ENTERING THE TEXT: Genesis 1:26-2:3

Labor Day

About ten years ago, William Diehl wrote an insightful though disturbing book called The Monday Connection. Borrowing a line from the teachings of Jesus, Diehl asks, "What does it profit a person to worship God for one hour in a church on Sunday, but be unable to experience God’s presence in the Monday world?" Indeed, Diehl offers a rather serious critique of the Church for failing to help lay people integrate their Sunday faith with their Monday to Friday world of work. Says Diehl:

Even today, I am called a “dedicated layperson” solely because of my work in my congregation and my denomination. My church has yet to call me a “dedicated layperson” for my efforts to bring God’s presence into my daily work, my relationships with others, my ethical decision making and my values.1

September 1, 2002

Similarly, the Church of the Savior in Washington, DC believes in ordaining laypersons, not to positions of leadership in the church like elders or deacons, but to their daily work. As part of their service of ordination, they ask, "Do you acknowledge that the place where you work is as holy as the place where you worship?"2

Clearly, Labor Day weekend offers one opportunity to speak about the relationship between faith and work, to help people make what William Diehl calls, "The Monday Connection." But when we remember that most people spend more time per week working than doing anything else with the possible exception of sleeping, I find myself wondering whether we preachers need to address this important theme much more often than just once or twice per year. (AGB)

PREACHING THE TEXT: Genesis 1:26-2:3

Labor, Leisure and God

And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done (Genesis 2:2).

On this Labor Day weekend, let’s speak about the relationship between work and rest, between labor and leisure. As a text, I have chosen some familiar words from the story of creation in the Book of Genesis. “And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done” (Genesis 2:2).

Let me speak with you first about work. Unfortunately, far too many people fail to see the connection between faith and work. We forget that the word vocation comes from a Latin word that means “a calling.” Therefore, your vocation is the voice that is calling you to be the person God created you to be. The word professional has a similar origin. When we hear the word “professional” we tend to picture some successful businessperson sitting behind a big desk bossing the work of hundreds of people. Or maybe we think of a doctor or a lawyer or even a sports star. But originally, a professional was someone who had made a profession of faith, someone who understood the intimate connection between faith and work, someone who was able to carry faith into the workplace.3

In one of his books, John Buchanan of Chicago’s Fourth Presbyterian Church describes two of his formative religious experiences. One summer during his teenage years Buchanan spent a week at the church camp where every night after dinner all of the campers attended evening worship. They walked to a clearing in the woods where the rustic benches were arranged in rows and where the camp choir sang the opening song.

The Lord is in his holy temple
Let all the earth keep silence before him.
Keep silence, keep silence,
Keep silence, keep silence.

Buchanan’s other formative religious experience occurred, of all places, at work. He was a struggling seminary student, married with one child and a second baby on the way. To earn some extra cash between semesters Buchanan landed a job in the local automobile plant. He worked the day shift from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 with thirty minutes for lunch and two twelve-minutes breaks during the day. The factory where he
worked was a huge assembly line where the sparks flew from welding stations, the machinery whirred, the forklifts roared and the noise of the mechanical presses was deafening. It was, says Buchanan, bright, loud and hot. Yet, one day when he entered that big, busy, dirty factory, he found himself humming the words of the song he had learned at the church camp several summers before, “The Lord is in his holy temple/Let all the earth keep silence before him.” Says Buchanan:

I have never forgotten that day, that experience. The hair on the back of my neck stood up, and I got a lump in my throat... That automobile factory was just as much the temple of God as was that hilltop sanctuary at the church camp.4

I wonder how many of us could make such a claim—that the place where we work is (or has the potential to be) as sacred as the place where we worship! Does such a claim surprise you? It shouldn’t, especially when we remember that the very first glimpse of God that the Book of Genesis gives us is a glimpse of One who is hard at work—

- creating light and darkness,
- separating the sea from the dry land,
- manufacturing the sun, the moon and planets,
- bringing forth plants and all of the animals,
- and then, as the crowning act of creation, creating man and woman in the divine image, which is the image of goodness itself.

The God we worship is not an idle, sit-back-in-an-easy-chair sort of deity, but a God who works. And don’t forget that God’s own son, Jesus, worked for a living as well; he had a job in his earthly father’s carpentry shop.

