



Your Spiritual Influence in the Workplace

by Tony Williams

REAL MOMENTUM

Where do we gain most of our self-esteem needs? **The Workplace**

Where is the "central nervous system" of a man's heart?

His value as a man is often derived by his success or failure in his work.

What percentage of laypeople have been intentionally taught to apply biblical faith to their work life through their local church?

Doug Sherman, Author..Your Work Matters to God... "Our surveys reveal that 90-97% of Christians have never heard a sermon relating to biblical principles to their work life."

Dr. Billy Graham "I believe one of the next great moves of God is going to be through believers in the workplace."

Jesus never envisioned His Church to be run by a religious elite. His design was intentionally non-religious.

1. None of the 12 disciples belonged to the religious establishment. They were Galileans, a group large despised by the religious clique in Jerusalem.
2. None of the leaders in the early Church were priests or leaders in the Temple. Paul had been a prominent rabbi, but was dismissed by the establishment the moment he became a believer in Jesus. In fact, the early Church looked to workplace leaders, as opposed to religious leaders.

Where would we find these workplace leaders today?

- Peter, John and James -- food industry (fishermen)
 - Matthew -- IRS/Savings and loan manager (tax collector)
 - Paul -- RV manufacturing (tent maker)
 - Luke -- medical doctor
 - The Seven (Acts 6) -- businessmen
 - The Ethiopian first convert -- banker
 - Dorcas -- manufacturer of inner garments
 - Lydia -- upscale clothing material distributor
 - Cornelius -- senior military officer
 - Simon the tanner -- leather goods
3. The Gospels were written by religious outsiders:
 - A medical doctor
 - A retired tax officer
 - A fisherman
 - And Mark, who may have been the heir of a wealthy family, the modern day equivalent of being the CEO of a private foundation
 4. The Church did not begin in a religious setting, such as the Temple or a Synagogue, but in a private home, most likely owned by a businessman. The Church began in a secular setting, the workplace.
 5. When the moment came to introduce a revolutionary principle, that Gentiles could and should be accepted into the Church, God used three workplace leaders: Peter, Simon and Cornelius (Acts 10)
 6. Finally, the Church's International Headquarters was established in Antioch, most likely to protect it from the religious climate coming out of Jerusalem.

All of these points lead us to conclude:

- Jesus never intended for the Church to be a *subculture* but, rather, the *counterculture*.
- The Church was not meant to blend into society, but to change society by *transforming* cities and nations.

Transformation: A marked change, as in appearance or character, usually for the better.

Problem?... We have a lack of understanding of work and our calling.
Our work is a calling and our place of ministry.

Work “IS” Ministry

- The work itself is ministry because it is *Service* to others
- The *Value* in secular work is when it meets the human needs of society
- Work is *Worship* – Avodah, a Hebrew word which encompasses spiritual, communal and work related service.

Worship is a lifestyle of enjoying God, loving him and giving ourselves to be used for His purposes.” The Purpose Driven Life

- Our work is a *Platform* to share Christ
- Our work is the means of *Giving* to Christian causes
- We are able to use *Influence* for societal transformation
- Our work Provides for our ministry

The Priesthood of every believer is our foundation of work.

“Take your everyday, ordinary life --- your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life and place it before God as an offering” The Message.. Rom. 12:1

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for man, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.” Colossians 3:23,24

Where did Jesus spend most of His time?

- Of the 132 public appearances in the New Testament, 122 were in the marketplace
- Of 52 parables Jesus told, 45 had a workplace context
- Of 40 miracles in the book of Acts, 39 were in the marketplace
- Jesus equipped 12 workers, not religious figures from the workplace
- Jesus spent more than 50% of his adult life as a carpenter before he went into a preaching ministry in the workplace

Sometimes it is said.. “How does a businessman have such wisdom?”

- Jesus had more credentials to be a carpenter than He did to be the Son of God. That's why the religious leaders would not accept Him.
- “Who is this working class man who is doing miracles in our midst?”
- We still have the same challenge today as workplace believers begin to experience God in the workplace.

God elevates those who desire to reveal His glory in their work:

“Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will serve before kings;
he will not serve before obscure men.” Proverbs 22:29

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"Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain." 1 Corinthians 15:58

Spiritual Influence in the Workplace

- Influence is the power or capacity to produce a desired result, to impact, or to cause a change to take place.
- Influence focuses on hearts and changes people from within.

What does Spiritual Influence require?

1. Competence

- Colossians 3:23... work "with all your heart"
- Ecclesiastes 9:10... "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might."

Consider Jesus... Before we introduce coworkers to God, we must introduce God into our work.

2. Character

Galatians 5:22... love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness and self control

3. Consideration

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.

Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the the things of others.
Philippians 2:1-4

4. Wise Communication

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." 1 Peter 3:15

5. Courage

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success." Joshua 1:8