

In 1960 Mars introduced the slogan, “*A Mars a day helps you work, rest and play.*” It was a catchy line which promised a lot, but all it could deliver was a quick sugar fix for an instant hit of flavour and energy, followed by a life-time of obesity and tooth decay. Like so many things that promise fulfilment, it was a lie.

Even so, you have to admire the genius of the slogan. In 10 short, well crafted words it summed up what lies at the heart of human wholeness and appealed to the deep longing we have for meaning, happiness and balance in life.

Work, rest and play are all a part of God’s design for humanity. When they are in balance they can create a sense of wholeness. When they are out of balance they can lead to stress, despair and feelings of futility. We can easily turn them into idols, convinced that in them we will find purpose and satisfaction, but in and of themselves none of these things give us true contentment.

As a new year begins it is our prayer that this week of teaching will help you to understand that it is only In Christ that work, rest and play find their proper place in our lives and that you will find fulfilment, purpose, hope, joy and refreshment as you draw nearer to him. Jesus, each day, gives us work, rest and play.

MONDAY

Work, Rest and Play: God’s Creational Gift and Calling
(Genesis 1 and 2) [Ray Bell](#)

Work, Rest and Play: Ruined by Sin and Idolatry
(Genesis 3) [Andrew Klynsmith](#)

TUESDAY

Abraham – Called For World’s Blessing
(Justified Apart From Works) [James Krieg](#)

Israel’s Royal Priesthood, Israel’s Slavish Idolatry
(The Slavery of Idolatry and Disobedience) [Simon Dent](#)

Ruth – God’s Salvation Found In Day to Day Action
(God’s Grace Worked in Human Works) [Nathan Elgar](#)

WEDNESDAY

Jesus – Always Busy with the Father
(Incarnation and Ministry) [Wayne Lines](#)

Jesus – Working Salvation for the World
(Suffering, Death and Resurrection. [Trevor Faggotter](#)

THURSDAY

The Spirit Of Christ Reordering Work, Rest and Play
(The Way of Love) [Andrew Klynsmith](#)

By The Grace of God...Your Work Is Not In Vain
(Suffering and Hope / Ecclesiastes) [Trevor Faggotter](#)

The Priesthood of Believers or the Drudgery of Dualistic Religion
– Finding a Unified Life [Ray Bell](#)

FRIDAY

Practical Wisdom for Work, Rest and Play in the Proverbs [Nat Mills](#)

Working, Resting and Playing into the Ages
(Eschatology) [Simon Dent](#)

Talk 1. Work, Rest & Play: God's Creational Gift and Calling

Ray Bell

Work – a very broad topic

The 'wisdom' of work (Matthew 11:28-30; John 6:27; Psalm 127:1; Proverbs 6:6; 14:4; Ecclesiastes 2-3; 1Corinthians 15:58).

Meaningless or meaningful?

Lazy or Resting?

Grind or gift?

Worry or worship?

A 'working' definition?

Work is all that we are gifted and called and blessed to do in life to the glory of God.

...participating with God in the perpetual work and action of his kingdom.

In the beginning...

We are blessed for work

Work is part of the 'very goodness' of Creation

Work takes place within 'the rest' of God

We know these things best when we live and work in covenant relationship – with God, and with one another.

Concentration Challenge

It's the first morning of Summer Camp, and you've got lots of energy, so lets test your powers of concentration. Listen carefully to Ray Bell in the first talk, and see if you can answer the following questions:

Which Bible passages does Ray refer to, and what are they about?