Moreover, when Jesus underwent a vocational transformation from being a wood worker to a worker of signs and wonders, he was once healing a man on the Sabbath. They criticized him for working on the Sabbath day, but he replied, “My Father is still working, and I also am working” (John 5:17). Work, you see, the redemptive, healing, life-giving work of the Creator was central to Jesus’ ministry and mission, and not even the Sabbath, the holy day of rest, could limit the work of God. As Jesus said on a different occasion, “The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27). Or as Eugene Peterson puts it in his modern paraphrase of the Bible called The Message, “The Sabbath was made to serve us; we weren’t made to serve the Sabbath.”

Sadly, many of us forget the truth of Jesus’ words. I remember reading about a group of young business people having lunch together one Monday. Over lunch they all started describing the briefcase full of work they had taken home over the weekend. Finally, one of them said, “It seems to me we've become rather complacent about violating the commandment about keeping the Sabbath. I know that sometimes we break the other commandments, but at least we don’t sit around bragging about it.”

Do you know what the Sabbath is? The Sabbath is God’s gracious way of giving us a blessed break from the busyness of life. Every life needs a balanced rhythm to it—your life does and so does mine—labor and then leisure; work and then rest. Even God understood this. For six days God put the divine nose to the grindstone creating stars and planets, green grass and vast oceans. But then came Friday night, and as Professor Walter Brueggemann imaginatively quips, God says:

I'm not going to the office tomorrow. I'm taking the day off. I've put in long hours every day this week, and tomorrow I'm going to put my feet up and enjoy all that I've accomplished.6

“Sabbath rest,” says Brueggemann, “is ordained into the very fabric and structure of created life...[and it became the way that faithful Jews] distinguish themselves from a world that is too much given to the power of restless anxiety and control.”7

Our text from Genesis tells us not about human rest but about the rest of God. It is God who rests after a hard week of work. But because we humans have been created in God's image, God’s rest becomes the model and the promise for human rest as well. As the Commandment from Exodus reminds us:

Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy... For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and consecrated it. (Exodus 20:8-11)

So keep the Sabbath you who have been created in God’s image. Keep it as a way of remembering that you are more than what you do. Keep it as a way of maintaining a healthy balance to life—labor and then leisure, work and then rest. Keep it, not only for God’s sake, but for your sake and for your sanity as well.

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Notes
6. Walter Brueggemann, the specific source of this quote is no longer known to me.

CONNECTING TEXT, SERMON, AND CULTURE

Remembering Sabbath

D isclaimer and Warning: This article is not for those of you who maintain a healthy balance between work and Sabbath time. Without apology it is for those of us that do not. The article still may
be helpful if you provide pastoral care to workaholics. Not long ago, I preached a sermon entitled, "Remember the Sabbath" to a local church in a D.C. suburb. I have two confessions up front. The first is that the preacher was uncomfortable with the topic herself. How can a pastor have much authority if she doesn't practice what she preaches, and in all honesty, the last time I felt like I could afford the luxury of a real Sabbath was the Sunday before I entered seminary, 18 years ago. I vividly remember as a child feeling renewed in corporate worship, especially a sense of relinquishing my cares and falling deeply into the lap of God during the prayers of the people. But once I entered seminary, Sunday worship was not so much a place to rest in God, as much as it was a place to do something. I certainly have taken time "off," and some of it even for God, and yet, in a way, the idea of Sabbath remains strangely foreign to me. The second is that I wondered how practical it was to talk about a Sabbath in the modern world. Is the Sabbath obsolete? What should a Sabbath look like in 2002? (a question we can also ask our Jewish and Muslim brothers and sisters.) The blue laws which once kept stores closed on Sundays have vanished, and Christians know Sunday is now as busy a day as any other day of the week. For many who attend church the Sabbath has been reduced to one hour a week, the worship hour, before we run off on other errands, and take the children to soccer. Worship may be the only time some of our parishioners sit still all week.

