

# Do Eden Anyway: Work

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 16 August 2026

Preacher: Chris Oswald

[0:00] The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us.

To redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. Praise you, Lord. Amen.

We'll be seated and dismiss our kids to children's ministry. And if you'll open your Bibles to the book of Ecclesiastes, we're in chapter 10 this morning. We'll go all the way through chapter 12 with this particular message.

This is part two of a series we're calling Do Eden Anyway. What we found last week was that after a thorough investigation into the nature of life, the preacher, the writer, the philosopher that penned the book of Ecclesiastes, explored every possible sort of venue and found a venue for human pursuits and found vanity on all of it. Basically, uncertainty, unfairness, thorns everywhere.

And yet his conclusion is, there are certain things that still a human must do and that are good for a human to do. And that is summarized in what we've said last week. Worship, work, wife, and wine.

[1:43] And if you're visiting with us, there are, these are categories like, you know, we're not like so into wine that we're making it a whole point in a sermon series. But these categories represent certain things. Worship represents the ongoing, fully quorum Deo life before the presence of God, where we know he loves us and he sees us and he evaluates our actions and our attitudes.

And so worship is a whole life endeavor, not just something we do on Sunday morning. By work, we mean just everything that God has given us to do. I think a good definition of work is, that's broad enough to be helpful is it's the investment into the unseen.

It's always some sort of effort into an outcome that we're hoping for or an outcome that's been promised to us or something. But it's a sort of investment into the unseen. If you want to, the shorthand of that, I think all work runs parallel to what a farmer does. It's, it's, it's so in tears, reaping joy. It's, it's put something in and wait for the outcome to come.

That's what work is. That's, and, and work across sort of the continuum of life. We have lots of different things we do for work. In terms of wife, that seems to be the people God has given you to take care of and love and be loyal to.

And then wine is a category in Ecclesiastes for celebrating on a, on a regular basis, modestly, but consistently celebrating the goodness of God through the means of grace that he's provided in our life.

[3:19] And so today we're going to talk about work. And as an introduction to that, I want to take a moment to celebrate my wife. Today is her birthday. And, and it seems fitting that I would mention her leading up to this sermon because she's one of the hardest working people I know.

And I think she's an elite worker in one particular areas. It's going to take me a minute to set this up, but there is a ratio we all go through between effort and attitude.

And there's a, we all have this breaking point, right guys? Like where like work gets really hard. Our attitude suffers. And I would say that I don't know of a single person who is a hard worker who also has such a great capacity to do it all without grumbling, cheerfully, full of faith, full of hope.

And so I love you wife. And, and she's not happy about this, but I just needed to say that like, you know, this is, I don't, I don't obviously use the pulpit to score romantic points often, but I feel like, you know, I feel like that should be in my salary package.

You know, like I should get a couple anyway, really do love my wife a great deal. Um, I think the place to start as we begin to think about what, what is happening in regards to work in the book of Ecclesiastes is to understand that there is a undeniable link between faith and work in general. [4:52] In general, there's an undeniable link between faith and work. Uh, I will draw your attention now. And then at the end of the sermon to the parable of the wicked servant who had every opportunity just to produce even a modest outcome to be a good worker for his master.

And he failed and he's called a wicked and lazy servant. But when you see what Jesus is talking about there in Matthew 25, you find that all of that is flowing out of his view of God. His bad efforts at work are flowing out of his bad understanding of God. And then, of course, you've got passages like James where it says that faith without works is dead. And we think of that as sort of like the most literal way of thinking about that. In other words, am I really saved? If so, there'll be real works that are visible. But the reality is, is that your whole work life is simply your theology on display.

In fact, throughout the Old Testament, the major word for worship, the major word for work, same word. There is a link between your theology and your work.

[5:58] There are lots of different kinds of work. There's the work you get paid for, which I'll refer to as your career. But simultaneous to that, there's the kind of work that you do not in your career, but on your career.

That in addition to earning a paycheck, you should be constantly thinking about how to make advances in earning, how to ruggedize your paycheck against cataclysms or moody bosses or market changes, and how to explore new things and acquire new tools so that you are ever increasingly useful to your employer.

So just in the area of strict paycheck work, there's at least two layers, working in your career and working on your career. And you are called to do both of those things. Additionally, there's all sorts of work you're supposed to do on yourself.

Fitness, physical therapy for some of us, strengthening weak things. By the way, as Angela and I get older, we have like in front of our, like in our bedroom, we have a whole drawer that's just foam rollers and massage tools and, you know, all this stuff to just get through the next day.

