

God at work 1: God commissions us to work

Discussion guide

From **Genesis 1 & Genesis 2** (linked to sermon of 10th May 2026)

www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series

This was part of a series on God at Work – where by 'work' we mean any role (paid or unpaid) that takes up time during our week eg looking after (grand)children or other dependents, walking the dog, Parkrun, commuting, helping with Scouts, working in an office, etc etc.

Intro: Describe one experience at work where you feel God has really been present

Read - **Genesis 1 v 26-31 & Genesis 2 v 15-20**

QUESTIONS (Please choose those you think are meaningful for your group context)

- Does the fact that Genesis presents God as a worker (in the normal sense of our everyday work), make you feel differently about your daily work?
- How does Genesis portray the work that God gives humans? What does this suggest about the inherent dignity of the work we do?
- What is the difference between a 'job', a 'calling' or a 'vocation'?
- What does 'subdue'/'have dominion' over the earth look like in our daily work?
- What are some ways that I can find meaning in my work? How could my work benefit myself or others. How does my work contribute to my community?
- How can we demonstrate the value of all jobs in our workplace? Hint: do you know the name of the person who cleans your office (or equivalent)?
- Where is the garden you "tend"? What is your "field of expertise"?
- The sermon contained a "corporate job description" (see overleaf) for humans – how did you feel this relates to your work (voluntary or paid)
- The sermon talked about work as collaborating with God and being the image of God's characters and names. How do you feel about this description?
- Eric Liddell said, "God made me fast and I feel his pleasure". What did God make you good at in your work? Do you feel his pleasure when you exercise your talents and experience? Do you celebrate and say "it is good"?

Personal reflection:

Head – what have you learned in this session that you need to ponder on more?

Heart – what has spoken to your heart in this session that you need to pray through more?

Hands – what actions do you need to take to put this into practice?

Is there anything from this reflection you want to share with your group (or one or two others in the group) so they can pray for you specifically, and encourage you in the days ahead?

Prayer suggestions:

- Each week in this 4-week series, get a couple of people in your group to talk in more depth about their 'work', how does being a Christian impact on it and what opportunities and challenges they face in that work.
- How can we pray for our work, the organisations we work in and the businesses we know about in our local area.

Corporate Job Description for Humans at work

Role Title: Image-Bearer & Kingdom Representative

Reports To: God

Key Responsibilities

1. Relationship Management (Vertical) "Love the Lord your God .." Matt 22:37
2. Relationship Management (Horizontal) "Love your neighbour .." Matt 22:39
3. Stewardship & Operations "Work it and take care of it." Genesis 2:15
4. Character & Ethics Compliance "Act justly.. love mercy.. walk humbly .." Micah 6:8
5. Brand Representation (Witness) - "You are the light of the world..." Matt 5:14

Sermon summary

1. God is a God of work

God did work - Genesis 2 v 2

God performed various work roles in Genesis 1, 2 and 3

- He was a creative designer – he created new things
- He was a taxonomist – he named things!
- He performed medical work - Gen 2 v 21 – Eve from Adam
- He was a project manager – he brought order from chaos with a rest break!
- He performed management roles – delegates, set boundaries and even gave them a job description (see above)
- He did "menial jobs" – gardening, made clothes for Adam and Eve

Jesus worked

- As a carpenter
- Hospitality – cooked breakfast (John 21:9)
- Campaigned for justice – Turning over tables (John 2:15)
- Servant – washed feet (John 13:15)

John 5:17 "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

2. God commissions humans to work

Genesis 2:15 "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it".

Exodus 20:8 - "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work ..."

Psalms 139:13 "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb." - God created my DNA with my personality, characteristics, etc.

We are all commanded to "take care of the garden" that God has given us. So, what is your "field" of expertise.

1 Corinthians 7:17 "Each one should retain the place in life that the Lord assigned each one and to which God has called them." We are all "called" to work.

3. Collaborating with God on the frontline

Colossians 3:23 "Whatever you do. Work at it with all your heart, as if working for the Lord not men."

When we exercise our talents, we are collaborating with and showing the image of the names of God in us e.g. Jehovah Jireh – The Lord who provides; Jehovah Rapha - The Lord who heals; Jehovah Rohi - The Lord is my shepherd; Jehovah Bore - The Lord who creates; Jehovah Shammah - The Lord is here

Eric Liddell – "I believe God made me for a purpose, for China –but He also made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure"

Work is worship (Avad), Gen 2:15, Joshua 24:15, Romans 12:1

God wants us to build his Kingdom by exercising the competences he has given us to be good stewards and use the untapped potential of the world to his glory.