Chapter 13
Work, Rest and Worship

The opposite of a slave is not a free man. It's a worshipper.
The one who is most free is the one who turns the work
of his hands into sacrament, into offering.[1]
—Mark Buchanan

In a recent article called "Americans Don't Like Their Jobs," Roy Rummler reports that fifty-five percent of American workers are dissatisfied with their work. In a survey supported by many other research projects, Rummler reports, " … only 51 percent felt their jobs were interesting—falling from a high of 70 percent."[2]

I am not one of the ones who are dissatisfied. I count it a privilege to know what a gift it is to work hard and enjoy it. The writer of Ecclesiastes says, "I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God" (Eccl 3:12-13). The ability to enjoy what God has given us is in itself a gift.

Yet in a fallen world the work of humankind is tainted with frustration. Ever since the fall of man and the introduction of sin to the world, work became onerous and burdensome. God said to Adam:

> … Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, the ground is cursed because of you. All your life you will struggle to scratch a living from it … By the sweat of your brow will you have food to eat until you return to the ground from which you were made … (Gen 3:17-19 NLT, emphasis added).

Without eternity in view, work is a bitter pill: for the minimum wage laborer who can't make ends meet, for the over-qualified executive who has been laid off and can't find a job, and for the struggling artist who is tremendously talented but can't produce income through their art.

Work is Good

Work was originally created, like everything else God made, to be *good.*

> In the beginning God created. He created. He did something. He *made* something. He fashioned heaven and earth. The week of creation was a week of work … The foundational truth is that work is good. If God does it, it must be all right. Work has dignity: there can be nothing degrading about work if God works. Work has purpose: there can be nothing futile about work if God works.[3]

After his work of creation, God set humans to the task of work: "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden *to work it and take care of it* (Gen 2:15,emphasis added). God created work just as he created the earth and all that is in it; he created it as a good thing. God created Eve as a "helpmate" for Adam. They were co-*workers*.

The kingdom of God is here to restore our original relationship with God, and to transform all of our endeavors, including our daily work. God has reclaimed and redeemed us to work unto him, not in frustration but with purpose and gladness. Let's take a look at work through God's eyes.

First, we have the example of Jesus. Most of his life he was a carpenter. Think of Jesus' long hours of working with his hands, sweating and serving and finding satisfaction in doing his job well. Fully man yet fully God. He enjoyed hanging out with His Father as he exerted himself in physical labor. I'm sure he sought to please His Father and his customers with every project and I'm sure he gave his clients a fair shake.

Then there was Paul, who worked hard both as a tent maker and as an apostle, empowered by God's grace. " … I worked harder than all of them [the other apostles]—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1 Cor 15:10). He was very productive—a tireless worker. He gives the Corinthians a list of his qualifications to legitimize his genuine apostleship, saying, "We work hard with our own hands … " (1 Cor 4:12). He rouses the church in Thessalonica to labor diligently, urging them to: "Make it your ambition … to work with your hands, just as we told you." "We gave you this rule: if a man will not work, he shall not eat" (1 Thess 4:12; 2 Thess 3:10).

In the first century, most people worked with their hands doing arduous and menial tasks. Millions of people were slaves in the Roman Empire and Paul challenged them to see work as sanctified, a holy act, an offering of worship. Paul instructed his friends to change their way of seeing their daily chores, to work not for men, but *as unto the Lord.*

Paul exhorts the church:

> Slaves, obey your earthly masters with deep respect and fear. Serve them sincerely as you would serve Christ. Work hard, but not just to please your masters when they are watching. As slaves of Christ, do the will of God with all your heart. Work with enthusiasm, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will reward each one of us for the good we do, whether we are slaves or free (Eph 6:5-8 NLT).

Regardless of our station in life, the promise of reward for good work fills us with hope. Even if men don't notice our attention to detail, God will. As we do the will of God with all our heart, we see beyond the next paycheck to our heavenly reward. We find

dignity in our high calling. Empowered by a deep connection with God's sovereign calling, we can find joy in our work, knowing the Lord will reward us.

Martin Luther affirms the sanctity of every occupation, every job done well:

> The maid who sweeps her kitchen is doing the will of God just as much as the monk who prays—not because she may sing a Christian hymn as she sweeps but because God loves clean floors. The Christian shoemaker does his Christian duty not by putting little crosses on shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship.[4]

Made in God's Image

God made us in his image. As His offspring, we reflect his glory. We are creative and productive because he is creative and productive. We like to make beautiful things because He endowed us with an imagination like his own. When we finish a job that requires skill and tenacity, we have great satisfaction.

