

# The Theology of Work – A Labor Day Reminder

Pastor Eddie Turner

Sunday, September 3, 2017

Colossians 3:23(NLT)- Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

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Prov. 14:23(NIV)- All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty

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*Labor Day Weekend*

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*Labor Day pays tribute to the contributions and achievements of American workers. It was created by the labor movement in the late 19th century and became a federal holiday in 1894.*

*Labor Day, an annual celebration of workers and their achievements, originated during one of American labor history's most dismal chapters.*

*In the late 1800s, at the height of the [Industrial Revolution](#), the average American worked 12-hour days and seven-day weeks to sustain a basic living. Despite restrictions in some states, children as young as 5 or 6 toiled in mills, factories and mines across the country, earning a fraction of an adult wage.*

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*People of all ages, particularly the very poor and recent immigrants, often faced extremely unsafe working conditions, with insufficient access to fresh air, sanitary facilities and work breaks.*

*As manufacturing took the place of agriculture as the hotbed of American employment, labor unions, which had first appeared in the late 18th century, grew more prominent and vocal. They began organizing strikes and rallies to protest poor conditions and compel employers to renegotiate hours and pay- 8 hours of work; 8 hours of rest; 8 hours of recreation.*

*The idea of a "workingman's holiday," celebrated on the first Monday in September, caught on in industrial centers across the country, and many states passed legislation recognizing it.*

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*On Sept. 5, 1881, around 10,000 workers assembled in New York City for a parade.*

*According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the parade inspired similar events across the country. By 1894, more than half of states celebrated a "workingmen's holiday."*

*Later that same year, President Grover Cleveland signed a bill declaring the first Monday in September as Labor Day.*

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So, this first weekend of September, as we have for the last 136 years, we celebrate the Workingman and Workingwoman; their achievements, their labor and sacrifice which have shaped America to be the greatest nation on earth.

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A recent poll by the Gallop Organization revealed that well over half of America's workforce do not enjoy their daily work.

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Colossians 3:23(NLT)- Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

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Col. 3:23(NIV)- Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters

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Col. 3:23(NASB)- Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men,

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Col. 3:23(TLB)- Work hard and cheerfully at all you do, just as though you were working for the Lord and not merely for your masters,

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Work is a God Idea:

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Gen. 1:1 (NIV)~ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

Five words into the Bible and we see God working; “In the beginning God created....”

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Gen.2:15 (NIV)~ The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

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*The work Adam and Eve did brought joy and value to their life. It wasn't until sin came into the world, that it turned valuable work into difficult and unsatisfying labor.*

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Gen. 3:17-19 (NIV)~ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’

“Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”

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*God worked, Adam and Eve, God's first man and woman was given godly instruction to work and that work brought fulfillment to their life and blessing to creation. But it doesn't stop there, the value of work was embraced by Jesus the Son of God.*

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John 5:1-17 (NIV)~ Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. <sup>2</sup> Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. <sup>3</sup> Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the paralyzed. <sup>[4]</sup> <sup>5</sup> One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight years. <sup>6</sup> When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, “Do you want to get well?”

<sup>7</sup> “Sir,” the invalid replied, “I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me.”

<sup>8</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.” <sup>9</sup> At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath, <sup>10</sup> and so the Jewish leaders said to the man who had been healed, “It is the Sabbath; the law forbids you to carry your mat.”

<sup>11</sup> But he replied, “The man who made me well said to me, ‘Pick up your mat and walk.’”

<sup>12</sup> So they asked him, “Who is this fellow who told you to pick it up and walk?”

<sup>13</sup> The man who was healed had no idea who it was, for Jesus had slipped away into the crowd that was there.

<sup>14</sup> Later Jesus found him at the temple and said to him, “See, you are well again. Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you.” <sup>15</sup> The man went away and told the Jewish leaders that it was Jesus who had made him well.

<sup>16</sup> So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jewish leaders began to persecute him. <sup>17</sup> In his defense Jesus said to them, “My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I too am working.”

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John 4:31-34 (NIV) - <sup>31</sup> Meanwhile his disciples urged him, “Rabbi, eat something.” <sup>32</sup> But he said to them, “I have food to eat that you know nothing about.”

<sup>33</sup> Then his disciples said to each other, “Could someone have brought him food?” <sup>34</sup> “My food,” said Jesus, “is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.”

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We worship the God of Creation who values work

God’s first man and woman were assigned work to bring fulfillment to themselves and blessing to creation

God’s only Son, Jesus, embraced the value of work he saw in his Father.

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God desires for each of us fulfillment and satisfaction, along with maturity and personal development. These benefits and blessings can only be won and learned through the discipline of work.

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Ecc. 2:24(NLT)- So I decided there is nothing better than to enjoy food and drink and to find satisfaction in work. Then I realized that these pleasures are from the hand of God.

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*Change your view of work; change your world!*

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*“change your apartment; change the world”*

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*Change your view of work; change your world!*

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Col. 3:23(NLT)- Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

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*1). Your Work Place is Full Time Ministry Space:*

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*church work is not the harvest field-church work is rearranging the harvest in the barn. Real ministry takes place in the harvest field-your work place is your full-time ministry place.*

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*2). Your Work Space is Sacred Space:*

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*3). Decide to Work for an Expectation Beyond Friday:*

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Prov. 6:6-8(NLT)- Take a lesson from the ants, you lazybones. Learn from their ways and become wise!

<sup>7</sup> Though they have no prince or governor or ruler to make them work, <sup>8</sup> they labor hard all summer, gathering food for the winter