

Work

Creating and Maintaining a Godly Culture

Within and Out of Common Purse: A culture of hard work is not a Community principle but a Scriptural command for all Christians. Again, holding each other accountable for daily, productive work should be happening in every fellowship around the world because it is a Biblical command for everyone claiming to follow Jesus Christ. In a broken world that needs Jesus there is no room for idleness or excessive leisure (which the Bible calls *sloth, laziness*) in the life of a believer. Because a culture of hard work is not about money we hold everyone accountable for a godly work habit in both schedule and ethic, whether they participate in Common Purse or not.

Paul's Instructions on Daily Work to the Church Fellowship: *"In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother."* **2 Thessalonians 3:6-15.**

***Important Note:** The Apostle Paul makes it very clear that the daily work of our fellow Christians is our business and is therefore a place for accountability. In our culture, your work life is a personal matter that is no one else's business and so the thought of fellow Christians holding us accountable for our work seems "controlling." While that may make sense to the Western world's culture that is in no way Kingdom culture, as Paul makes clear in 2 Thessalonians. Again, we need to let the Bible give us our worldview in the area of work, and refrain from trying to put our worldview in the Bible.

"keep away from every brother who is idle" ἄτακτος is the Greek word used here for "idle." In Ancient Greek culture this word was used for people who didn't show up for their daily work. The word essentially means "out of order." Work, in Paul's mind, is to be the daily order of a believer. When someone is not working daily they are seen to be out of godly order.

"They are not busy; they are busybodies." Paul uses the word ἐργάζομαι here for "busy." This word means "fruitful labor" or "work that brings gain." Christians are to be "busy" people- that is the daily life of the Christian is to be filled with fruitful work for both the Kingdom and/or the Marketplace. περιεργάζομαι is the word for "busybody" and means someone who is going around doing many things, but is primarily concerned with their own desires/kingdom: socializing, leisure, or other things that bring no profit or growth for God's Kingdom.

Both Idleness and being a Busybody are sin: Idleness (laziness) is the more obvious of the two, but idleness and fruitless busyness are sins in the eyes of the Lord because they waste the life of people Jesus purchased with His own blood. Our culture justifies both of these in many ways, but in God's sight both are displeasing. We must be careful to make sure that we do not whitewash either of these things and let the Lord develop Kingdom work-ethic within us.

"Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother." Paul believed that this was such an important part of the Christian life that he commands fellow Christians to actually refuse association with believers who are living in idleness or simply being busybodies. This is the level of importance with which the Apostles looked at the work ethic of

disciples of Jesus Christ. Also it makes clear that Christians holding each other accountable for their work ethic is not “controlling,” it is a biblical mandate for the sake of the individual believer as well as the reputation of the Gospel.

The Proverbs: One of the most frequent themes of the Proverbs is the theme of hard work and the blessing of God that is on diligent, godly, daily labor. At the beginning of the Book of Proverbs the benefits of reading the Book are listed: “*for gaining wisdom and instruction; for understanding words of insight; for receiving instruction in prudent behavior, doing what is right and just and fair; for giving prudence to those who are simple, knowledge and discretion to the young—let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance—for understanding proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise.*” **Proverbs 1:2-6.** We have to battle a culture all around us that is lazy, greedy, ambitious and filled with bad ideas and wrong morals about work. Reflect on these Proverbs as you read them, asking the Lord to speak to you about His view of daily work:

Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies have no sense. **Proverbs 12:11**

From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things, and the work of their hands brings them reward.
Proverbs 12:14

A lazy man’s appetite is never filled, but the desires of the diligent are fully satisfied. **Proverbs 13:4**

All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty. **Proverbs 14:23**

One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys. **Proverbs 18:9**

The craving of a lazy man will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work. All day long he craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing. **Proverbs 21:25-26**

And particularly for the ladies, the Proverbs 31 woman is a prime example of a godly woman hard at work:

