

# Faith at Work

Individual Purpose, Flourishing Communities



Speaker Paul Ryan



Gov. Sam Brownback



Sen. Elizabeth Dole



Art Lindsley



Penny Nance



Rev. Samuel Rodriguez



Hugh Whelchel





# FAITH AT WORK:

## Individual Purpose, Flourishing Communities

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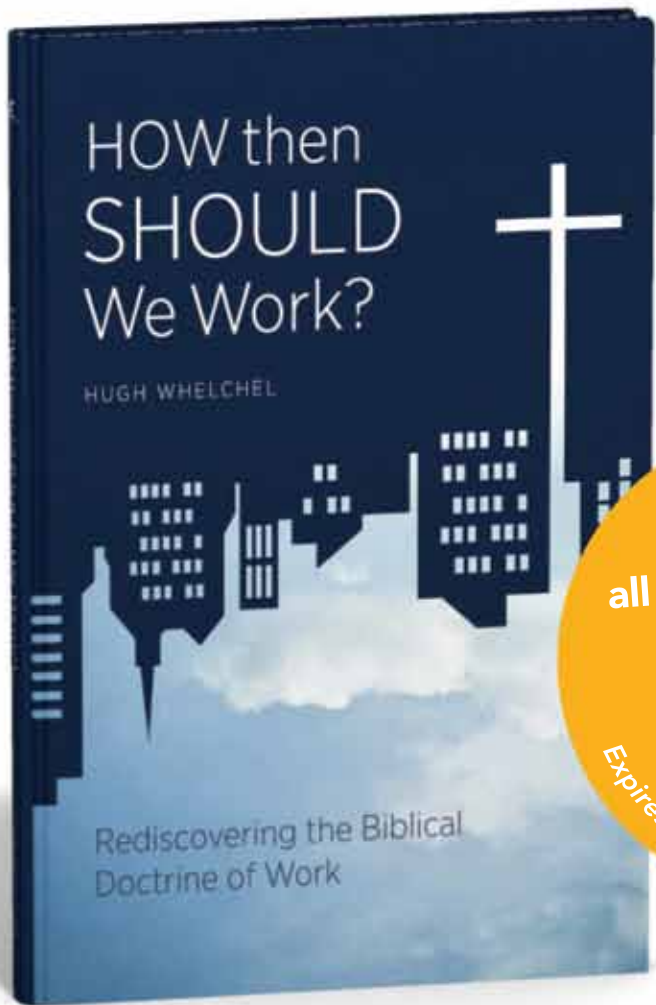
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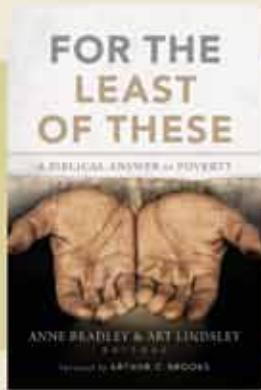
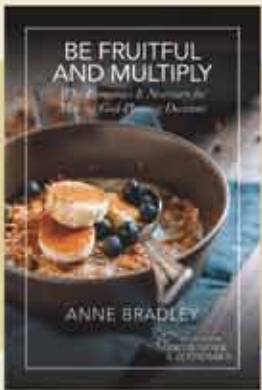
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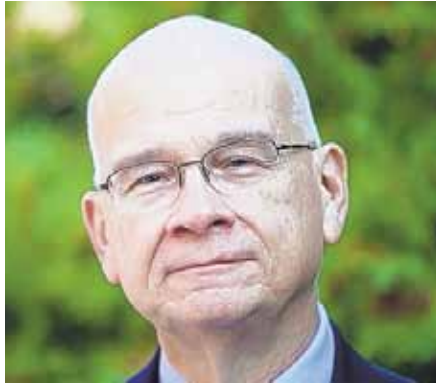


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# The dignity of all work



By Dr. Timothy Keller

All work has dignity because it reflects God's image in us, and also because the material creation we are called to care for is good. The Greeks saw death as a friend because it liberated us from the prison of physical life. The Bible sees death not as a friend, but as an enemy (1 Corinthians 15:26), because the created world is a brilliant and beautiful good (Genesis 1:31), destined to exist forever (Revelation 22:1-5).

Indeed, the biblical doctrine of creation harmonizes with the doctrine of the incarnation (in which God takes upon himself a human body) and of the resurrection (in which God redeems not just the soul but the body) to show how deeply

"pro-physical" Christianity is.

For Christians, even our ultimate future is physical. Some views of reality see the spiritual as more real and true than the physical; other, more naturalistic views see the spiritual as illusory and the physical as the only thing real; but neither is true of the Bible. We acknowledge that the world is good. It is not the temporary theater for our individual salvation stories, after which we go to live disembodied lives in a different dimension. According to the Bible, this world is the forerunner of the new heavens and new earth, which will be purified, restored and enhanced at the "renewal of all things" (Matthew 19:28; Romans 8:19-25). No other religion envisions matter and spirit living together in integrity forever. And so birds flying and oceans roaring and people eating, walking and loving are permanently good things.

As we have seen, this means that Christians cannot look down on labor involving more intimate contact with the material world. Caring for and cultivating this material world has worth, even if it means cutting the grass. This also means that "secular" work has no less dignity and nobility than the "sacred" work of ministry. We are both body and soul, and the biblical ideal of shalom includes both physical thriving as well as spiritual. "Food that nourishes, roofs that hold out the rain, shade that protects from the heat of the sun ... the satisfaction of the

material needs and desires of men and women ... when businesses produce material things that enhance the welfare of the community, they are engaged in work that matters to God."

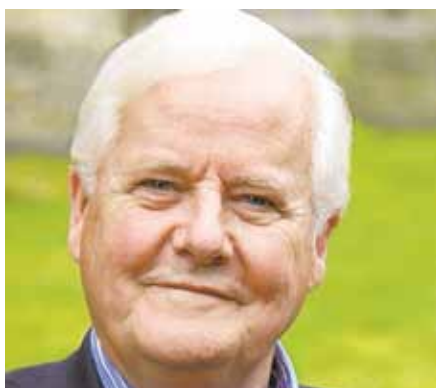
In Psalm 65, verses 9-10, and Psalm 104, verse 30, we find God cultivating the ground by watering it through rain showers and, through his Holy Spirit, "renewing the face of the ground." However, in John 16, verses 8-11, the Holy Spirit is said to convict and convince people of sin and God's judgment — which is something a preacher does. So here we have God's Spirit both gardening and preaching the Gospel. Both are God's work. How can we say one kind of work is high and noble and the other low and debasing?

We have an excellent foundation if we understand the goodness of creation and the dignity of work. We work in a wondrous world that is designed at least partly for our pleasure. The author of Genesis tells us we should experience awe as we stand before the richness of the creation, for it teems with life. God seems to delight in diversity and creativity. Other places in the Bible speak of God's creative activity as being motivated by the sheer delight of creating (see Proverbs 8:27-31). This, too, is part of God's plan for what our work should be about, and what it would still be about if we had not experienced the fall, which marred everything, including our labor.

We were built for work and the dignity it gives us as human beings, regardless of its status or pay. The practical implications of this principle are far-reaching. We have the freedom to seek work that suits our gifts and passions. We can be open to greater opportunities for work when the economy is weak and jobs are less plentiful. We no longer have any basis for condescension or superiority; nor is there any basis for envy or feelings of infidelity. And every Christian should be able to identify, with conviction and satisfaction, the ways in which his or her work participates with God in his creativity and cultivation.

.....  
Timothy Keller was born and raised in Pennsylvania and educated at Bucknell University, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and Westminster Theological Seminary. In 1989, he started Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City with his wife, Kathy, and their three sons. Today, Redeemer has nearly 6,000 regular Sunday attendees and has helped start more than 300 churches around the world. This excerpt is taken from "Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work," published Nov. 13, 2012 by Penguin Books, an imprint of Penguin Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC. Copyright by Timothy Keller, 2012.

## Understanding God's 'calling' to us in life and work



By Dr. Os Guinness

What do I mean by "calling"? For the moment let me say simply that *calling is the truth that God calls us to himself so decisively that everything we are, everything we do, and everything we have is invested with a special devotion and dynamism lived out as a response to his summons and service.*

This truth — calling — has been a driving force in many of the greatest "leaps forward" in world history — the

constitution of the Jewish nation at Mount Sinai, the birth of the Christian movement in Galilee, and the 16th century Reformation and its incalculable impetus to the rise of the modern world, to name a few. Little wonder that the rediscovery of calling should be critical today, not least in satisfying the passion for purpose of millions of questing modern people.

In short, calling in the Bible is a central and dynamic theme that becomes a metaphor for the life of faith itself. To limit the word, as some insist, to a few texts and to a particular stage in salvation is to miss the forest for the trees. To be a disciple of Jesus is to be a "called one" and so to become "a follower of the Way."

The third and fourth strands of the meaning of calling are the basis for the vital distinction elaborated later in history — between primary and secondary calling. *Our primary calling as followers of Christ is by him, to him and for him.* First and foremost we are called to Someone (God), not to something (such

as motherhood, politics or teaching) or to somewhere (such as the inner city or Outer Mongolia).

*Our secondary calling: considering who God is as sovereign, is that everyone, everywhere and in everything should think, speak, live and act entirely for him.* We can therefore properly say as a matter of secondary calling that we are called to homemaking or to practice law or to art history. But these and other things are always the secondary, never the primary calling. They are "callings" rather than the "calling." They are our personal answer to God's address, our response to God's summons. Secondary callings matter, but only because the primary calling matters most.

