



A Practical Guide for Reflecting God in Our Work

A Companion Guide for the “Follow His Way of Life: Work” Series

INTRODUCTION

God cares deeply about our daily work. Not only were we made to reflect God in our work, but our daily work was also made to shape us. It forms our desires, our identity, our habits, and the way we see the world. Whether we work in offices or classrooms, homes or hospitals, construction sites or studios, restaurants or warehouses, our work is one of the primary places where God meets us, forms us, and sends us.

This guide is designed to accompany the four themes of the Work sermon series and to help you practice life with Jesus in the real rhythms, joys, frustrations, and responsibilities of your work.

Each week contains a brief summary of the theme for the week, some personal reflection questions, a prayer prompt to help you connect with Jesus, some discussion questions to engage in community, and finally, a practice to help you integrate these ideas with your life and work.



WEEK 1: CREATED TO CULTIVATE

The Goodness of Work in God's Design

Work begins with God. The Bible starts with God at work creating and ordering the universe. At the heart of this creative work, God made a garden and placed humans in His Garden to reflect His own character. Before sin had entered the world, God called humanity to cultivate, create, steward, and serve His world. Work is not primarily about earning money or proving worth—it is about imaging God. Whether you work with your hands or through relationships, ideas, caregiving, creativity, or strategic leadership, your work participates in the goodness of God's world and contributes to the flourishing of others.

Yet most of us rarely stop to name the value of our work—or the value of the work others do every day. This week invites you to recover the dignity of your vocation by naming what is good, meaningful, and beautiful in the work you do, and by seeing how the work of others blesses your life and our city.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What aspects of your work reflect the creativity, wisdom, or care of God?
2. How does your work—paid or unpaid—contribute to the flourishing of others?
3. What parts of your work bring you joy, purpose, or gratitude?
4. How might God be inviting you to see the dignity of your work in a new way?

PRAYER

Take time to thank God for the goodness of your work. Ask Him to help you see the value that your work has in His world and take time to thank Him for the good work of someone else in your life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is one way your job or role reflects something about God's character?
2. Who in your life has a form of work that goes unnoticed but deeply matters?
3. Who in your life has a form of work that goes unnoticed but deeply matters?

PRACTICE: NAME THE VALUE OF YOUR WORK & THE WORK OF OTHERS

This week, take a few minutes to intentionally recognize the goodness of the work God has entrusted to you—and the goodness of the work He has entrusted to someone else. Use the two steps on the next page as a guide to this practice.

1. Name the Value of Your Work

Write 4–6 sentences reflecting on the goodness of your work:

- **What good does your work bring into the world?**
(How does it help, serve, repair, teach, organize, create, or care for others?)
- **How does your work reflect something about God's character?**
(Creativity, order, compassion, provision, beauty, wisdom?)
- **Who benefits from what you do?**
Keep it simple, honest, and specific.

Take a couple of minutes to ask God to help you engage your work as an expression of His love for the world.

2. Encourage Someone in Their Work

The practice of vocational affirmation can be a powerful way to show God's love and care for His people. Choose one person whose work blesses or impacts you and/or others—at home, in the community, at church, or at your job. Offer them a brief, specific word of encouragement (text, note, or in-person):

- Who is someone that you could encourage in their work? (*Take a moment to ask God and pay attention to who comes to your mind*)
- What is one good thing you see in their work?
- How does their work make a difference in your life or in the world?
- What challenges might they face in their work?
- How does their work reflect God's heart?
- Decide how you are going to share this with them.

PRACTICE REFLECTION:

How does this practice help me follow Jesus in the way that I work? What tensions do I feel about this practice? What could I do to address those challenges or tensions?

WEEK 2: WORK IN A BROKEN WORLD

Navigating Our Work in a Fallen World

Work is fundamentally good, but the world is profoundly broken. Much of our call toward work is to push back the darkness that our fallen world throws at us. Moreover, each job and every industry carries “thorns and thistles”—frustration, conflict, futility, pressure, boredom, idolatry, and temptation.

