



#Fail: Redeeming Life From Toil

Toil - Hebrew [*`amal.*] - conveys despair, weariness, oppression. It is drudgery, day after day of being worn out, beaten down.

“²⁹ God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand on the seashore. ³⁰ Solomon’s wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the people of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. ³¹ He was wiser than anyone else, And his fame spread to all the surrounding nations. ³² He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. ...From all nations people came to listen to Solomon’s wisdom, sent by all the kings of the world, who had heard of his wisdom.” 1Kings 4:29-34 (NIV)

“I said to myself, “Come now, I will test you with pleasure to find out what is good.” But that also proved to be meaningless. ² “Laughter,” I said, “is madness. And what does pleasure accomplish?” ³ I tried cheering myself with wine, and embracing folly—my mind still guiding me with wisdom. I wanted to see what was good for people to do under the heavens during the few days of their lives. ⁴ I undertook great projects: I built houses for myself and planted vineyards. ⁵ I made gardens and parks and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. ⁶ I made reservoirs to water groves of flourishing trees. ⁷ I bought male and female slaves and had other slaves who were born in my house. I also owned more herds and flocks than anyone in Jerusalem before me. ⁸ I amassed silver and gold for myself, and the treasure of kings and provinces. I acquired male and female singers, and a harem as well—the delights of a man’s heart. ⁹ I became greater by far than anyone in Jerusalem before me. In all this my wisdom stayed with me. ¹⁰ I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my labor, and this was the reward for all my toil. ¹¹ Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was gained under the sun.” Ecclesiastes 2:1-11

Turning From Toil

#1: Serve Someone

#2: Sacrifice Something

“And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these.³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith?³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’³² For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.” Matthew 6:28-34 (NIV)

#3: Work for Meaning

#4: Own Your Faith

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.” Matthew 11: 28-30 (NIV)

Rest - [anapausin] – refreshment, to re-set, to soak in God’s peace.

Small Group Questions

1. Look at the definition of *toil* [ˈɑːmə]. Are there currently areas of your life which you would describe as “toil?”
2. Of the four Turning From Toil “opportunities”, which may be the most difficult for you to embrace?
3. Read Job 3:26. React to this statement: “The deprivation of rest can lead to toil.” If Godly “rest [anapausin]” does indeed combat “toil [ˈɑːmə.]”, in what ways are you pursuing Jesus’ Matthew 11:28 invitation?
4. Read Colossians 3:1-4. What does this text have to say about the “pursuit of more?” What do you think it means “your life is now hidden with Christ in God”? (vs. 3)