

Proverbs 16:3; Exodus 20:8-11

Overview – Tomorrow we will celebrate Labor Day. Folks tend to mark the end of summer by going back to school shopping, having a cookout or just spending a last lazy day of summer before jumping into the hustle and bustle of work life.

Exegesis –

- This passage in Exodus is a simple reminder of what God lays out for us in Genesis 1. For 6 days God does creative, transformative and monumental work. Work that literally lays the foundation for the world and our existence – and on the final day, God chills.
- Tomorrow we have a day off, but for many of us it is the calm before the storm. There will be lunches to pack and drop offs to school. Everyone is done with vacation and hopefully refreshed and ready to launch into another fall work cycle.
- We live in a country where work is the center of our lives and the thing to which we give the most time and effort.
- This year there are many workers on strike – from Amazon warehouse workers to Hollywood hotel workers, folks are lifting up deep unbalances in our work culture.
- In theory we have a 40 hour work week and a weekend and it is worth noting that we didn't always have that practice and in my places that balance is eroding. So we take a moment today to remind ourselves what God calls us to and to make some commitments about how we want to be going into this next season in the year.

Key Points

1. God calls us to meaningful and purposeful work – we serve a God who often calls on us to be their hands and feet in the world. We should be asking how we live in the world with purpose and excellence. Making money is not our purpose!
2. AND that work should be done free from abuse – but if it is to be Godly work it also has to be done in a way that fairly compensated and free of abuse and coercion. This is a reminder to us both as workers and some of us as managers. If work is to be in line with God's calling it may challenge but it shouldn't damage.
3. God also calls us to intentional and consistent rest – God is also clear about the call to Sabbath to periods when we stop working and just be! For most of us this is a bigger challenge than

Reflections Questions

1. How can you approach the coming year bringing a real sense of purpose and calling to what you are doing both for paid work and for other efforts to which you feel called? Where are their opportunities to bring joy into your labor?
2. Are there places where you see yourself in unhealthy work practices around compensation, workaholism, etc ? Who is motivating that excess (your organization, your boss, yourself?) How can you set some appropriate boundaries around work? Where can you support others to set those boundaries?
3. In the coming year, how can you protect or initiate a practice of intentional rest? What forms of accountability will help you embrace God's call to Sabbath?