This vital distinction between primary and secondary calling carries with it two challenges — first, to hold the two together, and second, to ensure that they are kept in the right order. In other words, if we understand calling, we must make sure that first things remain first and the primary calling always comes before the secondary calling. But we

must also make sure that the primary calling leads without fail to the secondary calling. The church's failure to meet these challenges has led to the two grand distortions that have crippled the truth of calling. We may call them the "Catholic distortion" and the "Protestant distortion."

The truth of calling means that for followers of Christ, "everyone, everywhere, and in everything" lives the whole of life as a response to God's call. Yet this holistic character of calling has often been distorted to become a form of dualism that elevates the spiritual at the expense of the secular. This distortion may be called the "Catholic distortion" because it rose in the Catholic era and is the majority position in the Catholic tradition.

Protestants, however, cannot afford to be smug. For one thing, countless Protestants have succumbed to the Catholic distortion ... Ponder, for example, the fallacy of the contemporary Protestant



The FCCI logo is rendered in a large, gold, serif font. A torch with a bright orange and yellow flame is positioned behind the letter 'I', with the flame extending upwards and slightly to the right. The background of the entire page is a composite image featuring a dark, starry night sky at the top, a historical map of Florida in the middle, and a modern night photograph of the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Sarasota at the bottom. The map shows the state of Florida with various geographical features and text labels like 'MILITARY MAP OF THE PENINSULA OF FLORIDA' and 'SOUTH OF TAMPA BAY'. The hotel is a tall, multi-story building with many lit windows, reflecting in a body of water in the foreground. Palm trees are visible in the lower left and middle ground.

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# Why the biblical theology of work leads to a flourishing society



By Dr. Art Lindsley

**T**here is a significant need to recover a biblical theology of work in our time. In the past there has been a failure of the evangelical church to address a theology of work. William Diehl says in his book “Christianity and Real Life”:

“I am now a sales manager for a major steel company. In the almost 30 years of my professional career, my church has never once suggested that there be any time of accounting of my on-the-job ministry to others. ... There has never been an inquiry into the types of ethical decisions I must face. ... I never have been in a congregation where there was any type of public affirmation of a ministry in my career. In short, I must conclude that my church really doesn’t have the least interest in whether or how I minister in my daily work.”

There are now a number of churches and organizations addressing this issue, but they are still far too few.

A short summary of the theology of work would include these topics:

## 1. Work is not a result of the fall.

We were all created to work. In Genesis 1:26-28, image-bearers of God (male and female) are called to exercise dominion or rulership over the whole creation. Only God can create something out of nothing. We are to create something out of something. We are what Francis Schaeffer and J.R.R. Tolkien called

“sub-creators.” We can take wood and make a table or a house. We can take metal and make a tool or musical instrument, and so on. Dorothy Sayers argued that it is more true to say that we live to work than it is true to say that we work to live. She also maintained that it is more true to say we play to work than it is true to say that we work to play. Too many live for the weekend (TGIF) or for vacation or retirement.

## 2. Work is not a result of the fall, but it is made harder because of the fall.

Genesis 3:17 says the ground is cursed because of the fall into sin. The ground will yield thorns and thistles. There will be much blood, sweat and tears in the context of work. However, redemption can impact our work.

## 3. Work is more than a place to make money to give to the church or a place to evangelize.

It is certainly appropriate to give to the church or, when the appropriate situation presents itself, to share the Gospel, but these purposes are not the central reason to work. Work is valuable in itself.

## 4. The ministerial calling is not higher than other professions, such as business, medicine, law or carpentry.

Jesus was a carpenter, or general contractor, for about 18 years. It is estimated that he worked in this manner from age 12 or 13 to “about 30,” according to Luke 3:23. God’s kingdom can be advanced from all valid professions. We are all “priests” called to offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim his excellency in a world of darkness (1 Peter 2:5, 1 Peter 2:9-10).

## 5. Redemption extends to all of life, including our work.

In creation, we were made to respond to God (personally), respond to each other (corporately) and respond to the creation (cosmically). The fall impacts all three of these areas: Adam and Eve hide from God, rather than walking with him in Genesis 3:8 (personal); Adam blames Eve and Eve blames the serpent in Genesis 3:12-13 (corporate); and the ground is cursed in Genesis 3:17 (cosmic). Alienation impacts all three levels.

However, redemption influences every area the fall impacts: Christ died for us, rose for us, reigns in power for us, and prays for us according to Romans 8:34 (personal). When we accept Christ, we are baptized into his body according to 1 Corinthians 12:13 (corporate). Redemption extends to the whole cosmos. Acts 3:21 speaks about the “restoration of all things.” Romans 8:19-21 indicates that the whole creation “will be liberated from its bondage” (cosmic). Finally, God will restore the whole creation through a new heaven and a new earth.

There are two Greek words for “new.” “Neos” is totally new and “kainos” means renewed. Almost everywhere the Bible uses the word new (new birth, new self, new age, new creation, etc.), the word “kainos” is used. God will renew his creation. Al Wolters says, “God doesn’t make junk and he doesn’t junk what he has made.” This means our work can participate in the redemption of all of life. In fact, it is an important means of expressing that redemption.

## 6. There are indications that some of our work will be present in the new heavens and new earth.

In Revelation 21: 24-26, it says twice that the kings of the earth will bring the “glory of the nations” into the new heavens and new earth. This seems to indicate that there is something to the unique cultural creativity of each nation that will be present for people to appreciate for all eternity. This makes us wonder what creative products will last forever.

## 7. We are called to glorify God in our work.

1 Corinthians 10:31 indicates that we are to give glory to him in how we eat and drink and surely in how we work. Our work is to be done for the Lord (Colossians 3:23). Work, whether in business, medicine, law, carpentry, construction, garbage collection or the arts, can all be done to the glory of God and for our Lord. If our work is done well, he may say, “Well done my good and faithful servant” (Matthew 25:23).

## 8. What can pastors of people do?

First, watch our language. Being a pastor is not a higher calling than being a

carpenter. Second, find ways of acknowledging the validity of people who work in “secular” jobs in your congregation. Remember you can be a “minister” even in a government job (Romans 13:4). Finally, encourage creativity and entrepreneurship in your people. Hugh Whelchel, in his excellent book, “How Then Should We Work,” says, “Unless Christians embrace the Biblical doctrine of work, they will remain ineffective ... helpless to impact the culture around them for the glory of God and the furtherance of His kingdom.”

## 9. Recovering a theology of work can encourage a flourishing society.

Throughout the ages, people have desired a path that leads to flourishing. When we work together with other people and serve customers, giving them good products and services, we increase the well-being of our society. We are to use our talents for the good of the kingdom — God’s rule and reign on earth, as well as in heaven (Matthew 25:14-30). The Bible encourages “shalom” or flourishing in every direction. The kind of peace desired is pictured in Micah 4:4. “And each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree with no one to make them afraid.”

This kind of ownership and enjoyment of the fruits of our labors is encouraged by Scripture. The resulting state of flourishing brings glory to God and produces joy, peace and security.

.....  
Arthur W. Lindsley, Ph.D., is vice president of Theological Initiatives at the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics (tifwe.org) and co-editor of “For the Least of These: A Biblical Answer to Poverty” (Zondervan, 2015). This article was originally written for an upcoming revision of the Holman Illustrated Bible Dictionary. The Institute for Faith, Work & Economics (IFWE) is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) Christian research organization committed to promoting biblical and economic principles that help individuals find fulfillment in their work and contribute to a free and flourishing society.

## CALLING

From page C4

term, full-time Christian service — as if those not working for churches or Christian organizations are only part-time in the service of Christ.

For another thing, Protestant confusion about calling ... has led to a Protestant distortion that is even worse. This is

a form of dualism in a secular direction that not only elevates the secular at the expense of the spiritual, but also cuts it off from the spiritual altogether.

In short, the recovery of a holistic view of calling was powerful in culture as well as in the church, and calling was a vital element in the transition from the traditional to the modern world. It demanded and inspired the transforming vision of the lordship of Christ

expressed in the famous saying of the great Dutch prime minister, Abraham Kuyper: “There is not one square inch of the entire creation about which Jesus Christ does not cry out, ‘This is mine! This belongs to me!’”

.....  
Os Guinness, D. Phil., has authored numerous books, including “A Free People’s Suicide: Sustainable Freedom and the American Future” and “Renaissance: The

Power of the Gospel However Dark the Times,” and is a speaker of international renown. Born in China and educated in England, he is a graduate of Oxford University. Dr. Guinness is currently a senior fellow of The Trinity Forum. This excerpt is taken from “The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life.”



# Voting with your feet to serve the common good



By Dr. Anne R. Bradley

It's election season in the U.S., and we are hearing a lot about voting. I saw a public service announcement on television the other day, and a Hollywood actress asked us to vote. I suspect she wouldn't want my vote if she knew what it was, but she was encouraging voting nonetheless.

On Election Day, Americans proudly wear the red, white and blue "I voted" sticker, which is kind of a badge of honor. There are many in the world who are denied the benefits of democratic institutions, and this keeps them oppressed.

It is important, but is it the most important voting that we do? This prompted me to think about why we put so much emphasis in voting on Election Day and proudly wearing our stickers, when the "everyday voting" we do is so important yet never discussed.

