



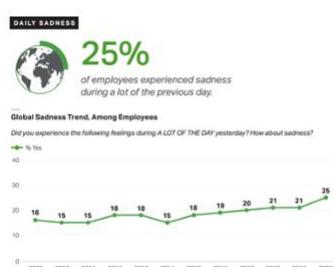
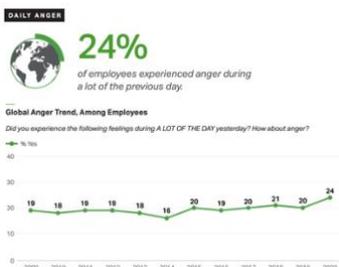
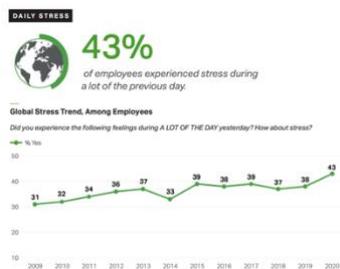
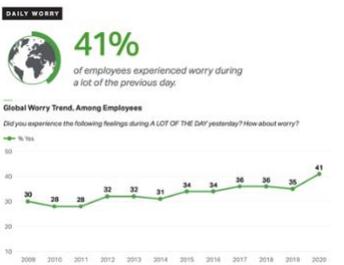
Part 4: God's Design for Work Genesis 1:26-28, 2:15

God's design for us is to join His work of bringing light into the darkness, order to the formless, and fullness of life to the empty.

As I think about work, we often live on a spectrum; at one extreme we hate it or at the other, we love it. The current studies have shown that in response to the pandemic, there is an increasing number of people who are leaning towards the "hate it" side.

A 2021 Gallop Report on "State of the Global Workplace"

- Seven out of ten employees are struggling or suffering, rather than thriving
- One in three people lost their job because of the pandemic
- There has been significant increase of worry, stress, anger, and sadness



The world is struggling on so many levels, particularly, it is struggling in the area of work. For ourselves and for the sake of the world, we need to ask, “What is God’s heart and design for work?”

Work Redefined

- Work is not just a job, or career, or vocation. **Work is whatever God puts before us to do.** So, students have work, stay at home parents have work, and even retirees have work. We all have work.
- Work is good. God is the first worker and we join Him in His work (Genesis 2:2, 15). God calls His work good (seven times – divine completion) (Genesis 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31).
- This is all before the fall, before work is tainted by sin. Work is now tainted and twisted by the brokenness of this world and sin (Genesis 3:17). We now experience injustice at work, abuse of employees, inequity of pay, and the toil of work.

Work as Cultural Mandate

- Cultural Mandate: Genesis 1:28. Repeated for Noah (Genesis 9), Abraham (Genesis 17), Jacob (Genesis 28, 35). The cultural mandate is first given to us as image bearers of God and as a blessing.
- To “rule and subdue” language is not to “dominate and exploit” but to take care of like gardeners “work it and take care of it” (Genesis 2:15).
- *Culture Making* by Andy Crouch
 - Creators: “people who dare to think and do something that has never been thought or done before, something that makes the world more welcoming and thrilling and beautiful.”
 - Cultivators: “people who tend and nourish what is best in human culture, who do the hard and painstaking work to preserve the best of what people before us have done.”
- We see the deeper heart of the “cultural mandate” through God’s creation.
 - In Genesis 1:2, the earth was formless, empty, dark. God responds.
 - Dark to **light** (v. 3) – Day 1: “Let there be light.” Where there was darkness, God created light. God was the first electrician: light to illuminate, light to grow, and light to create order.
 - Formless to **order** – Day 2: God separates and gathers to create order (v. 6). He creates a vault between the waters to create sky and gathers the land and the seas (v. 9). God was the first engineer.
 - Empty to **fullness of life** – Day 3: The first sign of life is vegetation (v. 11). God is the first gardener. Day 5: He creates birds of the air and fish of the sea. Day 6: He creates living creatures according to their kind. God is the first farmer. Pinnacle and crown of His creation – humankind – male and female – *tov meod* – very good.
 - Jesus is the fulfillment of the “cultural mandate.” The blessing given to Abraham has now come to us through Christ Jesus (Galatians 3). And Jesus is the light, the order, and fullness of life. “In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it...The

thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." John 1:4,5; 10:10

Work as Worship

- God designed work to have a vertical and horizontal component. It is as worship to God and a part of His ways.
- Audience of one.
"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:13,

God's design for us is to join His work of bringing light into the darkness, order to the formless, and fullness of life to the empty.

Prayer of Consecration:

"May the favor of the Lord our God rest on us; establish the work of our hands for us – yes, establish the work of our hands." Psalm 90:17