

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



HOLY LABOR

Holy Labor

August 31 & September 1, 2019

The fact that many Christians don't make a connection between their work life and their faith life may mean that preachers haven't adequately addressed the subject. Even though Labor Day is a day not to work, this is a good weekend to hold up the holiness of our labor/vocation. As we end our Mission Possible series, we recognize that the office, classroom, garden and workshop are our mission field.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: EPHESIANS 6:7

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

There are two reasons that we like this text for Labor Day. First, the word "enthusiasm" doesn't just mean to work with energy and a smile on your face. It literally means "in God". In other words, Paul encourages us to work in deep awareness that God is in it with us. Second, Paul reminds us that our ultimately "employer" is God. While someone else may sign our paycheck, God is the One who employs us for our labors and so we labor to please the Lord.

Listen carefully to Christians and you'll discover all sorts of misconceptions about work/labor that suck the meaning right out of it. First, some Christians actually believe that work is a curse, a result of the Fall in Genesis 3. Second, most Christians, in my experience, think and operate within the false framework of a sacred/secular divide. Going to church on Sunday is sacred business; going to work on Monday is secular business. Finally, those who focus on life-after-death as the "prize" tend to diminish the importance and sacredness of life here and now, including our work/labor. All labor, whether for a paycheck or not, can and should be seen as holy. As Rick Warren likes to say, "Work becomes worship when you dedicate it to God and perform it with an awareness of God's presence".

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Do you find it challenging to lean into the mindset that all our work is for the Lord? Why?
- What additional barriers of thought lead people to believe that their work isn't spiritual or doesn't matter to God?
- What helps you to keep an awareness of God in your work? What does that mean for you?
- What practices can you use to deepen your awareness of God in your work?

APPLICATION: This week, what is one step you can take towards merging your work world with your faith?