So there's work that you do on yourself, fitness, physical therapy, strengthening weak things, both physically and mentally and spiritually. Hygiene is a kind of work. Most of us own things.

[7:12] And when we own something, we have to maintain it. That's an expression of glorifying God. So whatever God has given us, whatever possessions we have, we have to steward them well. And steward them well means maintaining them, keeping up with all the materiality that God's blessed us with.

And then there are the things that you do own that you want to improve and you should improve. And there's some reason to improve it. And there's work there as well. And then there's the work on your marriage. And there's doing the work necessary to keep your kids growing and learning and thriving and becoming more godly and being kept safe and so forth.

And then there's the spiritual work that you have to do. And a lot of it is integrated into other forms of work. But some of it is just like reading your Bible on a daily basis and spending time in prayer and so forth.

In other words, your life is mostly work. And that's reflected in Ephesians, or sorry, Exodus 20, where we're told six days you shall do your work and on the seventh day you will rest.

You need six days. You need six days to do all that God has given you to do. Now, in our text today, we find the most unusual phenomenon in wisdom literature.

[8:18] And that is, it's like a big chunk of scripture that all seems to be about the same thing. And if you've ever read Proverbs, you know that's not that common. And so I'm kind of excited in that respect because we can go through a lot of this book focused just on themes related to work.

And so what I want to do real quickly is run you past what I think are ten vices and virtues for work that are found in this passage.

Ten vices and virtues found for work in this passage. In the first one, let's start in chapter 10, verse 9. Let's read chapter 10, verse 9. He who quarries a stone is hurt by them, and he who splits logs is endangered by them.

So the first vice virtue related to work would be something like fear versus fortitude. Here's the deal. Genesis 3, 17 through 19 says that we live in a cursed world and that our work bites back.

That's what a thorn is. Our work bites back. And so what this text is saying is, is that those who quarry stones are going to be hurt by them.

[9 : 26] And those that split logs are going to be endangered by them. And this is an inevitability of every single time you decide to get off the couch, whether it be relationally, spiritually, fitness, your job.

Every single time you decide to get off the couch and actually try to do something, that something will probably hurt you in some way. And what can happen is, is that you condition a kind of hesitancy toward the pain that keeps you saying, as the slugger does in Proverbs, there's a lion in the streets, there's a lion in the streets.

It's like, yep, we live in a fallen world. There are lions. There are thorns. There are splinters. There are people who will tell you you're not doing well. There are rejections when you apply for jobs or ask for promotions or ask a girl out.

Yes, the world is full of thorns. We do eat in any way. We embrace fortitude over fear. A Puritan by the name of Simeon Ash says it this way, Christian courage may thus be described.

It is the undaunted audacity of a sanctified heart in adventuring upon difficulties. The difficulties are not an excuse to the sanctified heart because the sanctified heart knows the one who is over the difficulties.

[10 : 46] Christian courage may thus be described. It is the undaunted audacity of a sanctified heart in adventuring upon difficulties and undergoing hardships for a good cause upon the call of God.

So there's vice virtue number one. The vice is you understand that like the world bites back when you start to try to make a difference in it and it causes you fear and hesitancy.

And the virtue is, no, just going to press forward. Just going to keep doing it. Even though I know it's not going to be fun. Even though I know there will be pain involved. I'm going to keep doing it.

Number two vice virtue set would be momentum versus mindfulness. Look at verse 10. If the iron is blunt and one does not sharpen the edge, he must use more strength. But wisdom helps one to succeed.

I'll get into this topic a little bit more later on. But this is just a reminder that you have to be wise not only to do work, but you have to be wise about your work and what is actually going on in your work.

[11 : 48] Verse 11 provides a bit of a comedic relief. If the serpent bites before it is charmed, there is no advantage to the charmer. In other words, don't get caught up in the momentum of your work so that you start working stupidly.

You have to think about your work across the tiers of your life and ask, what is this work call for? And how can I be careful that I'm not just getting sucked up into the momentum?

If you've ever chopped wood, this is an actual thing. Again, you develop a strike. You develop a rhythm to chopping wood. And once you develop it, it feels really good and you can finally chop wood.

And it's the easiest thing in the world to forget that there's another part of this job. And that is to sharpen the tool. And so you will waste time because you'll forget this.

We all do. Abe Lincoln said that if you gave him six hours to chop wood, which he did a lot, he'd spend the first half sharpening his axe. So one of the vices in the work world, in all of our work, is we get caught up in the momentum and the flow of doing the thing rather than thinking wisely about the systems and the efficiencies that are necessary in this particular thing.