Sometimes work hurts: a harsh coworker, an unfair system, a challenging client, an unhealthy culture, an overwhelming mountain of tasks, or exposure to the most vile parts of society. Other times work reveals what is broken inside of us: impatience, anger, insecurity, the need to control, a temptation toward comparison and covetousness, or the desire for self-promotion.

This week invites you to bring those real moments and real challenges directly to Jesus. Instead of merely trying to push through your frustration, fix it yourself, ignore it, numb out, or give in to temptation, you’ll practice turning to God with honesty and hope. Jesus meets you in the exact place where work hurts. And those moments can become turning points for freedom, formation, and deeper dependence on Him.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What types of brokenness does your work reveal and/or address?
2. What frustrates or burdens you most in your current work season?
3. How do you experience “thorns and thistles” in your role or industry?
4. What idols show up in your industry—success, approval, control, comfort?
5. In what ways has your work negatively impacted you or others?
6. What might it look like to bring your guilt, pain, frustrations, or burdens honestly to Jesus?

PRAYER

Offer a prayer of lament to Jesus. Name your work frustrations honestly and tell Him how they make you feel. Ask Him to be present with you in the middle of what’s hard, and ask for whatever help you need. End with a simple expression of surrender and trust.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Where have you felt the brokenness of work most intensely?
2. How does understanding the effect of the fall on our work influence the way that you understand those challenges?
3. How do you see Jesus meeting you or shaping you in those painful places?
4. What kind of support or accountability might help you as you navigate through these challenges?

PRACTICE: A BREATH-PRAYER PRACTICE FOR WORK CHALLENGES

Challenges and difficulties at work are invitations to anchor ourselves in God's presence rather than to spiral away from Him. This practice of a breath prayer helps you turn frustration, heaviness, temptation, or pressure into a prayer and a connection with Jesus.

1. Identify the Challenge

Choose one specific frustration or moment of pressure you want to bring to God this week. Here are some examples:

- An area of obvious or visceral brokenness
- A difficult meeting or coworker
- A recurring task that drains you
- An unjust practice or system
- An overwhelming workload
- A temptation to cut corners, control outcomes, or seek approval
- A project that triggers anxiety or insecurity

Name it simply and clearly:

- "When I receive that email..."
- "When I open this project..."
- "When I walk into that room..."
- "When I come face-to-face with..."

2. Reflect on where Jesus might be at work in the challenge

- What might Jesus be wanting to grow in you through this challenge?
- It has been said that "the fruit of the Spirit is grown in the womb of adversity." What fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control) might you need God to grow in you as you face this challenge?
- What do you need to see, remember, and hold fast about God's character and promises as you enter into this?

3. Practice a Simple Breath Prayer

When the challenge emerges, quietly practice one of these two brief prayers, with one breath in and one breath out:

- Inhale: “Lord Jesus...” Exhale: “...be near.”
- Inhale: “Christ in me...” Exhale: “...do Your work through me.”

4. Decide What Will Prompt the Prayer

Pick a specific event, moment, or action that will remind you to pray your breath prayer. The goal is to tie your breath prayer to a specific recurring moment. Here are some examples:

- Walking down the hall toward a difficult meeting
- Opening your inbox
- Seeing a certain person’s name
- Starting a recurring task
- Transitioning between job sites, clients, or activities
- Submitting a project
- Hearing a notification sound
- Sitting down at your desk in the morning

5. Build a Reminder into Your Day

Choose one simple way to help yourself remember:

- A post-it note or notecard in your workplace
- A reminder or alarm at a strategic time
- A calendar notification at the start of a meeting or block of time
- A symbol or small object that is visible throughout the day
- A lock-screen image on your phone with the prayer

6. Put It All Together:

“I have this (reminder), so that when I feel this (challenge), I can remember to pray this (breath prayer), to help me turn to God in the pain of my work.”

Use this practice daily throughout the week. Over time, this simple rhythm can become a deeply formative way of experiencing God’s presence in the middle of the challenges of your work.

PRACTICE REFLECTION:

How does this practice help me follow Jesus in the way that I work? What tensions do I feel about this practice? What could I do to address those challenges or tensions?

