

Labor Day

Introduction; Tomorrow is 'Labor Day'

- A. Labor Day is a legal holiday celebrated on the first Monday in September in the U.S.
1. The celebration of Labor Day, in honor of the working class, was initiated in the U.S. in 1882 by the Knights of Labor, who held a large parade in New York City. In 1884 the group held a parade on the first Monday of September and passed a resolution to hold all future parades on that day and to designate the day as Labor Day.
 2. In 1894 the U.S. Congress made the day a legal holiday. Parades, and speeches by labor leaders and political figures, mark Labor Day celebrations —2004 Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia.
 3. **Labor Day;** A U.S. and Canadian public holiday: a national holiday observed in the United States and Canada on the first Monday in September in honor of working people —Microsoft Encarta Dictionary
- B. The idea of Labor day is not to work but to rest and honor those who do work.
1. Labor day traditionally marks the end of the summer vacation period. Children usually go back to school.
 2. However things change. With technology and a higher standard of living even common people can vacation any time of the year. And some schools are open all year round.
- C. God expects man to work.
1. From the very beginning God expected man to work. Paradise was not a place of rest. However the work there was not back-breaking.
 2. God also expects man to rest. Jehovah, Himself, set the example in the beginning of resting after a week of working.
 3. There is not only physical work and rest but also spiritual work and rest. God expects us to be busy spiritually as well.
 4. Today we will consider man's responsibility to work both physically and spiritually. Rest follows work. Those who do not work should not expect to enjoy the special times of rest.
- D. Today we will consider the work Jehovah God has given man to do.

I. We have physical work to do.

- A. From the very beginning man had work to do.
1. Paradise was not a place without work. Man needs to work and to keep busy. Someone has said, "*Idle hands are the devil's workshop.*"
 2. Genesis 1 and 2 mention the work that man had to do. They are to subdue the earth and fill it. They are to work to control it.
 3. *Gen 1:26-28 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."* ²⁷ *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.* ²⁸ *Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth."*
 4. *Gen 2:15 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it.*
 5. Adam was to tend the garden and keep it. He was to take care of it. Eve was his helper. She had to work too. They worked together taking care of the garden of Eden.
- B. There seems to have been a change after being cast out of Paradise.
1. The work in Paradise did not seem to be difficult. It was not too hard. They were not worn out by the work. However this changed after they sinned by eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

2. *Gen 3:17-19 Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. 18 Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. 19 In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."*
3. We do not know if thorns and thistles are created at this time or if they simply become stronger or dominant. They do not seem to have been a problem in Eden.
4. Evolutionists say the best naturally survive. This may have been true in Eden. However, now weeds and thorns are stronger. Anyone who has a garden or lawn knows this.
5. After being cast out of the garden we see Eve and Adam's children working as shepherds and farmers. They also became inventors and builders.
6. *Gen 4:2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.*
7. *Gen 4:21-22 His brother's name was Jubal. He was the father of all those who play the harp and flute. 22 And as for Zillah, she also bore Tubal-Cain, an instructor of every craftsman in bronze and iron. And the sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.*

C. The rest of the O.T. shows man working. God commanded man to work.

1. Working is praised though it was not always rewarding. There is blessing and reward in working. However there is also hardship and disappointment.
2. *Prov 12:24 The hand of the diligent will rule, But the lazy man will be put to forced labor.*
3. *Prov 13:11 Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, But he who gathers by labor will increase.*
4. *Prov 14:23 In all labor there is profit, But idle chatter leads only to poverty.*
5. *Prov 21:25 The desire of the lazy man kills him, For his hands refuse to labor.*
6. *Eccl 1:3 What profit has a man from all his labor In which he toils under the sun?*
7. *Eccl 1:8 All things are full of labor; Man cannot express it. The eye is not satisfied with seeing, Nor the ear filled with hearing.*
8. *Eccl 2:23 For all his days are sorrowful, and his work burdensome; even in the night his heart takes no rest. This also is vanity.*
9. *Eccl 5:15 As he came from his mother's womb, naked shall he return, To go as he came; And he shall take nothing from his labor Which he may carry away in his hand.*