[13 : 02] I have an illustration for this. I think I've got it in on the... Yeah, there you go. This is a classic example of why I have a lot of woodworker friends and most of their handshakes feel weird.

This is a butcher who is selling some hamburger to an old lady and says, if you find a ring, let me know. I have a friend named Dave. And Dave actually made a ton of chairs one day.

And he's a master carpenter. And he went through, he was making these really exquisite shaker chairs. And he just got repetitive in the same motion over and over again. Now Dave's handshake feels very different than it used to.

Understand that if you can just get sucked into doing work mindlessly, you can suck in, ladies, to managing your home mindlessly and forget, like, actually, I'm probably not thinking about this super strategically right now.

I'm probably just responding. Like, we can all do this. So that's another vice and virtue. Number three, boasting versus discretion. Look at verse 12. Does not know the way to the city is an old way of saying, this guy doesn't know his left hand from his right.

[14:38] He's clueless. Everybody knew the way to the city. And what he's saying here is, is that one of the worst vices in vocational life is boasting, is talking a big game when you actually don't really know what you're doing.

And I would say that even when you do know what you're doing, you're supposed to let another praise you. Proverbs 27, 2. Not your own mouth, a stranger, and not your own lips. Proverbs 18, 13 seems related as well.

If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and his shame. The fourth vice and virtue is self-indulgence versus self-discipline. Look at verse 16.

Woe to you, O land, when your king is a child, and your princes feast in the morning. Happier you, O land, when your king is the son of the nobility, and your princes feast at the proper time, for strength and not for drunkenness.

So one of the common vices in all sorts of areas of work is, we just try to eat our dessert first. We are self-indulgent. We don't wake up when we're supposed to wake up.

[15:39] We don't go to bed when we're supposed to go to bed. We don't spend the time properly thinking about what's going on. We get easily distracted by all sorts of other things out there, doom scrolling and so forth.

And so one of the things that work is, vice and virtue of work is, the vice is this tendency toward treating yourself really softly. Like, I think I'll just have my wine for breakfast, thank you.

Versus, no, that goes in one spot, but right now I have to work hard. By the way, it's really taxing on a marriage if you don't have two people that are equally committed to working hard.

In the same way. Because this one of them is going to be asking, why can't we just go play? Why can't we just go do the thing that's the more fun thing? And it's like, nope, we have work to do.

We can't be princes who feast in the morning. We've got a job to do. The next one we're going to spend some time on, and that would be sloth versus diligence. Look at verse 18.

[16:43] By much slothfulness, the building decays, and through idleness of the hands, the house leaks. This is obviously a massive subject in wisdom literature, and it's worth slowing down on.

Because throughout wisdom literature, sloth or slackness is the most common vocational problem named. I've found over the years that people hate being called two things.

All the other sins seem to be okay-ish, but if you tell them they are a coward or that they are lazy, they really struggle. But when we look at the actual amount of data in the Bible about those two things, it must be talking about somebody.

There must be more common problems out there than they are in here, right? Now, sloth and laziness are wildly misunderstood, and I want to set some of that straight this morning.

Obviously, verse 18 is clear, that by much slothfulness, the building decays, and through idleness, the hands of the house leak. But what's going on when the Bible talks about laziness?

[17:47] I think it's important to lean into this a bit. Let's go through a few Proverbs, first of all. Proverbs 10, 4. A slack hand causes poverty, but the hand of the diligent makes rich.

See, this is where I have to avoid taking too much political bait, but back in 2020 and so forth, when so many Christians were talking about systemic poverty and so forth, it's like, you know, the Bible does have a category for injustice.

It does. It also has a category for people who just aren't willing to work and people who are addicted to welfare. It has both, and we should probably talk about both if we're going to be Bible guys.

Sloth, it says here, a slack hand causes poverty. Proverbs 12, 24. The hand of the diligent will rule while the slothful will be put to forced labor. Proverbs 12, 27.

Whoever is slothful will not roast his game, but the diligent man will get precious wealth. Proverbs 13, 4. The soul of the sluggard craves and gets nothing while the soul of the diligent is richly supplied.

[18:50] Now, the Hebrew word for diligent is really important because in wisdom literature, you'll get contrast. You'll get this word compared to this word. And so slothful and sluggard, kind of like, okay, what do those mean?

But the word diligent means tight. Focused, responsive, dialed in. It means dialed in.

