**Purposeful Labor**

**John 4:34-38**

Ever wondered what is the right sequence for labor and nourishment?

Essentially you labor in order to feed yourself (and hopefully your family), but nourishment is what you need in order to have the strength to work. So the sequence is little puzzling. It is like which comes first, the chicken or the egg?

Jesus solved the puzzle for us. He placed new element into nourishment and labor. In John 4:34 Jesus said "My food is to do the will of Him who sent me and to finish His work."

It is Labor Day weekend and we honor all those who labor to provide the essential things we all need, basically nourishment, health, prosperity, comfort and happiness. Labor Day takes more significance this year as we give special and deserving honor to all the essential workers for their sacrificial service during a pandemic.

In scripture there is no mention of whether Jesus worked in order to feed himself. At his spare time probably He helped His father in carpentry, but then His father died very early. Did He take over His father's business, we do not know. As human, one would expect that Jesus did some kind of physical labor to earn a living. But Jesus was more than a mere mortal being - He was more than human. He was the Word of God that became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:1,14). Jesus came to do the will of God and that was His nourishment, and He came to finish God's work, and that was His labor. God's work is nothing else than to give us eternal life and that is the will of God. In John 12:50 Jesus said: "The Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that His command is eternal life."

The food that we need and the work we do to earn it are essential for our physical welfare. That is why we eat plenty and labor hard and extra hours (or vice versa), still though we are unable to fulfill our desires. There is always more to possess or achieve; there is always more food, there is always nobler physical labor and always a better living. That is not the case with our spiritual life – God's Word is our only nourishment and doing His work is the noblest labor. Only Jesus will provide our needs and satisfy our spiritual desire - everlasting satisfaction and eternal salvation.

Friends, if you want to make your life meaningful, then consider doing more than just physical labor. Follow Jesus's example. Consider doing God's will as your spiritual nourishment, and salvation as the purpose of your labor. Do it now for the time is ripe and the harvest ready. "Open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest," Jesus said in this same passage. There is no better time to do God's work when we are in crisis and people are facing challenges. God's message of salvation is what this world needs. So consider doing God's work in you, in your family, in your church and in your community. You will be better off and eternally.

Coming back to the right sequence for food and labor, actually from conception, life relies on nourishment - physical it is but it must also be spiritual. God provides us both and He expects that we do His will and finish His work of salvation.

Have a purposeful Labor Day.

Amen.