



Dear Friends,

I am a little obsessed with the graph I used in the sermon on Sunday – “**Time women and men spend on leisure**”. (You really need to click on the link (and scroll down slightly to find it) because it’s interactive - <https://ourworldindata.org/time-use>.)

As we noted quickly on Sunday, the best place to live if you are a woman (in terms of leisure equity between genders) is Norway (370 minutes a day for men and 366 minutes a day for women). The worst place to live (in terms of leisure equity) for women is Portugal (289 minutes for men and 200 minutes for women). Mexico, however, the worst place for both genders (only 187 minutes for men and 159 minutes for women)!

In case you are looking for Australia, you need to hover just to right of the larger dot representing Japan. According to the 2020 data, men in Australia have 297 minutes a day for leisure and women have 269. Interestingly, we’d all be slightly better off, at least in terms of amount of leisure time, in New Zealand (306 minutes for men and 295 minutes for women.)

The other graph on the top of that page, comparing the amount of time that 23 different nationalities spend on work, education, sleep, unpaid work, housework, personal care, eating and drinking, TV and radio, seeing friends and other leisure is also fascinating.

And that was my main take away from 2 Thessalonians 3, our reading for Sunday; that while we are called, “*whatever you do [to] do everything for the glory of God*” (1 Corinthians 10:31), work that best glorifies God is work that is shared equitably and where all who work, “*long enjoy the work of their hands*” (Isaiah 65:22b). That goes for work in the church – and work in our wider society – as we continue to work towards the world or work and leisure that God envisions.

And that reflection bring us to the end of another church year* and my deep thanks for all of you who have shared the work of this church this year; “financially supporting it,” as I

prayed on Sunday, “inviting and welcoming new people to it, reading God’s word and praying and helping to guide it, cooking and cleaning and gardening and teaching classes and doing repairs and paying bills and playing instruments for it, and loving and caring for one another in it!”

This is my last *Sunday to Sunday* till early in 2026! Next Monday our Advent Reflections begin - so others will be sharing the work!! Let me close for the year with a prayer by 16th-century church theologian and reformer John Calvin.

*My God, Father and Saviour,
since you have commanded us to work in order to meet our needs,
sanctify our labor that it may bring nourishment to our souls
as well as to our bodies.*

*Make us constantly aware that our efforts are worthless
unless guided by your light and by your hand.*

*Make us faithful to the particular tasks
for which you have bestowed upon us the necessary gifts,
taking from us any envy or jealousy at the vocations of others.
Give us a good heart to supply the needs of the poor,
saving us from any desire to exalt ourselves
over those who receive our bounty.*

*And if you should call us into greater poverty than we humanly desire,
save us from any spirit of defiance or resentment,
but rather let us graciously and humbly receive the bounty of others.
Above all, may every temporal grace be matched by spiritual grace,
that in both body and soul we may live to your glory.*

— taken from a collection of everyday prayers Calvin wrote for the people of Geneva, Switzerland. Posted on MethodistThinker.com

Grace and peace,

Belinda