

# Labor—The Gift of God

*"And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, it is the gift of God." (Ecclesiastes 3:13)*

Some people may have the feeling that having to work for a living is an imposition of a corrupt society. Since they were brought into this world through no choice of their own, therefore the world owes them a living, they think. Is working a punishment because of our sins?

Well, God did "curse" the ground because of sin, but in an important sense it was for man's own good. "Cursed is the ground," He told Adam, "for thy sake" ([Genesis 3:17](#)). It would require "the sweat of thy face" (v. 19) before man could eat his bread, and even then it would be "in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life" (v. 17).

But the work itself would not be a punishment, for even before Adam sinned, God had given him the responsibility in the Edenic garden "to dress it and to keep it" ([Genesis 2:15](#)). Furthermore, we shall have work to do in the new earth in the ages to come, for we are told that "his servants shall serve him" there ([Revelation 22:3](#)), even though there will be no remnant of sinfulness there at all.

Even in this life, work is a blessing when we see it as "the gift of God." If we see it only as drudgery and hardship, then it can indeed be "in sorrow." But the Lord Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" ([Matthew 11:28](#)).

If having to work for a living will encourage us to come to Christ for salvation and peace of soul, then it is truly "for thy sake" that God's curse was pronounced on the ground. The key to joy in labor, instead of sorrow, is noted by the apostle Paul. "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men....for ye serve the Lord Christ" ([Colossians 3:23-24](#)). HMM

*Days of Praise*

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