



SMACC

Making Disciples of Jesus Christ



Bible Study Series:

Work



Our Mission:

*To glorify God together in response to his grace by making
disciples of Jesus Christ*

About These Studies

These studies were written by various SMACC leaders for use among young working adults and university students. You are most welcome to use and adapt these studies for your own context. Where you do so please provide the following acknowledgment.

These studies are adapted from St Mary's Anglican Cathedral. Used with permission. Other Bible studies like these are available at: <https://stmaryscathedral.org.my/bible-studies/>

Contents

Study 1: "God's Purpose for Work & Rest"	3
Study 2: "The Work of the Lord"	8
Study 3: "What does the Bible say about Unemployment?"	11

Study 1: “God’s Purpose for Work & Rest”

Getting Us Thinking

1. What do you think is God’s purpose for our work? Why do Christians work?

2. What questions do you have about work?

Context

For the next 4 weeks will be thinking about different aspects of the Bible’s teaching about work. In this first study, our aim to is lay a solid foundation as we consider the purpose of work. In future studies we’ll look at questions like evangelism, unemployment, career, calling and more.

Digging In

A. God’s Purpose in Creation

Read Genesis 2:1-17

3. According to these verses, is work a good thing or a bad thing? Why?

4. What is the purpose of work? (cf. 1:26-28)

5. God rests from his finished work of creation in 2:1-3. How does this help us to understand the place of resting as well as working? (hint: what would be wrong with spending our entire life only working?)

Work is not always fulfilling after the Fall - it is also frustrating. And that is made obvious in the curses that God pronounces on the serpent, Eve and Adam. They demonstrate that from that point on there will be relational disorder, spiritual disorder and physical disorder. The curses effect everything – including our work. (Genesis 3:14-19).

Work is still a legitimate source of satisfaction. Work can be fulfilling. But it is to be expected that it will often be hard, painful, frustrating. And it will never fully satisfy.

C. Why Do We Work?

10. What do the following help us to understand the reasons that we work?

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

Ephesians 4:17

Philippians 4:14-20

1 Timothy 5:17

1 Corinthians 9:14

11. “We work to live, not live to work”. What do you think of this statement?

D. Godliness at Work

12. What do the following teach us about the importance of godliness at work?

Colossians 3:17-4:1

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

(If you have time, you could also look up Eph. 4:28; 6:5-9, 1 Pet. 2:18-23, Js 5:4, 2 Th 3:6-15, and Pr. 6:6-11)

13. "God is more concerned with how we work, than exactly what job we have". Do you agree?

E. Work & The New Creation

14. How do the following verses help us understand what heaven will be like?

Revelation 14:11-13

Revelation 18:21-23

Revelation 22:3

15. Read Hebrews 4:1-11. Given the reality of this future rest, how should we live now?

Application

16. Summarising what we've seen, how does the Bible explain God's purpose for work?

17. How has your understanding of work been challenged/changed by this study?

18. What is one concrete way that understanding God's purpose for work will change the way you approach to your work next week?

Study 2: “The Work of the Lord”

For these 3 weeks, we will be thinking about different aspects of the Bible’s teaching about work. Last week, we learned the foundation of the purpose of work. Today, we are looking at the work of the Lord, evangelism.

Getting Us Thinking

1. When and where is a suitable time and place to do gospel work?
2. Is there a difference between ‘gospel work’ and ‘secular work’?

Digging In

A. It’s harvest time

Read John 4:27-4; John 5:10-17, 5:36-40; John 6:26-40

1. What do the disciples consider Jesus’ food to be (cf. vv. 31; 33)? And what really is Jesus’s food (i.e. the bread of life; cf. vv. John 4:34; 5:17, 5:36; 6:32-40)?
2. In v. 4:35, Jesus says the harvest is now and in the unlikelyst of places, Sychar. How does this affect when and where do we think is suitable to do the Lord’s work?

3. In vv. 4:29-30, 38-39, who has sowed seeds of faith that the disciples are now seeing harvested?

a. How does this affect our thinking about qualifications needed to do the Lord's work?

4. How did the rest of the Samaritans come to believe Jesus? (cf. v. 4:41)

a. What are the implications of this on our understanding of the role of God's word in gospel work?

B. The continuity of work

Read 1 Corinthians 15:50-58

5. We learned last week that work in this fallen world is futile and frustrating, why then does Paul say in v. 58 that "your labour is not in vain"?

6. If not in vain, what continuity is there in doing the Lord's work? (cf. vv. 12-14; 50-51; 57)

C. Tying things together

7. Summarising what we've seen, how does the Bible explain the work of the Lord?

Thinking it through

8. What should our involvement be in doing the Lord's work? Is bringing in the harvest more important than other works?
9. Who in our community or world are similar to the Samaritans, and are you willing to take the message of Jesus to them?
10. What are our biggest fears about engaging people in conversation about Jesus? What have we learned from the study that can help us overcome those fears?
11. How would you practically change the way you do evangelism at the workplace?

Read Matthew 6:24-34.

4. How should I think about my situation if I am jobless or if my business is not going well?

Read James 2:14-17.

5. How could I be loving brothers and sisters who are jobless?

Read Proverbs 6:1-11 and Proverbs 31:10-31.

6. What about those not engaged in formal employment - but are still doing important work?
For instance, unpaid voluntary work or stay-at-home mum?