Worshipping with that local congregation in D.C., I was in for a few surprises. Barely into the homily I echoed one of the vivid images we find in Albert Butzer's sermon, "If God can take a day off why can't we?" Without missing a beat, a woman in the pews chose to answer my question aloud in a voice that all could hear, "Because our work is never done." "Yes," I acknowledged her, "you're right." Trying to think on my feet and buy some time I mumbled some theological gobbledygook. Thankfully, coming to my senses quickly, I affirmed her again, "Let's keep in mind that our work is never done as I continue to share this morning; let's also keep the dialogue open even after I'm done." I didn't have any more verbal responses, but I knew that they were listening; I think I was too. The next surprise came during the offertory music. One of the lectors got up and walked across the altar to sit by my side. She softly spoke in my ear, "Thank you for a message I really needed to hear this morning. You know we don't talk about the Sabbath in church." We don't talk about the Sabbath in church?? Even though "Remember the Sabbath" is the fourth commandment and the longest one at that? Yes, I believe she is right. I know she is right. We don't talk about the Sabbath because... talking about the Sabbath is taboo, a forbidden topic inside and outside the church.

Sabbath is not pleasing to a society that worships work as a god. It is not pleasing even to the Church that needs happy volunteers to serve on all kinds of committees, sing in the choir, run the fall bazaar, teach Sunday school, etc. We know as people of faith we are not immune to adopting the gods of our culture. In the midst of our anxious strivings, which betray that we believe we are not enough, it never occurs to us that resting can win divine favor. It is actually pleasing to God that we rest? We act as if we believe more in the theological messages of the Babylonian creation myths in which the gods created humans so that humans could toil while the gods rested. We forget we are children of God, not beasts of burden. As Butzer shares, "Genesis tells us not about human rest but about the rest of God... But because we humans have been created in God's image, God's rest becomes the model and the promise for human rest as well."

A society of computers, pagers, cell phones, faxes, and answering machines doesn't want us to slow down; doesn't desire us to stop and catch our breath, not for a minute. We keep pace, and yet live with an uneasy feeling we may be trampled upon. Nowhere is this more vividly seen than in the insane speed we keep on the highways encircling our cities. Blood pressure rises when we encounter a slow driver. Ours is an addictive culture, and work is one of our primary addictions. Work, however, is not an addiction which horrifies us, but rather one which gains applause and praise. What often suffers the most is our health and the quality of our relationships. On NPR I heard about an Internet company in England recommending a worldwide day of rest from the Internet. Calling for users to lay modems and mice aside for a day, people everywhere might then be free to connect with others, because isn't the Internet about increasing communication anyway? The response of the radio commentator was that that particular Internet company must not mind losing out on some profits and income.

We believe there is a cost in a competitive economy to abstain from work. Someone else will get ahead. To succeed in business one has to be available for customers all of the time. For most, a phrase coined by Benjamin Franklin has become a mantra, "Time is money," and money is hailed as a more precious commodity than people or relationships. Among the western nations, the U.S. has the least amount of leisure time for its workers. How can it be then that we are still not #1 in production?

There is a certain pride in our merciless busyness and fatigue. Donna Schaper alludes to this in her book, Sabbath Keeping: "We are desperate for rest in a culture that seems to reward only effort. We understand ourselves as overworked, but in a way we are proud of our exhaustion and our failure to honor the Sabbath." Butzer captures this well in his illustration of the young business people having lunch on Monday after lugging work home over the weekend. We have become complacent about violating the fourth commandment, and we do brag about it. Usually it takes something like a serious illness to make us pause and think about the abuse we perpetrate upon our bodies and souls, let
alone the dehumanizing effect our workaholism has on others. How have we come to be so nonchalant about violating a commandment, which, if ignored, once imposed the death penalty? It seems outrageous to us that in the biblical tradition not observing the Sabbath was classified as a crime against humanity and God.

Some of us may even unknowingly point to Jesus as a reason to not observe a Sabbath. Jesus was critical of the institutional religion of his time, and infamous for “working” on the Sabbath. If we are not careful we miss one of the points Butzer makes in his message that Jesus modeled for us that “The Sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27).

As clergy we are faced with a veritable problem. “Work not rest is what our culture values,” and our congregation members are watching us. Can we take time off without worrying about whether or not things will fall apart in our absence? Can we model faith when we feel our parishioners are demanding too much from us? Even if we practice setting healthy work limits for ourselves, there is pressure to feel guilty for doing so. We ministers may find ourselves wanting and put on the spot when faced with the question, “Who will teach him (humankind) how to desire anxiously the spirit of a sacred day?”

