

The Hidden Gift of “Hevel”
Finding Meaning and Fulfillment in a World of Futility and Frustration
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We experience frustration and futility when our work doesn't seem:

- constructive
- meaningful
- successful
- satisfying

Scripture's explanation of the presence of frustration and futility in our work

1. **We long to do good work because we were made in the image of a worker-God (Gen 1-2)**
2. **We traded the job God gave us in an attempt to become our own bosses (Gen 3), and as a result:**
 - a. Our work is now frustrating and painful: “nothing works as it should”
 - b. Our work is now full of futility and loss: “nothing will last as it should”
 - c. Our work will always be fraught with our enemies' attempts to tempt us
3. **Ecclesiastes echoes these realities:**
 - a. *“Vanity of vanities,... all is vanity”* (12:8): No amount of ability, resources, or effort will enable us to bypass the difficulties that God predicted for his people.
 - b. “Here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the duty of all mankind.” (12:13)

Frustration and futility in our endeavors are an opportunity to pause and...

1. perceive where we have commandeered God's job and need to return it to him
2. grieve the hardships and losses and look forward to the day when they will be no more
3. focus on achieving and prioritizing the things that are right in front of us
4. receive our work and rewards as gifts from God
5. believe that our work will always be meaningful because of the work God is always doing in and through us