How many times did Ray say

“Work” _____

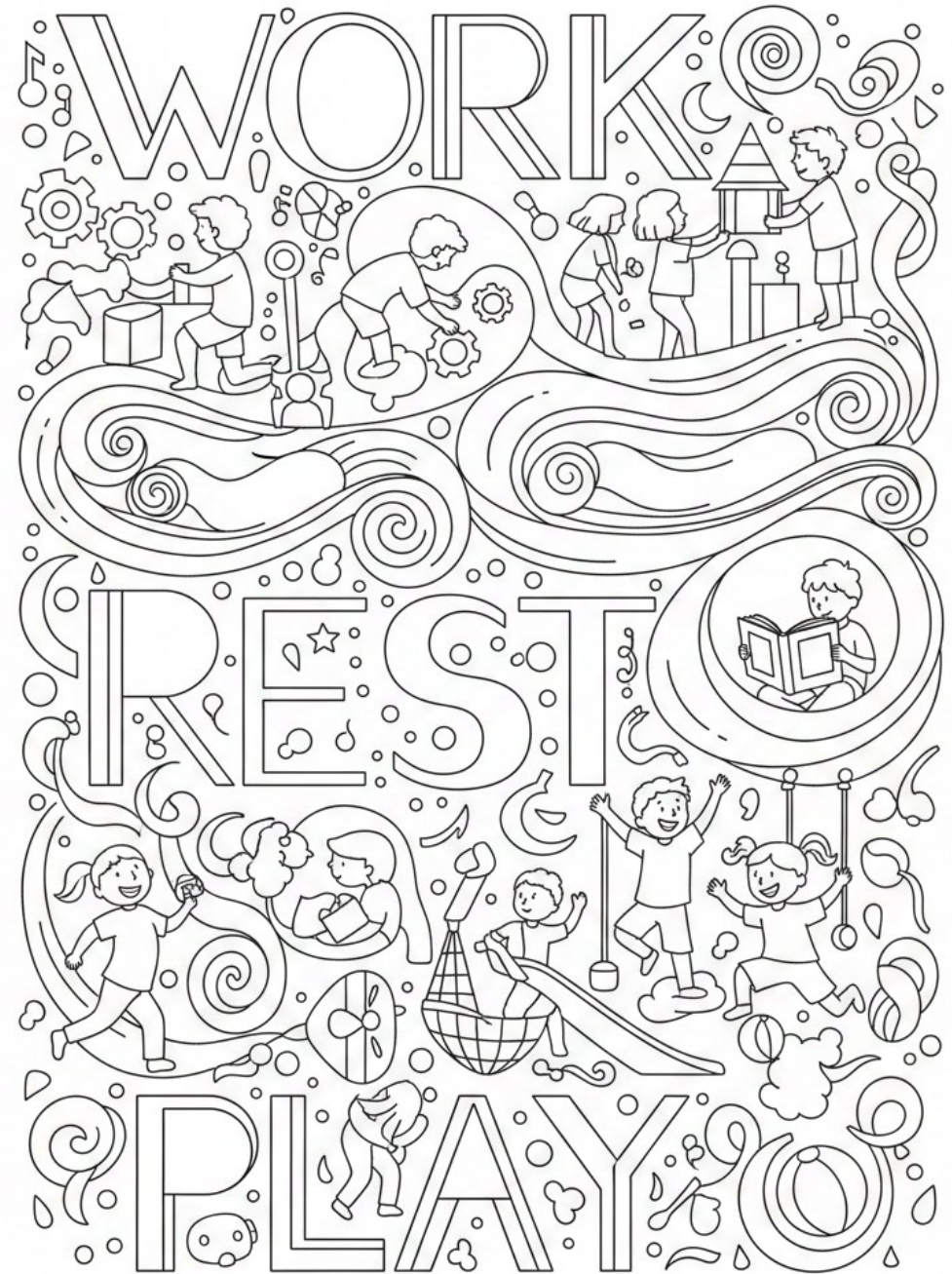
“Rest” _____

“Play” _____

What was the time when Ray scratched his nose? _____

Was there something Ray said that challenged the way you think about work, rest and play?

Was there something Ray said that you didn't understand? Write it down here and ask him about it later.



I made this coloring page using AI. Not all of it makes sense. What's the weirdest thing you can see?

Talk 2. Work, Rest and Play: Ruined by Sin and Idolatry

Andrew Klynsmith

A: Gen. 3:1-5 The original sin: idolatry – to want to be in God’s place, not simply being like God in God’s world.

The freedom of Eden was experienced in walking with God, fulfilling God’s commission and being in open relationship with others. A freedom known in all work, rest and play. It was the freedom to be, to see and to be seen.

B. Gen. 3:6-13 After succumbing to the serpent’s temptation, that freedom was lost. Now men and women hide from God and from one another. The garden – where God walked with them in the cool of the evening – became the hiding place.

This is what happens in all our work, rest and play. Instead of being the experience of freedom, seeing and being seen, the following happens:

The world becomes filled with rivalry – between Satan and the human race for, by the strange grace of God, the Saviour will come from here (3:14-15); and between the man and the woman (3:16.)

Life is experienced as a battle – there is pain and trouble in work and family life (3:16), and struggle and difficulty in work (3:17-19.)

Life loses its direction and meaning through death (3:19.)

Work, rest and play all become places in which we seek to avoid contact with God, places where we seek to find our meaning apart from Him.

C: Gen. 3:20-24 And yet this world remains the world of the gracious God. He sustains us in the wilderness, till the Saviour should appear there. Work, rest and play still are good, and may be found to be good through faith in this God.

Talk 3. Abraham - Called for World's Blessing

(Justified Apart From Works) [James Krieg](#)

Today's narrative about 'Abrahamic faiths'

True Abrahamic faith - Galatians 3:1-9

- The threat of a 'different Gospel' which in reality is no Gospel at all (1:6-7)
- The inclusion of Gentiles along with Israel in God's salvation plan (Ephesians 3:4-6, 1 Corinthians 15:3-5)

The scandal of the New Testament preaching (Acts 21:28)

- All Israel will be saved' (Romans 11:26)
- No more distinction between Jew and Gentile (Acts 10:15, Romans 3:23-25).

Abraham believed God (6)

- Genesis 15:6)
- Not after nor because he was circumcised (Romans 4:11)
- Abraham 'obtained the promise' (Hebrews 6:15, 11:39)
- Christian faith is to be of the same species as Abraham's faith

Scripture foresaw and preached to Abraham! (8)

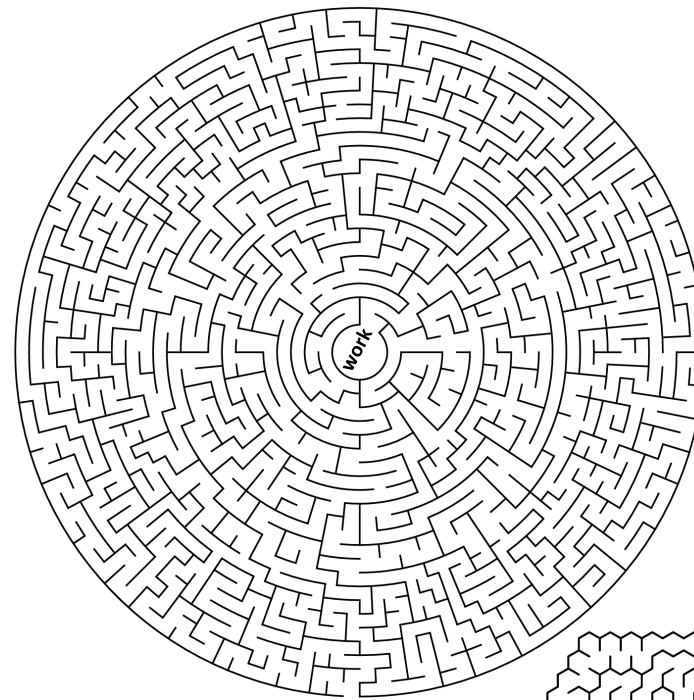
- (Hebrews 6:18).
- Labour transformed from Adamic toil into purposeful and restful self-giving works of love (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Justification by faith apart from the law doesn't mean that the Law is absent (2-5)

