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The Purpose of Work & Christian Ambition

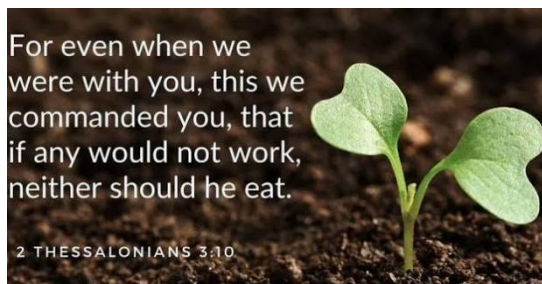
Most people if not all have some kind of ambition in life and it is not necessarily wrong to have ambitions or desires in our career advancement, but it must be consistent with God's will for us.

Work is a blessing given in the Garden of Eden in these times of perfection in Adam & Eve before the Fall (Gen 2:16). It was for man to take care of the garden and to dress it. After the Fall, there are certain consequences as man has to work from the sweat of his brows and there will be thorns and thistles as well. **Work is not a necessary evil as some would say but it is still a blessing from God and we can and must do it right.** Col 3:22-24, *'Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God; And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.'*



The Purpose of God-Given Work

Work is an ordinance that God gave to men to glorify Him and occupy himself meaningfully in the employment of his gifts and talents, for the sustenance of himself and his family (1Tim 5:8), for the economic good of society and for His kingdom's sake.



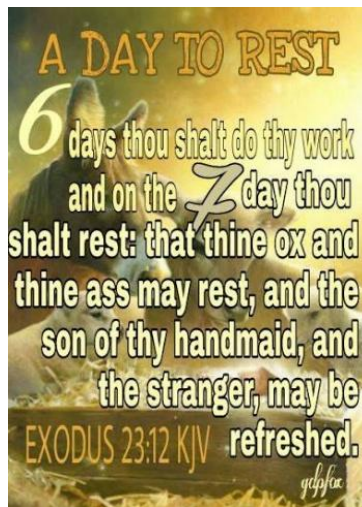
Laziness is a curse as Paul says in 2Thes 3:11-13, *'For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.'*

Work is to be fruitfully done six days a week with one day of rest on the Christian Sabbath with the worship of God (Exod 20:8-10).

There is to be productive and edifying work that supply mankind with goods and services as in the cultivation of crops for food or the making of industrial goods for the consumption of man. We are not designed for evil nor for a wicked end in immoral or unethical occupations (prostitutes, thieves, loan sharks, running gambling facilities) killing one another or making objects of harm and being a danger to mankind (selling drugs, vaping, scams, cigarettes, pirates or terrorists).

Work should be honourably and diligently done with our minds and hands and the talents and gifts that God has bestowed upon us to provide for the family and to be gainfully employed and productive in society and to glorify God. Indolence or slothfulness is condemned by Solomon in Prov 6:6-10 but diligence and hard work is encouraged.

Our example is the industrious ant and not the indolent pig as king Solomon warns us (Prov 6).



warns us (Prov 6). Believers are to be diligent and by their good testimony in honest hard work, they are to be effective witnesses and to glorify God. Matt 5:16 says, *'Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven'* and in Tit 2:14, we are told to be zealous of good works and that is one of the evidences of our true regeneration by the Holy Spirit as well.

Work & Stewardship in the Old & New Testament

Work entails responsible and edifying cooperative relationships with others in the workplace. In a healthy working environment, we should have the ability to work competently and to relate effectively to both superiors and subordinates so that we can be good testimonies to reach out for Christ. Daniel had a desire to honour God first in his life and he was promoted to the top civil post in both the Babylon and Persian empire. His right aims render him effective, and he became a dignified high-ranking officer in both the kingdom of God and man (Dan 1:8-12). Joseph met the same end when he put God first before his career and he was duly rewarded to be the right-hand man of Pharaoh. (Gen 39-40) Nehemiah has the ambition to build the walls of Jerusalem and God answered his requests and used him mightily for his own glory (Neh 1,2).