WEEK 3: REDEEMED FOR GOOD WORK

The Gospel and the Transformation of the Worker

The Gospel doesn't give us a new job; it reconciles us to God who gives us a new heart for our work. Because we are saved by grace and not by performance, we no longer work to prove our worth, secure our identity, or justify our value. Instead, we are free to engage our daily work as an act of worship and love. In Christ, even the most ordinary tasks gain purpose and eternal significance. The gospel reorders our desires, reshapes our motives, and restores freedom and joy to our work.

This week focuses on how the Gospel reorders our desires, reshapes our motives, and restores joy and freedom to our work. Life with Jesus at work is sustained not by willpower, but by habits of attention—simple liturgies that help us work from grace, not for it.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Where are you tempted to seek identity or approval through your work?
2. What would it look like for you to work from a place of rest rather than for rest?
3. How might simple daily habits help you stay centered in Christ at work?
4. In what ways does the Gospel free you for joy and service in your work?

PRAYER

“Lord Jesus, free me from the pressure to prove myself through my work. Let Your grace reshape my motives, my priorities, and my rhythms. Help me work with You and not apart from You.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How has the Gospel changed the way you approach your daily work?
2. What new habits or liturgies might help you stay connected to Jesus at work?

PRACTICE: CREATE A WORKDAY START-UP AND SHUTDOWN LITURGY

Creating simple liturgies can help you begin and end your workday with Jesus—grounding your identity in Him, releasing pressure, and practicing dependence rather than striving. Keep them short, repeatable, and realistic. Use the steps on the next page as a guide to this practice.

1. Your Workday Start-Up Liturgy

The goal here is to establish a simple and repeatable routine that can help you start the work day from a place of communion with Jesus and a clear sense of purpose.

Begin your day by orienting your heart toward God. Choose one action, one Scripture, and one prayer to mark the start of your work.

A. CHOOSE AN ACTION:

Pick one small physical cue to begin your liturgy:

- Take a brief, slow breath
- Sit still for 10 seconds
- Place your feet on the floor in awareness
- Open your hands
- Light a candle as a reminder of God's presence (if desired)
- Touch your desk, tools, steering wheel, or laptop with intention

B. CHOOSE A SCRIPTURE:

Pick one short verse to repeat daily:

- "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us and establish the work of our hands." (Ps. 90:17)
- "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." (Col. 3:17)
- "I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:5)

C. CHOOSE A SIMPLE PRAYER:

Write a simple prayer as you begin:

- "Father, establish the work of my hands."
- "Jesus, be with me in my work today."
- "Jesus, I offer you this day as an expression of my love for you."
- "Spirit, guide my words and actions as I do the work that you have called me to today."

2. Your Workday Shutdown Liturgy (2-3 Minutes)

End your workday with surrender and gratitude. This helps you let go of unfinished tasks and entrust the day to God.

A. REVIEW THE DAY WITH GRACE:

Ask yourself two simple reflective questions:

- What is one area from today where you see God's kindness?
- What is one moment that was difficult or heavy?

Name each briefly before God with gratitude, honesty, and trust.

B. SURRENDER YOUR WORK FOR THE DAY:

Pray a simple prayer of surrender and trust:

- “Jesus, I give everyone and everything to you.”
- “Lord, I place this day into your hands.”

C. MARK THE ENDING WITH AN ACTION:

Pick a physical cue to close the day:

- Close your laptop
- Wash your hands
- Turn off a light
- Take one slow breath

Let this action signal: “My work is done for today.”

3. Write Out Your Personalized Start-Up & Shutdown Liturgy

Write out your workday start-up and shutdown liturgies and put them somewhere visible to help you remember and establish this rhythm:

START-UP:

- **My action:**
- **My Scripture:**
- **My prayer:**

SHUTDOWN:

- **My review questions:**
- **My surrender prayer:**
- **My closing action:**

PRACTICE REFLECTION:

How does this practice help me follow Jesus in the way that I work? What tensions do I feel about this practice? What could I do to address those challenges or tensions?

