

FOR SUCH A TIME AS THIS

5-DAY INTRODUCTORY
PRAYER GUIDE TO
THEOLOGY OF WORK



by Dr. Joy Dahl

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MESSAGE FROM DR. JOY DAHL

Friend, I'm so glad you've chosen to continue your "faith and work" journey. This prayer guide serves as a next step for working women seeking the Lord and His purpose for their life. It also serves as professional development influenced by faith and founded on biblical truth. Each day we'll explore principles of Theology of Work. My prayer is that this guide becomes a conversation between you and God—a conversation you will also share with like-minded women as you come alongside one another and journey together. Whether you do this study on your own, in a small group, or with a co-worker, I pray the richness of God's plan and His great desires for your work will encourage you daily as you press into Him and receive with joy the specific calling He has for you in this season. God is raising up His workplace daughters in a new way. So go courageously—Jesus has prepared you and strategically placed you in your workplace for such a time as this!



...professional
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DAY 1

Created BOLDLY with Purpose. Who me?

Sister, God BOLDLY created you with purpose according to His plan. He BOLDLY created you with your gifts and talents, your likes and dislikes, your skills and passions. He BOLDLY created you for a life of purpose with specific good works prepared in advance for you to do.

- Do you believe this? Why or why not?

- Have you ever doubted this? If so, what circumstances led you to doubt? If not, what has kept you from doubting this?

Read: Psalm 139:13–18; Jeremiah 29:11–13

- What does Psalm 139:13-18 reveal about how you were boldly created, and the One who created you?

- How does “all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be” pertain to the plan God has for you?

- What does Jeremiah 29:11-13 reveal about God's plans and desires for those who seek Him?

Reflect on God's Plan:

Finding our purpose in life starts with understanding that:

- we are created **BOLDLY** in the image of God who works; and
- whatever we do for work—and wherever we do it—God is already there. Jesus is already at work in your workplace.

Unfortunately, many of us question whether or not God's plan focuses on our day-to-day. What do you currently believe about God's plan? Take this inventory:

- Does God's plan include working women? Why or why not?
- If it does, what type of work are we supposed to do? And are there particular types of work we should not do?
- As a Christian woman, is it okay to want to pursue a career? Are there limits to what careers women can pursue and when?
- Is it okay for women with young children to continue working if they don't have to?
- Does God care about the ordinary, seemingly mundane work we do each day? To what degree?
- Are certain roles or type of work more valuable to God and His kingdom than other roles or types of work? Why or why not?

In order for us to find purpose in our work—regardless of the type of work we do currently—we have to understand God's plan for working women. Over the next few days, we'll prayerfully explore 3 principles in a biblical Theology of Work. Together we'll dig deeper with Jesus into these scriptural truths as we explore our work and purpose. For today, rest confidently in this: Jesus invites you to join Him in the work He's already doing in your workplace.

You were BOLDLY created for such a time as this!

Query:

What would you like Jesus to reveal to you (or answer for you) through this prayer guide?

Pray and Journal:

Prayer is conversation. Prayer immerses us in the presence of our loving Heavenly Father. Prayer allows us to speak with, and hear from, our Creator. Prayer aligns our hearts and minds with our Savior Jesus Christ as He shepherds us forward. Prayer unleashes the power of the Holy Spirit. And prayer opens the door for the Holy Spirit to continue His transformative work within us. Take a few minutes to offer a prayer thanking God for His unfailing love for you and the plans He has for you, even if you're not sure what those plans entail. Then journal a prayer to God about your perspective of working women and their work.

DAY 2

Theology of Work Principle 1: Work as God's Plan

We now start building the foundation of a biblical Theology of Work. Over the next few days, we'll dig deeper into three bedrock principles. Today we begin with Principle 1: Work as God's Plan.

