

Is Your Labor in Vain?

by Bruce Hulshizer

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living with eternal values in view, doing labor in the Lord, and understanding that labor not done in the Lord is in vain.

Topics: "Eternal Significance", "Kingdom Labor"

Description

Bruce Hulshizer preaches on the futility of investing in earthly pursuits, as highlighted by Solomon in Ecclesiastes and reiterated in the New Testament. He emphasizes that all labor for personal gain on earth is in vain, as everything will eventually pass away. However, laboring in the Lord's work and for His purposes gives our actions eternal value and significance, as seen in passages like I Corinthians 15:58 and Hebrews 6:10.

Transcript

In Ecclesiastes, Solomon says that all man's labor is in vain since it will not ultimately profit him anything, for he will die and leave it behind. This truth is emphasized and extended farther in the New Testament, but is also set in contrast with labor which is not in vain. If one is investing in this world with his labors, his labors are in vain not only because he will die and take nothing with him (I Timothy 6:7), but also because all that he builds will one day be burned up with the earth itself (II Peter 3:10-11). Solomon saw the earth as forever. The New Testament says it too will pass away. Thus, it is futile and foolish to put our energy into building anything earthly, for the earth and its lusts are passing (I John 2:17).

Then is all labor in vain on the earth? No. The key is whether these labors are our labors according to our own purposes for our own gain on earth, or if they are "in the Lord" according to His purposes looking to fulfill His will on earth. Paul says to the saints that, since there is a future when we will be resurrected to be with the Lord, then what we do here is not futility if it is done in the Lord. "Always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. 15:58) The Lord knows our works and labor (Rev 2:2) and will not forget our "labor of love which we show to His name, having ministered to the saints." (Heb 6:10) So there are two sides. Labor according to our own purposes is in vain. Investment of time and energy into things of this world is foolish. However, labor in the work that the Lord is doing is not in vain, but has eternal value. In what am I laboring? Am I living with eternal values in view?

Eternity to the godly is a day that has no sunset: eternity to the godless is a night that has no sunrise.
Thomas Watson

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