

Finding Time for God, Work, Family, and Play

On this Labor Day Week of September 2024, I have some thoughts about how God, Work, Family, and Play fit into a pattern of Godly PEACE. After all, all four of these concepts are important in our everyday lives.

I'm reminded of the Fourth Commandment found in Exodus 20:8-10A and in Deuteronomy 5:12-14A, "Observe the Sabbath Day and keep it holy as the LORD your God commanded you. Six days shall you labor and do all your work. But the seventh is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; you shall not do any work."

God is our creator, so the admonition to take time to worship and give thanks to God for our many blessings almost goes without saying. The issue of course is that at times we lose our focus on God because of our compulsive need to work or to take care of family needs, or to simply have fun. Putting God first keeps life in perspective.

Work is important because God wants us to earn a living and not be dependent on the society as a whole. Work is also good for the psyche. There is a good kind of pride in doing a good job at what we do, and there is nothing wrong with expecting to be paid a living wage. Our problem is when work begins to so dominate our lives, that we have little room for God, family, or times to relax and have fun. High blood pressure often results.

Meeting the needs of our family is another Biblical principle. Parents and children need each other. Families are schools for the learning of what good relationships are all about. Families are where we learn how to be honest with each other and how to disagree in respectful ways. This is where we learn the art of forgiveness, or as Jesus says it to forgive as we have been forgiven. This is what laying down our lives in love for the people God puts in our paths is all about. Yet, when families are so important that there is no room for our creator, we get into trouble. We can also neglect to do our best at work when we become too interwoven in the lives of those close to us. And when having a great family dominates our lives, we may even neglect times to relax, play and have a good time.

Lastly, we all need time to have some fun. I remember the scripture from Nehemiah 8:10 “The joy of the Lord is our strength.” God wants us to be happy. God wants us to laugh and enjoy our lives. Yet when having fun becomes our obsession, something is wrong. Our relationship with God will suffer, and so will our commitment to family and work.

God, Work, Family, and Play are all important, but each one needs to be kept in perspective. I like to think that when I put God first in my life, that Work, Family, and Play will work themselves out, because God wants us to work, to have great families, and to take time to relax and have a good time.

Maybe that’s what Labor Day Week is all about! We celebrate God’s love for us by having a vocation that provides a decent living for our families, working to build good and lasting family relationships that overcome the tests of time, and learning the value of simply making time to relax and have some safe, good ol’ fashioned fun.

When our lives are well rounded, Paul’s admonition in Romans 8:28 becomes even more important: “And we know that all things work together for the good of those who love the Lord and are called according to God’s purpose.”

That’s my prayer for us. May we live well-rounded lives. May God be kept at the center of all we do and say. May we find a deep satisfaction with the vocation that God has called us to do. May we build good family relationships. And finally, may we find time to relax, play, and be happy.

Have a great week! Let God be God. Don’t forget to work. Be a good family member and leave room for times of happiness and joy!

God’s Best,

John

Prayers and Up-coming Events:

We begin a new Sunday School study this Sunday, September 8. We begin a study of the New Testament book of James. Join us each Sunday at 9:30 a.m.

Join us this next Saturday at the Bridge as we help feed the hungry in Dallas. We meet at the church at 7 a.m. and go to the Bridge together.

- Sept 5 9:30 AM – 12:30 PM Making Memories/Caregivers Morning Out in FH
- Sept 6 9:30 AM Toddler Music Class with Ms. Audrey (Fellowship Hall)
- Sept 7 Serve Breakfast at The Second Chance Café/The Bridge. Meet at the church at 7:00 AM
- Sept 9 9:20 AM WPC/WPPK Committee meets (Parlor)
- Sept 9 12:30 PM Dallas Area Parkinson Society/Dance Class for PD (Fellowship Hall)