Reflections on Important Exegetical and Theological Issues in the Text

Most of us believe we know Genesis 1:2–3. “God created and finished the heavens and the earth in six days, and then rested on the seventh day.” But a careful reading of Genesis 2.2 reveals that on the seventh day, God finished the work that God had done, and God rested from all the work that God had done. How can God both finish and rest on the same day? In response to this phrase which sounds strange to modern readers, a local parishioner said, “It’s obvious that God got up at 5:30 a.m., did what he had to do, and then took the rest of the day off.” We are inclined to think of “rest” as time off. In light of Genesis 2:2, it’s worth reflecting upon what “rest” in the biblical sense may mean, and its possible implications for understanding “Sabbath.”

Abraham Joshua Heschel alludes to the puzzling exegetical question about Genesis 2:2 in his beloved classic of Jewish spirituality, “The Sabbath.” He notes that ancient rabbis resolved the mystery by concluding that “there was an act of creation on the seventh day.” Just as heaven and earth were created in six days, menucha was created on the Sabbath. After the six days of creation—what did the universe still lack? Menucha. Came the Sabbath, came menucha, and the universe was complete.5 Heschel goes on to say that menucha, connotes much more than simply a withdrawal from labor and an abstention from strain or activity, but more essentially “tranquility, serenity, peace and repose.” To the biblical mind menucha is the same as happiness and stillness, as peace and harmony.7 In the 23rd Psalm the Lord who is the shepherd leads the psalmist “beside the still waters” (the waters of menubot).8 Job uses a word derived from the same root as menucha to describe the state after life that he longs for. “It is the state wherein man lies still, wherein the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. It is the state in which there is no strife and no fighting, no fear and no distrust.”9

This midrashic interpretation alluded to by Heschel is interesting in light of the frequently agreed upon date and context for the Genesis story. Most scholars believe that Genesis 1:1–2:3 was written in 6th century B.C., for the exiles of Babylon. There already was an older story about creation, so why was a new story needed? Walter Brueggemann speaks of the theological and pastoral purpose such a second story could serve, the power of its proclamation to a people who find themselves in the plight of exile.10 Where is the power of their God, Yahweh, when it appears as if the Babylonian gods have triumphed? The Genesis 1:1–2:3 creation story could empower the Israelites to lay aside the gods of their surrounding culture. Brueggemann states that in spite of the Israelites defeat, “...Yahweh is still God, one who watches over his creation, and will bring it to well-being.”11 The text “cuts underneath the Babylonian experience and grounds the rule of God in Israel in a more fundamental claim, that of creation.”12 While their struggle was yet before them, the Israelites could find rest from their weariness. They could still light candles, dance and sing. For humankind which is made in the image of God, Genesis 1:26–27, can also enjoy the menucha of God.

In Exodus we are given a connection between the 7th day of creation in the Genesis story and the Sabbath. The 7th day of creation, characterized by menucha, is related to Sabbath practice, which is believed to have been “a cornerstone of Israelite practice from earliest times.”13 The significance of the Sabbath in the biblical tradition includes the rationale that the Sabbath is a day to remember God’s menucha, and celebrate menucha as part of the divine order of creation, indeed as the climax of creation. The Sabbath as an institution is an invitation for the people of God to enter into the menucha of God on a regular basis. Observing the Sabbath enables the people of God to receive the menucha of God into their own lives.

Terence Fretheim writes: “Sabbath-keeping puts all human striving aside, recognizes the decisive role of God in creation, and provides for a weekly oasis to rest back in the arms of this reality.”14 In this way, one can, paraphrasing the words of Heschel, rest on the Sabbath as if all one’s work was done.15

Martin Marty, in his article “Sabbath: Our Need for Meaning,” informs us that the Babylonian term sabatu which meant the “day of quieting the heart,” and the Hebrew term for Sabbath, Shabbat, both shared a common root in West Semitic languages.16 He shares that this, in relation to the way Sabbath is used in other scriptural contexts, seems to imply that observing the Sabbath is about more than getting physical rest. He contends Sabbath is more about a “letting go and ruling one’s self off from work and its attendant anxieties that do not permit quietness of heart.”17 Sabbath is a time when the heart can rest, when our search for meaning can be fulfilled. The heart is made quiet by resting in the truth about Yahweh and Yahweh’s creation, and the heart is made quiet by dwelling in God. I believe it is in this sense that Heschel notes that, for some, the word “Sabbath” is the name of the Holy One, the name of God.18 Just think of St. Augustine’s opening lines in his Confessions:

