

4Ws

work
matters

WORK WITH JOY!

APRIL 10, 2022

WORSHIP

Can't Stop Singing, Lord
of all Creation, Blessed
be Your Name, More Like
Jesus, All Glorious

WELCOME

On a scale of 1-5, 1 being
the lowest and 5 being the
highest, how joyful are you
in your work?

WORD

ECCLESIASTES 5:18-20

Even so, I have noticed one thing, at least, that is good. It is good for people to eat, drink, and enjoy their work under the sun during the short life God has given them, and to accept their lot in life. ¹⁹ And it is a good thing to receive wealth from God and the good health to enjoy it. To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life—this is indeed a gift from God. ²⁰ God keeps such people so busy enjoying life that they take no time to brood over the past.

The pandemic has brought about drastic changes in our daily lives, and this includes our work set up. We shifted from working in offices to setting up our offices at home. This change not only impacted the traditional work setting, but also our personal lives.

Here are some challenges that were brought about by the pandemic in our work life:

- 1 out of 2 Filipinos feel overworked
- 1 out of 4 Filipinos want to resign because of stress, anxiety, and depression
- The rise of “presenteeism” or the act of being present without being productive due to ill-health.
- According to research, there is a wide 53% joy gap between expectation of having joy at work (90%) and the actual joy at work (37%).

Maybe some of us are experiencing these challenges as well, but God promises that joy can be found (**Psalm 30:5**). Jesus Himself endured the cross for the joy set before Him (**Hebrews 12:2**), and in **Habakkuk 3:17-18** we see that it is possible have joy in our circumstances as joy isn't based on our circumstances.

How can we have joy in our work? Let's look at these four learnings from the book of **Ecclesiastes chapter 5**:

1. BE A JOY-GIVER

The Book of Ecclesiastes was written by King Solomon. Looking at Solomon's life, he had a good track record in terms of work accomplishments. However Ecclesiastes has a different tone from all his other writings as it carries a somber note as he shares life learnings. He shares about how everything is in vain. He achieved many things in his lifetime, in other words “he's been there, done that” and for him, after all has been said and done, everything in life is meaningless. However, in **Ecclesiastes 5:18-20** he takes a step back and mentions in **vv.18** and **19** that it is good for us to “enjoy work”. This means that it is possible for us to enjoy work as we continue to put our trust in God (**Psalm 34:8**), and as we trust in God, we can ask ourselves “How can I restore joy in my circumstance?” and “How can I give joy to others and be a blessing?”. Because the reality is, if you are not happy where you are now, how can you be sure you'll be happy where you plan to go? Instead of looking for greener grass, make your grass greener!

2. RESTORE JOY WITH GRATITUDE

In **Ecclesiastes 5:18-19**, the writer says that people are to “accept their lot in life”. As we work on being joy-givers, we also need to evaluate ourselves: are we content with our lot in life right now?

WORD

There are many things we can be thankful for each day! But we also need to draw a clear line that there is a difference between contentment and complacency. Contentment is a spirit of gratefulness while complacency is a form of idleness.

To be content with our lot in life is to be joyful even with our limitations. Enjoy the boundaries of your limits and thrive where you are. Worldly wisdom says that there are no boundaries, and we can be whatever we want to be—that we can be and do what we set our hearts and mind to. There is danger in that because we all have our limitations. As an example, a child having inherited the encouragement to be all that he wants to be, may believe that he is as invincible as Superman, but realizes that he does not possess the superhuman strength he believed he had when faced with a “gravity-defying” challenge! The biblical truth we can embrace is that we are all uniquely blessed with talents and giftings, and with that we can instead say “we can be what God wants us to be” (**1 Corinthians 15:9-10**).

3. ENJOY WORK AS GOD’S GIFT

Solomon says in **Ecclesiastes 5:19** that work is a “gift from God”. What is the most precious gift you have received? God is the one who blesses us with work, and as we assess ourselves in the areas of gratitude and contentment, we are also to remember that work is God’s gift. This entails that as we enjoy the work we do, we are to guard ourselves from making work as an idol. We need to evaluate ourselves and be careful that maybe one of the reasons why we’re stressed is because we have put our work on a pedestal, leading us to lead an imbalanced life.

4. PRESS ON!

As we move on to our last point, we look back to our main passage in **Ecclesiastes 5:18-20** where it says that those who have found their joy in work are “so busy enjoying life that they take no time to brood over the past.”

Do you often find yourself comparing the quality of your life before the pandemic to how it is today? If we are in God, it is possible to be joyful despite our circumstances. If we are working with joy, there is no room for regret because we can hold on to the promise that God can make all things new (**Isaiah 43:18-19**). The Bible tells us to stop dwelling on the past, instead press on to what God has before us today (**Philippians 3:13-14**). In pressing on, we must learn to follow the principle of “motion before emotion”. This means that we do the right things because they are the right things as God has told us, in order that the joy might follow. Your work will not provide you with joy until you find your joy in your work (**Psalms 30:5; Psalm 30:10-12**)!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. Self-Check.

Do you find joy in your work? Why or why not?

2. Setting It Right.

Does your attitude towards work reflect or demonstrate your identity as a follower of Jesus?

3. Living It Out.

What simple step can you take this week to better work with joy?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people who have lost their joy in their work and are daily struggling in working with a grateful heart. Find opportunities to reach out to them and encourage them to evaluate where they are based on the points of the message. Show love in action through your God-given gifts, resources, and time. Share the gospel of Jesus—the true Source of joy that overflows.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- For God’s sovereignty to be on display over our upcoming national elections; godly, competent leaders to be voted into government posts at all levels.
- For the Russian invasion of Ukraine to stop; peace and order be restored, lives spared. Russian and Ukrainian soldiers, families, leaders to turn to Christ; refugees be given safe passage into surrounding nations.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

ECCLESIASTES 5:19 (NLT)

To enjoy your work and accept your lot in life—this is indeed a gift from God.