

The Value of Labor

In all labor there is profit, but idle chatter leads only to poverty.—Proverbs 14:23

Tomorrow is Labor Day, an official holiday to honor working people. The value of work is woven into our history in America. In 1608, Admiral John Smith became the leader of the Virginia Colony based in Jamestown. Most of the colonists were gentlemen and not used to hard physical labor. Food supplies ran low because so few were working which prompted John Smith to post the following proclamation:

[You] must obey this now for a Law, that he that will not worke shall not eate (except by sickness he be disabled) for the labors of thirtie or fortie honest and industrious men shall not be consumed to maintaine an hundred and fiftie idle loyterers.

The value of work is also interlaced in God's word. Probably the most often quoted passage on labor is Proverbs 6:6-8: *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise; Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."*

There are many areas of our life where we need to labor and bring glory to God. For the student it will include their studies, for a mother it may include providing a clothing and food for her family, for the father it may include housing and a safe secure environment. All of us are responsible to God to be wise and work. There is an area in each of our lives where labor is required, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (II Timothy 2:15).