- Abraham's obedience that flowed from his faith (Gen 26:4-5)
 1. 'Vicarious righteousness.'
 2. The language of the Mosaic law

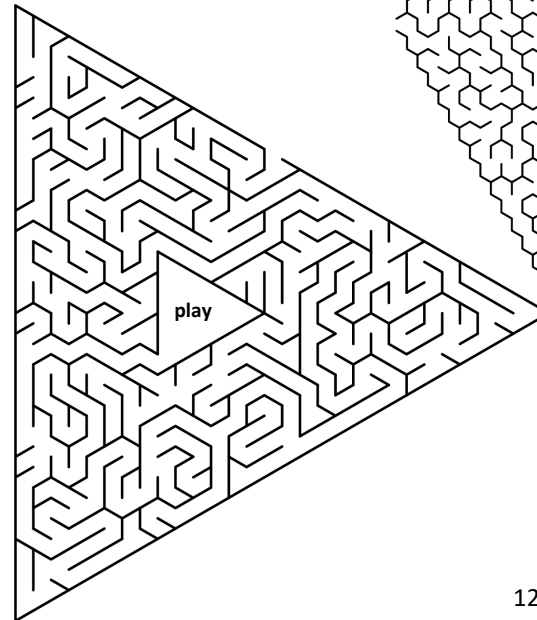
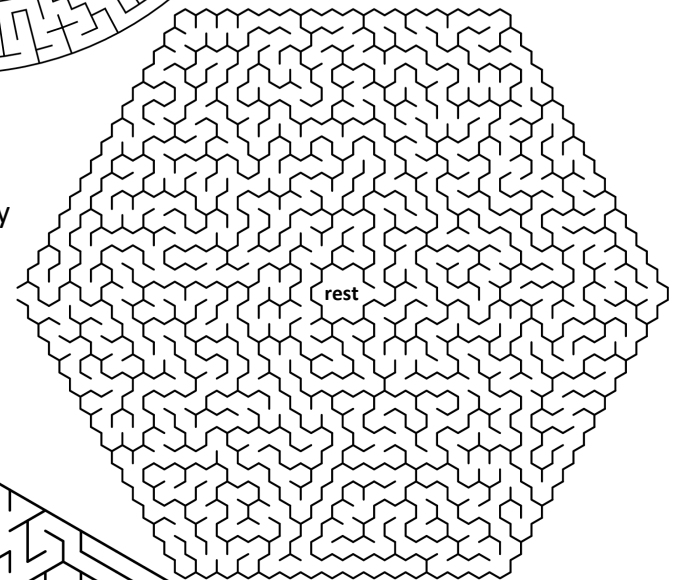
We have fallen from grace if we think in any way that our obedience to the law is going to produce justification, instead of our justification being the thing that produces obedience.

How do we reflect this purposefulness of faith flowing into love and hope in all we do in our church communities?



Start with Jesus
and find your way
to work, rest
and play

Jesus each day
gives us work, rest and play



TALK 4. Israel's Royal Priesthood, Israel's Slavish Idolatry

(The Slavery of Idolatry and Disobedience) [Simon Dent](#)

“You shall be for me a kingdom of priests.” (Exod 19:6)

1. WORK — Stewardship or Slavery

Work is stewardship, bound by covenant.

Therefore there are limits on power and wealth (Deut 17:16–17), an emphasis on care for the poor and release of debts (Lev 19:9-10; Deut 15:1).

Detached from covenant obedience, work becomes exploitative and enslaved to fear. (Amos 8:4–6)

2. SABBATH REST — Trust or Fear

Sabbath declares that life is a gift, not an achievement. It is modeled on God's own rest (Gen 2:2) and Israel's rest from slavery in Egypt (Deut 5:15).

Refusal of rest reveals fear and lack of trust in God. It becomes a primary reason for exile (Jer 17:27). The Exile of Israel becomes the land's Sabbath (2 Chron 36:21).

Jesus restores Sabbath as life-giving. Rather the more “work” to keep the law.

(Mark 2:27)

3. PLAY — Joy or Parody

Israel's feasts are commanded joy before the Lord. (Lev 23;1 Deut 16:14-15).

True joy flows from covenant but apart from covenant joy becomes a parody (Exod 32)

Idolatry hollows joy into distraction

IN CHRIST

Jesus fulfils Israel's priesthood — healing work, securing rest, restoring joy.

By the Spirit, we share his life as a holy priesthood (1 Peter 2:5)

TALK 5. Ruth –God’s Salvation Found in Day to Day Action

Nathan Elgar

Ruth – A ‘mundane’ story...

...full of God’s sovereign loving providence.

This providence underpins our ability to work, rest & play in everyday life.

Themes of work, rest & play weave together throughout the entire story of Ruth:

Work (an arena for living out faith and honouring God)

Rest (security & peace)

