



**By Elder
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Of the Seventy

*When you learn to
love and value work,
you also find a great
source of joy.*

My Best

Some years ago, I found myself in an auditorium at the Churchill College of the University of Cambridge in England for an annual meeting for the company I worked for. On that occasion, I had the privilege to receive from the company's global president and CEO an award in behalf of my team for the excellent work we performed that year.

As company leaders from all over the world, representing 80,000 employees, clapped their hands and praised our team for our achievement, I thought, "This must be my best day of work ever!" The atmosphere of that moment was exhilarating.

Shared Bread

But then my mind took me back to my first day of work nearly 40 years earlier. My father owned a bakery and baked bread that was distributed to many small markets in our city in southern Brazil. When I was a young child, I kept insisting that my father take me to work with him. One day he finally said yes!

My mother sewed a little white apron and a baker's hat for me, and my dad and I went to the bakery. Together, we mixed and prepared dough, manually shaped the dough into loaves,

and placed the loaves into the brick oven. When the bread finished baking, we used a long wooden paddle to carefully retrieve the bread. We waited for a few seconds, then we shared a loaf of the still-warm bread. It tasted wonderful!

Upon reflection, I decided that receiving an award at Cambridge was my second-best day of work. The best and happiest day at work was in a much more humble setting: a little bakery with no audience or standing ovation. It was just me and my dad. That day, he taught me to love and value work and helped me feel the joy of making something from scratch with my own hands. I learned that hard work is satisfying to both the body and the soul.

Work Is a Blessing

When the Lord told Adam and Eve, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread" (Genesis 3:19), it seemed like He was



*I will always remember the white apron and
baker's hat my mother made for me and the
bread my father and I made together.*

Workday Ever!

chastising them. In reality, He was giving them the opportunity to experience the joyful and fulfilling sensation of becoming self-reliant, of providing for their own wants and needs.

Many of us look at work solely as a way to temporally provide for ourselves and our families or maybe as a way to acquire a social status by carrying a fancy job title. But far more importantly, God wants us to work so we can gain a strong sense of fulfillment as we complete tasks, create something new, innovate and improve on what already exists, and add value to the world we live in.

Spiritually speaking, a gospel-centered life always includes work. Elder D. Todd Christofferson of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles has said, “A consecrated life is filled with work, sometimes repetitive, sometimes menial, sometimes unappreciated but always work that improves, orders, sustains, lifts, ministers, aspires.”¹

As a child, you were probably asked, “What are you going to be when you grow up?” During your teenage years, that question will most likely switch to, “What are you going to study in college?”

Passion, Honor, and Purpose

Whatever profession you decide to embrace, whatever line of work you may end up in, seek to do your work with passion, honor, and purpose. You should work hard and always try to accomplish the best results. Having this attitude toward work will help you

become temporally, emotionally, and spiritually secure. The opportunity to work is a blessing from the Lord. As you learn to appreciate and love work, you will find the happiness and purpose that come from self-reliance.

I can still hear the applause and the words of encouragement coming from that audience at the University of Cambridge, but more dear to me is the memory of my day at the bakery with my father and the smell of those loaves of bread as they came out of the oven. ■

NOTE

1. D. Todd Christofferson, “Reflections on a Consecrated Life,” *Ensign* or *Liahona*, Nov. 2010, 17.