Our hearts are restless O Lord until they rest in thee. Our lives are meaningless O Lord until they find their meaning in thee.
A way to think about this in interpreting Sabbath for modern day Americans is that there is a world of difference between getting 8 hours of sleep and getting a good night’s rest. We can put in enough sleep time and still awaken not feeling adequately refreshed. Sabbath is not just about taking time off, nor is it at its heart about resting so one can go back into the trenches on Monday morning. Sabbath time is more than leisure time. It is a time which can inspire the meaning of all our other days. Sabbath is about laying aside the gods of our culture, most prominently the god of work, and once again, worshipping the living God with our hearts, minds and souls. Sabbath is about resting in God; joyfully being content to sit in the lap of God. It is about giving God our full attention and basking in God’s splendor. And we remember how we are loved. As Christians we traditionally celebrate the Sabbath as the Day of Christ’s Resurrection; the day our Lord conquered the powers of sin and death. For Christians our Sabbath is to rest in the loving God we know in Christ, and to rest in Christ’s victory. We are renewed by the power of the Spirit even with the knowledge that the creation yet groans with the cries of people suffering all over the world. We are cognizant of the tension between the already and not yet nature of God’s kingdom; but pointing to the resurrection, the Christian Sabbath can be an opportunity to lay aside our worldly burdens and enter into a day of eternal gladness.

Sabbath brings together the community of faith, allows us to celebrate our common identity, and invites us beyond corporate worship to delight in the full mystery of God and in the beauty of God’s creation. One can envision God’s time of meluna as God putting the paintbrush down and sitting back and delighting in all that is exquisite upon the canvas of creation.

In The Song of the Lark, a novel by Willa Cather, Thea Kronborg is a young woman who is a classically trained singer. Despite working very hard by studying for two years in Chicago, she has made no great progress with her voice. Feeling like a failure, she journeys to Panther Canyon in Arizona to take a solitary retreat. Finding solace in nature she discovers herself, “getting back to the earliest sources of gladness” that she can remember. She also experiences her identity as a “soprano with a faulty middle voice” losing its grip on her. One day, basking in the brilliant splendor of sand and sun, content to listen to locusts and asp, and to lie in wonder about her own inactivity Cather writes of Thea, “All her life she had been hurrying ... as if she had been born behind time and had been trying to catch up.” But now, Thea felt like she was “waiting for something to catch up with her.” For Thea “had got to a place where she was out of the stream of meaningless activity and undirected effort.”

When was the last time you or your congregation members were out of the stream of meaningless activity and undirected effort?

Many people feel their work is boring and meaningless, and truly live for the weekend. But even those of us who may consider ourselves fortunate to have meaningful work to do may find that the meaning of our work becomes lost in the addiction of our busyness. Recently I received an e-mail from a well-respected ministerial colleague. It was an honest confession of his work addiction and a call for help. Many in the church hold him up as a standard to emulate. But what people don’t see is how a life without adequate Sabbath time is antithetical to the life of faith. The two illustrations of John Buchanan in Butzer’s sermon illustrate beautifully how the transcendence of Sabbath experience can break into our workday, and imbue it with meaning. The connection between work and faith is alive when Sabbath experience has become part of us.

Working hard is a virtue. Indeed it is even considered a divine attribute, as Butzer conveys with his picture of the Genesis Creator God putting “the divine nose to the grindstone creating stars and planets, green grass and vast oceans.” It’s not that there is anything inherently wrong with our busyness. Rather it’s a driven unreflective busyness which prevents us from seeing clearly. Things look different after we have stopped.

There is a happy epilogue for Thea Kronborg. In her time of doing “nothing,” something was being born in her, a sense of self and a sense of vocation. Like a growing embryo in a woman’s womb is invisible to the eye, but we know it is growing, so too the seed of eternity which God has planted in our souls can grow in a time of Sabbath.

To observe the Sabbath changes us. Something is made. God’s spirit is at work creating in us. Like love we can’t quantify it, but one can see it in people’s faces, one can hear it in their voices, it is reflected in their eyes; the gift of a certain tranquility and grounding.