Read: Genesis 1:1–28

- Genesis 1:1 "*In the beginning, God created...*" In other words, in the beginning, God went to work. In the very first verse of the Bible, we start learning about God's work. God reveals Himself as creator, sustainer, and provider. Are there other types of work you see God doing in these verses? How does God continue to work today?
- Genesis 1:26-28 introduces us to the *imago Dei*, the image of God. Men and women together are created in the image of God who works. Together all humanity for all time is called to carry on God's good work in the world as His representatives. And God pronounced blessing over both man and woman for their commissioned work: "be fruitful, increase, fill, subdue, rule." This section of scripture is often called the "Cultural Mandate" because the semantic range of the words used for "be fruitful, increase, fill, subdue, rule" indicates that these commands are fulfilled by creating culture. As God's representative, what are some ways you can create culture in your workplace and your circles of influence?

Reflect on Work as God's Plan:

God created the world perfect: Good... good... good... very good. Everything God made in Genesis 1 and 2 was perfect but not finished—on purpose! God commands all humanity—including us as women—to carry on His good work of creating, providing, sustaining in the world. We do this, at least in part, by becoming culture-creators. How might God be inviting you to continue His good work as a culture-creator?

God established work as good BEFORE the Genesis 3 curse, so although work is impacted by the Fall, it is NOT a result of the Fall. According to God's plan, work remains intrinsically good, even though our experience of work in today's fallen world may prove overwhelming or hard, and even though we may encounter difficult people. What aspects of your work or workplace reflect God's plan for good work? What aspects of your work or workplace do not reflect God's plan for good work?

Query:

What question would you like to ask God about His specific plan for such a time as this?

Pray and Journal:

Pray Genesis 1:26-28 to God, offering your work to Him as worship, and expressing your desire to align your work with His plan. Then take a few minutes to journal a prayer to God about His plan for your life and work. Share with Him your hopes, dreams, desired outcomes, frustrations, and challenges.

DAY 3

Theology of Work Principle 2: Work as Our Purpose/Calling

Today we continue building upon our Theology of Work foundation with
Principle 2: Work as Our Purpose/Calling

Read: Ephesians 2:8–10

- Whereas the Cultural Mandate was for all humanity for all time, now God (through Paul) addresses those created in Christ, aka believers. Ephesians 2:10 affirms we are created in Christ Jesus to do *good works*. Think back to Genesis 1 and the “good... good... good... very good” of creation. God calls believers into the good work He started and now wants us to carry on as Christ’s representatives. Review the work you have done to this point in your life. In what ways has your work been *good work*? For work you don’t see as *good work*, in what ways could you bring a new perspective or new *good work* plan of action in order to do that same work differently?

- Good work includes all work done with excellence and integrity, for the glory of God, for the benefit of creation. We see good work every day around the world in large companies and small shops, in support organizations and in restaurants, at home and through side-hustles. Good work is NOT exclusive to “church work” or “mission agency work.” Unfortunately, many people (myself included) have at one time or another believed that if they want to do something important for God—if they want to do truly good work for Him—they have to quit their job and go work for a church or mission organization. Have you ever felt this way? What wisdom can Ephesians 2:10 provide for you or someone else who struggles to see the purpose in their current work?

Reflect on Work as Our Purpose/Calling:

God affirms that He has prepared *good work* specifically for you. *Good work* includes both:

- *the work itself* – working with excellence and integrity to the best of our ability; and
- *the relationships we cultivate at work* – building authentic, grace-filled relationships characterized by respect, care, and a genuine desire to help others flourish (including co-workers, bosses, customers, vendors)

Do you see your current work—the work itself and your relationships at work—as *good work*? Why or why not? What could you do differently or change in your perspective to offer your work to God as *good work*?

We see many models of workers *doing good work* in scripture, including Jesus. In John 12:27, Jesus tells His disciples, “For I have come to fulfill my purpose—to offer myself to God” (The Passion Translation). And in John 17:1-4, Jesus says to God the Father, “I finished the work you gave me to do.” So too, Jesus wants us to fulfill our purpose and finish the work He has prepared for us to do, in whatever context we’re in right now. What good work might Jesus be asking you to finish in this current season?

Query:

What question would you like to ask Jesus about your purpose/calling?

