

# Vocational Flourishing

June 7, 2026

**Main Passage: Genesis 2:15; Proverbs 12:11; Proverbs 16:3**

## Theological Theme

God created us to work hard. We don't flourish in our work apart from Him.

## Introduction

We're studying Proverbs in this series, but before we dive into how Proverbs informs our thoughts on work today, we're going to make a stop in Genesis to read about God's design and designation of work. God gifted humans with meaningful work before the fall, so work isn't a consequence of sin as many believe.

- ❓ What is the worst and the best job you've ever had? Why?
- ❓ What do you think it looks like to flourish in your work?

## 1. Work is Created (Genesis 2:15)

So often, we view work, and the toiling we will do in the act, as a tragic consequence of the fall. To be fair, God's words in Genesis 3:17-19 can give that impression. When we picture Adam and Eve in the pre-fall garden, we might conjure up serene relaxation, reminiscent of a Renaissance painting. For surely the garden was the most peaceful place to exist so far, right? While it certainly was a place of joy and peace, there was already work.

God put man in the garden to work before the fall. Good, fulfilling, meaningful work existed before the consequences of the fall. To truly flourish in our work, we must first embrace the truth that we were, quite literally, created to work.

- ❓ Why is it significant that God gave people work before the fall?
- ❓ How might this reshape your view of work?
- ❓ What are some ways we might image God in our daily work?

## 2. Plenty (Proverbs 12:11)

We are meant to work, not chase fantasies and coast on the goodwill of others. We are meant to put forth effort to provide for ourselves and our families as we are able, and in times when that is genuinely not available to us, as some have experienced, Christian charity in community is meant to fill in the gaps (Think of all the ways we see the early church meeting tangible corporate needs in the New Testament!).

- ❓ What does this verse teach us about work?
- ❓ How do you think this applies to us in 2026?
- ❓ What are some other examples you know of biblical wisdom or examples that encourage hard work?

### 3. Surrender (Proverbs 16:3)

When we trust the Lord with our decisions, including the decisions in our vocation, our plans are “established” (v. 3), or secure, not subject to destruction.<sup>4</sup> We can walk out in faith knowing that God has a plan for our lives and that plan is good (Romans 8:28) and better than anything we could ever work up on our own. As we give over control, and truly trust in the Lord, we flourish with Him.

- ❓ What do you think it means for our plans to “be established”?
- ❓ How do we commit our activities to the Lord when it comes to our work?
- ❓ What does it look like to submit your plans to the Lord daily?

### Conclusion

We started our conversation about work in the beginning. If we want to flourish in our work, we must first recognize that God created us to work. When He made us in His image, He gave us the capacity to mirror His characteristics, including the ability to work hard. He gifted humans with meaningful work before the fall, so we know it isn't simply a punishment. When we flip our attitude and see our work (whether that's in a traditional vocation or not) as something we were created for, we begin to see work for the opportunity it is, not just the to care for our family (and possibly others), but an opportunity to glorify God.

- ❓ How does remembering that God Himself worked reshape your attitude toward daily tasks?
- ❓ What opportunities to serve and honor God exist in your current work? What does it mean to practically commit our activities to the Lord? How do we do that?
- ❓ How does living as hard workers who honor God give us opportunity to tell others about Him?