*A wife of noble character who can find? She is worth far more than rubies.
Her husband has full confidence in her and lacks nothing of value.
She brings him good, not harm, all the days of her life.
She selects wool and flax and works with eager hands.
She is like the merchant ships, bringing her food from afar.
She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants.
She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.
She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks.
She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night.
In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers.
She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.
When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet.
She makes coverings for her bed; she is clothed in fine linen and purple.
Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land.
She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.
She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.
She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.
She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.
Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her:
“Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.”
Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.
Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.*
Proverbs 31:10-31

Our Attitude as we Work: *Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.* **Ephesians 6:7-8.** Whether we are working for our daily wage, serving in the Church, spreading the Gospel, or doing other works of service we are not to grumble or despise either our work or those who may be in authority over us in those realms. Whatever we are doing we should do it knowing that we are serving the Lord Jesus directly.

Work and Worship: Because we have a society that has gained most of its outlook from Greek philosophical tradition we have to fight to have Biblical-Hebrew thinking as we walk in the Kingdom. The Old Testament uses a very special word for ‘work’- עָבַד “*abad*.’ The interesting aspect of this word is that it is used interchangeably with the word for ‘worship’ and ‘serve.’

For a quick example among many, in Genesis 29:20 it says “*Jacob worked (abad) seven years for Rachel...*” However, in Exodus 3:12 God says to Moses, “*Certainly I will be with you and this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship (abad) God at this mountain.*” Again, the name “Obadiah” (‘Obadyah עֲבַדְיָה) can be translated equally “Servant of Yahweh” or “Worshiper of Yahweh.”

The application to us in our thinking should be that we do not divorce our daily work from what we think of as worship. Worship is not something that you only do in a church service with music and praise, it is also what you do every day—or don’t do everyday. Our work is a greater part of our worship to God than our musical praise.

Giving up our Rights: Many can fall into the trap of thinking that after a period of hard work we have “earned the right” to leisure; retirement, extended-vacations, etc. all are part of this thinking in our culture. Consider this teaching of Jesus in light of this:

*“Suppose one of you has a servant plowing or looking after the sheep. Will he say to the servant when he comes in from the field, ‘Come along now and sit down to eat’? Won’t he rather say, ‘Prepare my supper, get yourself ready and wait on me while I eat and drink; after that you may eat and drink’? Will he thank the servant because he did what he was told to do? So you also, when you have done everything you were told to do, should say, ‘We are unworthy servants; we have only done our duty.’” **Luke 17:7-10***

Jesus tells us that we must give up the entitlement culture that we are so familiar with in Western society. As Christians, we should look at everything the Lord calls us to do and be as a privilege. We must remember that we don’t even deserve to be His servants because of our sins, but out of His great mercy He has forgiven us and taken us as His own.

Honoring the Reputation of the Gospel: *Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody. **1 Thessalonians 4:11-12***

When we diligently work in our daily lives we earn respect for the Gospel of our Lord with those outside the Church. In a culture where everyone is “working for the weekend,” or a paycheck, or retirement, when they see someone working hard and finding joy in that hard work each day it gives glory to God and shines like light in the darkness.

A Culture of Work in the Gladstone Community

Within Common Purse

Working Requirements in the Common Purse: We have a set of minimum standards in order to make sure that the way of life we live continues to honor the Lord, as well as each other. These minimum standards are set so that we can be accountable to one another in fulfilling the Scriptural commands of **2 Thessalonians 3:6-15**:

- Everyone must work 40 hours a week minimum.
- The goal is to have 40 *paid* hours a week.
- Whatever hours are lacking after your scheduled work-time are to be spent working in the community for one of the Community Work Crews.
- **Note** Working for the community should not be your job (see exceptions) and your goal should be to work and get as many hours as possible in the marketplace. For example: If you work 20 hours a week paid, look at getting another part-time job or another job altogether if you are unable to get more hours.
- The maximum hours you should be regularly working in the community is no more than 8 hours a week.