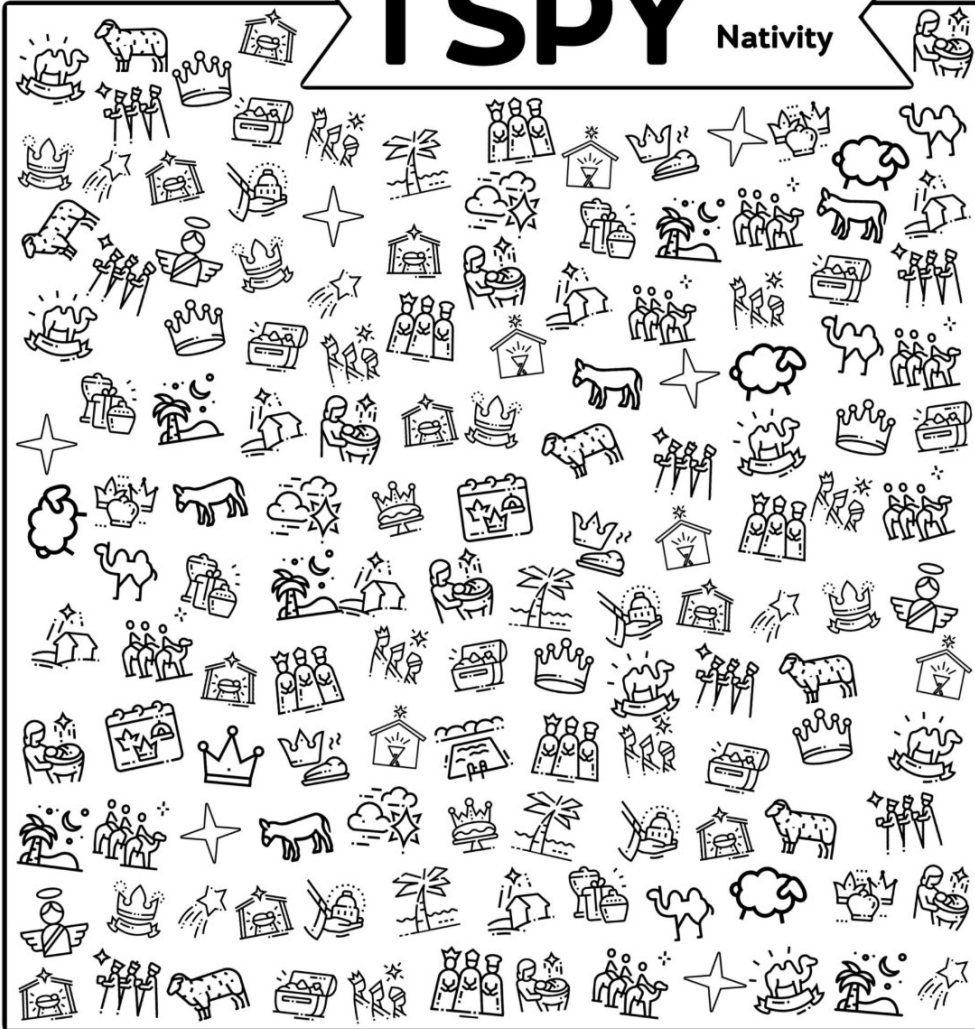
Play (joy, celebration & restoration)

The mysterious connection between daily work (&rest &play) & God’s saving work.

I know, I'm a bit late, but... HAPPY CHRISTMAS

I SPY

Nativity



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| 1 | | 6 | | 7 | | 1 | | 3 | | 6 | | 7 | | 4 | | 7 | | 5 | |
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DIDN'T YOU KNOW
I HAD TO BE IN MY
FATHER'S HOUSE?



Talk 6: Jesus - Always busy with the Father

Wayne Lines

‘My Father is working until now, and I am working.’ (John 5.17)

Jesus said this on the Sabbath, the day of rest. Could it be that he was ‘at rest’ while working with the Father?

He also had great joy while accomplishing the work his Father gave him to do, which he wanted the disciples to know (John 17.11). Could it be that working with the Father is also ‘play’?

‘Did you not know I must be about my Father’s business’ (Luke 2.49).

Jesus was working with the Father as a child, well before his public ministry. What did that involve and how was it relevant to his ministry? What meaning does that have for us?

‘... that they may be one as we are one.’ (John 17.4).

Jesus’ work on the cross is with a view to us having eternal oneness with the Father and the Son through the Spirit dwelling in us, i.e. the new creation. In that oneness we can know rest and play (joy) as we work, both in the present age and in the age to come.

Talk 7: Jesus Working Salvation for the WorldSuffering, Death, Resurrection [Trevor Faggotter](#)The **Father** sent Jesus **‘to save the world through him’** (John 3:17)

For by **grace** you have been **saved, through faith**—and this is not your own doing, it is the **gift** of God—not the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are *God’s handiwork*, created in Christ Jesus for **good works**, which God prepared beforehand to be our way of life (Ephesians 2:8-10)

The Work of Salvation is:

- A **Finished Work**, given to Jesus (John 17:4; 19:30; Heb. 10:9)
- Accomplished through the Cross for all (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 4:25; 1Jn 2:2)
- He *bore our sins* (1Peter 2:24); guilt taken once for all (Heb. 10:10)
- **Father** loving, sending, forsaking, raising; & **Spirit** enabling, applying
- **God** Incarnate crucified (John 6:38) and Jesus **Human** (John 13:1;)
- Personal (Rom. 8:23) and Cosmic. *‘universal restoration’* (Acts 3:21)
- Evocative: ‘Come to me’ (Matt, 11:28); ‘I now live by faith’ (Gal. 2:20)

Sabbath Rest:

Amid Suffering, Forsakenness, and Triumph? (Heb. 4:3c; Heb. 5:7).
 ‘...his works have been finished since the creation of the world’

Jesus called out with a loud voice, “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.” When he had said this, he breathed his last (Luke 23:46).

On Holy Saturday: *‘a significant zero, a pregnant emptiness, a silent nothing which says everything’.* (Alan E. Lewis, *‘Between Cross and Resurrection: A Theology of Holy Saturday’*). God the Son is Dead. An entire day of silence. Prayer: ‘Deliver us from evil’. (cf. John 1:5)

Play: Surely not? Ponder: trotting in on a donkey (Matt. 21), ‘toss of a coin’ (Matt. 22:19) ‘God of the living’ (Matt. 22:32), ‘David’s son?’ (Matt. 22:42), ‘no more questions’ (Matt. 22:46).