Pray and Journal:

Pray Ephesians 2:10 to Jesus. Pray through the answers you wrote today, laying these before God and His throne of grace. Pray through your Query and ask Jesus to begin revealing His response and His good desires for you by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then take a few minutes to journal a prayer to God about your *good work*, the specific purposes He has for you in this current season of life, and your Query question.

DAY 4

Theology of Work Principle 3: Work as Our Mission Mindset

Today we solidify our strong Theology of Work foundation as we explore
Principle 3: Work as Our Mission Mindset

Read: 2 Corinthians 5:17–20

- This passage starts by saying, “If anyone is in Christ...” meaning “Everyone who is in Christ...” Everyone in Christ is a new creation. Christ calls all believers to join His work in the world. And God’s work is not limited to the work of salvation or evangelism. His work includes the work of restoring and redeeming all creation—the *good work* we explored yesterday. What does being new in Christ mean, and how does it impact your perspective and your actions as a workplace believer?

- As followers of Christ, each one of us is now called to fill the role of **AMBASSADOR**. An ambassador holds a position of significance and high value. An ambassador fills a crucial role by representing their sovereign leader well. An ambassador is sent on mission with authority and the purpose of carrying a specific message of good will and collaboration. As Christ’s ambassadors to our workplaces, we’re called to adopt a mission mindset for whatever our workplace looks like today. How can you begin to fill the role of Christ’s strategic ambassador in your workplace mission field?

Reflect on Work as Our Mission Mindset:

In the Book of John, Jesus refers to Himself as a “sent one” over 25 times. Today, Christ calls and sends His disciples (including you and me) into our God-ordained, workplace mission fields. Christ has strategically placed each one of us in our circles of influence. He has already equipped us with skills, talents, passions, and experience. And now He says, “Go! I am sending you” (Luke 10:2-3). Jesus sends us with authority to carry His message of hope to a lost and hurting world. Why would an integral component of God’s plan include calling women to go into everyday workplaces as His representatives?

You work with people that church pastors and staff will never reach. God has boldly created you with purpose. As a follower of Christ, you are a leader in your work. He has called you and prepared you for such a time as this. He has strategically placed you in your workplace mission field. What are two practical steps you can take to accept the role of ambassador with a mission-focused mindset?

What does it mean to boldly work as Christ’s ambassador, and what might prevent you from filling this role whole-heartedly?

Query:

What help do you need from Jesus? What help do you need from other Christ-followers?

Pray and Journal:

Begin to visualize yourself as Christ's ambassador to your workplace mission field. Pray 2 Corinthians 5:17-20 to Jesus, asking Him for wisdom and discernment in your role as His ambassador. Then take a few minutes to journal a prayer to God about your role as ambassador and the authority entrusted to you by Christ for your workplace mission field.

DAY 5

Created BOLDLY For Such a Time as This

Over the last four days, we have been building a strong Theology of Work foundation rooted in biblical principles:

- **Work as God's Plan** [Genesis 1:26-28] We are created in the image of God who works
- **Work as Our Purpose/Calling** [Ephesians 2:10] God has prepared good work specifically for each one of us to do
- **Work as our Mission Mindset** [2 Corinthians 5:17-20] Christ sends us as His ambassadors with authority to carry His message of hope to a lost and hurting world

Living out our Theology of Work each day is hard work. We don't travel an easy route when we walk with Jesus. We'll continually experience ups and downs and unexpected curves. We'll rejoice on mountaintop highs and mourn in dark valley lows. This is why we need to journey together as sisters in Christ. Jesus calls us to community because two are stronger than one, and three are stronger than two. Together we can encourage one another, strengthen one another, intercede for one another, and navigate the winding route with one another. As we interlock our shields of faith, we can inquire of God together and discern His wisdom, His prompting, and His path forward. It took me a long time to find community with like-minded working women seeking to live out their faith in the whole of life.

If you don't currently share community with like-minded working women, prioritize this as a next step. Here are three suggestions for how to begin:

- Invite a co-worker or a friend to go through this prayer guide with you. Use it as a Bible study and meet once a week to talk through the questions and to share how God is moving in your workplace as you seek Him in prayer each day. Ask Jesus if there are other women you should invite to join in. Once you complete this prayer guide, select another Bible study and discuss how the teaching applies to your work.