If You Have a Paying Job Not Equaling 40 Hours:

- For men, you need to let The Work Crew Foreman know your schedule. For women, you need to let The Hospitality Coordinator know your schedule. All of this should be done by Thursday night at 5:00p. If, for some reason you have questions about your schedule please talk directly with The Work Crew Foreman or Hospitality Coordinator.
- You need to work diligently and with an attitude that honors the Lord as you work for the community. Bad attitudes and ingratitude are not acceptable. We work for the Lord, not for man. When we disrespect our brothers and sisters we disrespect God. (**Ephesians 6:7-8**)
- You should be doing all you can to pick-up hours at work (keeping in mind the few restrictions you have: Thursday nights and Sundays).
- Honor God by not having to be called out to fill your hours, but offer yourself willingly and of your own accord.
- **Note** Prayer and Scripture reading do **not** count as work unless you have been called to be a regular teacher of the Word (see the Apostles in Acts).
- When you work for the Community- ENJOY IT! Have a good time working with those you love and who love you in the Lord. Choose a good, joyful attitude.

If You are Quitting or Losing Your Job: As long as you are working the required hours, where you work is your decision. You do not need permission change jobs. That being said, seeking to be in unity with those you are in relationship with is a sign of maturity and always a good idea.

- If you are quitting (voluntarily leaving) you must first:
 - 1) Have received permission from the Lord. Don't leave a job just because you want to, but make sure that you believe you have the permission and guidance from the Holy Spirit to make those changes. Also, make sure to honor your current employer by giving them fair notice and continuing to work just as diligently.
 - 2) Seek unity with your house. The point of this is not to "get permission" from your house. In the end, as long as you meet the minimum work requirements, where you work is your choice. However, we seek unity with our house because we want honor each other, and allow the Holy Spirit to speak to us through the counsel of our brothers or sisters.
 - You must begin actively seeking another job before you leave your current one- honor God with this, do not try to sneak in a vacation. You should seek this job on your own time, as you would if you lived on your own.

- Your goal should be to have another job **before** your month or 2 week notice is up.
- If you are fired (or the company goes under):
 - Immediately look for other work.
 - You will work 8-5:30 for the community and actively seek work on your own time until you get a job.
 - You will be expected not only to apply at jobs, but also to phone back, go in, and otherwise follow-up any application. If you are not seen to be diligent in this we will begin steps of discipline.
 - ***Note* Communication with leadership is key! Don't let the enemy speak on your behalf.** The Community Coordinator will keep job-seekers accountable.

Students

Breaks for Students: For students, you are still required the equivalent of 40 hours of work each week on school breaks (unless your break coincides with one of the listed holidays.) During breaks, you'll report to Work Crew at 8:00 AM to work for the Community on workdays.

Students Grades & Work: Because the work of students is in their classes, it is crucial for them to honor the Lord with their time and grades. If a student is dishonoring to the Lord in their work ethic and they skip classes, forgo homework or have consistently poor grades due to lack of effort then they will be asked to leave school and to work a paying job until they are willing to repent and honor the Lord as a student.

Business Owners

Business Owner Work Hours: Those who run a business are required to 1) Work the required weekly hours (40), 2) Bring in an income yearly that is pre-established by the Community Treasurer. Business owners are not welcome to give themselves extra days off, etc. If there is a lack of work, they should report to the Community Work Crew.

Business Owner Work Days: Some businesses require work in the evening, or on weekends, etc. It is totally acceptable to substitute days within a week (for example, if you work all day Saturday you're welcome to take any day off during the work week that you'd like). Honor the Lord by tracking your hours diligently.

Stay at Home Moms

Honorable Work: We honor a family's decision to have the mother stay at home in order to care for the children and household. Accountability for this work is to be within the family, between the husband and wife, just as God has ordained it.

Daily Work

Typical Community Work Hours:

Prayer Meeting: 8:00 AM (sharp) to 8:15 AM

Work: 8:15 AM to 12:00 PM

Lunch: 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

Work: 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

Cleanup: 5:00 PM to Whenever Completed

Daily Work Lunches: Lunch is served Monday through Fridays during work days at 12:00 PM, and you are welcome to join in whether you are on the work crew or not. If you plan to attend, please inform Amanda Bohnhoff as early as possible. Anyone who would like to attend is encouraged to come and fellowship at these lunches.