You vote every day when you go to

the grocery store or the gas station, pay your rent, purchase a washing machine or buy a latte. You are voting with your feet and sending important messages about your preferences and desires to the folks who are trying to give you what you want.

In some ways, this is very different from political voting. When we go to the ballot box, we are not afforded the luxury of voting with precision. I vote for a person who I think believes what I do on at least more issues than not, and then I hope he or she wins.

If my candidate doesn't win, I am out of luck until next time, which could be four years later. If they do win, then I hope they stay true to their promises. If they don't stay true to their promises, it is difficult for me to keep them accountable.

I can send an angry letter (which will be read by a staff intern), place an angry phone call or go to social media. However, these aren't good accountability mechanisms, and they don't always result in changed behavior and apologies. Mostly, I have to wait for their term to end and hope to vote them out; this depends not just on me, but also how others feel about the performance of this person.

In short, it's complicated and has some accountability issues. That doesn't mean we shouldn't be involved, but it does mean we aren't going to get what we want, and the consequences of bad political behavior are high.

This operates quite differently in economic exchange. When I go to Starbucks to purchase a latte, I am buying one thing, so there is precision and transparency. This is also true when I buy a house — even though the house

is more complicated than the latte. I know what I want and have good reason to believe I will receive it. If I don't get what I want, I have many methods to hold the seller accountable.

Let's face it. We are fallen sinners, and mistakes happen. Starbucks may mess up my order, or the contractor may install my plumbing incorrectly. One of these is easier to fix than the other, but what matters is that they can, and often do, get corrected.

Why is this so? Because when I don't get what I have been promised, I not only write letters, place phone calls and go to social media, but these actions also bring about changed behavior and corrective action. They do that effectively because Starbucks wants me to come back, and they want my friends to come. They want me to keep voting for them with my dollars. The minute they let me down without fixing it, I am afforded the opportunity to leave. I can leave because I have a great deal of alternatives.

The private voting we do through economic exchange is possibly the most important voting that we can do: It brings about change, it helps us express our values and it serves the public good in awe-inspiring ways.

That I can go to the grocery store and have a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables from which to choose, in the middle of winter when I could not grow them on my own, brings about peaceful cooperation. I am cooperating with farmers, truck drivers and grocery store managers, whom I do not know, but we come together. I am served with fruit and vegetables, and I reward all those involved in the process by paying for them.

Most important, it allows people to use the gifts that God has given them to serve not just their family but also strangers.

We are made in the image of God with a command in Genesis to be fruitful and multiply. Part of being fruitful is using the gifts God has given you to serve his creation and others. This brings him glory and offers more flourishing on earth.

Voting with our feet through the market provides countless opportunities for us to use our God-given gifts to help others. This is true whether you are a janitor or a CEO. If God has created you to do these things, your job is to do them well. As customers, we vote with our feet and send signals about the value that others are creating, and this encourages even more human creativity.

The voting that happens in economic exchange brings peace and greater levels of human flourishing. The more voting we do in economic exchange, the better off we are, and in doing so, we can compete to see who serves strangers the best. In the market, we encourage others to do just what God has commanded us: use our creativity to be fruitful and serve.

.....  
*Anne Rathbone Bradley, Ph.D., is vice president of Economic Initiatives at the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics (tifwe.org) and co-editor of "For the Least of These: A Biblical Answer to Poverty." The Institute for Faith, Work & Economics is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) Christian research organization committed to promoting biblical and economic principles that help individuals find fulfillment in their work and contribute to a free and flourishing society.*





# The reason we work: To reweave shalom



By Hugh Whelchel

**D**o you want to lead a personally fulfilling and spiritually significant life?

To be able to do so, we need to know why we were created. We need to understand what our work is to accomplish and how through that work we can better steward all that God has given us.

In order to accomplish this, we must understand the Creator's original objective in creation, which was to bring glory to himself. We see this idea throughout the Bible. For example, Revelation 4:11 reads, "You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for you have created all things, and for your pleasure they are and were created." One of the ways we do this is by understanding how to correctly enjoy the very goodness of God's creation, because by doing so we bring him glory.

In the opening chapter of Genesis, we find the first hint of God's original intent for his creation. God's purpose for creation was to be glorified. Just as a great painting reflects the glory of the master artist, God created everything for his glory, including man, the crown jewel of creation.

C.S. Lewis writes in his "Reflections on the Psalms" that "The Scotch catechism says that man's chief end is 'to glorify God and enjoy him forever.' But we shall then know that these are the

same thing. Fully to enjoy is to glorify. In commanding us to glorify him, God is inviting us to enjoy him."

To be effective stewards of all that God has given us, we must achieve the owner's original objective — to bring glory to himself. One of the ways we do this is by understanding how to enjoy the very goodness of God and his creation.

In Genesis 1:31 we read, "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." As God looks out upon his finished creation, he sees that all the good things that he has created now work together in an extraordinary way. The whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts. In accord with God's design, every part of creation is distinct, interconnected and interdependent. Everything works exactly as he has intended.

In the Old Testament, this idea is called shalom. As Cornelius Plantinga Jr. writes in his book "Not the Way It's Supposed to Be," shalom is the "webbing together of God, humans, and all creation in justice, fulfillment, and delight." Shalom means "universal flourishing, wholeness and delight — a rich state of affairs" in which natural needs are satisfied and natural gifts fruitfully employed.

Shalom, in other words, is the way things ought to be — the full flourishing of human life in all aspects, as God intended it to be.

Shalom (including its Greek counterpart, "eirene," found in the New Testament) appears over 550 times in the Bible. In most of our English Bibles, we translate shalom as peace, but it means much more than an absence of conflict. The concept of shalom in the widest sense of the word is one of the most significant themes in the Old Testament.

Biblical scholars tell us that shalom signifies a number of things, including:

- Salvation.
- Wholeness.
- Integrity.
- Soundness.
- Community.
- Connectedness (to others and to God's creation).

- Righteousness.
- Justice.
- Well-being (physical, psychological, spiritual).

Shalom denotes a right relationship with God, with others and with God's good creation. It is the way God intended things to be when he created the universe.

This was God's original design for his creation — not that we live in scarcity, poverty or in minimalistic conditions. He desires that we enjoy the fruits of his creation and the fruits of our labor because by doing so we bring him glory.

The story of creation in the first chapter of Genesis also explains why we all long for shalom, or "the way things are supposed to be." It has been woven into the very fabric of creation. Biblical scholar Jonathan Pennington writes:

"Human flourishing alone is the idea that encompasses all human activity and goals because there is nothing so natural and inescapable as the desire to live, and to live in peace, security, love, health, and happiness. These are not merely cultural values or the desire of a certain people or time period. The desire for human flourishing motivates everything humans do — both belief in religion and the rejection of it; monogamous marriage and a promiscuous lifestyle; waging war and making peace; studying history and creating art; planting fields and building skyscrapers. All human behavior, when analyzed deeply enough, will be found to be motivated by the desire for life and flourishing, individually and corporately."

Every person has a powerful, relentless drive to experience shalom through right relationships with God, with our families, with our communities, and with the physical creation. This is because shalom was God's original design in creation. Yet these relationships were broken at the Fall, and the shalom of creation began to unravel.

Restoration of shalom is God's design in redemption. Understanding shalom is the key to realizing how God intends to use the work of our hands to participate with him in the restoration of his creation.

David Dark, in his book "Everyday Apocalypse," says it this way:

"The movement called Christianity cannot be understood apart from the Jewish concept of shalom. The Christian Gospel does not call people to give their mental assent to a certain list of correct propositions, nor does it provide its adherents with a password that will gain them disembodied bliss when they die and the pleasure of confidently awaiting their escape until then. Shalom is a way of being in the world. The Christian Gospel invites us to partake in shalom, to embody shalom, and to anticipate its full realization in the coming kingdom of God."

We will never create full shalom in this current age. Such fulfillment awaits the age to come, when Jesus will establish everlasting shalom in the New Heaven and the New Earth.

Still, like the exiles in Babylon, we are called to "work for the shalom of the city" (Jeremiah 29:7). Through our work, we are to be a blessing in our time and place. This is possible only because we have found our identity in Christ, the Prince of Shalom. Because of Him, we know what real shalom is supposed to be.

Therefore, the work we do in the here and now is important to God, as it brings about flourishing and serves as a signpost to point others to the New City, the City of God, where all of God's children will live one day in perfect shalom. Until then, our calling is to work for the shalom of this present world, to the glory of God and by the grace of God, reweaving the unraveled fabric of our broken world.

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Hugh Whelchel is executive director of the Institute for Faith, Work & Economics ([www.tifwe.org](http://www.tifwe.org)) and author of "How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work" (WestBow Press, 2012). The Institute for Faith, Work & Economics is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) Christian research organization committed to promoting biblical and economic principles that help individuals find fulfillment in their work and contribute to a free and flourishing society.





# Defeating the rats: How a biblical worldview inspires entrepreneurship, overcomes poverty



By Dr. Nancy Pearcey

**O**ur teenage son once worked at a Christian bookstore to learn biblical principles of business. Or maybe not.

The store ran a Christmas raffle where customers put names into a bowl. At the end, the staff drew the winning name.

And tossed it out.

The staff had hoped to reward one of their loyal customers. Sorting through the names, they found a customer they preferred and declared her the winner.

The bookstore staff were sincere Christians. But what made them think cheating is acceptable for followers of Jesus? Had they thought about how biblical ethics applies to business? Or does business belong in the “secular” realm, where Christian principles do not really apply?