[illegible]

[20:22] We have to be diligent in a way that feels highly uncomfortable. It's almost as if God designed the whole world so that we would have to depend on him. Okay.

The laziest room, man in the room, may often be the busiest. There's an excellent little booklet that I'll put, make available to you. It's by C.J. Mahaney and it's called Biblical Productivity.

Busyness does not mean that I am diligent. Busyness does not mean that I am faithful. Busyness does not mean that I am fruitful.

And you'd say, well, those both sound good. And they are good. But I want you just to understand there's a category. And that category is something like this. Efficiency is doing things right.

We get back to the idea of knowing when it's time to sharpen the axe. Efficiency is doing things right. Did I do this right? Did I do that right? Effectiveness is knowing which things come first.

Somebody else coined this phrase, the activity trap, mistaking busyness and motion for actual accomplishment. And friends, if you've explored the world of AI at all, you need to understand that this is absolutely coming for you.

It's a whole trap, guys. In Bible college, we used to make the joke. It's like you can't preach against the sin unless you've tried it first. Even as I've messed with AI, I can see like, oh my goodness, this

is a world full of shortcuts that are bad for my soul.

And you have to navigate all of that very carefully. Well, the next vice and virtue is muzzle versus celebration. One of the things that I would encourage you to consider is, is that it's actually a vice not to have a routine that involves celebration.

[24 : 46] Look at verse 19. Bread is made for laughter and wine gladdens hearts and gladdens life and money answers everything. This is what is known in the Bible as muzzling or not muzzling.

Proverbs 16, 26 says, A worker's appetite works for him. His mouth urges him on. Proverbs 38 through 9 says, Remove from me falsehood and lying.

Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of God. In other words, you need a certain amount of reward attached to your work.

You're not built for endless engagement and effort without any sign of an outcome. You and I can't handle that. And so what you need to do is you need to understand that God has provided this sort of lowest shelf level of celebratory actions that are usually involving other people and just sampling the fruit of your labor.

And that's an important part of work. I've often made the mistake of thinking I'm above that only to realize, No, I'm being burnt out by failing to do that.

[26 : 06] This concept is expressed multiple times throughout the scriptures in the phrase, Don't muzzle an ox when they're treading out grain. You can't tie an ox's mouth shut and ask it to work for you all day producing grain.

It needs to be able to eat a little of the grain as it goes. In fact, if you're familiar with how that played out archaeologically, it's a big stone wheel. The grain is underneath it.

It's a big post tied to the stone wheel. The ox is on the end of it. And if he just moves the stone, some grain will come down to him in front of him.

He'll be able to eat that. And then he moves a little bit and some more grain will come and so on and so forth. And it's not like he's going to eat all the grain. He can't reach most of the grain, just enough grain to keep him interested.

And friends, there's a pacing to life where you need to be able to, as I keep saying in this series, crown each day with a sense of joy and accomplishment because it's another day full of work and praise God for it.

[27 : 08] Envy versus contentment. Seventh vice and virtue. Look at verse 20. Even in your thoughts, do not curse the king, nor in your bedroom curse the rich. This chapter is full of comedic asides.

He says, don't curse the king or the rich in your heart because there's a bird that will hear you and it will carry your voice or some other winged creature will carry your discontentment and it'll be found out.

And that's all just comedic poetry to say, what is going on inside your heart in terms of envy, envy, resentment, bitterness, as you're working and you're thinking about so-and-so who isn't working as hard as you or the boss who won't recognize you and so on and so forth, all that stuff you think is being kept inside, this is a humorous way of saying it will eventually find its way out. Even if it's some bird that picks up your thoughts and carries them somewhere else. These attitudes are anti-productive. They are vices that will hurt you in your work.

Next one. Pessimism versus optimism. Chapter 11 now. We've gone through chapter 10, chapter 11, verse 1. Cast your bread upon the waters for you will find it after many days.

[28 : 29] Give a portion to seven or even to eight for you know not what disaster may happen on earth. If the clouds are full of rain, they empty themselves on the earth. If a tree falls to the south or to the north in the place where the tree falls, there it will be.

He who observes the wind will not sow. And he who regards the clouds will not reap. As you do not know the way the spirit comes to the bones of the womb of a woman with child, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.

In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening withhold not your hand. For you do not know which will prosper, this or that. What is this phrase? It's somewhat famous, at least in my generation.

Cast your bread upon the waters. There's two debated interpretations of this. The one seems more likely, and that is waters were known historically as like that's where you did your trade.