Time Off

Personal Time Off (PTO): Each person in the Community has **7 PTO's** through the year that they can use at their discretion. This applies to students, Community workers and those who work in the marketplace. This means you can take the day off to do whatever you want/need to do and you will have 8 hours applied to your 40 hour workweek requirement. Those with jobs who have more PTO's offered can only use 7 at their own discretion (subject to "How to Use a PTO" below). Any additional time off requests must be approved by the Community Coordinator before they are used.

How to Use a PTO: You are responsible to arrange your PTO use with your own employer in accordance with whatever protocols your work uses for time off. After this, simply let your House Coordinator know so that they can keep track of PTO usage.

If you work for the Community, then you are responsible to get permission from your Supervisor (like you would at a job in the marketplace) before the PTO is approved. After getting it approved through your work supervisor, simply inform your House Coordinator who will keep track of PTOs for your house.

Extended Breaks: Students, teachers, seasonal workers all can have portions of the year (2 or 3 months) where they are unable to do their normal work. It is critical that these times not be looked at as vacation time. Yes, in many of these vocations their work is hard in the 9 or 10 months of the regular season, but many year-round workers work just as hard or harder. The point is that we should not look at these breaks as time for vacation, but opportunities to serve the Lord temporarily in other work.

Important Note on Exceptions: The culture that is being laid out in the document is intended on keeping fairness within our Common Purse, and to display an honorable work ethic to the world as we hold out the Gospel of Jesus Christ. That being said, these are all bendable as situations require. For example, someone with an injury, illness, etc. may need to have requirements adjusted for them. Also, those with family out of town and various other relational needs may need to have adjustments made. These are all possible—just a few important points: 1) Don't assume. We need to walk out these exceptions in relationship, and leadership has the responsibility to make sure things are done fairly and consistently. 2) Be open handed. We have been called to a particular lifestyle, which requires change. Be open to changing things as the Lord leads. 3) Think bigger. Don't just think about yourself, but think about the culture, the mission, and other situations.

The reason this note is under "Extended Breaks" is because it is often jobs that have extended breaks that don't fit into some of the normal work categories and require the most exceptions, although they are certainly not the only ones.

Holidays

2015 Holidays (No Work)

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| New Years Day: Thursday, January 1st- Week of December 28- January 3..... | 32 hour workweek |
| President's Day: Monday, February 16th- Week of February 15-21..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Passover/Good Friday: Friday, April 3rd- Week of March 29- April 4..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Easter: Monday, April 6th- Week of April 5-April 11..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Pentecost/Shavuot/Memorial Day: Monday, May 25th- Week of May 24-30..... | 32 hour workweek |
| July 4th: Friday, July 3rd- Week of June 28-July 4..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Labor Day: Monday, September 7th- Week of September 6-12..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Rosh Hashanah: Monday, September 14th- Week of September 13-19..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Yom Kippur: Wednesday, September 23rd- Week of September 20-26..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Tabernacles/Sukkoth: Friday, October 2nd- Week of September 27- October 3..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Thanksgiving: Thursday & Friday, November 26th & 27th- Week of November 22-28..... | 24 hour workweek |
| Christmas: Thursday-Friday, December 24th-25th- Week of December 20-26..... | 24 hour workweek |

**Same week but non-consecutive*

If your work's holiday schedule does not match the Community's, then simply go by the number of hours of work required in a week rather than the particular day.