WEEK 4: WORK & THE RENEWAL OF ALL THINGS

Vocation as Participation in God's Restoring Mission

God's vision for the world is not escape but renewal. The Bible ends with a restored creation—the new heavens and new earth—where God dwells with humanity (Rev. 21:3) "making all things new" (Rev. 21:5), and "the kings of the earth bring their glory into" the new creation (Rev. 21:24-26). This means that human culture, creativity, craft, and work are not thrown away in the new heavens and new earth, but are in some way gathered up, purified, and woven into God's eternal kingdom.

Our work in the present world—whether caregiving, building, teaching, designing, serving, coding, repairing, leading, creating, or otherwise adding value—serves as signposts and genuine foretastes of that future renewal. As followers of Jesus, we are not just doing jobs; we are participating in God's mission to make all things new. Each act of justice, beauty, service, wisdom, healing, or craftsmanship is a small but real preview of God's coming kingdom. This week invites you to approach your work with the confidence and joy that your labor is not in vain, but rather integral to God's larger story and where He is taking His creation.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What parts of the new creation vision inspire or shape how you think about your work?
2. How does your work contribute—even in small ways—to healing, beauty, order, justice, creativity, or some other type of flourishing?
3. What could be changed or improved for you to more fully reflect the goodness of God in your field or industry?
4. What parts of God's character are you invited to image to those around you as you do your work?
5. What skill or other aspect of your craft could you strengthen to more fully reflect God's kingdom?

PRAYER

Ask God to give you a clearer vision for how your work fits into His Kingdom purposes. Pray that He would show you how your daily tasks, relationships, skills, and influence can participate in His work of renewal.

Adapt a portion of the Lord's Prayer to the context of your work: "*Let Your kingdom come and Your will be done in my work, as it is in heaven.*"

Pray this slowly, imagining what it might look like for God's kingdom to show up through your craft, your presence, and your faithfulness this week.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it look like for your work to anticipate the renewal of all things?
2. Where do you sense God inviting you to bring restoration, hope, or goodness through your vocation?

PRACTICE: SEEING WHAT YOU SEE, WHAT WILL YOU DO?

One of the most practical ways we join God's renewal is by paying attention to the opportunity before us, and stepping into it with courage and trust. Throughout history, the love of Christ and the hope of the new creation have motivated followers of Jesus to do amazing, life-giving work in the world. As you show up to your work context, what do you see? What opportunities exist? What needs might you fulfill? How might you grow as the kind of person who is more fully equipped to do this good work?

Choose one small step in the coming week toward this. It may be developing your craft, improving your field of work, meeting a particular need, leveraging your voice or agency for others, or simply showing up well in the routine tasks of your role. This is not for the sake of self-advancement or recognition, but so that your work can more fully reflect the goodness and renewing work of the God we serve.

1. Reflect and identify one area where you may pursue renewal

It could be improving a technical skill, how you show up relationally, leveraging your influence on behalf of others, correcting issues from the past, coming up with a new idea, etc. Here are some examples:

- Clearer communication
- Safer processes
- Better planning
- More honoring practices
- Stronger empathy
- Deeper creativity
- Better boundaries
- More precision
- More attention to client care

2. Connect it to the bigger story

Ask yourself: "How does this small act anticipate and participate in God's renewal of all things?"

It might heal disorder, create beauty, strengthen justice, bring clarity, cultivate peace, or simply bless another human being—all of which are seeds and cultivators of the new creation.

3. Take a simple step toward growth

- Ask a colleague or mentor for input
- Make a structural change despite opposition
- Watch a short tutorial or training video
- Read one article or book chapter
- Start a conversation with the right people
- Practice one skill for 20 focused minutes
- Improve a workflow or system that serves others
- Apologize to a coworker
- Try one new technique or tool

4. Offer this opportunity to God

Pray something like this over your efforts to grow: “Lord, establish the work of my hands. Use my growth, skill, and effort to bring life, order, beauty, and hope into the world.”

PRACTICE REFLECTION:

How does this practice help me follow Jesus in the way that I work? What tensions do I feel about this practice? What could I do to address those challenges or tensions?

