

MARSHALL COUNTY DEVOTIONAL PAGE

"There remains therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into His rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from His. Let us labor therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief." - Hebrews 4:9-11

The first Labor Day demonstration is thought to have started on Tuesday, September 5, 1882, in New York City. The union leaders organized what is thought to be the first Labor Day parade where thousands of labor union members - plumbers, bricklayers, tailors, typists, and many other tradespeople - took unpaid leave, marching with their locals, demanding shorter hours and better work environments. This demonstration

was so successful that the movement grew, accomplishing the workers' demands. It had such an impact on everyday society that Labor Day was declared to be a national holiday in 1894. This principle of God rewarding hard work is taught all through out the Bible. "Wealth gotten by vanity shall be diminished: but he that gathers by labor shall increase" (Proverbs 13:11).

We naturally have the popular understanding that all labor is equal to work, which is a limited definition. However, when we read the Bible, we find that God also has a special kind of labor that excludes work. In our opening verses, God calls us to "labor therefore to enter into that rest." This laboring to enter into rest sounds, at the first, to be a contradic-

tion in terms. Then again, when we understand the basics of the gospel message, we understand that this kind of labor is not the effort of one's work. By simple reason, this laboring to rest does not depend upon the labor of works or religious efforts because there would never be a rest if it were a work. You see, God is calling us to a salvation rest in His Son Jesus Christ, by the labor of faith. Many religions have a works-mentality whereby they make faith a work and teach that this "work of faith" is their part in salvation. However, faith is not a work. Faith is an active belief trusting in someone or something outside of oneself. So to make faith a work is to take partial credit for salvation, which is an offense to God. "But to him that worketh not,

but believeth on Him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Romans 4:5,6).

The only thing that hinders a person's labor to enter into that salvation rest is "unbelief," which is the last word in our scripture reference. Unbelief hardens the soul, while faith gives the spiritual pillow of God's comfort and rest. Understand that laboring is the speedy endeavor of faith that first strives diligently to rests from our religious works, and secondly faith strives to rest in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ on our behalf as our Savior. In short, the day of salvation for the believer was the spiritual labor day of rest for the believer.

David C. Hale, pastor Email: insights@gmx.com

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