

Work and worship: Signs of significance

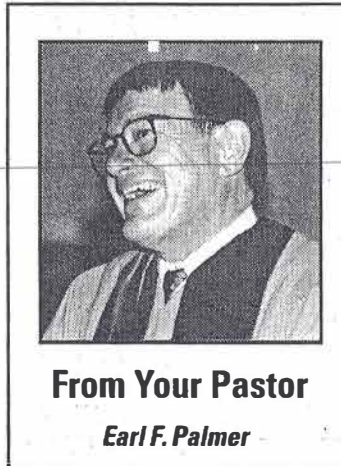
"Grant us Thy love all our days ... and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us ... " — Psalm 90

This is a prayer about significance; when I join with Psalm 90 and pray this prayer I am asking for God's blessing so that my life and what I do with my hands day by day will create and make a positive and lasting difference in the world. But a big question follows the prayer and it is a practical one: how can this happen in and through us? How does a person make a difference for good?

I think the answer is in the prayer, we ask for God's blessing upon who we are first of all and then for what we do in the work of our hands.

Autumn is a time when most people think concretely about the work of our hands. This is the stuff careers are made of, and so we go to school for skills and knowledge so that we have a work that we are skilled in doing. This training never really ends throughout our life and the careers we choose are not stuck in cement either!

We have a dynamic understanding of work as people of



will be more to do with the talents and work skills of our lives than we had imagined. Heaven will not only be a spectacle we watch in awe, but the new Jerusalem where we each bring our

the covenant of God because our Lord Himself gave a powerful answer to the Psalm 90 prayer in His parable of the talents (Luke 19). The workers who dared to deploy their talents heard at the end of the day the divine accolade: "Well done good and faithful servants, you have been faithful in a few things I will make you stewards over many."

This means that there

giftedness to the lamb as we share in the healing of the nations. (Revelation 21, 22) Nothing we learn and learn how to do is lost; everything is fulfilled and that is the grand mystery that is before us.

But best of all, **significance for a human life has** its source in the relationship we have with God. For this reason we go to church to worship God; for this reason we are the church by our physical and spiritual actual presence in a real place in real time. We meet together where streets have names and where people see us and learn our names. It is ironic in a way that we seal the grand significance of our lives by this act of worship, and by the concrete ways that we keep the fellowship of the people visible and present in a city like Seattle. In worship we are the thankful rememberers as much as the proactive doers.

These two marks of significance go together; the worship because of God's love, and the work of our hands also because of God's love.

Autumn is a good time to claim each.