D. The N.T. also shows us that we must work.

1. We must work to support ourselves, our families and the church. We work that we might help others who are in need. We pay our taxes and do good with our wages.
2. *Eph 4:28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.*
3. *1 Thess 4:9-12 But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; 10 and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; 11 that you also aspire to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you, 12 that you may walk properly toward those who are outside, and that you may lack nothing.*
4. We see the need to work with our hands to support ourselves. We do this to, 'walk properly towards those who are outside'. This means we give them no opportunity to blaspheme the church because the members are lazy and try to live off of the work of others.
5. *2 Thess 3:10-12 For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. 11 For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. 12 Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.*
6. Some in the church there were not working. This may have been due to their expectation of the end of the world coming soon. However we must work until the end to support ourselves, the church and our families.
7. *1 Tim 5:8 But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied*

the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

- E. There is to be rest for our labor.
1. God set the example in the beginning. He rested after His work was done. I really doubt that He was tired or bored. He showed man that as He rested, man needed times of rest.
 2. *Gen 2:1-3 Thus the heavens and the earth, and all the host of them, were finished. 2 And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. 3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.*
 3. We cannot rest from our labor if we do not work. Those who do not work have nothing to rest from. The word of God has always condemned laziness and being idle.
 4. *1 Tim 5:11-13 But refuse the younger widows; for when they have begun to grow wanton against Christ, they desire to marry, 12 having condemnation because they have cast off their first faith. 13 And besides they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house, and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not.*
 5. Because God rested He commanded a day of rest for the Jews in the Ten Commandments. Evidently man did not learn the need for rest by their self and so Jehovah commanded it. The Jew were probably not given rest in Egypt as slaves. Jehovah does give them rest.
 6. *Exod 20:8-10 Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the LORD your God. In it you shall do no work; you, nor your son, nor your daughter, nor your male servant, nor your female servant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates.*
 7. We are not commanded to have a specific day of rest today. God leaves it up to us. We must set aside time to rest after we have finished our work. However we must not rest too much.
- F. We see that we must work to enjoy rest.

II. We also have spiritual work to do.

- A. We are saved by faith. We are forgiven of our sins & blessed by Christ when we turn to Him.
1. However this does not mean we do not have to do anything to be saved or to stay saved. We will be judged by our works and obedience to the faith.
 2. *Eph 2:8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.*
 3. *2 Cor 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*
 4. Our salvation is not on the basis of good works or law-keeping. We do not earn our salvation like we earn our salary.
 5. We are in sin and are lost —Rom 2:23, 6:23. We cannot save ourselves. There are no works that can earn salvation. Therefore we must turn to God and do what He says to be saved. We must do what it takes to find the blessings of forgiveness in the blood of Christ.
 6. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
 7. *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*
 8. We see we must believe, repent and be baptized to be forgiven of our sins and be saved. This is not difficult. This is not backbreaking work. These things earn nothing by themselves. It is only when we do them in obedience to Christ they mean something.
 9. *2 Cor 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*
 10. *Rom 6:3-4 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.*
 11. We see that repentant believers are baptized into Christ become new. They are new in that they are now forgiven of their sins and children of God. They are saved.

- B. As Christians we are saved by our faith. However it must be an obedient faith.
1. Ephesians 2:8-10 (above) tells us we are created in Christ Jesus for good works. We saw we became new (created) in Christ in baptism. Baptism is an act of faith because it is not a work of man but of God.
 2. Being created in Christ for good works does not mean we decide what it good to do. God's word tells us what good works are. It tells us how to worship, live and think.
 3. *Titus 3:1-2 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.*
 4. *1 Cor 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*
 5. *Phil 2:12 Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;*
 6. We see clearly we must be working in the kingdom of the Lord. We must be ready to do any good deed. We must abound in the work of our Lord. We do this to work out our own salvation.
 7. *Col 3:5-6 Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience...*
 8. *Col 3:12-13 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.*
 9. We see then some of the works and the type of character we need to have if we want to please God and have the hope of heaven when this life is over.
- C. There is spiritual rest for those who work.
1. God has promised heaven as an eternal rest for those who labor in His kingdom. 'They will rest from their labors.' Therefore they must have worked for Him on the earth.
 2. *Rev 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' " "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."*
 3. Jesus spoke of a rest many times. He promised a rest and blessings for those who were faithful and working. We need to work for this.
 4. *Matt 25:21 "His lord said to him, "Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord."*
 5. *Matt 25:34 "Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'"*
 6. *Matt 11:28-29 "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."*
 7. *1 Thess 1:10 ...wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*
 8. There is the wrath to come for those who are not laboring in the kingdom of the Lord. There is rest for those who work. We must be workers.
 9. This does not mean we are earning our salvation and that we save ourselves. Works mean nothing for sinners. We must have our sins washed away by the blood of Christ for our works to do us any good.
 10. *Heb 4:9 There remains therefore a rest for the people of God.*

D. We see again we must work to enjoy rest.

Conclusion: We need a time of rest.

- A. We need times of physical rest after working all week.
- B. We are promised a time of spiritual rest if we are working for the Lord in this life.
1. This is for those who believe, repent and are baptized to become Christians.
 2. It is for baptized believers who are working in the Lord's vineyard.
- C. If the church can help anyone in obeying and serving Jesus Christ, please let us know what we can do.