I have friends in all fields of work who are successful and happy in their jobs. A part of them really comes alive when they talk about the way God is blessing their business. My friend Matthew, a successful lawyer, says, "When I think of my work as an offering to God, one of my touchstones is a quote from Eric Liddell: 'I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run I feel His pleasure.' I love what I do. I recognize that God takes pleasure in my excelling at talents He has given me."

My friends who have successful careers see God's favor on their work and are delighted to generously share from their earnings to support Kingdom work around the world. They humbly acknowledge that all they have is a gift from God and believe that "the money belongs to Him." In Christ, they all have a sense of purpose and fulfillment in doing their work. They work not just for an earthly reward but an eternal one, too. No Christian who loves God first and foremost should apologize for aspiring to do well in their chosen field. The Bible doesn't teach the elimination of aspiration but the transformation of it.

We have a glorious identity as God's ambassadors on the earth. The psalmist expresses his astonishment to God over the glory he has bestowed on man: "You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet" (Ps 8:5-6). Saint Irenaeus, a second century early church father and apologist put it beautifully when he wrote, "The glory of God is man fully alive."

We reflect God's glory. John Eldredge encourages us to not "fear our glory" but to embrace it and live from it. "Living from your glory is the only loving thing you can do. To admit we do have a new heart and a glory from God, to let it be unveiled and to

embrace it means we must come out of the boat, take the throne, be what he meant us to be. And that feels risky but it is also exciting. It is coming fully alive."[5]

God gives us talents that he wants us to invest, to use for his glory. He's not glorified when we hide our "glory" under a bushel; he doesn't want us to bury our talents in the ground. In the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25, Jesus essentially says, "Use what I've given you and watch it multiply!"

Writing, performing and recording worship music is part of the job God gave me. While there is always a danger of self-aggrandizement in the arts, God calls me to not "fear my glory" but to boldly use my gifts to their fullest potential. It is who he made me to be. So I've written hundreds of songs over the past thirty years; some have just been between God and me, some have touched a few lives, and some have gone far and wide. I'll probably keep writing songs until I die. At the end of my life, my songs will most likely be for God alone.

Gregory the Great—The Contemplative and Active Life

Considered one of the greatest popes in the history of the church, Gregory the Great (540-604) gives us a very helpful model for dedicating our lives to God in the workplace. Born the son of a Roman senator and an aristocratic mother, Gregory received an excellent education and proved to be a very intelligent and skillful leader in both spiritual and administrative roles. As prefect of Rome, his responsibilities were to coordinate the business of the church with government officials. His accomplishments were far ranging, including negotiating treaties with occupying armies and sending missionaries throughout the world.

Earlier in his life, when carrying less responsibility, Gregory had more time for contemplation. It was easy to contemplate God, Gregory mused, when you are not "scurrying to meet the avalanche of human needs that confront you as bishop."[6] Many a modern-day pastor and busy mother would agree.

Gregory's wholehearted embracing of a busy life is encouraging to the vast majority of us who struggle to live a devoted life while working in a secular context. He embraced a life "that simultaneously contemplates God and engages in purposeful activity."[7] He said, "The active life belongs to many, the contemplative to few."[8] In an era when monasticism flourished and was viewed as the holiest path a person could take, Gregory lifts up the active life of work as a high calling from God.

Gregory's approach to "contemplation" is very practical. He compares our interludes of prayer, amidst a busy life, to a grasshopper that leaps up towards heaven but inevitably falls back to the earth.[9] He viewed action and contemplation as complementary, not in conflict with each other. These lessons from a sixth century pope are timeless. Through Gregory the Great, God shows us the sacred value of our secular work.

My friend Paul, who worked as a pastor for several years before starting a business, describes the melding of the sacred and secular:

> When I started out on my working life as a residential flooring contractor, I looked at earning money at work as a means to an end. Christian ministry was what I felt "called to," and I worked in a job to pay for my family's needs. I saw the two roles as separate, as though one were "sacred" and the other "secular." In recent years, my perspective has changed to view everything I do and everywhere I go as an opportunity to participate in building God's Kingdom.

Brother Lawrence: Dishwasher

I know of no other figure in church history who understood work as a holy offering to God like Brother Lawrence. In a modern world full of people who are either bored or irritated with their daily work, we desperately need to learn from the example of this man who approached every activity with prayerfulness and gratitude. Brother Lawrence practiced the presence of God continually. Here are some excerpts from his well-known work, *Practicing the Presence of God*:

> "The time of work," he wrote, "does not with me differ from the time of prayer. In the noise and clatter of my kitchen, while several persons are at the same time calling for different things, I possess God in as great a tranquility as if I were upon my knees at the Blessed Supper."

