

2019 MRI SYMPOSIUM – ABSTRACT

Mark Pufpaff

26 April 2019

This paper will explore the concept of leisure in Greek philosophy and its relationship to contemplation, understood and expressed within the Christian tradition. Its purpose will be to delineate between these two ideas conceptually, and then explore their convergences in terms of human experience and aspiration. The context for this exploration is what Josef Pieper described in his seminal work, *Leisure: The Basic of Culture*, as “the world of total work.” The phrase describes a condition of existence where the ultimate measure of a person’s worth, or dignity, is in their productive outputs. Such a condition arguably marginalizes the classical idea of leisure and compromises the pursuit and practice of contemplation as an end in itself. Thus, the attempt of this paper will be to establish a link between leisure and contemplation, and demonstrate their complementarity to and support of work and the active life as a whole. It will conclude with a listing of practical implications and recommendations for cultivating space for leisure and a habit of contemplation.