

Labor Day | Preparing, Celebrating, Discipling

I. The Christian's Relationship with Work

- Genesis 1-3
- God is the eternal First-Worker. He built the cosmos, He formed man, He engineered woman, He is the great and glorious Producer. And then He invited mankind into His work.
- To be in a relationship with God is to *participate* in the work of God. But don't misunderstand. We don't work to *be* in a relationship with God; we work *because* we're in a relationship with God.
- Work that truly satisfies and work that eternally lasts can only be accomplished by God's people because God's work is as perfect as He is.
- Due to sin, God cursed the ground in order to make the beautiful, enjoyable, profitable, satisfying act of work . . . toilsome, burdensome, uncomfortable, and sorrowful. This is why there are two reasons people don't like work.
 - **People don't want to do God's work.** This refers to unbelievers in particular, but it also applies to believers. Every time we sin, we're choosing our work over God's work.
 - **People don't want to experience pain they don't find valuable.**
 - We all work. You can't avoid work. The dictionary definitions of work are so broad that we can say that we're working when we're asleep.
 - Everything we do is work, but we only do the work we want to do. And we only want to do the work we believe will give us satisfaction.
 - And we all know that work involves pain. But each human is well practiced in the economic method of balancing costs and benefits. It's not that we don't want to experience pain, it's that we want to choose the pain we believe is valuable.
 - But here's where mankind's utter foolishness is revealed.
 - God commands us to obey Him. When we do we will experience spiritual blessings beyond imagining including the satisfaction of being involved in eternally valuable work.
 - And yet we so often refuse to worship God and instead worship ourselves because we want to be satisfied in a different way. We want the high, we want the thrill, we want the sinful pleasure . . . but what is the outcome. More pain than we ever realized.
 - Not only does the satisfaction of sin never last or produce anything of value, it actually hurts us. It hurts the people around us. And it hurts our relationship with God . . . if we even have one.

II. Preparing to Celebrate God on Labor Day

- Check out the Labor Day page at CelebrationOfGod.com.
- Read the Labor Day Bible Reading.
- Pray.
- Set up your Celebration Wall.
- Invite your fellow disciples to prepare their hearts as well.
- You may also need to plan a menu, clean the house, and put together activities. I
- t's always best to plan and prepare for those beforehand so that you're not running around like a crazy person flying by the seat of your pants. Busyness is a terrible distraction from worship; therefore, we should strive to reduce the busyness of an ill-prepared celebration so that we can focus on what really matters . . . celebrating God.

III. Celebrating God on Labor Day

- In America Labor Day is typically celebrated by not laboring. So, instead of laboring at work, we labor at restful activities like feasting and playing and fellowshiping and resting.
- But, we must remember that most of us have probably celebrated ourselves on Labor Day more than we have God.
 - It's not hard to worship ourselves on a holiday. We eat the food we want and play the games we want and spent time with the people we want . . . simply because we want it. We give no thought to what God would have us eat or what God would have us do or how He would have us do it or with whom He would have us fellowship.
 - That's the difference between celebrating self and celebrating God. The motivation is the key. Am I eating this third hamburger because I want to or am I avoiding gluttony because God wants me to?
 - This is one of the most difficult parts of The Year Long Celebration of God. Most of us are pretty used to doing the right things in the right ways for our own honor and glory. But we need to intentionally do the right things in the right ways for God's honor and glory . . . and that doesn't happen accidentally. It must be purposeful.
- Therefore, if you did a good job preparing to celebrate God on Labor Day, then you likely planned to do most of the following:
 - **You plan to approach each activity, moment, and opportunity with the thought, "How can I best glorify God right now?"** This is a practical approach to I Corinthians 10:31.
 - **You plan to talk about God with those you're evangelizing or discipling.** We talk about the things we love, therefore, it would make sense that — at least once — a conversation will include deliberate celebration of God, His mercy, and His gift of work.
 - **You plan to pray to God.** Every good gift comes from above, so plan to be specific in your praise of God. Thank Him for the food and the fun and the weather, but also thank Him for His merciful gift of work that allows us to avoid an empty, meaningless life.
 - **Plan to encourage God to speak to you through His Word.** We talk to God in prayer, and He talks to us through the Scriptures. So, invite God to your Labor Day celebration by getting Him involved in the conversation. Take some time to read some of the passages from the Labor Day Bible reading. You can even discuss the ones that are really impactful for you.

IV. Celebrating God by Discipling on Labor Day

- This one is actually pretty easy. It's an integral part of celebrating God because God expects it of us. If we obey every other command in Scripture, but we don't participate in discipleship with our fellow believers, we're sinning against God.
- So, any time we involve other people in our worship of God, we're discipling to one degree or another.
- That means you should invite people to prepare for Labor Day, invite them to interact with God and His truth on Labor Day though Bible reading and prayer, and — to one degree or another — find opportunities to take the conversation deeper by applying God's will to your lives.
- Only by worshipping God and encouraging others to do the same can we successfully throw a Labor Day party that genuinely pleases God by giving Him the worship He deserves.