Is **Jesus—at play** on resurrection morning?: “Then Jesus met them, stopping them in their tracks. **‘Good morning!’** he said”. (Matt. 28:9a—*The Message*).

Are Sudoku puzzles work, rest or play?

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				1		5		
6		1						
2	6	8	7			1	4	
							3	7
1		3			5	6	2	9
5	3					7	8	
							5	
			5	8	4	2	6	

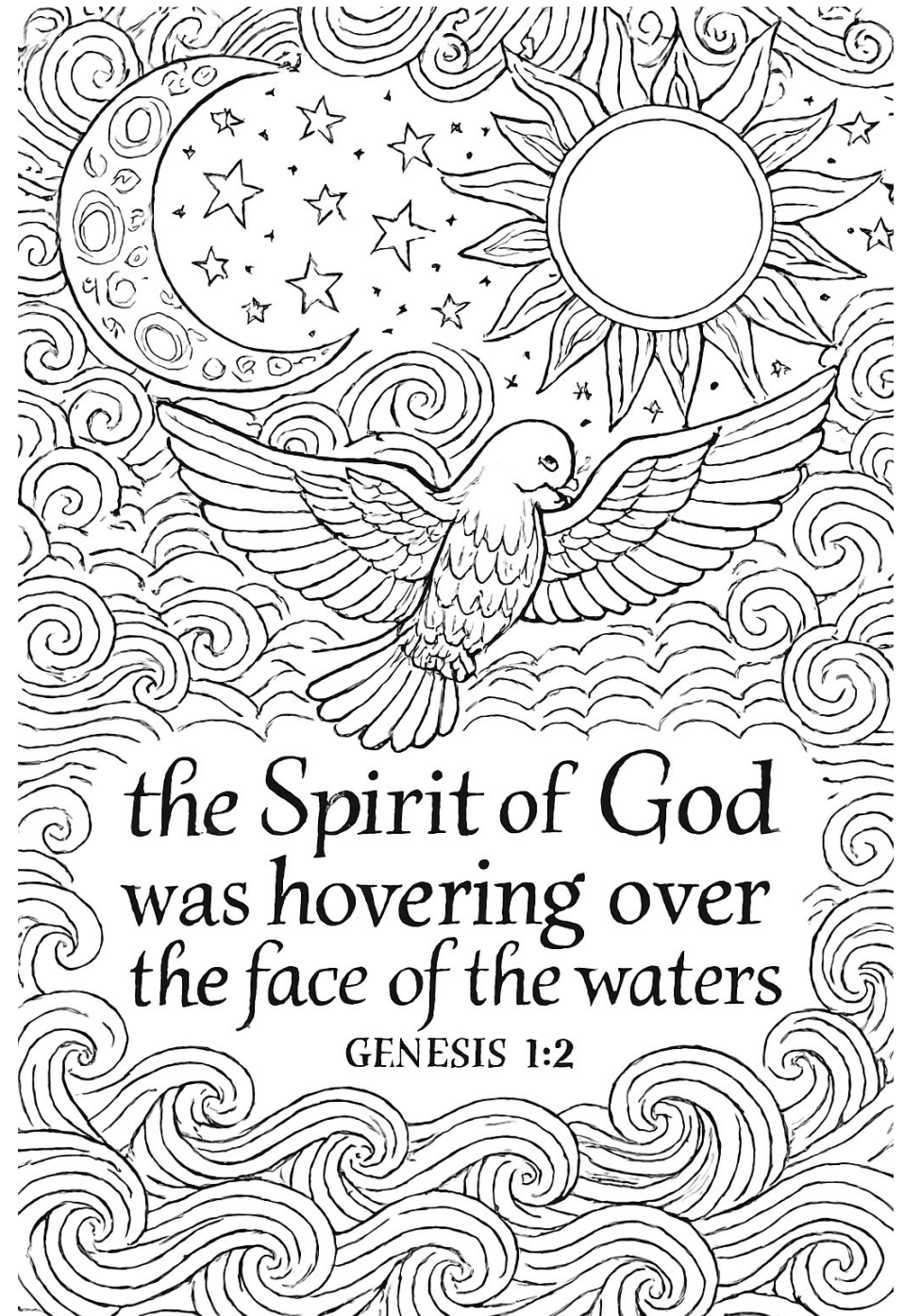
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4				8	6			7
			7			1		6
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Talk 8. The Spirit Reordering Work, Rest and Play (The Way of Love)

Andrew Klynsmith

A. The Holy Spirit is the gift of Jesus Christ to include us in His work of creating a new heavens and new earth through the gospel. Just as, at the beginning, the Spirit was deeply involved in the creative work of God and then was breathed by God into humanity for participation in His ordering of the creation, so too the Spirit comes to the church for our participation in Jesus' work of making all things new.

Gen. 1:1-2, 26-28;

Gen 2:5-8, 18-25;

Mark 4:9-13;

Luke 24:44-53;

Acts 2:1-4.

B. The Spirit sanctifies life in all its aspects (work, rest and play), and this is paralleled with the command of God to be holy just as he is holy. There is no aspect of life untouched by human sin; even more so there is no aspect of life that is untouched by the sanctifying work of the Spirit in Jesus Christ. Jesus' true humanity is ours through the Spirit.

Rom. 12:1-21;

1Cor. 10:13;

Col. 1:17

C. Marriage, the gift of God to humanity, is a sign of the relationship of Christ with his Church. It is to man and woman that the mandate of servant-lordship is given. Work, rest and play is not primarily individual but corporate, and all true 'corporateness' has its human origin in marriage and family. (See the traditional Christian wedding ceremony preface.) In healthy marriage and family life there is a deep interplay of work, rest and play.

Eph. 5:3-6, 22-33;

Col. 3:18-4:1

D. This sanctification of the whole of life comes from the Spirit, who is the Spirit who pours God's love into our hearts. As beloved children of God we are called to be imitators of Him. This will mean living as the Son lived, in service to one another and sacrificial love to God.

