

52-Work As Worship

Certain things catch your eye, but pursue only those that capture the heart.
Native American Proverb

Your right is to work only, but never to the fruit thereof. Let not the fruit of action be your object, nor let your attachment be to inaction.
Hinduism, *Bhagavad Gita* 2: 47

By devotion to one's own particular duty, everyone can attain perfection. Let me tell you how. By performing his own work, one worships the Creator who dwells in every creature. Such worship brings that person to fulfillment.
Hinduism, *Bhagavad Gita* 18: 44- 45

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Hinduism, *Bhagavad Gita* 2: 47

Even one that is slack in his work is brother to him that is a destroyer.
Judaism, *Mishlei (Proverbs)* 18: 9

Behold, what I have seen to be good and to be fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life which God has given him, for this is his lot.
Judaism, *Ecclesiastes* 5: 18

Fill your bowl to the brim and it will spill.
Keep sharpening your knife and it will blunt.
Chase after money and security and your heart will never unclench.
Care about people's approval and you will be their prisoner.
Do your work, then step back. The only path to serenity.
Taoism, Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 9

He who stands on tiptoe doesn't stand firm.
He who rushes ahead doesn't go far.
He who tries to shine dims his own light.
He who defines himself can't know who he really is.
He who has power over others can't empower himself.
He who clings to his work will create nothing that endures.
If you want to accord with the Tao, just do your job, then let go.
Taoism, Lao-Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Chapter 24

The evil-doer mourns in this world, and he mourns in the next; he mourns in both. He mourns and suffers when he sees the evil of his own work. The virtuous man delights in this world, and he delights in the next; he delights in both. He delights and rejoices, when he sees the purity of his own work.

Buddhism, *The Dhammapada*, 15

By work one is a husbandman, by work one is an artisan, by work one is a merchant, by work one is a servant.
By work one is a thief, by work one is a soldier, by work one is a sacrificer, by work one is a king.
So the wise, who see the cause of things and understand the result of work, know this work as it really is.
By work the world exists, by work mankind exists, beings are bound by work as the linch-pin of the rolling cart (keeps the wheel on).

Buddhism, *The Sutta Nipata*, 651-654

You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits.

Christianity, *Matthew 7: 16-20*

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

Christianity, *Timothy II 2: 15*

Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his hands, so that he may be able to give to those in need.

Christianity, *Ephesians* 4: 28

Nay, those who seek gain in evil, and are girt round by their sins,- they are companions of the Fire: Therein shall they abide (For ever).

But those who have faith and work righteousness, they are companions of the Garden: Therein shall they abide (For ever).

Islam, *Qur'án* 2: 81-82

Who, as they raise them from their couches, call on their Lord with fear and desire, and give alms of that with which we have supplied them.

No soul knoweth what joy of the eyes is reserved for the good in recompense of their works.

Islam, *Qur-an*, 32: 18-19

It is incumbent upon each one of you to engage in some occupation--such as a craft, a trade or the like. We have exalted your engagement in such work to the rank of worship of the one true God.

Bahá'i, Bahá'u'lláh,
The Kitáb-i-Áqdas, K 33

O MY SERVANT! The best of men are they that earn a livelihood by their calling and spend upon themselves and upon their kindred for the love of God, the Lord of all worlds.

Bahá'i, Bahá'u'lláh,
Hidden Words, Persian #82

All humanity must obtain a livelihood by sweat of the brow and bodily exertion; at the same time seeking to lift the burden of others, striving to be the source of comfort to souls, and facilitating the means of living. This in itself is devotion to God.

Bahá'i, 'Abdu'l-Bahá,
Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 182

In this great dispensation, art (or a profession) is identical with an act of worship and this is a clear text of the Blessed Perfection.

Bahá'i, 'Abdu'l-Bahá,
Bahá'í World Faith, p. 377