This vignette illustrates why Christians have surprisingly little impact on society. Many are trapped in the sacred/secular split — the assumption that Christianity belongs in the private realm of “religion,” while saying little to the public realms of

business, marketing, finance, etc.

Another example. A man underwent a dramatic conversion in midlife, eventually rising to leadership in a Christian ministry. But secular methods of doing business were so ingrained that he applied them without thinking. For example, to impress the public and attract donor dollars, he used statistical tricks to shade the numbers to exaggerate the ministry’s effectiveness.

How common do you think this is? The Center for the Study of Global Christianity at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary found that “250 of the 300 largest international Christian organizations regularly mislead the Christian public by publishing demonstrably incorrect or falsified progress statistics.”

These Christian leaders may be sincere. But the sacred/secular split leads them to think it’s acceptable in business to play by a different set of rules.

To overcome that split mentality, we must ask fundamental questions about what it means to be human. In Genesis 1:28, God gives what we might call the first job description. Having created humans, God assigns them their tasks and responsibilities: “Be fruitful and multiply and subdue the earth.”

Unpacking the Bible’s highly compact language, the phrase “Be fruitful” means to create not only families but also the other social institutions that historically grow out of the family: school, church, business, government. To develop the social world.

The phrase “subdue the earth” means to develop the natural world. Plant crops. Build buildings. Design computers. Compose music. Theologians call this verse the “cultural mandate” because it means God created humans to build cultures,

communities and civilizations.

God created humans to work.

This Christian view of work has the resources to address poverty and inspire entrepreneurship around the globe. A development organization called Disciple Nations Alliance tells the story of the Pokomchi Indians, descendants of the Mayans, historically among the poorest of the poor in Guatemala.

The traditional religions in the region are animist, teaching that nature is controlled by powerful spirits. Animism creates a passive, fatalistic, fear-based mindset. You might perform rituals to placate the spirits, but you have no real control over your life. The common assumption is, if you’re poor, you will always be poor.

A generation ago, missionaries planted churches, and many Pokomchi converted to Christianity. But they stayed poor. They knew they were saved and going to heaven, but they were still passive and fatalistic in their attitudes to this life.

We could say that they were converted in their *theology*, but not in their *worldview*.

Later, secular development organizations with government funding built things like schools and latrines. But when the groups left, the Pokomchi did not use any of the expensive projects that had been built. They had not changed their fatalistic worldview. If the poor will always be poor, why send your children to school to create a better life?

Finally, in the early 1990s, a young Peruvian pastor named Arturo Cuba came to the Pokomchi. He taught the cultural mandate — that humans are made in the image of a Creator to be creative and to practice stewardship and dominion in this world, not just wait for the next world.

For example, one reason the Pokomchi had so little to eat was that they did not have effective storage for their crops, which were being eaten by rats. The pastor asked the farmers, “Who is smarter: you or the rats?”

The farmers laughed sheepishly, and one said, “I guess the rats are.”

“So who has dominion here: you or the rats?” The farmers had to acknowledge that, in a real sense, the rats did.

Arturo Cuba taught biblical principles of stewardship: that God created humans to be active instead of passive — to take initiative, to exercise caring control over nature.

The farmers developed new methods of grain storage, the food supply increased and their children enjoyed better nutrition. Eventually, they developed better farming techniques and sent their children to school, and the Pokomchi began their climb out of poverty.

But it all began with a shift in worldview — from a sacred/secular split, where Christianity is only about how to get saved and go to heaven, to a comprehensive worldview that applies biblical principles to our daily work.

That is God’s job description — for them and for us.

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Nancy Pearcey, Ph.D., is professor and scholar in residence at Houston Baptist University. She is editor at large of *The Pearcey Report* and author of *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Crossway, 2008) and *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism and Other God Substitutes*.”

## The best workers make the best neighbors



By Dr. Tom Nelson

As a boy, I remember hearing the

heart cry of a restless generation echoing from my eldest brother’s high-powered stereo speakers. The words of pop singer Jackie DeShannon still ring with crystal clarity in my ears. “What the world needs now is love, sweet love; it’s the only thing there is just too little of.”

The world still needs lots of love, but the heart cry I hear from so many today is, “What the world needs now is jobs, sweet jobs; it’s the only thing there is just too little of.”

Jobs matter because they affirm human dignity and provide the economic capacity necessary for human flourishing.

The everyday world we wake up to is an economic world. We are confronted

daily with global economic realities impacting our lives in myriad, often stress-filled ways: We may lose our job to downsizing. We may face unemployment or underemployment. The latest jobs report and housing starts immediately impact the financial markets, consumer confidence and retirement accounts. An unwelcome rush of worry ambushes us with the latest alarming headline.

How does Christian faith inform our thinking when it comes to our global economy and the economic opportunity of others? Is it possible that our lack of thoughtful engagement in the economic challenges of our world are in part the result of an impoverished understanding

of Jesus’ teaching on what neighborly love entails?

Jesus taught that loving God and our neighbor is at the very heart of Christian faith. But what does loving our neighbor look like in daily life? Is it about taking soup to a sick neighbor or mowing the lawn of a neighbor who is on vacation? Of course, these tangible gestures of love are good and right, but what if Jesus had more in mind when he spoke about neighborly love? What if neighborly love speaks into the collaborative work we do every day and fuels the economic flourishing of our increasingly globally interconnected world? Could it be that

» see **NELSON** | **C10**



# The three callings of a Christian



## By Andy Crouch

If you're a Christian you don't have "a calling," you have three.

Two of the three are fundamental and universal — that is, they aren't optional and they aren't individual, but they are by far the most important callings in your life. The good news (and hard news, actually) is they each come with a community who can help you fulfill them. In fact, without that community you won't fulfill them at all.

Your first fundamental calling is shared with every other human being: to bear the image of God. We are here to reflect the Creator into the creation, and to reflect the creation's praise and lament back to the Creator. To bear the image is to exercise dominion, caring for and cultivating the good world and making it very good through our creative attention. Most human work falls under this heading, which is why Christians work gladly alongside neighbors who

don't share our faith, and also why almost all human work is perfectly appropriate for Christians. It requires no more justification than this: Bearing the image by working fruitfully in the good world is what we were always meant to do.

For the great majority of human beings, this calling is fulfilled primarily in the first and most fundamental human community: the family. The image bearers are called to be fruitful and multiply. "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." From that union come every one of us image bearers, always already immersed in a human community, whose faces we sought as soon as we were born. This is not the "nuclear family" of the late industrial West, but the extended family that has known us since our birth and will, if we are blessed, surround and provide for us at our death. Whether or not we go on to form new families of our own, our human calling is inextricably linked with the family where we first found our name, language, identity and home.

Your second fundamental calling is shared with every other member of the family of God: to restore the image of God. The entire story of God's people — beginning with Abraham and Sarah, and now extending to all nations through the reconciling power of the cross — is a vast, world-historical rescue mission to restore the capacity for true image-bearing. Our distinctive calling as Christians is not just to till and keep the world as image bearers, but to actively seek out the places where that image has been lost, to place ourselves at particular risk on behalf of the victims of idolatry

and injustice. So in every workplace, Christians should be those who speak up most quickly and sacrifice their own privileges most readily for those whose image-bearing has been compromised by that organization's patterns of neglect. In every society, Christians should be the most active in using their talents on behalf of those the society considers marginal or unworthy. In every place where the Gospel isn't known, Christians should be finding ways to proclaim Jesus as the world's true Lord and "the image of the invisible God."

This image-restoring calling comes with, and requires, a new family: the church. No one can restore the image alone — only a people can do that, mirroring the original creation of human beings as male and female, the divine communion foreshadowed in the words "let us make" and the revelation of God as three in one. Whatever our family of origin, the church becomes our "first family," bound together in the creative love of the one from whom every family takes its name (Ephesians 3:15). And the church is especially for those who, in the twists and turns of a broken world, have lost their human family: widows, orphans, refugees, strangers. They above all are our brothers and sisters, our companions in discovering our new identity in Christ. Our image-restoring calling cannot happen without the church, without each other.

So what is your calling? It's really pretty easy: to bear the image and to restore the image. To engage in the kind of fruitful tending of the world that would cause the Creator to say, "behold, it is very good," and to boldly confront idolatry and injustice wherever they are

found while gently restoring those who have been captives to idols and victims of injustice. And to do these things above all in the context of the family we were given at birth and the family we were given at baptism. If you're doing one or both of those things in your daily work (paid or unpaid) and your volunteer time, it's safe to say you're fulfilling your calling.

Oh, I almost forgot, you have a third calling — but honestly, if you get the first two right, the third is practically an afterthought.

Your third calling is your contingent calling: to make the most of today, while it is called today. "Contingent" is a word philosophers use to describe something that could be otherwise — in that sense, it's the opposite of necessary. It's also used, in a related sense, to describe something that depends on something else — in that sense, it's the opposite of independent.

And that is the nature of all our life and work: It's far from certain, and it's deeply dependent on others and, ultimately, on God. It can end as unexpectedly as it began, but every day that we find ourselves able to work and serve others in the world, we can do this much: Bear the image and restore the image in the world, making the most of whatever is given us today. That is all, and that is more than enough.

Andy Crouch is executive editor of *Christianity Today* and author of "Culture Making: Recovering Our Creative Calling." Adapted from "The Three Callings of a Christian," [http://andy-crouch.com/extras/the\\_three\\_callings](http://andy-crouch.com/extras/the_three_callings). © 2015 Andy Crouch. Used by permission.