Brother Lawrence found a way to perform menial tasks with love: "We ought not weary of doing little things for the love of God, who regards not the greatness of the work, but the love with which it is performed."

Serving the Lord, not *chronos*

Psalm 127 is a well-known warning against over-working.

> Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves (Ps 127:1-2).

If we forget that God is working even as we work, we'll frantically push too hard.

For many years I saw the next part of this psalm as unrelated to the first verses: "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them … " Ps 127:4-5). I have six sons and two daughters. I *do* feel blessed. At times, I'm literally quivering because of so much blessing! But what does that have to do with work?

Eugene Petersen sees the gift of children as an example of God's work in and through us: In contrast to the anxious labor that builds cities and guards possessions, the psalm praises the effortless work of making children. Children are

> … born not through human effort, but through the miraculous processes of reproduction which God has created among us … The entire miracle of procreation and reproduction requires our participation, but hardly in the form of what we call our work … We participated in an act of love which was provided for us in the structure of God's creation.[10]

God made each one of us to do certain things well. When we're functioning in our God given role, it's almost like the reproduction process—we're simply fitting into "the structure of God's creation." To some people he gives the gift of watch-making, to others the gift of teaching and to others the gift of cooking. He gave me the gift of worship leading. After over three decades of leading worship, I still marvel at the miracle that happens: when I simply play guitar and sing, heaven comes down and people connect with God. When we do what God *made us* to do, it doesn't have to be anxious toil.

I know it's the same with many of my family and friends; when we find our niche as workers, there's an easy rhythm to our work. For Linda, caring for people's medical needs comes naturally because God wired her with a scientific mind and a compassionate heart. My friend Ron is an accountant. He is gifted in working with numbers, details and complex formulas. As I discuss my bookkeeping and taxes with him, it seems that for him, working with the complexities of the tax world are almost as easy as breathing.

In the workplace, we are surrounded by God's "sons and daughters." Regardless of their spiritual orientation, they are God's offspring. No matter what kind of job, career or profession we have, our work is about relationships with *people*. "As Christians do the jobs and tasks assigned to them in what the world calls work, we learn to pay attention to and practice what God is doing in love and justice, in helping and healing, in liberating and cheering."[11]

As working worshippers, we set ourselves and our time apart for God. But if we let it, time can be a harsh tyrant, sucking the life out of us. The Greeks understood that time could either be a vehicle for high purposes or destruction. In Greek culture there were two different words for time, *chronos* and *kairos*. These two words connote two distinctly different ways of looking at time.

Kairos is defined as an undetermined period of time in which something special happens. What the special something is depends on who is using the word. Viewing our lives through the lens of *kairos* gives us a sense of purpose and opportunity. Time is a gift to be used for good. Jesus, Paul and Brother Lawrence operated in the *kairos* view of time. They saw every moment as a chance to glorify God.

While *kairos* is qualitative, *chronos* has a quantitative nature. The word *chronos* refers to chronological or sequential time and is taken from one of the gods in the Greek pantheon.

> *Chronos* was a nasty minor deity, a glutton and a cannibal who gorged himself on his own children … Goya depicted him in his work *Devouring His Children.* In the painting, *Chronos* is gaunt and ravenous, wild-eyed with hunger. He crams a naked, bloody-stumped figure into his gaping mouth. He was always consuming, never consummated.[12]

This description of *Chronos* illustrates the way we can be devoured by an overly busy schedule. We can be enslaved to the tyranny of *chronos* time. James Bryan Smith has some very helpful things to say about our need to create "margin" in our lives.[13] He says:

> We add so much to our schedules that we have no "margin," no space for leisure and rest and family and God and health … We live in a culture that rewards busyness and overextension as signs of importance … The number one spiritual sickness of our day is "hurry sickness."

To create margin in his own life, James learned to *say no* to non-essential activities. He advises his readers to say "no" to "anything that is not absolutely necessary to the well-being of your soul or the welfare of others … when we lack margin, it is our own doing and is a sure sign we have stepped outside the kingdom. So be honest and be ruthless with your schedule. Your spiritual, relational and physical health, depend on it."

