

Synchronizing the Heart for Effective Labor For the Lord

Sunday Morning, September 2, 2012

Thesis:

To Labor For the Lord Effectively Our Hearts Must Be
In Check With God

Introduction:

Labor Day has always been one of those Holidays that puzzled me. Are we celebrating labor in general? Are we supposed to be taking a break from labor? Or are we supposed to be laboring? Labor Day started back in 1882. There are two stories about who started it and where it got started that year, but it basically started for the purpose of honoring the worker and labor unions. There were parades full of Union workers marching down the streets. As time has gone by, Labor Day has become the “End of Summer” Holiday (which is also an inaccurate title). A time for one last big barbecue, watching sports or shopping for things on sale. So, instead of celebrating the workers of America, we are now celebrating a break from labor. Labor Day is now a time to relax and enjoy the fruit of our labors.

To Labor For the Lord Effectively Our Hearts Must Be
In Check With God

I. Six Areas of the Heart That Affect Our Labor for the Lord

1. Is Our Heart Open to the Word?

(James 1: 22-25)

22 But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.

23 Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man looking at his own face in a mirror.

24 For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but one who does good works—this person will be blessed in what he does.

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2. Does Our Heart Give Dignity to All People?

(James 2: 1-6)

1 My brothers, do not show favoritism as you hold on to the faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ.

2 For example, a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and a poor man dressed in dirty clothes also comes in.

3 If you look with favor on the man wearing the fine clothes and say, “Sit here in a good place,” and yet you say to the poor man, “Stand over there,” or, “Sit here on the floor by my footstool,”

4 haven’t you discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?

5 Listen, my dear brothers: Didn’t God choose the poor in this world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that He has promised to those who love Him?

6 Yet you dishonored that poor man. Don’t the rich oppress you and drag you into the courts?

3. Does Our Heart Generate Good Works? (James 2: 14 -23)

14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can his faith save him?

15 If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food
16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,” but you don’t give them what the body needs, what good is it?

17 In the same way faith, if it doesn’t have works, is dead by itself.

18 But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.”

Show me your faith without works, and I will show you faith from my works.

19 You believe that God is one; you do well. The demons also believe—and they shudder.

20 Foolish man! Are you willing to learn that faith without works is useless?

21 Wasn’t Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar?

22 You see that faith was active together with his works, and by works, faith was perfected.

23 So the Scripture was fulfilled that says, Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him for righteousness, and he was called God’s friend.

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4. Does Our Heart Control Our Tongue?

(James 3: 1-10)

1 Not many should become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we will receive a stricter judgment,

2 for we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a mature man who is also able to control his whole body.

3 Now when we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we also guide the whole animal.

4 And consider ships: Though very large and driven by fierce winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

5 So too, though the tongue is a small part of the body, it boasts great things. Consider how large a forest a small fire ignites.

6 And the tongue is a fire. The tongue, a world of unrighteousness, is placed among the parts of our bodies. It pollutes the whole body, sets the course of life on fire, and is set on fire by hell.

7 Every sea creature, reptile, bird, or animal is tamed and has been tamed by man,

8 but no man can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

9 We praise our Lord and Father with it, and we curse men who are made in God's likeness with it.

10 Praising and cursing come out of the same mouth. My brothers, these things should not be this way.

5. Does Our Heart Stand for God or the World?

(James 4: 4-10)

4 Adulteresses! Don't you know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? So whoever wants to be the world's friend becomes God's enemy.

5 Or do you think it's without reason the Scripture says that the Spirit who lives in us yearns jealously?

6 But He gives greater grace. Therefore He says: God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

7 Therefore, submit to God. But resist the Devil, and he will flee from you.

8 Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners, and purify your hearts, double-minded people!

9 Be miserable and mourn and weep. Your laughter must change to mourning and your joy to sorrow.

10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.

6. A Good Heart Before God Produces Effective Prayer

(James 5: 13-18)

13 Is anyone among you suffering? He should pray. Is anyone cheerful? He should sing praises.

14 Is anyone among you sick? He should call for the elders of the church, and they should pray over him after anointing him with olive oil in the name of the Lord.

15 The prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will restore him to health; if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The urgent request of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours; yet he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the land.

18 Then he prayed again, and the sky gave rain and the land produced its fruit.

Are These Six Points Progressive Links?

Conclusion:

None of Us Have Perfected These Things. Each of Us Should Labor For Them Diligently.