**Abundant Life Church**

**Sunday, Sept. 7th, 2020**

**Title: Your work matters to God**

**Text:**

 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.
**Genesis 2:15 (NIV)**

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."
**Genesis 2:18 (NIV)**

**Intro:**

Our culture is going through some incredible transformation right now. Some changes are good and some changes are not. This weekend is Labor Day and I want to speak with you about the biblical idea of our day to day labor and work. By labor I do not simply mean labor for which a person gets paid. I mean all labor.

 The labor it takes to work a job or run a business to pay your bills.

 The labor it takes to raise a family

 The labor it takes to keep a home up

 The labor it takes to take care of aging parents

1. **Labor is part of God’s plan for all humanity.**

The text is clear that when God created the man and the woman that His purpose for them was to labor within God’s creation. Work is not a product of our sinfulness. Adam and Eve were not created to sit around the garden all day doing nothing. Sitting around all day doing nothing is not healthy for your mind, nor your body.

Notice that the labor which God gave Adam to do was physical labor. Working with his hands over the garden that God planted. There is no job which is beneath a child of God. All work is honorable.

Notice also that Eve was not created as Adam’s helper. But a helper in the work for which God had given man. Now instead of working alone, the two work together. I mean what good is it to grow a large tomato or zucchini if you don’t have someone to show it to and talk about it.

Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you.
**1 Thessalonians 4:11 (NASB)**

Now in Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha…this woman was abounding with deeds of kindness and charity which she continually did…all the widows stood…weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them.
**Acts 9:36-39 (NASB) parts and pieces**

1. **God has ordained labor as the means of having your needs met.**

Even while we were with you, we gave you this command: “Those unwilling to work will not get to eat.” Yet, we hear that some of you are living idle lives, refusing to work and meddling in other people’s business. We command such people and urge them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and work to earn their own living.  **2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 (NLT)**

It is not compassion to give to a person who refuses to work. Quit being manipulated by feelings of guilt and act on principle. This is true whether it is a stranger or an adult child. I am not telling you to not be a generous giver. But be smart about it. Giving directed by the Holy Spirit and compassion is very different that giving as a result of manipulation.

I passed by the field of the sluggard and by the vineyard of the man lacking sense, and behold, it was completely overgrown with thistles; Its surface was covered with nettles, And its stone wall was broken down. When I saw, I reflected upon it; I looked, *and* received instruction. "A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to rest," Then your poverty will come *as* a robber and your want like an armed man.
**Proverbs 24:30-34 (NASB)**

1. **There is no such thing as sacred work or secular work. There is only work or labor done for God’s glory or work done in vain. It is the heart of the laborer that decides the meaning of the work, not the job itself.**

23  Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men,
24  since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.
**Colossians 3:23-24 (NIV)**

…the works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they may be, do not differ on whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks…all works are measured before God by faith alone.  -Martin Luther

In Luther’s time the word vocation was only applied to those who worked in the church. Luther was the first to apply the word to the common laborer because he saw all labor as sacred.

Vs. 23 - Whatever work you do, you decide whether it is for God’s glory or not.

Vs. 23- Do it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men…

This way of thinking should revolutionize your life. Everyday there is sacred labor to do.

To the young mother –

 You are not wasting time tending to your children

 The father who is working to meet the needs of his family is sacred

 The person who is going to work

 as a homemaker, or TG, Toyotomi, Law Enforcement, Janitor, Teaching, Entrepreneur, Starting a Business, Real Estate, Construction worker, Tending the elderly, raising children, homeschooling, home businesses, Nurse, Doctor, Roofing, Lawyer, Playing games with your children, Mechanic, Food prep, Cutting the grass, etc…..

Vs. 24 – It is the Lord Christ you are serving!!!!

Are you using all your labor in the service of Christ? You alone decide whether your labor will be wasted or whether you will be rewarded for it.