Eph. 5:1-2;

Col. 3:1-17.

Talk 9: By The Grace of God...Your Work Is Not In Vain

—Suffering & Hope / Ecclesiastes [Trevor Faggotter](#)

‘Vanity of Vanities! All is Vanity. What do people gain from all the toil at which they toil under the sun? ...I saw all the deeds that are done under the sun; and see, all is vanity and a chasing after wind ((Ecclesiastes 1:2b—3; 1:14)

The Pleasure Experiment (Eccles. 2:1—11; 8:15; 9:7-10)

Fame and fortune are fickle (Eccles. 4:13-16)

The seeming injustice in human affairs (Eccles. 7:15-29)

‘Life is useless, all useless’ (Good News Bible). Scholar John Kleinig says this is **not** here the meaning of the Hebrew word ‘hebel’ or ‘havel’. Rather, it is ‘**breath of breath, everything is fleeting**’. The word denotes vapour, a gust of wind. One must learn to ‘keep in step with the Spirit’ and adjust to fleeting life. ‘**For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven**’ (Eccles. 3:1). *The Teacher* exhorts us not to absolutise:

- (1) nature,
- (2) history,
- (3) knowledge
- (4) pleasure
- (5) wealth,
- (6) work, or even
- (7) wisdom.

The Creational Mandate given to humanity (Genesis 1:28; Psalm 8) has a goal, a telos. Life is Teleological. By grace (Eph. 2:8—10): we see the Telos, the Holy City, renewed creation, the glorification of God, and a new humanity, where

‘...the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it’ and ‘People will bring into it the glory and honour of the nations’ (Revelation 21:24, 26).

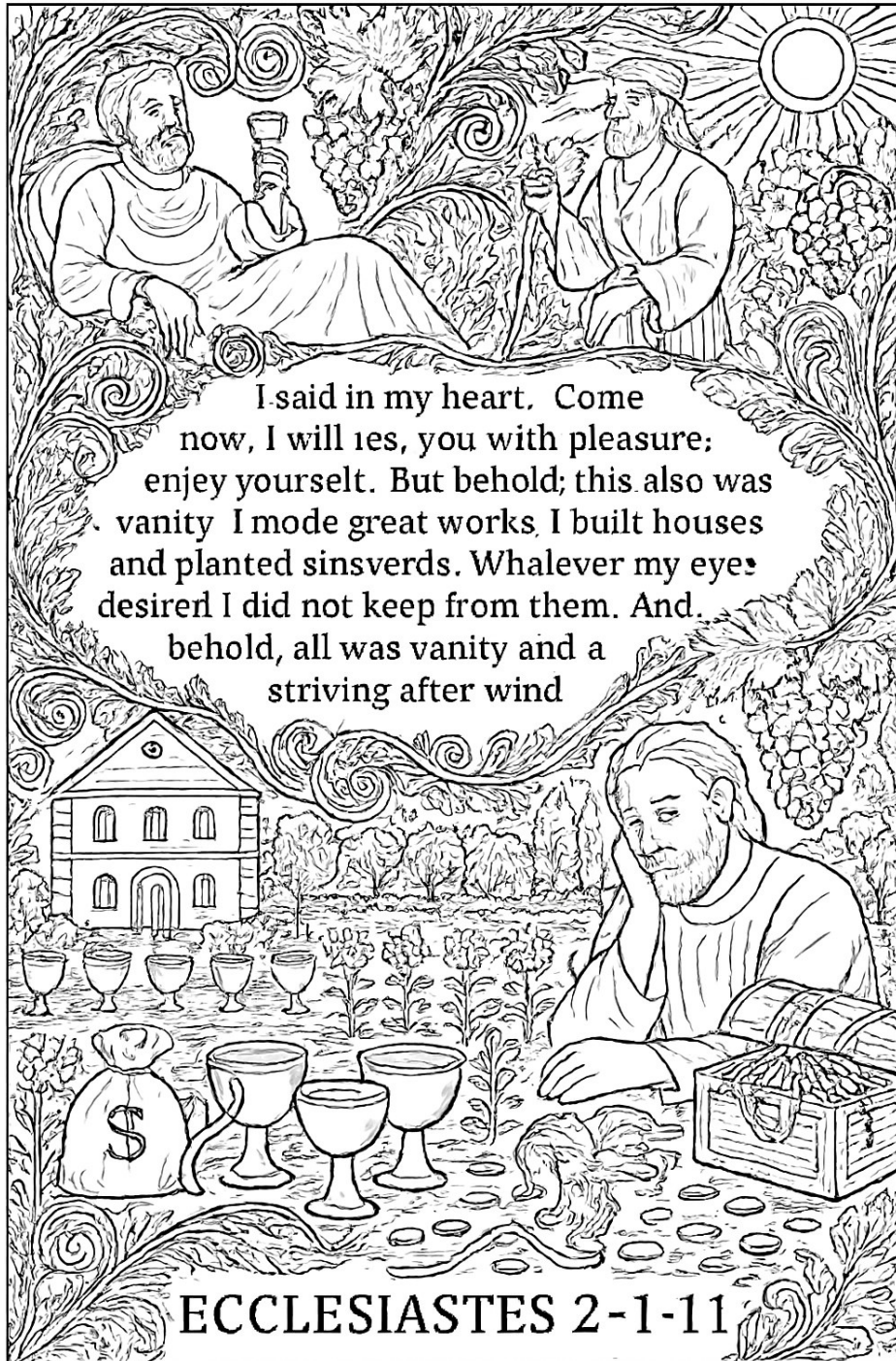
The Resurrection of Jesus transforms how we view a human life. I will often read the mystery of 1Cor. 15:51-58 at a funeral graveside:

Therefore my beloved, be steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord **your labour is not in vain** (1Cor. 15:58).

