

Strategies for Advancing God's Kingdom
(September 6, 2020, By Rev. Anthony Menzel)

Today on Labor Day we celebrate workers...

<https://www.dol.gov/general/laborday/history>

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the **labor** movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It constitutes a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country.

((The form that the observance and celebration of Labor Day should take was outlined in the first proposal of the holiday — a street parade to exhibit to the public "the strength and esprit de corps of the trade and labor organizations" of the community, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of the workers and their families. This became the pattern for the celebrations of Labor Day. Speeches by prominent men and women were introduced later, as more emphasis was placed upon the economic and civic significance of the holiday. Still later, by a resolution of the American Federation of Labor convention of 1909, the Sunday preceding Labor Day was adopted as Labor Sunday and dedicated to the spiritual and educational aspects of the labor movement.

The character of the Labor Day celebration has changed in recent years, especially in large industrial centers where mass displays and huge parades have proved a problem. This change, however, is more a shift in emphasis and medium of expression. Labor Day addresses by leading union officials, industrialists, educators, clerics, and government officials are given wide coverage in newspapers, radio, and television.

The vital force of labor added materially to the highest standard of living and the greatest production the world has ever known and has brought us closer to the realization of our traditional ideals of economic and political democracy. It is appropriate, therefore, that the nation pays tribute on Labor Day to the creator of so much of the nation's strength, freedom, and leadership – the American worker.)))))

***Everyone is important...

1 Corinthians 12:12-26

12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also *is* Christ. **13** For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink [g]into one Spirit. **14** For in fact the body is not one member but many.

15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? **16** And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,” is it therefore not of the body? **17** If the whole body *were* an eye, where *would be* the hearing? If the whole *were* hearing, where *would be* the smelling? **18** But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. **19** And if they were all one member, where *would* the body *be*?

20 But now indeed *there are* many members, yet one body. **21** And the eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you”; nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” **22** No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. **23** And those *members* of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable *parts* have greater modesty, **24** but our presentable *parts* have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that *part* which lacks it, **25** that there should be no [h]schism in the body, but *that* the members should have the same care for one another. **26** And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with *it*; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with *it*.

***So we should appreciate what each person contributes to the church and to society in general...

***Labor Day is time to remind us to rest even as we work to advance Christ's kingdom.

Sometimes we feel really burdened down because we are trying to carry burdens that aren't ours...

1 Corinthians 10:12-13

12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. **13** No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to [d]bear *it*.

Part of that escape is taking the time necessary to stay close to the Lord Jesus.

John 15:1-6

15 “I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. **2** Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He [a]takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. **3** You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. **4** Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me.

5 “I am the vine, you *are* the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. **6** If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned.

Escaping to be with the Lord Jesus is the only way we will have the strength to escape from sin and all the tricks and traps of the enemy.

Matthew 11:28-30

28 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 [f]gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. **30** For My yoke *is* easy and My burden is light.”

Even as we work hard to advance Christ’s kingdom, God wants us to have peace in our souls.

Psalms 127:1-2

Unless the Lord builds the house,
They labor in vain who build it;
Unless the Lord guards the city,
The watchman stays awake in vain.

2

*It is vain for you to rise up early,
To sit up late,
To eat the bread of sorrows;
For so He gives His beloved sleep.*

The Lord Jesus wants us to sleep...

Sometimes we just have to leave things on our agenda undone until another day...

The principle of resting in God is part of the The Ten Commandments, the 10 main rules that God gave us under the Old Testament or pact.

Exodus 20:8-11

8 “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. **11** For *in* six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that *is* in them, and rested the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it.

The Lord Jesus doesn't want us to be so busy that we don't have time to spend time with Him.

His main reason for creating us is to spend time with us...

Revelation 21:6-7

6 And He said to me, “It[c] is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. **7** He who overcomes [d]shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son.

What hurts the Lord Jesus the most is when we forget about Him...

Jeremiah 2:32

Can a virgin forget her ornaments,

Or a bride her attire?

Yet My people have forgotten Me days without number.

***As workers for the Lord Jesus, celebrating past victories, great and small, will encourage us...

***Resting will help us to have the strength to keep working for the Lord

***A last important strategy is to be diligent in working for Him when it is our time to do so.

While we should not carry unnecessary burdens, we should to purpose in our hearts to work for the Lord, according to the purpose that He has for us...

John 9:4

4 I[a] must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work.

That work is going to include some suffering.

Philippians 1:27-30

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, **28** and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but [f]to you of salvation, and that from God. **29** For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, **30** having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear *is* in me.

We are not supposed to just believe in Jesus Christ but also to suffer for Him...

Romans 8:16-17

16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, **17** and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him*, that we may also be glorified together.

Initially salvation is free, and it can't be bought with money. However, persevering in Christ often does cost us... It costs us our time and effort...

We can be saved by the skin of our teeth, but if we want more from God, if we want all we can get from the Lord Jesus, we have to put forth effort..,

1 Corinthians 3:9-15

9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, *you are* God's building. **10** According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. **11** For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. **12** Now if anyone builds on this foundation *with* gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, **13** each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. **14** If anyone's work which he has built on *it* endures, he will receive a reward. **15** If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.

We need to remember that our efforts for Christ's kingdom will determine our position for eternity.

On the other hand, our efforts for earthly things are important on certain levels, such as taking care of our families.

However, they should definitely be secondary as compared to our efforts for Christ's kingdom.

Luke 12:13-21

13 Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me."

14 But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" **15** And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of [c]covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. **17** And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' **18** So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. **19** And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, *and* be merry.'" **20** But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'

21 "So *is* he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

So it is time for us to work while it is the season to do so...

Proverbs 10:5

He who gathers in summer *is* a wise son;

He who sleeps in harvest *is* a son who causes shame.

We need to do our best to complete the work the Lord Jesus has for us to do.

Colossians 3:23-24

23 And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, **24** knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for[a] you serve the Lord Christ.