This really seems to be a passage about diversify your work. Have more than one job. Do multiple things. Engage in multiple activities if you can.

[29 : 35] And not all of them have to be for immediate financial profit, and not all of them have to be like things you need to make money on. But diversify your work. Put your effort out there as much as you can.

Now what does a pessimistic person do when they think about that? They think about all the possible ways that that effort, or that effort, or that effort could go wrong. And I would just say, don't think so highly of yourself.

A bunch of your life is going to be wasted one way or the other. Like how many dead ends has a person, you know, in their 50s hit? How many bad thousand dollar investments has a person, you know what I'm saying?

Like how much money have I lost just by being dumb or not seeing a thing, or something just happening because I didn't know it was going to happen? My life is full of the mouse hitting the dead end, shaking his head, turning around, and going and finding another spot.

But I will tell you this, there's a lot more ground is covered by the mouse who does that than the one who does what this passage says. He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not weep.

[30 : 40] This sense of like the timing has to be right, everything has to be perfect. And I can't, you know, there's a wisdom to all of this, and you have plenty of people to give you counsel. But the idea here seems to be, be hopeful enough to act.

Be hopeful enough to act. Now the alternative reading here, which sounds like it might have been made up by a pastor, is that this is about giving. And it could be.

It could be. And I would just argue that actually any wise Christian is doing both of those things.

He's diversifying his efforts, and he's being generous. And he sees that even that generosity as an act of investment that God will take care of in the end.

Number nine, the ninth vice virtue is vexation versus gladness of heart. Vexation versus gladness of heart. You can just decide to be happier than your circumstances suggest.

Verse 7. And light is sweet, and it is pleasant for the eyes to see the sun. So if a person lives many years, let him rejoice in them all.

[31 : 51] But let him remember that the days of darkness will be many. All that comes is vanity. Rejoice, O young man, in your youth. And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Walk in the ways of your heart and the sight of your eyes.

But know that for all these things, God will bring you into judgment. Remove vexation from your heart and put away pain from your body. For youth and the dawn of life are vanity.

In other words, remove vexation from your heart. One of the most interesting difficulties about our modern state is that we have been convinced by the world that there's a certain interior part of us that we can't work on.

That that's all just biology and circumstances and so forth. And we can't work on our own attitude. We can't work on our own mindset. Those things are not in our field of work.

It's like, well, that's absolutely not the way the Bible talks about this. When it talks about removing vexation from your heart, it's talking about removing a giant boulder from a field. Removing a stump.

[32 : 58] Removing a stain and a shirt. My wife gets, like, obsessed. Like, I would have given up seven washes ago, and she'll be like, it's still not out. I'm going to keep working.

Well, when you want to remove something, my friends, are we perhaps under the modern illusion that that just happens? Or are you prepared to understand that even the things that you have to remove, including your own attitude, are just other places where work is required?

The final one is number 10, vice and virtue, presumption versus urgency. Remember also your creator in the days of your youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw near, of which you will say, I have no pleasure in them.

One of the key messages of Ecclesiastes is, life is short, make the most of today. Tomorrow could get worse. James 4, 13.

I want you to read this and think about something. We're almost done. Come now, you who say, today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make profit.

[34:09] Yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.

As it is, you boast in your arrogance, and all such boasting is evil. Look at verse 17. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

Now, it's very interesting because this passage is almost always put on a sort of captain of industry who is busy doing trading, and he says, tomorrow I'm going to go do this trade or that trade.

It's like, well, okay, that's a possible way of taking this. There's another way. And that's the person who says they will get to work tomorrow. They'll handle the thing tomorrow.

They'll do the work tomorrow. There's always tomorrow. And that would line up much more clearly with verse 17. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.

[35:08] My point is simply that there are different ways of being lazy and that there are different ways of this verse applying. And one of them is this constant arrogance to suggest that you have a tomorrow.

And if you're a procrastinator, that's arrogance. That's you pretending like you own the heartbeats as they come. And you know they don't.

You don't. Okay, conclusion. As I said at the beginning, all of this is wildly theological. All of this has to do with your view of God.

There is a reason why Jesus, I feel like, almost reflexively says about the lazy and wicked servant that it was because he believed wrong things about the master, ultimately, that he turned out to be such a vice-ridden worker.

Here's the reality. I could talk to you about your job and observe your manner of working across all the domains that God has given you, and I could understand pretty quickly how you view the tension between God's sovereignty and man's responsibility.