The Crucifixion of Jesus transforms how we view suffering, with hope (Rom. 5:3-5; 8:18; 1Peter 3:12—19;) ‘Entrust yourself to a faithful Creator’. ‘He shall see the fruit of the travail of his soul and be satisfied (Isaiah 53:11 RSV)

Q. How then, do we think about things? (Phil. 4:4—9; Col. 3:3 our ‘hidden’ life)

- (1) Work.....
- (2) Rest.....
- (3) Play



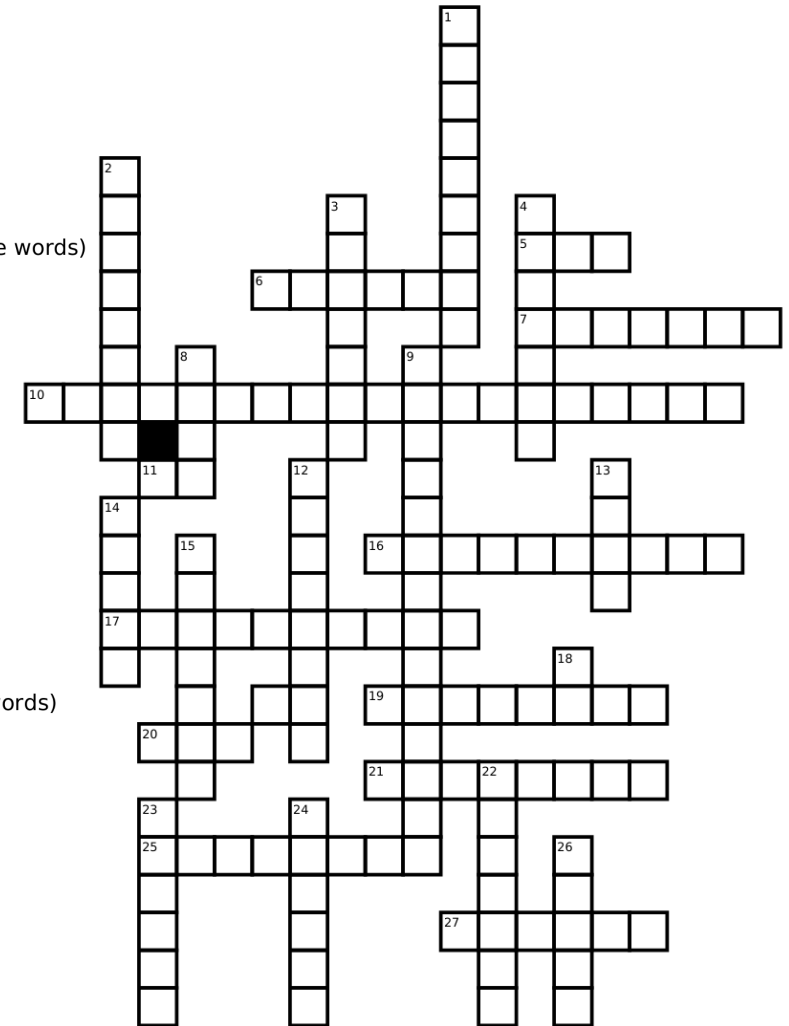
The following crossword puzzle contains one word from each verse of Ephesians 4:1-16, and all the words of verse 2 (excluding 2 letter words). Use the NIV translation. See if you can memorize verse 2.

Down:

1. Eph 4:9
2. Eph 4:11
3. Eph 4:2
4. Eph 4:5
8. Eph 4:2
9. Eph 4:12 (three words)
12. Eph 4:8
13. Eph 4:2
14. Eph 4:7
15. Eph 4:2
18. Eph 4:2
22. Eph 4:2
23. Eph 4:2
24. Eph 4:2
26. Eph 4:3

Across:

5. Eph 4:2
6. Eph 4:13
7. Eph 4:6
10. Eph 4:4 (five words)
11. Eph 4:2
11. Eph 4:2
16. Eph 4:2
17. Eph 4:14
19. Eph 4:1
20. Eph 4:2
21. Eph 4:16
25. Eph 4:10
27. Eph 4:15



Talk 10. The Drudgery of Dualistic Religion – Finding a Unified Life

Ray Bell

Finding a Unified Life

A self-help book or salvation?

Less dualism = less drudgery

More unity = more joy

Again, our work will be enjoyed best in covenant relationship with God and with one another.

Ephesians 3:20-21

A misplaced doxology?

To him be glory... in the church!

God does most of his extraordinary work through ordinary means!

Ephesians 4:1-16

Therefore...

Walk in a manner worthy...

One body and one Spirit

The gift of grace

The gifts to the church

The work of ministry

Building up the body... to the fulness of Christ

Each part... working properly

In love

Talk 11. Practical Wisdom for Work, Rest, and Play in the Proverbs

Nat Mills

1. Where have I set my hope?

(1 Peter 1:13)

2. There is an essential component to all practical wisdom.

(Proverbs 9:10)

3. Wisdom of the Lord concerning...

a. **Work** - Proverbs 6:6-11;

14:23

b. **Rest** - Proverbs 19:23;

