

# Memory Verse

## Colossians 3:23-24

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

GRACELIFE



CHURCH

# Thematic Overview of Genesis 1-12 - Pt 5

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## A Theology of Work

We continue our series on a *Thematic Overview of Genesis 1-12*. So far, we focused on God, His creation of all things in 6 literal days, that were *very good*. We answered questions that arise and addressed dinosaurs. Today, we will study *a theology of work*.



## A. What is a Theology of Work?

It means we *look at work from God's perspective*. We all have our view of work... But understanding *God's perspective or view of work* is key for the Christian. This helps us see our "job" is more than a job, but something God has given to us, to honor Him, provide for our needs and provide for the needs of others, and do it for His glory.

## B. The Creation of Work

***Genesis 2:15*** - The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. - Adam was to *care for* and *maintain* the Garden. The word for "work" here is *tilling the ground, or labor*. "Keep" refers to *watching, preserving or having a charge over*. He was responsible to take care of the ground.



**ESV Study Bible Note: Genesis 2:15-16** - "The man is put in the garden to work it and keep it. The term "work" (Hb. *'abad*; cf. v. 5; 3:23; 4:2, 12; Prov. 12:11; 28:19) denotes preparing and tending, and "keep" (Hb. *shamar*) adds to that idea. ...Productive work is part of God's good purpose for man in creation. Later, the same two verbs are used together of the work undertaken by the priests and

Levites in the tabernacle (“minister” or “serve” [Hb. *abad*] and “guard” [Hb. *shamar*]; e.g., Num. 3:7–8; 18:7). The man’s role is to be not only a gardener but also a guardian... And the LORD God commanded the man. The fact that the command was given to Adam implies that God gave “the man” a leadership role, including the responsibility to guard and care



for (“keep”) all of creation (Gen. 2:15) - a role that is also related to the leadership responsibility of Adam for Eve as his wife...”



## B. The Creation of Work

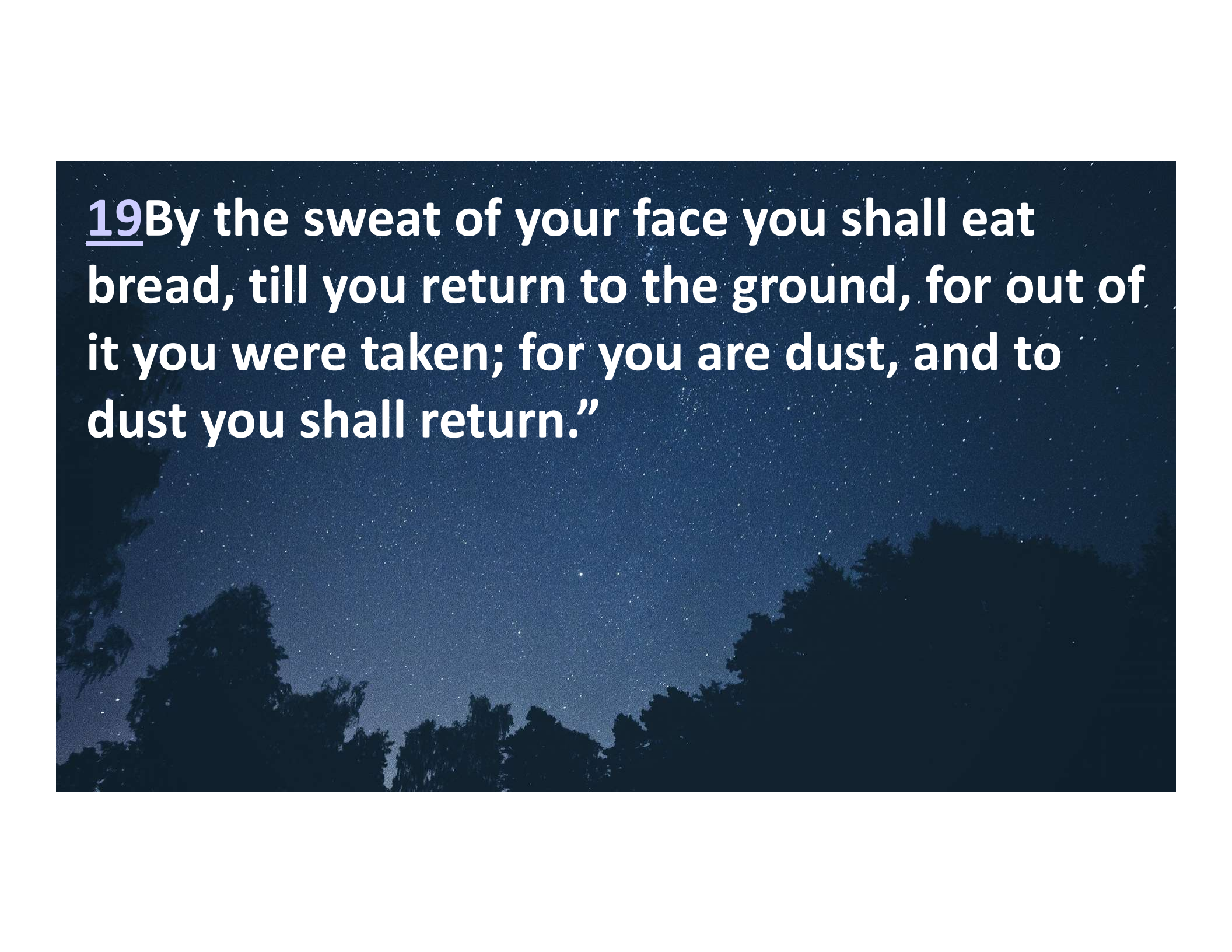
Before sin, work would have been a **joy**. Adam would have *recognized* his responsibility and role were given directly by God. Because of the *good relationship* he had with Him, he would have *seen this as a result* of being made in God's image, and would have gladly obeyed. Adam was to explain what God said to Eve...