## NELSON

From page C9

Jesus was a more insightful economist than we realize?

When Jesus left his carpentry shop to become an itinerant rabbi, his preaching context was often in a marketplace surrounded by buyers and sellers. One of Jesus' most famous stories was about an unlikely hero who had an unusually good grasp of what it means to be a good neighbor. This unlikely hero, simply described as a Samaritan, was not a religious leader, but most likely was a person engaged in first-century commerce. On a business trip, he comes upon a person who has been robbed, beaten and left for dead. Unlike two religious leaders who had walked by the victim of injustice, the Samaritan offers first aid, interrupts his business trip, pulls out his own Visa card and takes the

wounded stranger to an inn to recover. What amazing generosity the Samaritan embodies.

In his story, Jesus presents a riveting contrast between the callous indifference of the religious leaders and the heartfelt compassion of a Samaritan business person. However, there is a more subtle contrast Jesus is making that we must not overlook. Embedded in Jesus' parable is the riveting contrast between the economic injustice of the robbers wrongly taking what is not theirs and the economic goodness of the Samaritan generously giving what is rightfully his.

Have we paused to consider how the Samaritan was able to care for his neighbor in this moment of crisis? What made it possible for the Samaritan business person to help his needy neighbor get back onto his feet? Clearly, the Samaritan was motivated by heartfelt compassion, but he was able to engage in loving

action because he had the economic capacity to do so. The Samaritan's economic capacity came from diligent labor and wise financial stewardship within an economic system of adding value to others.

Jesus goes out of his way to describe the merciful compassion of the Samaritan and the economic generosity the Samaritan exhibited. If we are going to love our neighbor well, it is not enough to manage our financial resources well; we must have financial resources to manage. A philanthropic heart is not enough; the economic capacity for philanthropy matters too. Distinguished economist Thomas Sowell emphasizes the need for economic capacity in caring for our neighbors: "Ultimately, it is economic prosperity which makes possible for billions of dollars to be devoted to the less fortunate."

Jesus' teaching on The Great Commandment reminds us that loving our

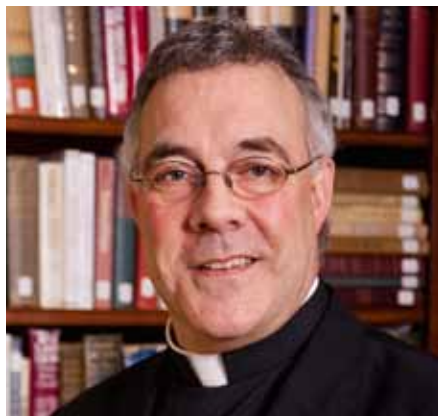
neighbor in need involves both altruistic compassion and economic capacity. Neighborly love calls for truth, grace and mercy to put on economic hands and feet. The Christian faith compels us to live in such a God-honoring way that we do honest work, make an honest profit and cultivate economic capacity so we can serve others and help meet their economic needs. Our diligent work creates economic value, and it is economic value that makes possible the economic capacity for living generously. What the world needs now is jobs, sweet jobs. Good jobs make for good neighbors.

Tom Nelson is the author of "Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work" (Crossway, 2011). He serves as senior pastor of Christ Community Church in Kansas City, Kansas, and is the president of *Made to Flourish*, a pastors' network for the common good.





# Work expresses who we are, what we are, what we believe



**By Rev. Robert Sirico**

A popular bumper sticker in my current home state of Michigan reads something like this: “A bad day of fishing beats a good day at work,” which prompts (for me at least) the question: “What if fishing is your work?” And this follow-up: “Would fisherman rather find themselves working in an office, factory, or in retail or agriculture?”

Work, properly understood, negates the blithe sentiments of the bumper sticker however much it amuses the fishing obsessed. Nor does work merely mean, as the Greeks and Romans mistakenly put it, “not-leisure,” as noted by Josef Pieper in his seminal book, “Leisure: The Basis of Culture.”

The idea of a “worker,” *contra* Karl Marx, doesn’t reduce the person in question to a conceptual and ideological generality.

Work and the individuals who perform the tasks required of it are, in fact, expressions of human creativity applied toward productive results. Just as we refer to the panoply of artistic endeavors as “works,” we are called also by God to consider each moment of “not-leisure” as a creative activity. True, our labor and talent may not compare favorably with the ultimate act of Creation or even the works of Shakespeare and Dante, but however dimmed in contrast, they reflect the brilliance of humanity’s initial design in the image of God.

Work, either requiring toil and sweat, mental labor or performing even the most seemingly menial tasks, reveals an essential aspect of God’s plan for humankind. This may appear shocking to those modern-day Gnostics, who view the material world as anathema to the truly spiritual life. To persons possessed of such a mindset, work at best is a necessary evil or benign utilitarian requirement. However, they couldn’t be more wrong.

Pope John Paul II noted the flawed theological underpinnings of Gnostics, both in the past and resurgent in the present, regarding not-leisure when he

wrote that work is required of man “because as the ‘image of God’ he is a person, that is to say, a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself, and with a tendency to self-realization.” The pontiff concluded: “As a person, man is therefore the subject of work.”

The Catholic poet and priest Gerard Manley Hopkins expressed much the same sentiment in “God’s Grandeur.” In this sonnet, Hopkins begins by relating to his readers the immutable fact: “The world is charged with the grandeur of God,” and proceeds to describe the beauties of His boundless creativity. Nature, Hopkins reminds us, consistently replenishes itself by benefit of God’s creative hand. Humanity’s relationship with both God and nature suffers when work ceases to be a creative exercise, and instead, blindly, “all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toil,” resulting in an earth that “wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell.”

We are called to subdue the earth and dominate it, but only to apply such efforts to express not only our own creativity but also to acknowledge our own nature, as being created in the *imago Dei*, the image and likeness of God. Work expresses who we are, what we are, and what we believe. Just as the created order, God’s work, expresses His character

(Psalms 19:1-6), so our work makes visible our invisible spiritual nature. It shows our character, just as certainly as good works make known the presence of faith in the heart of one who professes it (James 2:18). In work, we reflect the image of our Maker (Genesis 1:26), for He too works (Genesis 2:2, John 5:17), and at the moment of our creation He commanded us also, to work.

Whereas God’s creativity is infinite, humanity’s capacity to create is limited. There are times in anyone’s not-leisure life when that person desires to be doing something elsewhere or not doing anything at all. Ultimately, however, work should be perceived as a universal component of the human vocation, fully understood only when considering our obligation to others and our being created in the *imago Dei*, to be creative as God is creative. The unleashing of human productivity for the sake of the common good is the end result of accepting God’s instruction for us all, creatively and intelligently, to make use of our human resources.

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Rev. Robert A. Sirico is a Roman Catholic priest and co-founder and president of Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. He is a frequent lecturer and commentator on economics, civil rights and issues of religious concern.



## 'We've been blessed to be a blessing'



**By Sen. Elizabeth Dole**

I consider it a personal privilege to be invited to share with fellow travelers a little of my own spiritual journey. Like most of us, I'm just one person struggling to relate faith to life ... but I am grateful to be asked to speak from the heart, about the difference Jesus Christ has made in my life.

...  
My grandmother, Mom Cathey, who lived within two weeks of her 100th birthday, was my role model. I remember many Sunday afternoons with other neighborhood children in her home — the lemonade and cookies, I think that's what enticed us; the Bible games; listening to Mom Cathey, as she read from her Bible, now one of my most cherished possessions. She practiced what she preached and lived her life for others. In

a tragic accident, Mom lost a son at the hands of a drunk driver. The insurance policy on his life built a hospital wing in a far-off church mission in Pakistan. Although Mom was not at all a wealthy woman, anything she could spare went to ministers at home and missions abroad. And when it became necessary, in her 90s, to go into a nursing home, she welcomed the opportunity. I can still hear her saying, "Elizabeth, there might be some people there who don't know the Lord, and I can read the Bible to them."

...  
I can't remember an unkind word escaping Mom's lips in all the years I knew her, or an ungracious deed marring her path. My grandmother was an almost perfect role model. And I wanted to be like her. From an early age, I had an active church life. But, as we move along, how often in our busy lives, something becomes a barrier to total commitment of one's life to the Lord! In some cases, it may be money, power or prestige.

In my case, my career became of paramount importance. I worked very hard to excel, to achieve. I was really competing against myself, not others. My goal was to do my best, which is all fine and well. But, I was inclined to be a perfectionist. And it's very hard to try to control everything, surmount every

difficulty, foresee every problem, realize every opportunity. My career began crowding out what Mom Cathey had taught me were life's most important priorities.

I prayed about it, and I believe, no faster than I was ready, God led me to people and circumstances that made a real difference in my life. I found a tremendously sensitive, caring pastor who helped me see what joy there can be when Christ is the center of life and all else flows from that center.

...  
"If anyone would come after me," Jesus tells us, "he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the Gospel will save it."

Hard words to swallow when you're busy doing your own thing, but the most compelling logic I've ever heard. For if Christ is who he says he is — our Savior, the central figure in all of history who gives meaning to a world of confusing, conflicting priorities — then I had to realize Christ could not be compartmentalized.

