
An Examination of Addiction to Work in the Protestant Work Ethic, an Article by Barbara Goodrich

While being a student at a school such as the Alabama School of Math and Science, one tends to notice how hard-working even young adults are. Just about everywhere you go in this country you see hard working people putting in many hours of their time into their work. Some would call it obsessed, while others choose to call this passion for what they do. North America differs with other countries on the views on work and leisure time. Reading about the Protestant work ethic was very interesting because it actually explained some of the origins of this almost addiction to working.

I've been in the United States since I was 6, but I've grown up in a family from Ukraine/Russia so I have been able to see both sides of the view. My parents are both hard working individuals but they also love their free time. They believe that work is a great and helps you have the things you need to survive, but free time is also very healthy as it is the time you need to learn about yourself and go out of your comfort zone to learn about the world around you. Reading through the article you could conclude that some Calvinist almost let leisure time equate to sin. Also, the Calvinists believed that your life was already predestined from the time before your even conception and that there is no way to change your destiny. While, personally, I believe that God does predestine you to some point, I believe you still have to make the right and/or wrong decisions to determine your final outcome in this life. Yes, I believe that God has a say where you start out in this world, be it a slave or a son of a wealthy heir, but you have the say on how far you go.

I enjoyed how Barbara Goodrich explained the back story of the Protestant Work Ethic and the view of it in early America, but she also added in these other facts. I specifically remember how she explained that the founding fathers of our country were Deists, not Christians. Even though they did respect Christianity, the country was not founded on it, and therefore, the people who claim the U. S. is based on Christianity are simply historically incorrect. Little facts like that really capture the readers' attention and help them learn something new too.

Something else I did not quite agree with was the opinion that if you enjoy your work, then it is not really working. I believe that for an individual to be happy he or she must work a job he or she really enjoys. In the end, he or she will work even more since he or she does not view it as work. There were also examples of Calvinism in the modern world in the text. One was people feeling very passionately about a topic but would not advocate for it because they believed they should be working instead. I feel like this is a little silly. We were all given the gift of life to make

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a change and learn something new. If you are too scared to even advocate for something you STRONGLY believe in, then can you really claim you are still truly passionate on the subject?

Overall, I enjoyed reading this article and learning something new. It is always interesting to me to hear others views on this world and life even if they are not always what I agree with personally.

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