Evelyn Underhill writes, “The action of those whose lives are given to the Spirit has in it something the leisure of Eternity...they achieve far more than those whose lives are enslaved by...the unceasing tick-tick of the world. In the spiritual life it is very important to get our timing right.” She concludes with “Otherwise we tend to forget that God, who is greater than our heart is greater than our job too.”

God invites us to confidently rest in the leisure of eternity.

Like the old adage about needing to look death in the face before one can begin to truly live, I believe that one of the pearls we can discern in the Genesis story and the Exodus commandment is that only in daring to cease our work in a healthy rhythm of work and Sabbath, are we able to truly discern our work’s meaning; only then do we begin to know at a deeper level what all our work is for, and to whom we belong.

Many of us feel like we are bailing out a sinking ship, we who are so concerned about what the “declining” mainline churches need to do. While there is no simplistic answer, maybe the search also needs to focus on how we rest, “rest” in the nuances of the biblical sense of the word. The Jewish people have endured through long hardships and persecution through the centuries. How is it that their culture and spirituality have been preserved, and passed on from generation to generation? This of course echoes Butzer’s vital concern about connecting the faith experience of Sunday morning with one’s work throughout the week. There is a well-known saying that more than the Jewish people have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jewish people. As mainline Christians, who or what is going to keep us?

In the midst of our own struggles as the institutional church, we may once again begin to recapture the sense that
honoring the Sabbath has cosmic implications; that what was created on the seventh day, *menucha*, preserves and ensures the continuation of the life that has been created.

The cosmic implications of keeping Sabbath is a fertile topic for an exciting sermon. One can explore the practical merits of keeping Sabbath, not only for oneself and one’s people, but for the sake of the peace of the world. Heschel asks: “...is there any institution that holds out a greater hope for man’s progress than the Sabbath?”

When we cease in order to revel in the mystery of God, and in the beauty of God’s creation; when we stop to rest in what we ultimately believe to be true about our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer and God’s relationship with us in Christ, we approach, even enter into the mysterious gift that is Sabbath. God doesn’t demand, doesn’t yell or clamor to get our attention the way so much in our lives seems to. Our hearts are already restless, tired and hungry for meaning. God simply whispers in our souls, “Remember the Sabbath,” inviting us to wonder, delight, even play. As we are granted a foretaste of God’s kingdom in our Sabbath meal, the Lord’s Supper, so in observing the Sabbath we can taste the *menucha* which exists in God’s eternal time. Yes our work is never done. But we are enough, in some sense even made whole, when we stop laboring. For even in the busiest day there can be a few moments when we remember all our time is in God’s time; a few moments when we stop, breathe, and let the Spirit of God whom we know as Christ Jesus to possess us. And when we begin to labor again faith and work may suddenly find themselves intimately bound together.

For that next sermon, I offer a few lines from a Japanese translation of the 23rd Psalm given to me by a friend who practiced law:

*The Lord is my Pace-setter, I shall not rush: He makes me stop and rest for quiet intervals. He provides me with images of stillness, which restore my serenity... Harmony and effectiveness shall be the fruits of my hours. For I shall walk in the pace of my Lord...*”

Preacher’s epilogue: I do not know how long this will last. The process of wrestling with the Genesis text has changed me somewhat. I am driving slower these days. My work as a campus chaplain somehow feels lighter in spite of the fact that it will never be finished. I just got word that for the first time in the Univ. of Maryland’s history, Fall Commencement for 2002 will be held on a Sunday. While the Christian Chaplains don’t anticipate having any power to change the almighty university calendar, we might feel called to refuse to be available to do the commencement prayers. We might even take a stand for the Sunday Sabbath. Imagine that.

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Notes

2. Ibid., p. 6.
4. Ibid., p. 22.
5. Ibid., Quoted as a Midrash by Rashi on Megillah 5a; on Genesis 2:2; Toseft Sanhedrin 38a.
7. Ibid. Heschel’s footnote (25) is Deuteronomy 12:9; cf. Kings 8:56; Psalms 95:11; Ruth 1:19.
11. Ibid., p. 25.
12. Ibid.
15. Heschel, p. 32.

(continued from page 44)

Thinking about our text, I can almost picture Paul out in the parking lot of some affluent mega-church, throwing rocks at the windows of Suburban Assault Vehicles (SAV’s), and cursing the "purpose-driven" selfishness of superficial Christians.

Then I look again and realize he’s throwing rocks in my parking lot.

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Notes