James notes that, "more than any other time in history, we have become obsessed with productivity, speed and efficiency."[14] He quotes economist Jeremy Rifkin who writes, "while other cultures might believe haste makes waste, we are convinced that speed reflects alertness, power, and success."[15] Smith says, "Our impatience has made life a dizzying blur. And as a result, our spiritual lives are diminished. As we try harder, we are becoming spiritually shallow and deeply disappointed—not exactly a recipe for a robust life."[16]

Robert Barron writes: "the deepest part of the soul likes to *go slow*, since it seeks to savor rather than to accomplish; it wants to rest in and contemplate the good rather than hurry off to another place."[17]

The Cost of Being Overly Busy

I'm a typical first-born child; I'm very conscientious and I enjoy working hard in all areas, whether it's music, academics, or in my own backyard. I enjoy accomplishing things, whether it's writing a song or building a garden shed.

But my greatest strengths can also be my greatest weaknesses. I get so focused on my work that I forget about my other priorities. If I'm not careful, I get tunnel vision, and all I can think about is accomplishing the next task. I think this is a common problem for

many men. If we're in control, working hard and seeing results, we're happy. But if we're not accomplishing something, we're not content. This is partly due to being influenced by a culture that views rest as laziness. We are falsely taught that our worth comes from what we produce or earn.

One area that can suffer is our family relationships. Because I'm in overdrive so much of the time, I default to working instead of paying attention to the people I love the most.

The payoff from our closest relationships is less dramatic than finishing a project or hitting that next goal at work. Relationships with our spouses and children involve hanging out, listening, and taking an interest in others instead of pushing our own agenda. It's more about *being* than *doing.* When I don't stop for recreation with my family, I'm robbed of the joy of a noon-hour basketball game with my boys or a 5:00pm bike ride with my daughter Lizzie. If I'm driven by the delusion that nothing is more important than work, I'll never take my kids for a day trip to the beach in White Rock.

When my work consumes me, I forget that I'm in the people business. I don't have the emotional resources to be kind and helpful; I become short-tempered and easily angered. My work day never ends—instead of calling it quits at 5:00 or 6:00, I keep plowing all through the evening, turning my back on my family. I never cross a line that says, "my work is finished."

On September 15, 2006 I was praying in the morning, asking the Lord for a word of encouragement. Immediately I felt God was saying "you're trying too hard" and then I saw in my mind's eye a picture of a foot letting up on the gas pedal of a car. God was saying, "Slow down. Don't drive so fast!" This was two days before the first Sunday morning meeting of a new church plant I was helping to lead. God knows that in my eagerness I sometimes put too much pressure on myself and on others; I expect too much progress too quickly (read: *impatience*). So he gave me a picture that communicated very clearly: relax, don't push so hard. Trust me.

Another sign that we're overextending is physical stress and pain. When I overwork, I often get headaches and backaches from too many hours at the computer. When I ignore God's guidelines for rest, I pay the price with physical pain. This is one way God gets my attention.

God designed us to *need* rest—body, soul and spirit. If I get exhausted from overwork, I lose perspective. I can't think as clearly. I feel overwhelmed because I've robbed myself of the rest God intends for me. It's harder to trust God and be cheerful when I'm emotionally and physically depleted.

The statistics show that many Americans are suffering from sleep deprivation. Dr. Siang-Yang Tan reports that in the 1850s the average American slept 9.5 hours a night. Today the average American sleeps under seven hours a night. "A poll done by the

National Sleep Foundation showed that forty-nine percent of American adults have sleep related problems."[18] We endanger our own lives when we mess around with our God given limits: Bertrand Russell said, "One of the symptoms of an approaching nervous breakdown is the belief that one's work is terribly important … "[19]

I'm self-employed, so if the productivity bar is being set too high, I only have myself to blame. There are a few reasons I drive myself too hard. One is a lack of trust in God to provide. If you're a salesman or a small business owner, you know what I mean. I have to trust God to provide work for me. A lack of faith results in a lack of peace, and sometimes in working too hard. When I slip into a doubting attitude, I put my hope in the work instead of God who provides work and income. Simply put, that's idolatry.

My "to do" list is not my God; but sometimes it would seem that way. At the end of a day or the end of a week, I have found myself annoyed by having so many unfinished items on my list. As wisdom slowly takes control of me, I pry myself away from my desk and take the Lord's offer of an intermission. How silly it is to willingly choose servitude to overworking when the Lord Himself has opened the door for us to go free.