In the building of the temple or the Tabernacle in the Old Testament under Moses as commanded of God where various gifted people worked on the Tabernacle with skilled labour in Exod 35 and 36 and they were greatly used of God. There were supervisors and those sensible ladies who do the curtains with fine needlework and craft like the masons, silver smiths, gold smiths, the weavers and other final touches by the ladies as well. This was seen also in the New Testament church Dorcas sewed clothes for the old ladies in winter with her needle in Act 18 and Lydia was a seller of purple in Act 16 which is a kind of an entrepreneur in those days. Paul, Aquila and Priscilla were tentmakers and there are others who do work in the other industries in agriculture and in the fields as shepherds. John and James are fishermen, and Matthew was a tax collector, there are also who are doing some businesses and yet others are professional soldiers like Cornelius the Centurion who was converted. It is not wrong to have ambitions in life, but we need to ask what the purpose of it is. **What do you want to achieve in your job or career finally? Is it for selfish gain, power, prestige and self-glory or it is for the glory of God and to be a witness for Christ and a good testimony for His kingdom's sake?**

If any of our children want to be a doctor or lawyer, that is considered laudable by many parents. What if our daughter or son did not want to become a well know professional but became a clerk or mechanic as the Lord wills? Is that acceptable to you? Some ambition may not be met in the end as it may not be God's will for us for His plans are higher than ours. For example, King David wanted to build God a temple but his son, Solomon was to be one instead. In all things we willingly submit to the sovereign will of God as his will is always the best for us.



1Cor 10:31 says, *'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.'* Does your work consume you everyday and leave you with no time for God and family? I know some foreign workers would like to work an average of over 72 hours a week when the norm is 44 hours. Over time work means more pay for them even if it means working on Sunday to get the extra cash but is it right before God and is it the best for us physically and spiritually? **is the Sabbath rest and the worship commanded of God important to us? We need to think carefully on this matter if we are to break the Christian Sabbath to the detriment of both our bodies and souls.**

Paul brought up the important factor of time when he says in Eph 5:15-16, *'See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.'* We have limited time on earth, and **we need to use it prudently for the Lord before our time is up and eternity begins.** Psalms 90:12 says, *'So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.'*

We need to pray and read His word and serve Him and humbly seek the will of God first and wait upon Him patiently to give us His sovereign good time.

Our duty or ambition in life is to fear God and keep His commandments (Ecc 12:13), to glorify God and be a good testimony for Christ, for we are accountable to Him and to make our lives count for eternity as a result of our God honouring ambitions.

**Godliness +
Contentment
= GREAT GAIN**

Paul in 1Tim 6:6-10 warns, *'But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the*

love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.' **Beware also of covetousness and a greedy quest for secular interests only without a heavenly purpose.** For example, a person who just works hard every day to increase his / her net worth by accumulating wealth in money-making or self-glory and self-promotion at the expense of worship, reading the word, prayer and serving and glorifying God with our talents, time and substance have forfeited himself of something precious and important in his life and there are consequences.

Directions in Life

There was a show on our local TV at one time entitled *"Who Wants To Be Millionaire?"* Many took part with a desire to be a millionaire, or others aspire to be a CEO or a General which may not be wrong, but we need to ask the question, *'What is the purpose for their cravings for these high positions? Is it not alright if it is the will of God for you to lead a simple life and to take a reasonably paid job and have ample time for God, family, service, mission, worship and the fellowship with God's people?'*

Jeremiah's advice to his secretary, Baruch is given here, Jer 45:5 *"And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the LORD: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest."*

I know of some pastors, evangelists and missionaries who have given up their promising careers to serve the Lord and to study in a theological college and are serving God full time faithfully though they can be successful in the secular world. We wondered what John Calvin and Luther, Tyndale, Cranmer, Knox and Zwingli, Spurgeon or John MacArthur would be in the world in their days if they had not given up their all to serve their God? **God is sovereign and blessed is the man and woman who submits to His will.** There is no greater joy in this life than be in the will of God and serve the King of kings.



Finishing Well

Paul had fought and won and finished well the race of life (2Tim 4:6-8) and fulfilled a meaningful calling and a purposeful life for God that will last for eternity. There are eternal rewards in store for them who serve the Lord. Rev 14:13 says, *'And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.'* Paul in Gal 6:9 says, *'And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not'* and 2John 8 says, *'Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.'* Matt 6:21, *'For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also* and Matthew 6:33 *But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.'*

We must soberly examine the basis for our ambitions and motives in life and ask if we are living for Christ and eternity or for self and the temporal world. Will you pray and consider doing it today before God?



Conclusion

Ambition is to be guided by the word of the Lord and work is a wonderful gift and calling from God and let use it for His glory while there is breath in our nostrils. **Know that one day Christ is coming again soon to rule and judge us and what will become of us one day when He returns? The recent pandemic changes our view of life and ambition. Many lost their jobs or their net worth is affected adversely. Let us make our lives count for eternity and reflect and search ourselves first and make our lives a ready willing vessel of honour to serve God first (2 Tim 2:20-21).** This is the greatest joy and ambition; i.e. not just to be great on earth but in heaven by exalting and glorifying God and being **a faithful steward and servant of the most High God till He comes and this is the highest honour and duty for any soul in this temporal life.** We do not have much time left on earth. Something to think about and act upon.

