

LABOR DAY SERMON SEPTEMBER 2011 “CREATED FOR WORK”

II Thessalonians 3:6-15

Today is Labor Day Sunday.

The day we honor the working people of the earth.

Today I want to say a special thanks to all you 50 and older.

Because you have worked over 100,000 hours in your life.

And there is an enormous army of young workers out there as well.

In fact let me give you just a couple of the top ten reason.

That young people know their working today.

#10. You know the people at the Fast Food places better than your next door neighbors.

#05. Your grocery list has been on your refrigerator so long some of the products don't even exist anymore.

#01 Top Ten reason young people know their working today.

#01. Cleaning up the dining area means getting the fast food bags out of the back seat of your car.

Just because we're working doesn't mean we're happy!

2011 statistics show that

The average man changes jobs every four and one half years,

The average woman every three years?

So that regardless of the profession

There is a lack of satisfaction in our work.

Maybe from inadequate wages, schedules, and countless other pressures

Albert Einstein was a brilliant man.

He was known for his theory of relativity and Quantum mechanics and other theories,

He had the pictures of two other great scientists on his office walls:

Sir Isaac Newton and James Clerk Maxwell.

BUT --Toward the end of Einstein's life

He changed the pictures of Newton and Maxwell with

Mahatma Gandhi and Albert Schweitzer.

When asked about the change,

He said:

“I discovered it was service and not science that makes the difference in life.”

As he put it.

“Only a life lived for others is a life worthwhile.”

I. GOD CREATED YOU FOR WORK.

The Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it. Genesis 2:15

The very first thing the Lord did with Adam was to put him to work.

This was before he was banned from the Garden of Eden.

Which means that God created us for work before sin entered the world.

Sorry friends, but Heaven may just be a place of work.

SLIDE---Young people when you mom or dad ask you to do something,
 To clean up the room
 Mow the lawn,
 Wash the car,
 Clean the basement
 Sweep out the garage.
 You don't have a problem with them.
 You have a problem with GOD- not your MOM OR DAD.
 GOD created you for work.

Believe it or not he didn't create you just for water skiing,
 Summer baseball, swimming,
 Cruising 6th Ave. Basketball, camps.
 Or for video games and television.
 Those are all well and good.

SLIDE----If you learn the ethics of work
 The joy of a job well done.
 You will succeed in life.

One employer at a fast food place said that his young people give %100 to their work.

- * 12% Monday
- * 23% Tuesday
- * 40% Wednesday
- * 20% Thursday
- * 5% Friday

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. II Thess 3:6

Think about it.

The man considered the greatest scientist of the 20th century knew
 "Doing things for other give us life with a capital L!"

Work is so important that in Exodus 34:21
 God gives this command:

Six days you shall work but on the seventh day you shall rest. Exodus 34:21KJV

That's why we honor the working people today.

I think of Waitresses who take so much abuse from fussy patrons.

Because the second egg wasn't fried hard as the first.

Baggers at grocery stores who can't get it right for everyone- plastic or paper?

What about the Garbage men and women whose noses just can't smell the roses anymore.

Carpenters and cement men, roofers and asphalt layers

Whose wives and sweethearts haven't seen their husbands;

Finger nails clean in a century.

But in working to serve others.

But there is a great sense of satisfaction in our world.

When we can work to serve others.

Paul writes:

If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. II Thessalonians 3:10

Send that to your congressmen.

As they contemplate balancing the budget for the future.

I was watching Dr. Phil not long ago.

He was dealing with adult kids who are mooching of their parents.

One brother in his mid- 30's whose parents have always supported him. Has never had to face the responsibilities and hardships involved in a job.

Well as a consequence he is hopelessly immature in many areas of life.

And always sees himself as the victim.

God instituted work:

One of the primary purposes of work is to develop our character.

II. GOD CREATED WORK TO MAKE LIFE ENJOYABLE

Whatever you do, do your work heartily as for the Lord rather than for men... It is the Lord Christ whom you serve. Colossians 3:23-24

I was watching the news not long ago and they were interviewing

A couple in their early 80's who raised produce for their community farmers market.

They asked them why they went to so much trouble.

Working 6 to 7 hours a day getting ready for the market.

She said: "We could get a lot more money for our produce,

But we just want to help our community

And beside we like doing it."

SLIDE---That's the heart of the American Work ethic.

Our forbearers came to this country out of Ireland, Germany, Russian, Scandanivia,

To find a place where they could make a life,

Not just for themselves.

But for their children's- children.

SLIDE---They homesteaded this land

Broke the sod, Lived in the harsh elements

Raised their families

Buried their dead.

To provide a future for their families.

That was the example the Apostle Paul wanted to leave

We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. 9 We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. II Thessalonians 3:7-9

It is sad to say that we are fast becoming a welfare nation.

Capable people who live on benefits,

and unemployment for extended months and years.

And we can't fault them when the Government gives it to them.