Jesus calms down his followers who are worried about daily provision with these words:

> What I'm trying to do here is get you to relax, not be so preoccupied with getting so you can respond to God's giving. People who don't know God and the way he works fuss over these things, but you know both God and how he works. Steep yourself in God-reality, God-initiative, God-provisions. You'll find all your everyday human concerns will be met. Don't be afraid of missing out. You're my dearest friends! The Father wants to give you the very kingdom itself (Luke 12:29-32 The Message).

If we *really* believe in God, we will trust Him to help us get enough work done within the hours of the day and days of the week that he has created. Then, we'll rest. Our simple trust is worship, and it's precious to God.

God's Gift of Sabbath

Work done in the context of eternity points us towards rest. When we realize that our days are numbered and that "we can't take it with us," we'll be more inclined to not work ourselves to death. Sabbath rest reminds us that God is infinite and we are finite. In stopping to rest, we agree with the way God chose to create us.

One of the main purposes of the Sabbath day is to *remember* that God delivered us from slavery. God gave Moses this commandment to pass along to us:

> Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you … Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and that

> the Lord your God brought you out of there … Therefore … observe the Sabbath day (Deut 5:12, 15).

As slaves to the Egyptian Pharaoh, the Hebrews had no option of resting. But we have the privilege of resting. Not to rest is to refuse to acknowledge God's design. Ironically, we place ourselves back in bondage to slavery when we choose work over the gift of rest.

Part of me reacts to the word *Sabbath* negatively, probably because I associate the idea with legalism. When I hear *Sabbath*, I think of Old Testament rules and regulations, and legalistic branches of the church that follow man-made rules, taking the fun out of a day of rest, like no TV or games. But what did God have in mind when he designed Sabbath rest? Jesus said: " … The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark 2:27). Jesus wasn't a legalist. To show that Jesus wasn't bound to the strict Pharisaical interpretation of the law, Jesus healed people on the Sabbath and gave his approval to rescuing an animal in distress on that day. While he calls us to take a breather from our daily grind, he doesn't forbid us to help someone on our day off.

God's intention has always been for us to obey Him in order to be blessed by Him: "Oh, that their hearts would be inclined to fear me and keep all my commands always, *so that it might go well with them and their children forever*" (Deut 5:29, emphasis added). God's design in giving the law through Moses was: "so that you may *live* and *prosper* and *prolong your days* in the land that you will possess" (Deut 5:33). God has never been a kill-joy.

If we go back to the roots of the Sabbath day, we see God calling his people to follow God's example of resting on the seventh day. In the New Testament, Jesus expands the scope of the commandments from observation of outward rituals to the writing of those laws on our hearts.

With the coming of Jesus, we see the idea of Sabbath rest extending far beyond a once per week ritual. Rest is an orientation, a way of being and seeing, and second, a set of outward habits. Rest isn't a feeling and isn't primarily to be found on vacation. It's not an emotion. The essence of a Sabbath heart is being conscious of God's presence at all times.

Richard Foster explains it well:

> We learn over time and experience how to bring the reality of resting in God into the confusion and busyness of daily life. We learn to work resting. We learn to live on two levels at once. On the one level we carry on the ordinary task of our day. But on a deeper level we live out of inward promptings and whispered words of wisdom.[20]

My wife has an interesting interpretation of the story of Martha and Mary. Mary was sitting at the feet of Jesus, just listening. Martha was bustling about getting the housework done. Linda says, "Martha forgot that she was loved. It wasn't an over-

activity problem. I have to be a Martha—I have to get a lot of stuff done. But I can still find Jesus even when I'm busy."

Brother Lawrence encourages us to worship while we work: "Do not forget him but think of him often. Adore him continually. Live and die with Him. This is the glorious work of Christian; in a word, this is our profession. If we do not know it, we must learn it … " He prays:

> Oh my God, since Thou art with me, and I must now, in obedience to Thy commands, apply my mind to these outward things, grant me the grace to continue in Thy Presence; and prosper me with Thy assistance. Receive all my works, and possess all my affections.

Brother Lawrence made it his "profession" to adore the Lord continually. But he did so with freedom, not legalistic bondage. Staying focused on God wasn't easy and his mind often wandered. I find his determination to worship God at all times both inspiring and challenging: " we must serve God in a holy freedom. We must work faithfully without trouble or disquiet, recalling our mind to God mildly and with tranquility as often as we find it wandering from him."[21]

Today many people feel enslaved, trapped in their daily work, especially in "lower" positions such as kitchen work. In contrast, Brother Lawrence shows us it is possible to be content as a slave of Christ in any job. This is so radical and so biblical. May we have the mind of Christ to understand that the greatness of the task isn't the point, but the love with which it is performed.