Jack Sin

SOVEREIGNHOPE
bible presbyterian church

BIBLICAL COUNSELING SEMINAR

Equipping the Church to Help the Hurting with God's Truth

 **6 SEP 2026, SUN**

10 AM  **The Case for Balaam**

12 PM  **Biblical counseling in a mentally disturbed world**

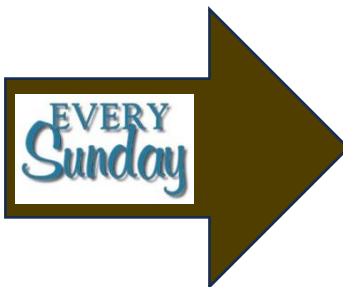
 *Come and find out how you can help others with mental concerns. All are welcome.*

 Those interested, register with **Eld Yue Kay**

 **97450311**

BY 30 AUG 2026

 **VENUE:**
160, Paya lebar Rd, #04-06,
Orion @ Paya lebar Rd, S(409022)

SOVEREIGNHOPE
bible presbyterian church

Jul to Sep 2026 Sermon Series Precious Insights from a Veteran Prophet (Book of Deuteronomy)

SEP 6 The Case of Balaam
[Deut 23:5-23]

13 Making Major Decisions in Life
[Deut 30:1-20]

20 Doctrine of Moses Applied
[Deut 32:1-21]

27 Gospel Sunday

Last Sunday @Sovereign Hope



Glad to see you,
Dr Sam & Chandler!



Blessed time of learning the Book of Hosea at
the Zoom Chinese Fellowship!



In Loving Memory of Eld & Mrs Khoo Peng Kiat

Eld Khoo called to Glory in Jan 2025.

Mrs Khoo (Mdm Chan) returned Home on 25 Aug 2026.



Eld & Mrs Khoo at
SHBPC 2nd
Thanksgiving
Anniversary in
Feb 2019.



Memory Verse

Deut 18:12 For all that do these things are an abomination unto the LORD: and because of these abominations the LORD thy God doth drive them out from before thee.

Announcements

1. Welcome to our Worship Service! If you are here for the first time, do leave us your contact numbers in our guest book before you leave. Those who share the church vision to acquire a place of worship in due time, may designate your offerings to the SHBPC Church Building Fund.
2. Pastor brings us God's Word this morning on "**Warnings from God on the Occult [Deut 18:9-22]**", continuing the quarterly series on "**Precious Insights from a Veteran Prophet - the Book of Deuteronomy**".
3. Next Sunday, Dr Tim Yates will preach on "**The Case for Balaam**". Dr Yates will also conduct a seminar on "**Biblical Counselling in a Mentally Disturbed World**". See details on page 6.
4. **Annual Congregation Meeting** is held after the worship service this morning. **All members are required to attend.**
5. There are no Sunday School classes today in view of the ACM.
6. Chinese Fellowship meets every Sunday night at 7pm via Zoom. **[Zoom ID:883 9662 4157 Passcode: 218178]**. Join us for time of learning on the Book of Hosea (Thirdmill video lessons) and Heroes of the Faith (messages).
7. Do send your prayer items to Pastor and join us for Church Prayer Meeting on Wed at 8pm via Zoom. The prayer list is available in church. **[Zoom ID:863 7527 5431 Passcode: 625551]**.
8. Pray for:
 - **Dr Sam**: New job in Ningbo, **Yusong**: Master's program at King's College, London from mid-Sep
 - **Joseph & Rachel**: GPS Mooncake Festival Outreach on 19 Sep and void deck outreaches
 - **Hnin**: delivery of baby boy on 16 Sep in KL
 - **Medical**: **Simon** [hospitalization, depression], **Kin Hoong's daughter Joyce** [chemotherapy], **Ps Babu's father-in-law** [treatment options for pancreatic cancer]
 - **Lily Almon** [citizenship application]
 - **Mission Trip to Myanmar [10-17 Nov]**
9. Love gifts, Offering and Tithes to the Lord can be given in the following ways:
 - **Cheque** payable to **Sovereign Hope Bible Presbyterian Church** and mail to church address. (Kindly write the full name of the church as indicated.)
 - **Fund transfer** to Church **UOB** Account **392-308-825-1**
 - **PayNow** to Church UEN: **T19SS0116FSOV**

Kindly indicate "**Church Building Fund**" if you would like to designate towards this cause.