[36:18] I think I could tell how you understand God's character to be, what providence is. I think I could understand your biblical view of submission to authority. I think I could understand how you think about God paying attention to your work when no one else is.

I think you could demonstrate just through your work your theology of generosity, your desire to be good to others, your ability to trust God in the delay between sowing and reaping, your ability to trust that all good things are done before God and not done in vain.

I think I could tell if you know how to show honor, and I think I could tell if you understood that there is in this cursed world a necessary connection between pain and prosperity and that he who sows in tears reaps in joy.

In other words, you have a lot of work to do, which means you have a lot of theology to do. You have a lot of God-knowing to do.

Go back to that verse about the Acts. Acts. Chapter 10, verse 10. If the iron is blunt and one does not sharpen the edge, he must use more strength, but wisdom helps one to succeed.

[37:42] We understand that principle, right? Think back to what Peter Drucker said about the difference between efficiency and effectiveness. It's efficiency is doing things right.

Effectiveness is doing right things. What's the single effort you could put in this week that would bring maximal returns across all other areas of your life?

What acts could you sharpen this week that would help you do work better in general? Well, I think that the answer is, is knowing God.

Bowing before him. Saying, you know, that meddlesome pastor, he kind of dug at me a little bit here and there. Lord, how about this?

I recognize there's an area or areas that I should improve in, but would you do this, God? I want to fix these things in a way that involves fellowshiping with you.

[38:49] This isn't just laws to adjust to. This is someone who loves you and is inviting you into the act of character formation by knowing and loving him.

Lord, I see some things I need to change, but I want to change them in such a way as to resolve the underlying issue, and that is, God, can I have, through just your grace, a renewed vision of who you are and that I am confident that if you would sharpen that one blade, so much of work would start to look different.

I think that the most efficient thing any of us can do today is to say, Lord, it is indisputable that our work is just downstream of what we believe about you.

And, Father, would you please renew the joy of my salvation, renew my joy in you, renew my familiarity with you, renew my experience with you, Lord, so that you would transform my work as we've seen is absolutely always the case.

Remember, Paul says this, I worked harder than any of them, but nevertheless, it was not I who worked, but he who worked in me. I think of all of these vices and virtues, I'd love to say, now let's get out there and get after it, and boy, there's something about me that's tempted to do that because I really want us all to have optimally successful lives, but I have to be your pastor right now and say, let's get out there and get after God.

[40:38] Let's be transformed again. By the renewing of our mind. If you felt little jabs from some of these vices, here's where I'd like you to go.

I'd like you to go to the finished work of Jesus Christ and understand that that finished work has the power to transform your heart and mind and that he who began a good work in you is faithful to complete it because he's not just the author, but also the finisher.

So do not use my little know the Lord more speech, which is my heartfelt desire for you. Don't use that as a way of becoming lazier.

work hard on these areas, but do so as you walk with your great God. As I have studied through Ecclesiastes, I've been like, I'm so glad this book exists.

I'm also so glad it's not the only book we have. And I get the privilege of bringing the gospel into places where it doesn't naturally appear.

[41:50] I will tell you that if I could do one thing to help you really embrace a life of work, it would be this. God has made it possible for you to reliably count on him as for you.

And if you can reliably go through life thinking he is for me, then you can reliably invest into the unseen, knowing that in his timing and type, those investments will pay.

God loves you so much that he gave his only son, that whoever believes in him won't perish, but have eternal life. Do you know the God who loves you so much that you can just get out there and get after it with a smile on your face like my beautiful bride does almost every single day?

Do you know that, God? I really hope you do. I hope that you'll place your faith in him if you don't. And that's what we do every week with communion. We set before you the finished work of Jesus Christ.

And we enjoy the fruit of his toil. So I'm going to pray and then the band's going to come up and we'll participate in communion. Father God, would you please bless this time and Lord, would you help us to be zealous for good works, but only as we read in Titus 2.10, only in light of the grace of our God appearing, training us to renounce ungodliness and to become zealous for good works.

[43:33] The mechanics of spiritual renewal are hard to articulate, especially really quickly. But Lord, if anyone here is in need of spiritual renewal, I just pray your great blessings upon them where there is dryness, Lord, and fatigue.

Lord, help there to be repentance and freshness and joy. And Lord, I just pray that you would initiate renewal in many hearts today.

We have so many great things to do with you, but we need to have the right vision of you to do those great things. Please, Lord, bless us with that vision in Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. So if you're a Christian, whether you're a member here or not, we invite you to come up and grab some elements and go sit at your seat and we'll partake together. may may may Thank you.