- Become a member of an organization which gathers and equips Christian working women with faith-forward professional development. My organization, Polished Network, gathers women to navigate the workplace and explore faith together in authentic community. Polished hosts local in-person gatherings and national virtual gatherings each month. Regardless of age, stage, or employment status—you belong here! Find details on our website (<https://polishednetwork.org>) or social media. Additionally, Pinnacle Forum for Women focuses on transforming leaders who transform culture. Pinnacle engages executive women leaders to develop deep peer relationships and steward their influence to impact their workplaces and culture. Find details on their website (<https://pinnacleforum.com/women-forums/>).
- Use the BOLDLY Conference as a resource for developing or finding new community. Look into sponsor and speaker organizations that offer groups and gatherings. Connect with other participants or sign up for a women’s Bible study at one of the churches that hosted a BOLDLY group. You can find information on the website, and registered participants can access details in the BOLDLY app and through the many Digital Swag Bag offerings.

Read:

Re-read the three principle passages: Genesis 1:26-28; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20. Now go back and re-read the Queries you wrote for each of the previous four days of this prayer guide.

- What aspects of the three principle passages speak into your Queries? Have you received answers to (or wisdom pertaining to) any of your Queries? If so, note those details here.

- For those Queries for which you're still seeking answers, reframe your Queries into a list of questions for Jesus. Prioritize them based on which ones you feel are most important in this current season.

Reflect on Your Work, For Such a Time as This:

Friend, I can tell you for sure that worldly success or failure is not a good metric for evaluating a life of purpose. Rather than focusing on success or failure by the world's standards, we should evaluate how we work with Jesus each day. How we work with excellence and integrity as if reporting directly to Him. How we come alongside others and cultivate authentic, grace-filled relationships characterized by love, respect, care, and a genuine desire to help others flourish--including workplace relationships. In this season, in your current workplace, how would you evaluate your work with Jesus each day?

Work as Christ's ambassador includes diligent stewardship. Jesus asks us to prayerfully steward our talents, our time, our resources, our relationships, our position at work, and our roles within our circles of influence. Spend a few minutes thinking through these areas of stewardship. Which of these do you steward well as a commissioned ambassador of Christ? Which of these do you not steward well, and how could you change this?

Jesus invites you to join His work in your workplace. Will you say YES to going on mission with Him? Identify at least one next step you will take as you accept the role of ambassador to your workplace.

Do you have hesitancy about your next step(s)? If so, why? What could prevent you from taking your next step(s), and how can you overcome those obstacles?

Query:

What is your most pressing question for God about the next step(s) you identified?

Pray and Journal:

Pray your prioritized list of questions to God, and pause and wait, allowing Him time to respond. Then take a few minutes to journal a prayer to God about what you have learned so far through this prayer guide, your prioritized list of questions for Jesus, and your commitment to the next step(s) you identified.

For such a time as this, Jesus says, “Come follow Me. Interlock your shields of faith with one another, and together let’s BOLDLY go and change the world workplace-by-workplace-by-workplace.”

For such a time as this, dear sister. We’re called for this moment in history. Our time to shine the light of Jesus in a new way has come. Let’s join in this BOLD mission together!

Created BOLDLY with purpose? YES! All of us. For such a time as this!

May I pray for you?

Lord Jesus, thank you for my dear sister and her desire to join your good work in the world. Thank you for the way you have BOLDLY created her for purpose. Thank you for how you have equipped her with talents, skills, passions, and unique experiences. Thank you for how you have strategically placed her in her workplace and in her circles of influence for such a time as this. I pray that today, and in the days to come, you will bless my dear friend with wisdom, discernment, perseverance, patience, life-giving community, and the power of your presence. Embolden her as she embraces her role as your ambassador in this world. May she shine as your light-bearer—joining your work—for your glory and the expansion of your kingdom on earth. In the precious and powerful name of Jesus I pray. Amen!