

Work and the Christian Worldview

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Deuteronomy 8:11-20

In our culture the goal of work is often defined as a high salary or the weekend. In this passage, God was speaking to a generation who was a stranger to settled work. They wandered, under God's direction, in the wilderness for 40 years. Their food had been provided. They had no permanent housing or upkeep of them. As they were soon to be introduced to settled work, God through Moses reminds them to be careful they do not define the goal of work in the midst of prosperity as prosperity itself.

I. Prosperity may come to God's people through their work.

- A. Being a Christian does not mean that physical blessing will automatically follow.
 - 1. Note the Israelites who served as slaves (Ex. 1ff)
 - 2. Note Job (Job 1,2)
- B. God was going to bless the Israelites upon their entrance into the Promised Land (vv. 3,7-9a)
- C. Such blessing would come through providentially blessed work
 - 1. For 40 years food had been provided. Now it stopped. (Joshua 5:12)
 - 2. They now had to settle down and work. Describe some of their tasks.

II. God's people must realize the danger of forgetting God in the midst of material blessing (v.14). How this can happen ...

- A. Our security is placed in riches, not the God of that wealth (I Timothy 6:17)
- B. We become proud in our accomplishments and independent of God. (I Timothy 6:17)
- C. We become so busy in our work we do not have time to read the Bible and pray. (Luke 10:38-42)
- D. We become so busy in our work we do not have time to teach our children about God (Judges 2:10)
- E. The Lord's Day becomes just another day. (Exodus 16:4,5) The Lord had set the example they are to follow by giving them a portion of manna on the 6th day so they could remember the Sabbath and keep it holy. However, in the midst of prosperity, it is easy for people to say, "I have become prosperous by working 6 days a week, I can become more prosperous by working 7."
- F. Society often idolizes that which works within it, forgetting the work of God. (Psalm 106:19-21)
An ox did important work in that society. Thus an idol was made of it. Point out what can be idols in our own day — computers, cars, etc.

III. How we can fight the temptation to forget God in the midst of prosperous work.

- A. Begin each week by obeying the 4th Commandment (Exodus 20:8 ff). We recall God's great work of salvation (Romans 5:6-11)
- B. Think of the providential works of God in our lives and times (Psalm 78:1-4 vv 15-16)
- C. Faithfully tithe. This teaches us that our income is not ours. The gifts and talents by which we earn a living come from God.
- D. Recall that all work is important before God. Notice the work mentioned in the texts maintaining houses, vineyards, etc. God notes all our labors.

- E. Keep technological advances in perspective. Thank God for them. Do not become totally dependent on them.
- F. Remember from whence you have come (8:15:16). God has been pleased to bring you to the point in your life you are at now in regard to your prosperity.
- G. Pray that you will love God more than the blessing He gives.
- H. Train your children to work. Do not teach them that everything is free or without cost to them.

Deuteronomy 8:11-20

Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day:

Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein;

And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied;

Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage;

Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint;

Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that He might humble thee, and that He might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end;

And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth.

But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth, that He may establish His covenant which He sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.

And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.

As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God.