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Often I find myself faced with tasks demanding wisdom and courage far beyond my own. And not just in the big decisions ... I am constantly in need of

God's grace to perform life's routine duties with the love for others, the peace, the joy inherent in God's call. I've had to learn that dependence is a good thing. That when I've used up my own resources, when I can't control things and make them come out my way, when I'm willing to trust God with the outcome, when I'm weak — then, I am strong. Then I'm in the best position to feel the power of Christ rest upon me, encourage me, replenish my energy and deepen my faith. Power from God, not from me.

...  
Total commitment to Christ is a high and difficult calling. And one that I will struggle with the rest of my days. But I know that for me, it's the only life worth living, the only life worthy of our Lord. And each one of us has a unique assignment in this world given to us by our sovereign God — to love and to serve those within our own sphere of influence. We've been blessed to be a blessing; we've received that we might give.

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*Elizabeth Dole is a former U.S. Senator from North Carolina. She served as secretary of transportation and secretary of labor prior to serving as president of the American Red Cross. In 2012, she established the Elizabeth Dole Foundation to support the caregivers of our nation's wounded warriors.*

## Hispanics work like it's holy



**By Rev. Samuel Rodriguez**

One of the unfortunate results of the politicization of immigration in America is that it overshadows the true contribution that the Hispanic community makes in this country. It causes certain Americans to look upon our community with suspicion when — in fact — our community isn't changing America for ill, but reminding America of who she once was.

In 2012 the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference, for which I serve as president, partnered with the Barna Group to conduct the most comprehensive study of "Hispanics and Faith" to date. Among many other interesting

observations, the study revealed that 85 percent of Hispanics found "personal meaning and fulfillment" at work, with almost as many specifically noting that they believe that they were creating a better world through their work.

When asked what we would define as the top contributions we make to American society, "work ethic" made it in the top three. Rightly so, for no community in this country has more collective calluses on its hands and sweat on its brow than ours.

You might say that we still believe in the American Dream. We still believe that if you work hard enough, you can pull yourself up by your own bootstraps and that you can give a brighter future to your family, to your children and to their children.

What is — perhaps — different about how we work is that component of "meaning." Anecdotally, I can tell you that our work isn't driven by narcissism, hedonism, consumerism and self-interest in the way that so many others are driven to succeed in our economy. Our work ethic is driven by our commitment to our families, and it is inspired by our faith.

We work as hard as the pioneers who

laid the foundation of this great country, and we work with a drive fueled by the same sense of faith that united them. In fact, nearly all Hispanics in the Barna study revealed in some way the importance of faith in *all* aspects of their lives. We are a community that works hard and loves God, embraces "Judeo-Christian" values, and we are proudly anchored upon the bedrock of family.

We ought to be considered a *light* in an increasingly dark time in America, and our *light* stands in stark contrast to the nativism that seeks to divide our nation. At a time when so many in America seem to be cheating on the values that made America great, the Hispanic community is holding down the fort even as we multiply our ranks. Now, we've become so powerful that our votes can determine national elections, but we remain humble enough to know that this is a responsibility to be stewarded. We refuse, as so many before us, to sacrifice truth on the altar of political expediency. You can rest assured that our votes will be on behalf of values that made America great.

Like the rest of us, we simply want a brighter America for our children and

our grandchildren, that's all. We want an America where immigrants can step out of the shadows, without fear of discrimination, and where they can find their opportunity to fully bless this land that has given them freedom, security and opportunity.

Let's be clear: The Hispanic community strengthens American values, and without our contribution the American economy would grind to a halt. Without us, this country would be *less* American today — not more American — and without us, the principles that made America truly exceptional might have been long lost.

While politicians on Capitol Hill are fighting over our community's future, we are working to make sure they even have a country to fight for.

America is better, together.

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*Rev. Samuel Rodriguez is the author of "Be Light: Shining God's Beauty, Truth, and Hope into a Darkened World." He is the president of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference. The opinions presented here do not necessarily represent the policies of NHCLC/Conel or New Season Christian Worship Center. PastorSam.com*



# Thank God It's Monday: A Christian approach to work and vocation



By John Stonestreet

**C**huck Colson came to work excited. He'd show up at the office at the beginning of the workweek and proclaim to the staff, "Thank God it's Monday!" And he meant it.

The source of his attitude toward work was his clear vision and certain knowledge that God had called him to his work. He knew that the talents God had given him, God could use. Those, along with his life experiences (including a law degree, a tenure in the White House, connection with Watergate, and time in prison) enabled him to minister

in prisons, to work for criminal justice reform, and to teach Christian worldview. His hours and days had a purpose, because for Chuck, "work" was not defined down to merely his career. He understood work, as it has been since God first created His image-bearers to care for His world, to be an essential part of what it means to be human.

As Warren Cole Smith and I discussed in the conclusion of our book, "Restoring All Things," the Judeo-Christian approach to work is distinct from other worldviews, and best summed up in the often used (and often misunderstood) term "vocation."

Vocation comes from the Latin word *vocare*, meaning "to call." Today, *vocation* is often confused with *occupation*, or what we do to make a living. The Protestant Reformers understood vocation differently. For them, anywhere and everywhere we go is our "station," situations and relationships ordained by God.

Think about the places you go during any given week: the office or worksite, the grocery store, school, church, the PTA, the neighborhood cookout. Then think about the people you interact with in those places. Do we take advantage of our unique talents and experiences and figure out how we might use them to join in God's work of drawing all people to Himself?

Our station in life — the situations and relationships we find ourselves in — is what Chuck's longtime colleague and friend, theologian T.M. Moore, described as "the personal mission field." And this personal mission field is God-ordained. As Paul told the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers during his famous "Mars Hill" sermon, "And (God) made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place" (Acts 17:26).

It is no accident if we are brothers, daughters, employees, neighbors and citizens. God is writing our stories into his Grand Narrative of the Story of All Things. And it being the grandest of all stories, God uses a cast of billions, all with individual, particular gifts, abilities and passions. And here I have to add that all Christians, not just clergy or those who work for nonprofit ministries, have a sacred vocation. Each and every one of us who bear the name of Christ — be we stockbrokers, soldiers, auto mechanics, nurses, whatever — are called to join in God's work of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:14-21).

So, how do we get ourselves into a "Thank God it's Monday" frame of mind? Whether just out of college, nearing retirement, or even retired, we ought

to ask ourselves, "What do I love doing?" Or better yet, "What makes me come alive?"

We might thrive on creativity or analytics. Maybe we love to see systems built that benefit others, or we are bent towards giving or cooking or painting? Our passions are good indicators of how God designed us.

Then how do we apply those passions in a way that give us purpose, and that shows our love for God and our neighbor? As Warren Smith and I wrote, we should ask ourselves, "What breaks my heart?" Or, "What are the cultural trends that are leading people away from truth?" Christians have a stunning track record of addressing evils like racism, slavery, poverty, corruption, and other forms of injustice in their time and place. We have a high calling, indeed!

To be Christian is to be called to God's redeeming work in the world. And anyone who is in Christ can and should seek to glorify God wherever they are — even on a Monday.

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*John Stonestreet is the president of The Colson Center for Christian Worldview. He is co-author of "Restoring All Things: God's Audacious Plan to Change the World through Everyday People," and co-host of "BreakPoint" radio.*

## Mops, people, and the 'soul' of your firm



By Greg Leith

What does a mop have to do with valuing people, making a profit and living out your faith at work? Well, actually, everything. Let's explore how an \$8 billion NYSE firm lived out the answer based upon deploying faith at work.

Doesn't your day go better when the tools you use everyday work well? If the "e" key on your 8-year-old computer was

broken, it would be a tough day being productive. Yet as to our employees, we often allow them to work with mediocre, old, broken tools. The startling truth is that there is a link between profitability and the way things happen at the front-line level of our firm.

In their fine work "The Service Profit Chain," authors James L. Heskett, Leonard A. Schlesinger and W. Earl Sasser Jr., of the Harvard Business School uncover the linkage between employees, customers and profits. You can learn more at [ServiceProfitChain.com](http://ServiceProfitChain.com).

As leaders we can't teach excellence and then welcome a new team member on their first day of work by giving them the last employee's uniform, which is one size too big, with stains on it, while assigning them a work truck with a crack in the windshield.

In the employee's mind, the analogy breaks down. In effect, we've said we care about excellence with customers and profit for our firm, but not about our employee as a person. There's a link between valuing people and achieving profit.

At ServiceMaster, where I was greatly privileged to work for 20 years, we built an \$8 billion firm on the basis of ascribing dignity and worth to service workers. At the same time we cared deeply for achieving organizational excellence and growing profitably. The principles that fueled ServiceMaster are based in biblical truth: honoring God, helping people, pursuing excellence and growing profitably.

How are you investing in your people? Have you "walked in their shoes" lately? I've spent time walking in the shoes of service workers who were cleaning hospitals. After the 10th person walks by you while you're on your hands and knees scrubbing the floor, and they say, "You missed a spot!" you understand that certain work categories are not valued.

So in my days at ServiceMaster, we took the standard cotton mop on a wooden handle and transformed it into a fantastic cleaning tool that employees appreciated. The wooden handle was replaced with a hollow fiberglass core that made it lighter, stronger, easier to grip and more flexible; thus, less fatigue sets in

per day and the handle is break-resistant. Next, we coated the handle with a safety yellow paint so it was visible and could be used to block off wet floor areas. And finally, we put a rubber grip on the end so holding the mop was less tiring.

