
How does work touch eternity?

1. God's plan is to resurrect my body, not just save my soul.

If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. Philippians 1:22–23 (ESV)

And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel 12:2 (ESV)

But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself. Philippians 3:20–21 (ESV)

So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body. 1 Corinthians 15:42–44 (ESV)

2. God's plan is to restore and renew the earth, not just restore and renew Christians.

A. Will this earth be destroyed?

But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. 2 Peter 3:10 (ESV)

But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. 2 Peter 3:13 (ESV)

- *naos* new - temporarily new
- *kainos* new - qualitatively new (to renew)

And he who was seated on the throne said, “Behold, I am making all things new.” Revelation 21:5

For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. 2 Peter 3:5–7 (ESV)

B. The earth's restoration is intimately connected with our resurrection.

For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. Romans 8:19–21 (ESV)

and through him (Jesus) to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. Colossians 1:20 (ESV)

...Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. Acts 3:20-21 (ESV)

C. God will unite the restored earth with heaven and put it all under Christ.

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, “Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. Revelation 21:1–3 (ESV)

3. There will be great continuity between the current fallen earth and the new heaven and earth.

through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. Revelation 22:2 (ESV)

By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it, Revelation 21:24 (ESV)

A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord. Isaiah 60:6 (ESV)

4. God will reveal the truth of our current work, reward us for it and carry it into the new creation.

Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. 1 Corinthians 3:12–15 (ESV)

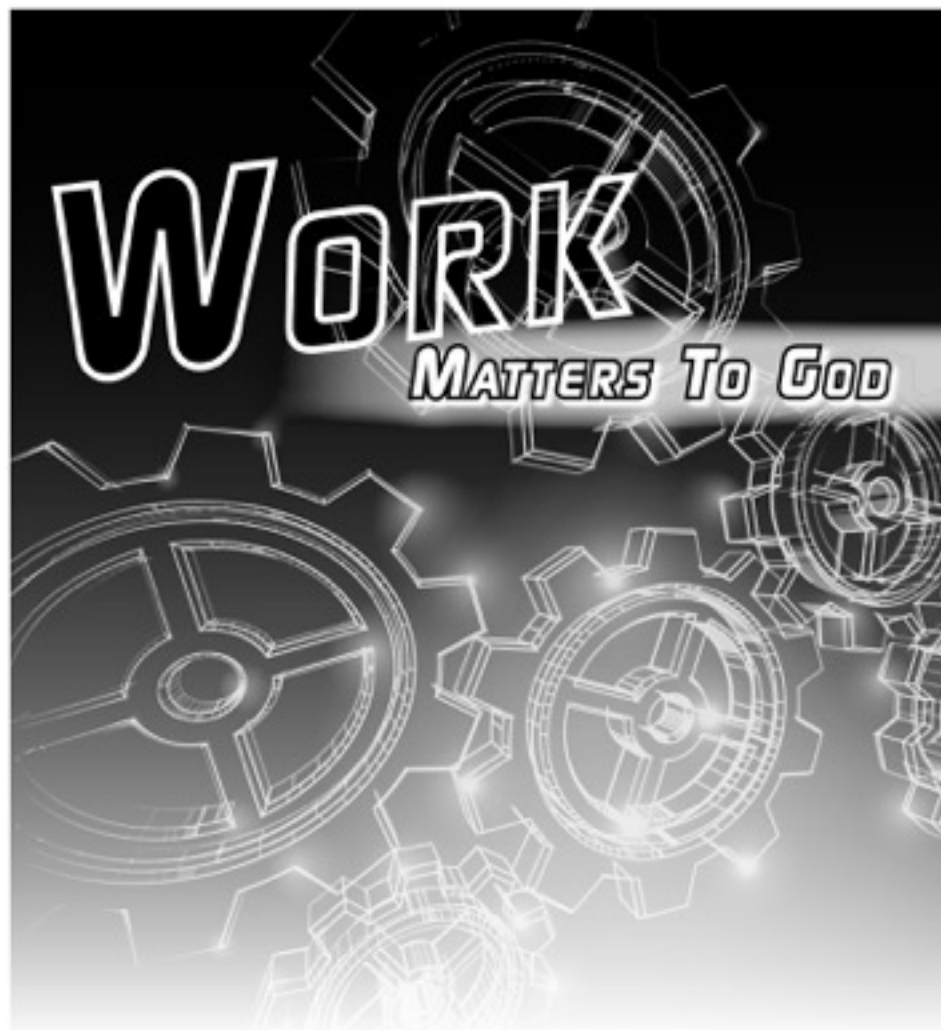
Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:58 (ESV)

Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us: yes, establish the work of our hands! Psalm 90:17 (ESV)

And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!" Revelation 14:13 (ESV)

5. God's plan is to reward us with even greater work in the new creation.

His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.' Matthew 25:21 (ESV)



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