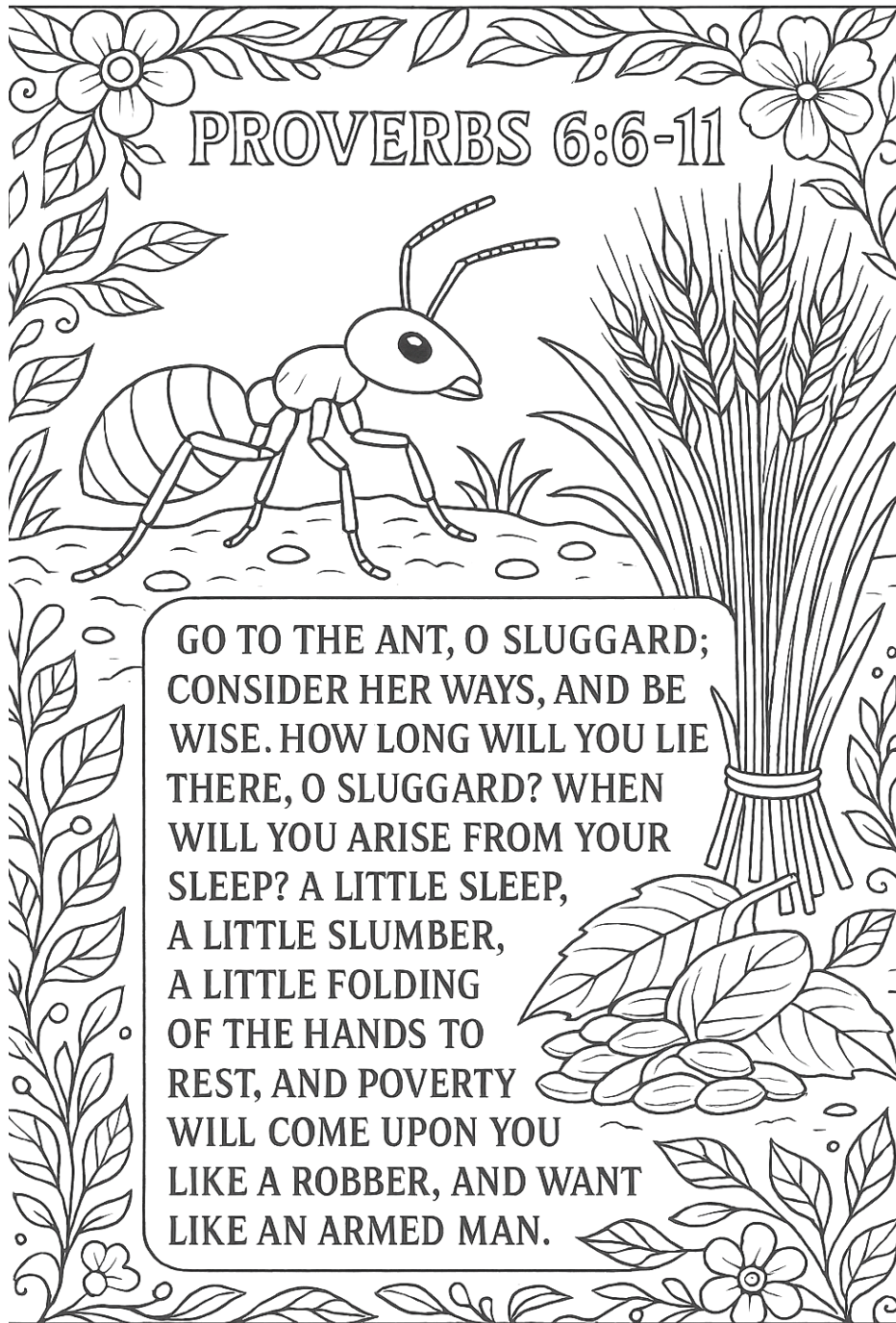
20:13

c. **Play** - Proverbs 25:16;

Ecclesiastes 2:24-26;

3:12-13;

5:18-20



Matthew 11:28-30

A H B J F R H Y E Q J E D X A T X O F T
D I F P I Q V K P K B U R D E N E D S Q
E Y P K N K H B F C A H H O I K C V N V
K E O A D M E T U H D X V V O W M C K A
G Y C K F H T Y S R F K C H E L C M J L
A E W G E R E R K H D S S M S K S I Z E
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S G I V E H U R O T V N H V E Y I L L U
L I G Y N D P V P F E D U N L O G A H T
E Q P G L U O X R D E T M O U U A N B A
A F N C R W N U E W H T B U O R J Z T K
R H F N R U J H O N A Q L A R N V U Y E
N N W Y O K E A X F P R E R T C F D Y E

Mat 11:28-30 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. (29) Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. (30) For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Find all of the words with 4 or more letters.

Talk 12. Working, Resting, and Playing into the Ages

Work, Rest and Play is Humanity's Eternal Vocation. [Simon Dent](#)

1. WORK — Participation Without Futility

Work belongs to creation, not the fall (Gen 2:15). What sin introduces is toil, anxiety, and futility (Gen 3:17–19; Rom 8:20).

In the New heaven and New earth :

- God's servants serve and reign (Rev 22:3–5)
- Human labour is no longer "in vain" (Isa 65:21–23; 1 Cor 15:58)

Jesus models work as "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34)

Eternal work is meaningful participation in God's life; creative, priestly, and free from exploitation.

2. REST — Secure Life in God

Rest is not inactivity but security. In the new creation, humanity works from rest, not toward it. Life is no longer driven by fear, scarcity, or self-justification.

- God rests in delight (Gen 2:2–3)
- A Sabbath rest remains for humanity (Heb 4:9–10)

Jesus invites the weary into true rest (Matt 11:28–29)

3. PLAY — Joy Made True

Jesus reveals joy as the truth of God's kingdom. Christ's resurrection opens the future of joy without loss (Rev 19:9; 21:4). Because death is defeated, joy no longer needs to escape reality. Eternal play is joy without anxiety, celebration that no longer distracts from reality, but expresses it.

- Jesus rejoices in the Spirit (Luke 10:21)
- He eats, feasts, and celebrates with sinners (Luke 15)

The kingdom is a wedding feast (Matt 22:1–14, Revelation 19:6–9). A scene of rejoicing, celebration, and blessing in the eternal kingdom. "The dwelling of God is with humanity." (Rev 21:3)

