**The 3 R’s in Labor Day**

(Material gathered from Mike Mazzalongo, Steve Shepherd & Mike Riley)

The last thing we want to do on the Labor Day weekend is think about "work." But before we leave for the lake or start on the Labor Day project, let's spend a moment reviewing a few main ideas that the Bible has about our work that might be helpful when we get back to the job after the holiday is over.

**1. There Is Time For Work (Balance our Spiritual, Personal and Work life)**

Exodus 20:9 “Six days you shall labor and do all your work.”

Most people here in the U.S. work five days per week, but then there are also some that work six and seven days per week. (I use to work seven days per week, partly for necessity and partly because I became a workaholic).

Why would God command us to work six days a week? Probably for several reasons. One reason why God wants us to work is because He is a worker!

God worked when He created the heavens and the earth, but He didn’t stop there! He has been working throughout all of history! He is still at work even though we may not be aware of some of His work.

He is at work doing “behind the scenes” things as well as out in the open. BUT ONE THING IS CLEAR: GOD IS A WORKER AND HE WANTS US TO WORK!

I know that as a father I have always wanted my kids to do some things like me: Like work, live the Christian life, etc. I never cared that they took up running like I did, or bass fishing, etc., but I sure wanted them to learn to work for a living.

God is our Heavenly Father and He wants us to learn to imitate Him in life because He does everything right! He does good things and work is one of them. WORK IS GOOD FOR US ALL. It’s an indication that we’re becoming just like our Heavenly Father.

God also wants us to work because it is just plain good for us. Work benefits us in many ways. Work is a healthy thing to do. It exercises both the body and the brain.

Most people don’t die from hard work or from being overworked. They die from doing nothing.

Solomon reminds us that there is a time for everything, including work. Some people think that life is work and that everything else is an interruption. There are probably those who resent Labor Day because it prevents them from being on the job! Sacrificing rest and worship is no way to improve productivity.

**2. A Day's Work for A Day's Pay**

The Bible says, "The workman is worthy of his hire." [Luke 10:7](https://bibletalk.tv/verse/4609). Nothing is more motivating in the area of labor than to be treated fairly. This works both ways -- employers always know when their workers are not "earning" their pay, and employees quickly lose heart with employers who refuse to share the profits created by their hard labor. When employees and employers work to profit each other -- all are blessed.

Apparently, the key to enjoying our work more is in our thinking. If we think of our work as being work, it will be work. It will be tiring and draining. But if we think of our work as play, it will become more like play; much more enjoyable, much more beneficial to us and others.

And if we think of our work as being the best job in the world, it may well be! It’s all in the mind!

Example: Truck driver/delivery driver – my experience as an Amazon driver (I controlled when I worked and how much I worked and how much I made – having this kind of flexibility was great when I wanted to spend time with Hannah & Josh or if I wanted to travel but I chose to work seven days a week most of the time. Lol…)

[According to one survey](http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2010/01/05/national/main6056611.shtml), only 45 percent of Americans are satisfied with their work.

In the first century, Christian slaves had even less reason to be enthusiastic about their work. But Paul gave them a way to grasp a glimpse of glory amid the everyday grind. He wanted them to “adorn the doctrine of God,” that is, to show the beauty of their faith in Christ by how they work (Titus 2:9-10).

A significant and often overlooked way that we serve God, is in our everyday tasks.

Martin Luther understood this when he wrote,

*“***The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays — not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on the shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship***” (source).*

Brethren, as followers of Christ, let us put forth quality labor — the labor that God can put His stamp of approval on (cf. Matthew 5:16; Ephesians 6:5-8; Colossians 3:22-24).

**3. Don't Be "Selfishly" Employed**

Work also benefits us spiritually. How could that be?

Luke 11:24-26 “When an evil spirit comes out of a man, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, ‘I will return to the house I left.’ When it arrives, it finds the house swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there...”

Do you get the picture? Jesus is saying that a clean but empty house is a wide open invitation for evil to set up house. Or I could put it this way: WHEN YOU DO NOTHING YOU ARE GOING TO GET INTO TROUBLE!

I Cor. 15:58 “Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.”

THERE IT IS! The best job in the world is serving the Lord in any form! Teaching, preaching, youth worker, ladies grouper, elder, deacon, trustee, sound technician, song leader, praise teamer, pianist, organist, singer, usher, server, waiter-on-table person, church-cleaner-upper, communion preparer, coffee maker, and several others.

Yours is a job that is never done in vain! It always pays the best dividends! It carries eternal value! It does good when nothing else does any good! It accomplishes something when nothing else does!

Your job in serving the Lord, whatever it is, should be done with great zest and zeal. You are serving the Lord! You are honoring the Lord! You are glorifying the Lord!

A basic principle throughout the Bible is that no one ever worked simply for himself. Work and profit was from God but the purpose for work was to bless others not just self. Our primary objective in work is supplying the needs of our own family but God always wants us to bear in mind that we, "… have something to share with him who has need." Ephesians 4:28. Nothing guarantees the success of our labor like our generosity towards those who are poor.

CONCLUSION-----------------------------------------

ILL.- J. C. Penney. Most of you have shopped at one of his stores at some or another. J. C. Penney died in 1971 at the age of 95 and left a 1,660 store empire that he built without compromising the principles he had received from three generations of Baptist-preacher ancestors.

J. C. Penney didn’t drink or smoke and for many years, demanded the same from his employees. Penney said, “I believe in adherence to the Golden Rule, faith in God and the country.”

He also said, “I would rather be a known as a Christian than a merchant.” Three cheers for J. C. Penney!

Apparently, Penney thought that being a Christian was the most important thing in life. AND HE WAS RIGHT!

Col. 3:23-24 “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. IT IS THE LORD CHRIST YOU ARE SERVING.”

Sure, it's a holiday weekend, just keep in mind the 3 R's for Labor Day this year.

**RELAX, REJOICE, AND REMEMBER.**