

Labor Day

1 Thess. 4:11 & 2 Thess. 3:10-12

INTRODUCTION:

I think Labor Day is a kind of strange holiday. While we call it "Labor Day," we try to do as little labor as possible and most working people have the day off. I don't recall anyone wishing me a "happy labor day" or sending me a Labor Day card. We don't give corsages, decorate the house, or give Labor Day gifts. Even the florists and greeting card manufacturers haven't found a way to capitalize on it. Of course, it's a boon to resorts and tourist centers and a bad weekend for the Church because everyone wants to travel.

Like most things, Labor Day is different things to different people. To the factory or office worker, it may be a day off. But, for mothers who have both Dad and the kids to deal with, it's a tough day. For policemen, who must deal with extra heavy traffic and alcohol abuse, it's a tough day. To farmers and ranchers, it's just another day to feed the cattle and work in the field doing things that allow no holiday.

For preachers, it is an opportunity to talk about work and its rewards. Work is a very important part of God's revelation and will for people.

Read text ([1 Thessalonians 4:11-12](#) & [2 Thessalonians 3:10-13](#)).

I. Let's think about where we are today in relation to work and how we got here:

A. God has always honored and provided work.

1. He is a worker Himself and appreciates rest. [Gen. 2:2](#)

2. He created us in His image and gave us work to do. [Eph. 2:10](#), "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

3. Even from the beginning, God gave men work to do. [Gen. 2:15](#)

B. When Jesus came to earth, God honored work:

1. Announced His birth to working shepherds
 2. Jesus Himself learned a trade and worked with His hands.
 3. Jesus chose working men as s His apostles. He called them from their labors to His side.
 4. Preached His message to the working class and common people.
- C. It is sin that has caused work to be unpleasant: **Gen. 3:17-19**
1. Presently, we think work is a necessary evil and we should do as little as possible for the greatest return.
 2. This leads to the idea of someone else doing the work for you - an employee.
 3. If circumstances permit, a slave.
 4. In America, "labor" and "management" are adversaries. Labor wants the most money for the least work. Management wants the reverse.
 5. The American way is based on this adversarial relationship.

II. The American system is not necessarily Christian.

A. Christians share an eternal, spiritual perspective.

1. Paul illustrated this in talking of masters and slaves. **Ephesians 6:5-9**
2. God cares about how we conduct our business and how we treat others.
3. We will all face judgment, both slave and free.
4. The Christian can't separate his business and his spiritual life.

B. The Christian does not live for self alone:

1. Money is an opportunity to benefit others. **Ephesians 4:28**
2. "**Honor one another above yourselves.**" **Romans 12:10**
3. "**the worker deserves his wages**" **Luke 10:7**
4. The Christian does the best he can for others, not the least he can get by with.

C. This affects the way we live and do business:

1. Christian employees do more than expected because they work for the Lord.
2. Employers do the best, not the least they can for employees because they also have a master.
3. If an employee can get by with shoddy work because his employer expects no better, he has no right to do so. He works for the Lord.

III. Here are some principles for Christians to work by:

A. [John 6:27](#), "Do not work for food that spoils"

1. Jesus means get your priorities straight.
2. Spend time working for the eternal, not the temporal.
3. Jesus is our Example. [2 Corinthians 8:9](#)
4. God will provide for our needs. [2 Cor. 9:11](#), "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God."

Principle #1: Concentrate on the eternal and you won't need to worry about how much you can get or keep in this life.

B. God warns us of the peril of wealth. [1 Tim. 6:6-10](#)

1. We are not to see our religion as a means of financial gain.
2. Those who desire riches place themselves in great danger.

Principle #2: Don't be greedy. You can be much happier if you don't have to own everything you see.

C. Christians know people are more important than property.

1. Nothing in the world is worthy of our love. [1 Jn. 2:15](#), "Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in

him."

2. The same author tells us repeatedly to love one another.

3. People are so important, it is vital we treat them right.

Principle #3: Matt. 7:12, "do to others what you would have them do to you"

CONCLUSION:

To the extent we carry our Christian principles into the work world; our work becomes a Christian ministry. This gives work new meaning and dignity.

We can't, on the other hand, claim to be Christians if our Christianity is only a one day a week affair. God does care what you do Monday through Friday whether you are an employee or employer. There is great encouragement in knowing this.