

Work Resources

“Work” is a big topic and people have approached it in a variety of ways, offering everything from practical tips for living well “on the job” to detailed theological histories of the development of our current views. Below is a list of resources I have discovered and a few notes on the topics or approach they each take.

BOOKS (most of these are available online)

- Plowing in Hope - despite being relatively brief, this book takes deep look into a Genesis to Revelation view of work, focusing on both the redemptive and “cultural” mandates found in the Bible. Its approach is to build a “positive theology” and is therefore fairly easy to read.
- Culture Making - like Plowing in Hope, this book takes a very positive view towards the task of developing our view of work. It argues that the best way to change things is to build something better. It is less a book about the history of our view of work and more a of a call to be part of making the world. Its author, Andy Crouch, is a very engaging speaker and writer. The website tied to this book, www.culture-making.com, has links to many good resources.
- Business for the Glory of God - A very concise book (83 pages) that digs into many of our assumptions about what is good and bad about work, topics like competition, profit, ownership, inequality, etc. Its author, Wayne Grudem, is a very well respected Biblical scholar, and his findings are both encouraging and surprising.
- Your Work Matters to God - an older, broader book that first critiques common flawed views of work and then digs into a deeper Biblical view of work on a very practical level. A booklet based on this text, “God Cares About Your Work,” is also available.
- The Other Six Days - An in-depth look not just at work but the philosophical and theological foundations that our view of work (especially “ministry” vs “secular” work) is built on. It does a good amount of “deconstruction” on its way to gradually building up of a newer vision.
- The Fabric of This World - is a very broad ranging book. Part I surveys Greek, medieval, renaissance and more contemporary views of work and then discusses Luther, Calvin and modern Catholic responses to these views. Part II dives into practical implications not only on career and job choice but also on career advancement and management theory. This last topic is covered in detail in the last chapter of the book, making this a good book (or a good chapter) to share with anyone who is thinking about or has power to shape their work environment.
- 90,000 Hours: Managing the World of Work - This book reads like a series of essays on topics connected to work, topics like creativity, rest and harmony, and argues for the inherent value of our work even as we deal with the stress and problems that we often find in this world.
- The Heavenly Good of Earthly Work - A short but in-depth exploration of our past theological basis for work as well as a solid, positive construction of a fresh perspective (overview and summary available at human365.org)

- The Gift of Work is an insider's view of what it means to "work for God" in the marketplace. In the back are three very rich appendixes, one by Dallas Willard and two others that can be found online at <http://books.google.com>. The essay "Unto This Last" explores "the true functions of a merchant," and "Business-A Profession" redefines success in business and gives some fascinating examples.
- Our Work Loves Our Neighbor - Anne Cregger has written a great review (available at human365.org) of this book, calling it an exploration of "what our heavenly Father is doing on earth in different fields of endeavor: fields like telecommunications, accounting, consulting, carpentry and counseling. We learn how these works that seem so secular are, in fact, sacred."
- Surprised by Hope - NT Wright has written a fascinating book about the nature of heaven and the future God has in store for us. This book does not directly address the topic of work but builds on and supports some of the ideas explored in Plowing in Hope.

BOOKLETS/ESSAYS

- "God Cares About Your Work" - a brief overview of the big ideas covered on the Your Work Makes to God.
- "The Great Divide" - An exploration of the wide-ranging problems caused by "SSD" - the sacred-secular divide.

BIBLE STUDIES

- "The Gift of Work" - Bible study by Dean Storelli (available at human365.org).
- *Our Daily Work in the World* - detailed notes from a series of talks by Donald McGilchrist.

LAUSANNE

- Jerry White was one of 4 speakers at the 2010 Lausanne conference to talk about work. To find these talks, go to lausanne.org and search for "people at work" (exact phrase). Other excellent material can be found at this site by clicking on the documents/document by issue tab and looking through the "Business as Mission" links. Included in this rich list of resources is a short, powerful booklet, "God Means Business" (http://www.lausanne.org/documents/BAM_GodMeansBusiness.pdf).