## C. The Difficulty of Work

While Eve was deceived, *Romans 5* says God puts the fault on Adam. He was *created first*. He had the *responsibility to teach Eve what God said*, and once they partook of the forbidden fruit, **things changed**.



***Genesis 3:17-19*** - And to Adam he said,  
“Because you have listened to the voice of  
your wife and have eaten of the tree of which  
I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’  
cursed is the ground because of you; in pain  
you shall eat of it all the days of your life;  
18thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for  
you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

A night sky filled with stars, with the dark silhouettes of trees visible at the bottom. The text is overlaid on the upper portion of the image.

**19By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”**



## C. The Difficulty of Work

### 1. Cursed is the ground

God *cursed* the *ground*, not Adam and Eve. The ground was cursed, *because of man's sin*. This was not a local situation, but affected the **earth!** *Wherever there is ground, it was cursed by God because of Adam's sin.* To *curse* is the opposite of *bles*s. It refers to death and judgment.

## C. The Difficulty of Work

### 2. It will be painful to work

God said it will be *painful for him and all of humanity* to eat from the ground from then on. The word for "*pain*" also means "*toil*," or it's going to be **difficult to work** the ground from now on. This is also mentioned in *verse 19a* - by the sweat of your face...





## C. The Difficulty of Work

### 3. The ground will rebel

Part of the reason it will be so difficult is because *the land will rebel against those whom were given the responsibility to take care of it!* **Thistles** and **thorns** grew as a result of sin.



## C. The Difficulty of Work

### 4. We will die

While this is *not the main focus* for our study today, God says they, and we, will *return to the ground from which we were taken*, because of sin. **Death is the result of sin!**

## D. The Value of Work

Though work became difficult, there is still **great value** in it! Though it changed after the fall, or after sin entered the world, God still told Adam that he had to work. **He still had a job to do!** Adam and Eve were still responsible to take care of and use the ground for their life sustenance, for



## D. The Value of Work

themselves, and eventually for their descendants.

God **ordained** it that way.

## D. The Value of Work

Work gives us **purpose**. It can help develop our **confidence**. Yes, work can be difficult and working with others who make it difficult can diminish our confidence.

But, work helps us to complete a task, fulfill a need, and give us a sense of **accomplishment**.



## D. The Value of Work

Work gives us an opportunity to ***better ourselves***. We have to get an education to work. For some that means college, and for others it means a vocational school. We need to ***improve in order to work***. When we find a job, we hope there are opportunities for growth within that job.

## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 1. We Work for the Lord

***Ephesians 6:5-9*** - Bondservants (*slaves*), obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, 6not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7rendering



## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 1. We Work for the Lord

service with a good will **as to the Lord and not to man**, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. 9 Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who

## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 1. We Work for the Lord

is both their Master (*Lord*) and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

Paul summarizes this in *Colossians 4:1*.



## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 1. We Work for the Lord

While we do *work or labor for a manager, owner or corporation*, ultimately, a Christian looks beyond his or her boss to the **Lord**. **Colossians 3:23-24** - Whatever you do, work heartily, **as for the Lord and not for men**, 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are **serving the Lord Christ**.

## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 2. We Work to Avoid Laziness

***2 Thessalonians 3:6-11*** - Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. 7For you yourselves know how you ought



## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 2. We Work to Avoid Laziness

to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, 8 nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. 9 It was not because we do not have that right, but to

## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 2. We Work to Avoid Laziness

give you in ourselves an example to imitate.

10For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: **If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.** 11For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. 12Now



## **E. Work in a Christian's Life**

### **2. We Work to Avoid Laziness**

such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to **do their work** quietly and to **earn their own living**.

## **E. Work in a Christian's Life**

### **2. We Work to Avoid Laziness**

**Scripture warns about laziness: *Proverbs 6:6-11; 12:27; 13:4; 20:4; 21:25-26; 22:13; 24:30-34; 26:13-16; Matthew 25:24-30; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Thessalonians 4:10-12; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12; 1 Timothy 5:8, 13.***



## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 3. We Work to Provide for Others

***Ephesians 4:27*** - Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

## E. Work in a Christian's Life

### 3. We Work to Provide for Others

The thief uses his/her hands to take. When *salvation comes*, that person is to **work**. He or she is to *do an honest day's work, with... his own hands*. This is not just to provide for his/her needs, but to *give away to those in need...*



## E. Work in a Christian's Life

**Overworking** or **business** is a struggle for some. *Just because you are busy, does not mean you are productive.* Often, when we are *too busy*, we have a problem with our priorities. Yes, some cultures require more work than others as an *unspoken expectation*. But as Christians, we have a **choice, to keep our priorities Biblical, or cultural.**

## E. Work in a Christian's Life

Even if we have a job, we can ***become lazy***. The warnings of the Bible still apply in that situation. One danger, particularly for men, is to *find our **identity** in work (or ministry)*. *Work is part of what we do, but not who we are. **Work should not define us**, though it is a major part of our life.*



## E. Work in a Christian's Life

Another danger, and this is prominent in the church, is to see "**ministry**" as sacred and separate from a "**secular**" job. That is a misconception and an **unbiblical concept**. Every *legitimate form of work* can be an *act of worship to the Lord*, as Scripture says. The **sacred – secular** split is not a Biblical concept.

## **E. Work in a Christian's Life**

**“It is not the fruit of our labors but the focus of our heart that gives value to our work in the sight of God. Thus, “secular” work becomes spiritual when it is done to please God, and “religious” work becomes secular when it is done to please and impress people.”**

**<https://bible.org/article/biblical-worldview-work> - A Biblical  
Worldview of Work**