

The Hardest Work You Will Ever Do

Hard work is virtuous. And when it comes to hard work, we seem to go to two extremes in our culture...

- We look for a way *out* of it – Like, how do I get rich, quickly, with very little training, no learning curve, and in as few hours as possible?
- We let it become an idol – It becomes our source of identity and significance. We get addicted. We become workaholics.

The fact is, hard work *can* be very rewarding, but it can also seem like it's all for nothing. Even the wise King Solomon reflected this sentiment:

But as I looked at everything I had worked so hard to accomplish, it was all so meaningless—like chasing the wind. There was nothing really worthwhile anywhere.

~ Ecclesiastes 2:11 NLT

Solomon later made sense of it all, at the end of his book. Many people misread him because they don't read all the way to the end where he concludes, basically, that life makes sense when you realize **it's not all about you**. It's about your Creator and [his purpose for your life](#).

So you can work hard for stability, for security, for significance, for the money, for the fame, for the fortune... and you might never, ever find your pursuit truly rewarding.

But there is a kind of hard work that is always rewarding. Always.

The kind of hard work I'm talking about is the heart work of **growing, developing, and disciplining yourself to become all that you are supposed to be**.

Heart work – the work of developing yourself – is actually the hardest work you'll ever do. And it's also the most rewarding.

Why is growth so hard? Because...

- You have to face your past.
- You have to be honest about your imperfections and inadequacies.
- You have to understand *why* you do the things you do.
- You have to [change your patterns, rituals, and habits](#).

- You have to [get over a lot of fear](#).
- You have to stop making excuses and take responsibility.
- You have to be consistent over a long period of time.
- You have to learn to love.
- You have to love people who are hard to love.
- You have to learn your true value to God and others.
- You have to become solution-focused rather than problem-focused.
- You have to develop selflessness.

Feel overwhelmed yet?

We often avoid hard work because it feels like *too much*. Where do I even begin? And that's why so many people quit, out of a sense of discouragement, and settle for mediocrity.

But here's the beautiful truth. You have a lifetime to get this done. And you get to take your life a day at a time. And you get to grow an inch at a time.

You're going to need people to help you – friends, family, mentors, [coaches](#), [counselors](#), and pastors.

You're going to need [good examples and models to follow](#).

You're going to need some routines and some disciplines that, practiced consistently over time, will build the very core of who you are.

If you're in school, work hard at being a great student. If you're employed by someone, work hard to honor them and earn your paycheck. If you [work for yourself](#) or do the hard work of managing your home, go at it with all your heart.

But never forget that **the hardest and most rewarding work you'll ever do is the heart work required to become the person you're supposed to be.**

One more thing... as a Christian, I believe that my personal growth and development isn't so much about becoming something I'm not. Rather, it's about growing in grace and becoming who God actually created me to **become** to begin with.

Christianity isn't about trying harder. It's about redemption, restoration, and healing from the inside out. We have mercy, grace, and the enabling power of the Holy Spirit to move us toward maturity.

> [Read more from Brandon Cox](#)