

Biblical Reflections on Labor Day

Labor Day is a holiday when we can reflect on the dignity and importance of work.

Work is one of what we call “the five commandments of prosperity” found in the Bible. The other “commandments”—giving, learning, saving and management—are all fruits of working, so work is the most important of God’s financial commandments.

The requirement that we work to meet our needs goes back to our first parents, Adam and Eve. God had given Adam a job tending the Garden of Eden before the fall of mankind. The work would have been pleasant in the productive garden, and Adam had plenty of time to walk with God (Gen. 2:15). It is also worth noting that God gave man a job before he gave him a wife. After the fall, however, Adam was required to work “by the sweat of [his] brow” (Gen. 3:19a, NIV) to provide for his family. Adam lost the place of prosperity God gave him, and his sin made his work harder.

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Sin can also make our work harder if we have left the place of prosperity God has established for us. For example, we’ve seen people whom God called to be tentmakers, providing for their personal ministry through labor like the apostle Paul (Acts 18:3); people who lost their prosperity by trying to be a church-supported minister, and vice versa. Of course, refusal to work is also a pathway to poverty (Prov. 6:10-11). We are commanded to help the poor (Deut. 10:11), but God also says that a person who refuses to work should not eat (2 Thess. 3:10-12).

In reality work is an act of worship, to be done with sincerity and reverence for the Lord. We should work as if we work for the Lord, knowing that the Lord will reward us (Col. 4:22-24). God wants us to realize the prosperity that comes from work. Work brings respect and frees us from dependence on others (1 Thess. 4:11-12). Through hard work, our desires are satisfied (). Hard work also brings promotion and rulership (Prov. 12:24).

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It is the secret to accumulating wealth (Prov. 10:4).

So this week spend a little time with the Lord reflecting on your labor. We believe that the Lord has "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jer. 29:11b). If your labor is not producing hope and a future for you, seek the Lord about your work. It may be that He has a better place of prosperity for you, but it could also be that you may need an attitude adjustment where you are before you can realize your destiny.

Begin to work as unto the Lord, and the Lord will begin to work for you.

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