



Reflection for September 7

Labor Day Reflection

By Forrest Wells



Labor Day, the first Monday in September, was first established by the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. It is a yearly national tribute to the contributions workers have made to the strength, prosperity, and well-being of our country. An interesting piece of history is that people were encouraged not to wear white on Labor Day, since white clothing was common summer attire of the wealthy as they traveled to vacations that the common people were not given the time to take and could not afford. Labor Day became the celebration of common hard working laborers. Like many of our national holidays it's easy to forget why we have the day off, we are just glad for a long weekend! This year, we who have employment can give thanks we have a job, an income, even as we pray for and support those whose lives are filled with anxiety and turmoil because of the lack of a job.

There is another type of labor that I want to honor today; the work of those who give of themselves because of their living faith in God through Jesus

Christ. For many “salt of the earth” Christians, their life and work is a testament of their faith. They live out the principle from I Corinthians 10:31, “Whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” I also celebrate those who sacrificially give of their time, energy and financial resources for the betterment of the community. Hospitals, schools, homeless shelters, hunger mitigation, housing assistance, community organizing for criminal justice and other reform have often been initiated by Christian people because of the Spirit’s prompting in their hearts.

We welcome this day of rest and recreation. The country is tired physically, emotionally and spiritually. Still, let us be thankful for the blessing of work that provides food and shelter. Give thanks especially for those who labor on our behalf in the public sector. Say thank you to someone today for their work! And, though we may be frustrated, angry or depressed with all that is wrong in the world, encourage one another with the words of Paul in Galatians 6:9, “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Let us not give up in our labors of love for God and the people of God!

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May this devotion provide you with a moment of faithful reflection and care. You are involved in ministries of justice and witness, in ministries of standing up and standing with people working to create better systems and communities, in ministries of learning and searching and researching to become more aware and awakened, more technologically savvy and proficient, more virtually and personally present in your churches and communities and world. Each of us who serve as members of your Wisconsin Cabinet write these devotions in grateful prayer for you – for

sustenance and buoyancy, for strength and courage, for safety and just actions, and for faith and love to be full and fulfilled in your daily lives. God's grace and blessings, God's challenge and healthy discomfort, God's Spirit and energy be with you, in the hope Christ offers us all.

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