

PENTECOST 9

"On the seventh day God completed all the work he had been doing. God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on that day he had rested after all his work of creating". (Gen. 2: 1-3.)

1 According to the book of Genesis, God instituted the first holiday, called by Jews, the Sabbath. It was, and still is kept as a holiday by the Jewish people as a day of rest from work. It is held on Saturday. By this act of creation God made sure that people had a time of rest and recreation - at least once a week. Now we have lots more holidays - Christmas, Easter, Whitsun and of course some holidays which are not connected in any way with Christianity, like August or Spring Bank Holidays. Holidays are important to us all. They are times of rest from our work. School holidays are coming soon - a time of rest and recreation - for whom?

2 What work did Jesus do? He was a carpenter - furniture- doors - windowframes - yokes. "My yoke is easy, my burden is light".Matt.11:30. Working is an important part of what it means to be human. So also is rest and recreation an important part of what it means to be human. Has anyone ever heard of an ant having a holiday or a bee having a day off?

3 Work is also a way in which we can co-operate with God in His rule over creation. <story of man in garden - vicar comments:- "isn't it wonderful what can be done when man co-operates with God" > The importance of stewardship. Work is creative.

4 Our work gives us a sense of fulfillment. It is not good to be idle - unemployment is a very serious problem - leads to depression and ill-health and family breakdown.

5 Work is a means of serving others. The way in which we do our work, whether it be farming or building or being a bank manager or a traffic warden, is a witness to our faith. Work is prayer and prayer is work. 'Laborare est orare. Orare est laborare'.

AMEN