Why did we bother investing research dollars to create a better mop? Because at our core, we believed people were created in the image of God and therefore people have value. Since God is creative, the people he creates are creative, and we should value their input into their work. Since God intensely values each person, we should serve the people we lead, seeing them as ends, not means, in accomplishing work. We can use the vehicle of work as a development tool.

At Convene Corporation ([Convene-now.com](http://Convene-now.com)), where I am now privileged to lead the firm as CEO, we help Christian CEOs help each other as peers as they lead high-performing business on a biblical blueprint. All of us at Convene believe that business, from the smallest

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# 'Mutually respectful' commerce connects, serves all people



By Michael Novak

A large proportion of the people in this world today work out their destinies — economic, social and religious — in the daily activities of business.

I do not mean only the entrepreneurs — the small farmers, the shop owners, the multiplying numbers of consultants working at their computers in independent businesses, the barbers and hairdressers, the managers of large firms, the executives of smaller ones — but all those others who work with them and whose daily bread depends on the success of business activities.

"Doing business" is what most citizens in free nations do most of the time.

At the heart of the business vocation are invention and enterprise; in short, creativity. Across Latin America, Asia and Africa, large swaths of people are entering the international networks of economic supply and demand. These numbers will keep increasing as more and more nations turn to invention and enterprise as the main economic focus of civil society. Hopefully, that network will steadily become more and more lawlike and peaceful. *Commercium et Pax*, commerce and peace, was the proud motto of Amsterdam, one of the first great market societies of the modern world, whose busy port was crowded with the dipping and swaying masts of sailing vessels coming from nearly every harbor of the globe. Commerce is what people do when they are at peace.

Commerce is better than war.

Commerce among all peoples is better than the isolation and poverty of some.

Commerce, as several of the Eastern fathers of the Catholic Church wrote, notably St. John Chrysostom and St. Ephrem of Syria, is the material bond among peoples that exhibits, as if symbolically, the unity of the whole human race — or, as he dared to put it in mystical language, shows forth in a material sign the "mystical Body of Christ."

The human race is one. The international commerce that shows forth the interdependence of all parts of the human body knits the peoples of the world together by the silken threads of a seamless garment.

Commerce is dignified by this mysterious and often not fully conscious activity — this knitting together of the nations, to which we too seldom explicitly lift our gaze. In our local activities, which are often so difficult and challenging that we scarcely have time to contemplate their larger meaning, we are engaged in weaving a small but crucial part of the universal tapestry. We are part of something much larger than ourselves. We are

of war and division the hard-burnished alloys of peace: an elemental prosperity for all, the rule of law and daily practices of freely given consent. War is a destroyer; commerce is a builder. Division, separation and isolation unravel the substance of human unity; lawlike and mutually respectful commerce knits human societies into one.

In addition, commerce works in a humble but privileged way. It ties together people who have never met. The very impersonality that Marx excoriated as the "cash nexus" is the humble glory of commerce. Commerce does not require that we have physical or emotional contact with all with whom we do business.

Consider the pipe in my cabinet that I wish I were smoking (my doctor has required that I no longer use it). I know not where the exotic wood of its bowl comes from, nor who with such art designed it or turned it out; nor whence the rubber of the stem was drawn or by whom processed; nor where the metal ring that separates the two was produced; nor from which pits of ore the substances

elements together for the manufacturer who sold it (directly from the factory) to me. Without having met them, I have often felt gratitude to them.

What languages all the workers in this far-flung set of enterprises speak I know not, nor how they address their God, nor their thoughts or feelings. From all over the world, we have been brought together — those who make and those who enjoy the fruits of their labors and inventions. By many invisible paths, with no one knowing or intending all the human relations by which it passed into my hands, and perhaps without any one person in the world having all the knowledge, arts and skills required in all the steps of its journey to my cabinet, we have nonetheless been brought together in the pleasures my pipe has afforded me. To all these unknown people, I give thanks. In my hands, I have held tangible evidence of the world community to which we belong.

This same evidence teaches me that I have obligations to them, though I do not know who they are. In this way, commerce is the most solid, material sign of unmistakable human solidarity. Yet it takes away from none of us our cultural differences, not to mention our individuality. I think of my pipe as a "peace pipe," not only for the pacifying effect its use once brought me, but also for the sense of universal community it evokes, together with the latter's obligations.

Perhaps because I am Catholic, my mind works naturally in such sacramental ways. Everything around us is a sign of the beyond. We have merely to allow our natural wonderment free reign. "Everything we look upon is blest" (Yeats). "Everything is grace" (Bernanos). But one does not have to be Catholic to grasp this method. I think it must be natural to humans.

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Michael Novak, sometimes called the philosopher and theologian of liberty, was awarded the Templeton Prize in 1994. This article is adapted from "Business as a Calling: Work and the Examined Life" (Free Press, 1996), one of the more than 45 books he has written on culture, philosophy and theology.



bringing together the entire human race, activating our local part of the universal work of the noble, wounded race to which it is our glory to belong.

We are trying to wrest from the ashes

from which it was alloyed derive; nor who invented the filter designed to allow hot smoke to exit halfway to the mouthpiece; nor who arranged for the multiple transactions that brought all these

## LEITH

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mom-and-pop operation to the largest global conglomerate, is about leaders, women and men, living in community, making culture better, so humans can flourish. When that happens, workers, customers and vendors have the

curtains pulled back on the meaning and purpose of life. When that happens, entire companies, communities and countries are changed as they move toward their God-ordained purposes.

Maybe it all begins with a mop, or with the tools that fuel your firm, because that's where the world is: at work Monday to Friday, waiting for us to love them well.

.....  
Greg Leith's life mission statement is "to strengthen leaders so the kingdom can be accelerated." He is the CEO of Convene, where Christian CEOs connect around business excellence on a biblical foundation. His career spans over 35 years of senior leadership roles in corporate, nonprofit and academic sectors. Greg has served the persecuted church with

food, brought relief and long-term jobs to Orissa, India, assisted mission agencies in China with strategy and helped envision a school of journalism in Haiti. Greg was a senior executive for 20 years with ServiceMaster. He and wife Shelley are parents to five thriving young adults.



# It takes community to flourish



By Dr. Jesse Miranda

A few thoughts on community:

## We only learn what we already know

A Sufi story I once heard was about community leaders of a small village inviting a renowned public speaker to speak to their people. He came and stood in the town square and said to those assembled, “You only learn what you already know.” Then he asked, “How many of you know what I am to talk about?” No one raised a hand. “Well, if you don’t know, you won’t learn,” he said as he left.

He was asked to return and again made the same statement, and for the second time asked the same question: “How many of you know what I am to talk about?” This time, they all raised their hands. “Well,” he said, “if you all know, there is no need for me to tell you” and again left.

On his last and final visit, he made his statement and asked the same question for the third time, “How many of

you know what I am to talk about?” The response was different this time. Some raised their hands, indicating they knew. Others raised their hand, indicating they didn’t know. “Ah,” says the visitor, “then those that know what I was about to say please tell those who don’t know.”

His mission was accomplished: to teach the village people to talk to each other and get to know each other to create community.

## A life of “both/and”

Why a story? Stories are powerful lenses for examining the human experience, a means by which to learn together. Jesus said he came to give life and make life more abundant. He told stories in the form of parables as an initial step for engaging crucial conversations — conversations that we may shy away from because they may cause some discomfort or a little cognitive dissonance.

The issue of diversity and inclusion is one such conversation because it asks us to temporarily suspend certain beliefs and worldviews to nonjudgmentally entertain the beliefs and the worldviews of others who are different.

America is changing, and cultural competency with regard to diversity has become paramount. The fact is that racial and ethnic Americans live in between two worlds. By living in “the hyphen,” the “in-between,” one can connect to or separate from the dominant culture, to have the best of both worlds or live in a divided world. It is a “both/and” or an “either/or” proposition. This fact may go unnoticed to the general population,

but it resonates deeply with Hispanics and other racial and ethnic groups that cultural understanding leads us to create community and flourish for the common good.

Cesar Chavez, in leading the civil rights of farmworkers while marching under a banner of religion, told them not to seek achievement for themselves while forgetting about progress and prosperity for the community at large: “Our ambitions must be broad enough to include the aspirations and needs of others, for their sakes and for our own.” Hence, the Christian faith must be a prophetic religion, an instrument of God for the sake of human flourishing and the common good.

## Imagining a deeper unity

This fact raises the question: Have we yet not learned about racial and cultural diversity to create community? Remember, we only learn what we already know. The Civil Rights Act changed laws and changed external behaviors toward African-Americans and Mexican farm workers. But it is obvious today that it failed to go deep enough to create a much-needed model of national unity and economic prosperity. This takes imagination to go higher and deeper in life. To climb to the “mountaintop,” like a Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. envisioned. To bring solidarity and community under a religious conviction, as did a Cesar Chavez. They left us a story to be repeated.

Stories ask us to imagine a slightly different world by posing the question, “What if?” What if we are true believers, and together “we hold these truths to be

self-evident that all men are created equal ... that among those rights are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”? What if we create a nice, caring, compassionate and happy community? What if the Hispanics and the more recent immigrants are not looked upon as a problem to be solved, but rather as potential human, social, economic and spiritual capital that needs to be developed?

With over 50 million consumers, the U.S. Hispanic population already represents 16 percent of the entire population with an estimated annual purchasing power of \$1.3 trillion. It is The Jesse Miranda Center’s aim to reach into the growing Latino community, making it flourish by converting spiritual, cultural and service through faith, work and economics into creative action. What if, among this rich community, we identify and empower trailblazers and innovators toward the common good and a common faith? What if these visionaries develop a love and inclination to increase human well-being and promote human welfare? Can you imagine the beginning of a new Hispanic legacy?