But are we creating a nation of citizens
 Who feel no longer responsibility for their own lives?
 Citizens who are more willing to take a hand out than a hand up?

A third grade Sunday school teacher gave out stars to the children for coming to class,
 having their Bibles, and bringing another child with them. She was getting ready to hand out the
 stars, when she dropped them on the floor. There were little silver stars everywhere. She got
 down on her hands and knees and began picking them up with her fingernails. Then she realized
 that all the children were just sitting there watching her so she said: "Won't somebody give me a
 hand?" The kids all began to applaud.

We have a society full of people who will watch others work
 And feel they should all reap the benefits from it.

The original intention of the Gov welfare plan
 Was only to be a stop gap
 To give people a second chance.
 But too many in our program today,
 See this as a inherent right.
 And that work is beneath them
 And we insult them to suggest it.

John Stoffel on Nightline interviewed panhandlers in Las Vegas.
 Many who simply begged on the streets for 4-6 hours a day.
 He offered them a job, bus tokens, and gave them \$20. To tide them over
 For a guaranteed job if they would come to work on lawns and landscapes.
 But only one showed up.
 The rest didn't come because they didn't want to come.
 They wanted to live with their hand out
 And not receive a hand up.

A selfish life doesn't give anything back to it community,
 Or to its country.

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat." 11 We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. 12 Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. 13 And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. II Thessalonians 3:10-13

If you're a Christian here today,
 And you are not incapacitated and suffer from disabilities,
 Then service and work isn't really an option.
 It's an essential.
 True joy and fulfillment come only when we give out what we take in,
 And pass on to others what we have received.

Compare it to having your arms full of Christmas presents.
 You can't accept any more until you've given away what you're already holding.
 And that's just like God's gifts and blessings.
 He has more he wants to give us,

But we've got to make room first, by offering what we already have.

I'm not only talking about your money, but about giving yourself, your time, your talents, Just for the joy of knowing that is what you were created to do.

III. WORK IS A BLESSING GIVEN TO US FROM GOD

King Solomon wrote:

Here is what I have seen to be good and fitting...to enjoy oneself in all one's labor in which he toils under the sun during the few years of his life which God has given him; for this is his reward. Furthermore...to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor, this is the gift of God. Ecclesiastes 5:18-19

When was the last time you did something for another person,
That really cost you something.
And when it was over you would do it again,
Because it gave you a sense of satisfaction.

You just enjoyed yourself in your labor.

And you found out that that is exactly what God wants us to do
To lose ourselves in service,
Is the greatest pay we'll ever receive.

13 And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. 14 If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. 15 Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. II Thessalonians 3:13-15

SLIDE ---One of the toys that we had for our kids and grandkids
was a round ball with different cut out shapes on all sides of it.
One's was triangle, a star, a circle, a square, a hexagon,
Each piece has a specific shape and kids learn
That the circle won't fit the triangle
The square won't fit the star.
They learn shapes by matching the pieces into the right hole.

That's the way God made each of us.
We're different.
And the world and the church is all full of different niches and holes.
And God has created someone specific to fill
each and every one of them.
Once you discover what your place is to fill,
You will find that everything else falls into place behind it.

It's really about God working through us to accomplish his plans.
And every one of you is important in the service of our Lord.

Think about it this way:
If our church comes off as unfriendly to visitors,
It's because one of us didn't step up here to greet them.

Remember two numbers when you come to church

#3 RULE--Visitors leave the church within three minutes after the service,
 We have four exits on this sanctuary.
 Unless you greet them within three minutes—we miss them.

And the #10 Rule

Make sure you greet every around you within 10 feet of where you are
 Before you attach yourself to your old friends and acquaintances.
 Then we can grow a church.

Not one person should ever leave this place without feeling welcome.
 Accepted, listened too.

Maybe God doesn't ask you to go to serve in China,
 But just to serve the china in fellowship kitchen.

Jesus said:

When you do it for the least of these my brethren you do it for me. Matt. 25:40

You will be blessed
 So on this Labor Day

First of all:

1. Recognize that finding yourself a job is your responsibility, not the governments
2. Recognize that work is what really brings true satisfaction,
3. Recognize that work that please God is that which serves others.

During WWII a group of French soldiers were captured.

They were made to work for the German in their munitions factory.

They literally had to make bombs,

Knowing that some of those bombs would be dropped on their own people.

Maybe even their own families. One of the captives was a scientist.

He figured out how to construct the bombs so that they wouldn't actually detonate when they hit
 Sure enough when they bombed France, the bombs came down, but didn't explode.

Experts were called in to find out what was going on.

When they disassembled one of the non-detonating bombs,

There was a note inside.

It said something like this.

“Doing the best we can, with what we have, where we are.”

That is the biblical standard of WORK.

And I trust that on this Labor Day weekend,

That is what can be said of you:

“Doing the best I can, with what I have, where I am, for the kingdom of God.”