

GraceNotes

Grace Christian Church
1713 E. Sevier Avenue
Kingsport, TN 37664
(423) 247-2691

A Monthly Newsletter of Grace Christian Church



September 2025
Vol. 7, No. 9

Dr. J. Edward Clevinger, Minister

www.gracechristiankingsport.com

GROWING IN GRACE

“JESUS’ YOKE – WHERE WORK AND REST MEET”

An enduring query among the people of God is the nature of Heaven and Heavenly life. The Bible gives us an impressive array of glimpses. One that is particularly intriguing is God’s revelation that *“His bond-servants will serve Him”* (Rev. 22:23b). What will the service be? In his 1881 poem, “L’Envoi,” Rudyard Kipling wrote, “The Master of all good workman will put us to work anew.” A new version of work? It brings into view the curious prospect of a Heavenly rendition of work that invites reconciliation with the Biblical designation of eternal life as a “Sabbath rest.” So is Heaven work or rest; labor or leisure? How to reconcile?

Part of the challenge in answering such a question is that our earthbound concept of work and labor are derived from the Edenic sentence on Adam and Eve that their post-fall life would be *“under a curse”* (Gen. 3:17a). The curse included *“toil by the sweat of their brow”* (Gen. 3:17b, 19). In effect nature itself would become an adversary of *“thorns and thistles”* (Gen. 3:18). Work and labor would become a heavy burden to bear. With that frame of reference, it can be tempting to adopt a concept of work and labor that confines understanding to this worldly realm. But how about the Heavenly realm?

In Revelation 22:3, it is declared that for life in the Heavenly realm *“there will be no more curse”* (for the people of God). This opens a new understanding – yes, a new experience – of work and labor. Freed of the curse, work and labor become “bond-service” to the Lord in like sign of Eden before the fall. This “bond-service” is still work, but it is no longer toilsome; it is no longer worn-for-wear drudgery; it is no longer a ‘blood, sweat, and tears’ proposition. In Heaven work and labor will glorify God, so that it will be synonymous with rest. So the great meeting place of work and rest was in Eden and will be in Heaven God’s glory. In the light of His glory, work and rest merge in a service of worship that is perpetually and simultaneously vitalizing.

What an awesome consideration as we begin September with Labor Day. Moreover, what an encouraging consideration as we continue GROWING IN GRACE together. It is a source of great inspiration to know we are living toward the reconciliation of work and rest. And the reconciliation commences in this life when we bring our work and rest under the Lordship of Jesus who said, *“Come to Me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble of heart and you will find rest for your souls”* (Matt. 28-29). “Yoke” and “rest” in the same sentence sounds like a set-up for disappointment.

-continued-