

# Work and Personal Responsibility



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## We Are Commanded to Work

Work has been the way of life on earth since Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden. The Lord said to Adam, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Genesis 3:19, page 6).

In these latter days, the Lord renewed this commandment to His Saints when He said, "I, the Lord, am not well pleased with the inhabitants of Zion, for there are idlers among them" (D&C 68:31, page 127). Modern prophets have also repeated this commandment, counseling members to make hard work "the ruling principle of [their] lives" (*Teachings of Presidents of the Church: Heber J. Grant* [2002], 115).

## Family Responsibility

Working to care for our families physically, emotionally, and spiritually is some of the most rewarding work of our lives. Modern prophets have taught: "Parents have a sacred duty to rear their children in love and righteousness, to provide for their physical and spiritual needs, and to teach them to love and serve one another" ("The Family: A Proclamation to the World," *Ensign*, Nov. 2010, 129).

Parents share these responsibilities as equal partners and should work together for the well-being of their family. They should never expect anyone to take care of this responsibility for them. The Apostle Paul wrote, "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith" (1 Timothy 5:8, page 1510).

## We Can Enjoy Working

Some people naturally find work exciting, while others have difficulty enjoying it. But as we put forth effort to learn to love work, we can better enjoy some of life's fullest blessings.

Not all of us can choose the kind of work we do. Some of us labor for long hours for the basic necessities. And though it can sometimes be difficult to love our work, we can all find ways to make our work more meaningful and even find joy in it.

We can help one another in our work. The heaviest loads become lighter when we work together and share them with others.





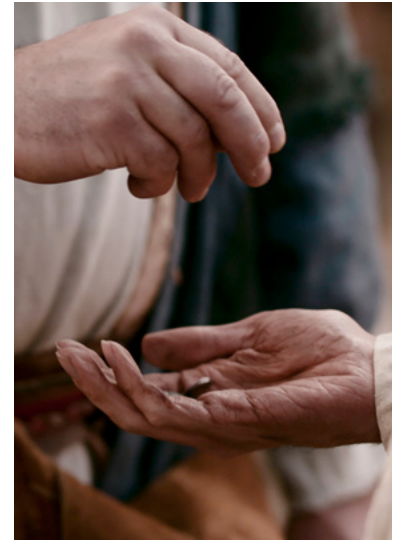
Knowing that our work is serving God can help us find joy in it. In any honest work we can serve God. King Benjamin, a Book of Mormon prophet, said, “When ye are in the service of your fellow beings ye are only in the service of your God” (Mosiah 2:17, pages 148–49). If we can provide for ourselves and our families through our work, we are doing our part to help God’s children, and our work is important.

## We Should Avoid Idleness

The Lord is not pleased with those who are lazy or idle. He has taught that those who are idle need to “repent and mend [their] ways” (D&C 75:29, page 136). He has also commanded us to work so that we can be both self-sustaining and generous. He said: “Wo unto you rich men, that will not give your substance to the poor. . . . Wo unto you poor men, . . . whose eyes are full of greediness, and who will not labor with your own hands” (D&C 56:16–17, pages 101–2).

True followers of Jesus Christ will not voluntarily shift from themselves the burden of their own support. So long as they are able, they will supply themselves and their families with the necessities of life.

The Lord promises great blessings to those who keep the commandment to work and are humble—“the fatness of the earth shall be theirs” (D&C 56:18, page 102).



“As my father’s worldly circumstances were very limited, we were under the necessity of laboring with our hands, hiring out by day’s work and otherwise, as we could get opportunity. . . . By continuous labor [we] were enabled to get a comfortable maintenance.”

Joseph Smith—History 1:55, page 55

LOOK  
THEM  
UP

### Additional Scriptures

- **D&C 58:26–29, pages 105–6**  
(we should be anxiously engaged in a good cause)
- **Moses 4:23–25, page 10**  
(Adam was commanded to work for his food)



# Personal Experience

What a wonderful time to be living on the earth! This is the era of the Restoration of the true gospel, and we each can make a needed contribution. Each of us has the opportunity and the obligation to work in bringing about the Lord's purposes.

Because some of us are still in prison, we might feel that there is nothing we can do that will help the work of the Lord. We might also feel that we are not free to act upon the principles of the gospel. This is not true. Prison should not deter us. We can certainly prepare ourselves to build the kingdom of God when we are released. In some ways, we may even be able to prepare ourselves better than those on the outside of prison because we do not have all the distractions of the world to contend with.

It might be easy to fall into some form of idleness while in prison, but we can break away from this attitude. We can look for ways to share the gospel with other inmates. We can be involved in wholesome conversations. We can invite others to participate in Church programs, meetings, institute classes, and Sunday worship services. We can make our living environment cleaner and nicer. We can do as the Savior taught and go about doing good each day. The Lord has abundantly blessed me as I have applied the principles of good works while in prison.

"The Lord has abundantly blessed me as I have applied the principles of good works while in prison."

# Work and Personal Responsibility

## RESPONSE FORM

What blessings have come to you through hard work?

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What responsibilities do you have in your family?  
How can you fulfill those responsibilities?

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How can you maintain a good work ethic as an inmate?

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How can you encourage other inmates to make a positive and productive use of their time?

Four horizontal lines for writing an answer to the first question.

Why does the Lord command us to work diligently and avoid idleness?

Four horizontal lines for writing an answer to the second question.

If you have an opportunity to be released, what might be your chosen career path? How could you use that career to bless others?

Four horizontal lines for writing an answer to the third question.

Is there anything else that you have learned from this lesson that you would like to share?

Four horizontal lines for writing an answer to the fourth question.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Offender # \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer the questions on this response form, detach, and return to the address below:

**Correctional Services**  
50 East North Temple Street  
Salt Lake City, UT 84150  
1-801-240-2644

Please request the next lesson you would like to study: \_\_\_\_\_