2016 Holidays (No Work)

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| New Years Day: Friday, January 1st- Week of December 27- January 2..... | 32 hour workweek |
| President's Day: Monday, February 15th- Week of February 14-20..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Passover/Good Friday: Friday, March 25th- Week of March 20-26..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Easter: Monday, March 28th- Week of March 27-April 2..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Pentecost/Shavuot: Monday, May 15th- Week of May 15-21..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Memorial Day: Monday, May 30th- Week of May 29-June 4..... | 32 hour workweek |
| July 4th: Monday, July 4th- Week of July 3-9..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Labor Day: Monday, September 5th- Week of September 4-10..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Rosh Hashanah: Monday, October 3rd- Week of October 2-8..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Yom Kippur: Wednesday, October 12th- Week of October 9-15..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Tabernacles/Sukkoth: Friday, October 21st- Week of October 16-22..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Thanksgiving: Thursday & Friday, November 24th & 25th- Week of November 20-26..... | 24 hour workweek |
| Christmas: Friday, December 23 rd - Week of December 25-31..... | 32 hour workweek |
| Christmas: Monday, December 26 th - Week of December 25-31..... | 32 hour workweek |

Vacation Policy: 1 vacation a year without using PTO. This vacation time can use up to 5 work days.

- Unused vacation days do not carry over. (Ex. a 3 day vacation will not leave you with 2 remaining vacation days.)
- Over 5 days, PTO days must be used. (Ex. a 2 week vacation can use the 5 vacation days for the first week, but the second week will use PTO days.)
- Vacation (like PTO) does not accumulate across years.
- Vacation approval is not automatic. It must be approved through the House and recorded by the House Coordinator with as much advance notice as possible.

Defining Vacation: Leaving Town. A vacation occurs when you actually leave town. Vacation days cannot be used for “staycations,” etc. PTO’s are used in those instances. Work trips, mission work, etc. does not count as vacation. Kingdom work and business trips do not count as vacation. Those are approved separately.

Outside Common Purse but within Covenant Community

As stated previously, we live by standards of work whether we are in Common Purse or not because of the Biblical teaching.

Work Requirements: Everyone must work at least *40 hours* of meaningful work every week. Whether this work is paid or volunteer work is totally at the discretion of the person (as they are not in Common Purse their income is not the issue of accountability).

Same Ethic: It is important to emphasize that non-Common Purse members of the fellowship are not “second-class” Christians in any way, and therefore will not be treated differently in Biblical work ethic that God has called us to have in Jesus. Not joining Common Purse is not the “easy” road, it is just a different expression of living out the same Biblical commands and principles as those in Common Purse.

Accountability: First and foremost accountability begins and ends with God. Conforming to the image of Jesus, and allowing your work ethic to be shaped by the Holy Spirit is crucial. However, because we are all a work in progress, the Lord has given us brothers and sisters to help us stay accountable to God. The primary accountability for honoring this culture of work for non-Common Purse members will occur in their House (Fellowship Group).

Seeking Counsel and Unity: Again, as in the Common Purse Houses, seeking counsel and unity on job changes, etc. is not for the sake of control or to get “permission” rather we should want to hear from those

who know us and are walking alongside us in the Kingdom. Laying these things before one another before making decisions is a sign of spiritual maturity and wisdom.

Your time is not Yours: Not being in Common Purse you will have less “structural accountability.” However, that does not mean you are less accountable to God for your time. Your work, your weekends, and everything else belongs to God. It is your job to seek Him and conform your life, year-round, to what God wants for you. 1 Corinthians says it best: *“You are not your own; you were bought at a price.”*

Rebuke: It is also critically important that we clearly rebuke one another when we are slacking in our work, whether through poor work ethic, or lack of working (in the form of excessive vacations, etc.) or anything else that is contrary to character of Jesus Christ in our lives. We need to not be afraid, for the sake of one another, to call each other to account. We also need to make sure we’re not avoiding calling out those who are slacking in work in order that we ourselves are not called out for our own slack! Remember the seriousness of work shown in 2 Thessalonians 3 and what the Proverb says: *One who is slack in his work is brother to one who destroys. Proverbs 18:9*

Conclusion

Great Blessing: God intends that our daily work would be a life-giving partnership with Him. This is not only true when we are working in an area we are passionate about, but in any and every job. Work in Christ is not meant to be toil (which came in the Curse) rather fruitful labor. We should seek to redeem our daily work from the Curse and dedicate it to Jesus Christ. May the Lord bless us as we seek to honor Him with the work of our hands, heads and hearts. Amen.