A.W.Tozer said, "Faith is the gaze of a soul upon a saving God."[22] As we think on him, we can find rest in the midst of turmoil. Jesus said, "Come to me, all who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls" (Matt 11:28-29).

Jesus takes the laws of the Old Testament and teaches us to write them on our hearts. The laws become part of the fabric of every waking moment. Instead of merely "don't commit adultery," Jesus said "don't lust after a woman. Instead of "repay your neighbor an eye for an eye," Jesus said "love your enemies." Similarly, instead of one day of Sabbath, he calls us to abide in an ongoing peaceful place of Sabbath rest. Rest is both a way of thinking and an outward practice. It's more than a ritual, it's a relationship; it's the peace of God that penetrates and slows our frantic pace.

Rhythms of Rest

When it's time for a day off, I begin to slow down and sometimes feel out of sorts. There's no adrenaline rush from plowing through my "to do" list. Sometimes I feel depressed. It takes a while to turn off my work engine. Slowly I shift my orientation to non-productivity mode. Ironically, it takes a conscious effort to surrender myself to rest

mode. In those awkward moments of shifting gears, it's almost as if I can hear the Lord saying with a twinkle in his eye, "Remember this feeling? You haven't felt it for a while; it's called *rest.*"

But taking one day off every week is only part of the picture. There's also the rhythm of daily rest. Bill Hybels' ritual of rest is a great example. Bill figured out that he needed some firm boundaries to have a chance at a long life of productive ministry. He came up with a practice of "crossing a daily finish line."

Bill's day of work begins early in the morning and ends at around 4:00 pm, and then he goes for a forty minute run with a few friends. His "ritual" is then to have a shower, put on casual clothes and hang out with family or friends in the evening. He has a sense of "emotional completion" as he goes through this routine. In contrast to Bill's routine of rest, three quarters of the pastors that he mentors and coaches have no idea when their day ends. Some of them are proud to say, "I'm never off the clock."

It took fifteen years for Bill to figure out that he had such a strong work ethic that he had to physically remove himself from the area to get a day and half off. So every Sunday afternoon he drives or flies to a tiny cottage on Lake Michigan. He says, "the ritual for me begins when I'm driving down our gravel driveway, toward our little cottage … I exhale and I can feel it in my body … the stress just goes out of my body. It's my payoff for a hard week of work and I can unplug."

Conclusion

The writer of the book of Ecclesiastes concludes that it is good to enjoy your daily work: "I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil—this is the gift of God" (Eccl 3:12-13).

God has "placed his glory on us." His imprint is on us. He is pleased to see us fully coming alive as we use the gifts he has given us. In humble gratitude, we realize that every ability and skill and shred of knowledge is a gift from him. Everything we do, we do unto the Lord. Like Paul, we can be shining examples for God in the workplace—generous, kind and full of integrity.

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1. Buchanan, *The Rest of God*, 24.
2. Roy Rummler "Americans Don't Like Their Jobs," Meridian Workplace Examiner http://www.examiner.com/workplace-in-meridian/americans-don't-like-their-jobs (accessed September 10 2010).
3. Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction,* 104-105.
4. Buchanan, *The Rest of God*, 23.
5. John Eldredge, *The Journey of Desire, Searching for the Life We've Only Dreamed Of* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000).
6. Beebe, *Longing for God, Seven Paths of Christian Devotion,* 227.

7. Ibid.
8. Richard J. Foster and Gayle D. Beebe, *Longing for God: Seven Paths of Christian Devotion,* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009), 233.
9. Ibid., 229
10. Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction,*105-106.
11. Ibid.*,* 107.
12. Buchanan, *The Rest of God*, 36.
13. Smith, *The Good and Beautiful God,* 128-131.
14. Ibid., 174.
15. Jeremy Rifkin, *Time Wars,* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1987), 71.
16. Smith, *The Good and Beautiful God,* 174.
17. Robert Barron, *Heaven in Stone and Glass* (New York, NY: Crossroad, 2000), 40.
18. Smith, *The Good and Beautiful God,* 33. A quote from Siang-Yang Tan.
19. Bertrand Russell, *Conquest of Happiness* (New York, NY: Liveright Publishing, 1996), 61. Russell was a British author, mathematician, & philosopher. The above reference is a reprint of the book he authored in 1930.
20. Foster and Beebe, *Longing for God,* page 235.
21. Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God.*
22. A.W. Tozer, *The Pursuit of God*, (Camp Hill, PA: WingSpread Publishers, 1992), 181.