The descendants of Don Quixote are by nature dreamers and believe it is possible. May we build community, and may God bless America!

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Jesse Miranda, D.Min., is president of The Jesse Miranda Center for Hispanic Leadership, CEO emeritus of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference and executive presbyter for the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

# Sunday faith and Monday work



By Matt Rusten and Josh Good

Made to Flourish, a pastor’s network for the common good, fosters outstanding pastoral leadership by helping a rising generation of pastors — and their congregations — overcome the sacred-secular divide between personal piety on the one hand and our responsibilities as faithful workers in the larger economy on the other.



Whether churchgoing or not, a clear majority of Americans appreciate pastoral leadership and healthy churches for their leavening function in our cultural life — especially at a time when political campaigns have become so rancorous and divisive. The Made to Flourish pastors network — which includes the leaders of more than 950 evangelical

congregations — is cultivating a community of pastors who specifically affirm human dignity and the value of work, arguing that because free enterprise improves human life, it is therefore a moral, not merely material, good.

Churches need this argument precisely because they are — or should be — the deepest institutional wellsprings for fostering empathy toward our fellow man, for connecting discipleship and daily work and for extending lasting hope to the poor.

## Economic freedom and poverty

In the sweep of human history, we live in a time of unparalleled global prosperity — and yet many U.S. Christians are unfamiliar with this fact.

Consider, for example, a 2011 study from Yale University and The Brookings Institution that showed that, in 1981, 52 percent of the world’s population could not provide for its basic needs, including housing and food, meaning those men

and women lived below the extreme poverty line. Just 30 years later, that percentage plummeted to 15 percent. Why? To cite the Yale-Brookings study: “the rise of globalization, the spread of capitalism, and the improving quality of economic governance.”

In 2014 Bill Gates made a similar point in his foundation’s annual letter: “By almost any measure, the world is better than it has ever been. People are living longer, healthier lives. Many nations that were aid recipients are now self-sufficient. ... You might think that such striking progress would be widely celebrated, but in fact, Melinda and I are struck by how many people think the world is getting worse.”

Today, more than 70 million people are moving out of destitution each year. What underlies this massive shift? One economist says five dynamics are essential for alleviating extreme poverty:

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# The God-given dignity of a woman at work



By Penny Nance

**V**ocation, meaning “calling,” can come in unexpected forms. For women, especially, we find that our callings are not monolithic, but an organic collection of intertwining roles, various callings we seek to simultaneously enact in the course of our daily lives and often changing through life’s seasons.

The brilliance in it all is that any form of a woman’s work takes on a specific relational orientation. Eve was made from the very start already in relationship to Adam, who conversely had taken a long time to realize he was alone and had relational needs. She was to be his “helper” in his work. Eve was created from Adam’s side and presented to him face to face, thus totally equal to him, so we are mistaken if we see her helping as a subordinate role. The Hebrew term for helper is often ascribed to God and particularly applied to a situation in battle. It’s more like a “savior” or “partner” or a helper without whom work would be impossible.

Part of Adam and Eve’s important work was to “be fruitful and multiply,” something in which a woman obviously

has an important role. But beyond the literal *labor* of childbearing, all women seem to have an amazing capacity for relationship and for bringing life to those around them. That particular genius is something we need to bring into whatever we find ourselves doing. That means in the home, out of the home and in the carpool line.

Single women, too, are good at finding connection with families and friends, and they often find ways to be part of a family by teaching Sunday school or keeping up with their siblings. And single moms heroically take on their own unique burdens while deeply loving their kids.

There is so much fuss about women balancing work and family that we forget to see relationships as part of work. In fact, Psalm 127 reminds us that all our anxious toil and sleep deprivation and career “work” is actually secondary to the importance of heritage and how familial blessing can actually benefit us in the public square. This is why Hilary Rosen’s accusation that Ann Romney, a campaigning wife and mother of five sons, had “never worked a day in her life”

was so irritating. But this doesn’t make a career unimportant, as many women in the Bible worked hard — such as Lydia selling purple cloth (Acts 16:14). The question is not so much about balancing work and family, but about balancing the work that a career takes with the work that family takes. And everyone has a different solution.

I have done it all. I have been a working single woman. I have pursued every imaginable combination of balancing family and career — part-time, full-time, stay-at-home mom. I think only you and your husband can know what’s best for your family. The truth was that the particulars of “balance” changed with every season of my life — there was no magical formula. But there is amazing opportunity. What an amazing country we live in with the freedom to even have options. Women now earn more degrees, own 9.2 million businesses, generate \$1.4 trillion in revenue and employ 7.9 million people. Plus, we maintain the awesome gift of fertility, and we have the guidance of the Holy Spirit available in a personal, intimate way. It’s an amazing time in

history to be a working woman.

So here is the point: You have to find meaning where you are. At the risk of giving a clichéd “bloom where you are planted” lecture, I want to emphasize that you have to see the beauty and dignity in everything you do.

This isn’t to say there won’t be suffering. Some days, your work to the Lord involves getting out of bed — doing the bare minimum is all you can do. Some days, an overwhelming sense of failure may hit you; you know your work is valuable to the Lord, but you made some mistake that means you have to learn that your work, though important, is not your identity and worth. And as you wrestle with that paradox, you can begin to grasp the depths of grace.

After a long exploration on toil, vanity, futility and the meaninglessness of life, a rather depressed writer of Ecclesiastes comes to a more hopeful conclusion:

“I perceived that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live; also that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil — this is God’s gift to man.” (Ecclesiastes 3:13)

This is the take away lesson. Despite the toil and the pains of the curse, there is great dignity in work and great dignity in womanhood. You are the “helper” of your ultimate bridegroom Christ. Your work is a gift to God and a gift from God — for your flourishing and the building of His Kingdom. Enjoy that gift.

*Penny Nance is the CEO and president of Concerned Women for America, the nation’s largest public policy women’s organization. She is also the author of the new book, “Feisty and Feminine: A Rallying Cry for Conservative Women.” Penny lives in Virginia with her husband and two children.*



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free trade, property rights, the rule of law, globalization and entrepreneurship. These conditions provide the foundation for economic progress — in part because they operate when we are sleeping, like an engine humming steadily along. As U2’s Bono recently said at Georgetown University, “Aid is just a stopgap. Commerce and entrepreneurial capitalism take more people out of poverty than aid — we know that.”

So as parishioners and pastors, how should we understand these economic principles, and, in a country still widely characterized by religiosity, how does faith relate to how we go about our work?

### Back to basics

From a biblical perspective,

connecting faith, work and economics stems directly from what we know about human identity. In the first chapter of Genesis, God connects the essential meaning of humanness — that is, bearing the Lord’s unique image — to our stewardship task of subduing the earth and exercising dominion (Gen. 1:27-29). His creativity provides the basis for our creativity, undergirding our charge to work. Perhaps this is one reason Christ himself shouldered “the vocation of small business: a creative vocation, a vocation of humble service ... helping his family earn its own way”; perhaps this is why he spent six times as many years working as a carpenter-builder than he did in his public ministry.

When we recognize that work is a pre-fall task that comes from God — that it is, in this sense, fundamentally human — we can understand that people everywhere, including the poor, are

assets to be developed, not liabilities to be managed.

Moreover, as we grow into maturity, it is the workplace — much like the institutions of family, church or school — that helps to form us, rebuke us and give us clarity and new direction. Participating in the exchange economy is a gift from God.

In its first year as an organization, 1,100 pastors joined Made to Flourish, embracing these foundational ideas, sharing best practices and forming relationships with like-minded practitioners. These pastors are equipping their congregations through sermons, public prayers and commissionings, and celebrating vocational faithfulness, workplace visits, classes, small group curricula, entrepreneurial initiatives and job training programs.

In fresh ways and through faithful presence, congregations across the

country are reconnecting deeply held Christian convictions with the place where most of us consistently spend a majority of our lives: at work. As a “priesthood of believers,” to use the biblical expression, the scattered church worships God through daily work, defined as value creation (whether paid or unpaid). And perhaps, more than anything else, it is through work that a post-Christian, pluralistic society encounters the light and hope of Christ.

*Matt Rusten is executive director of Made to Flourish, a pastor’s network for the common good, which provides resources, training, events and local city network gatherings to equip pastors with a deeper understanding of the connection between Sunday faith and Monday work. Josh Good is program director for the Faith, Work, & Economics Program at The Kern Family Foundation.*



# ‘Partners with God in the work of creation’



**By House Speaker Paul D. Ryan**

The reason that poverty is such an important issue to me is that, the way I see it, it is more than an economic issue. It is a moral issue. And I think there are millions of people of faith who agree with me.

There’s a common thread running through both the Christian and Jewish traditions. And that’s the belief in human dignity. It’s the belief that people aren’t just a factor of production — they aren’t just a means to an end. They are the end. Their happiness is the center, the focus, the very purpose of our lives. And

everything we do — every law we pass, every transaction we make — should enhance human dignity.

And the dignity of the individual rests in large part on the dignity of work. It goes all the way back to creation. The Bible says God made man “and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it.” Even before the fall — even before God had told us, “By the sweat of your brow, you shall eat bread” — God wanted us to work. Paradise is not a beachfront resort. And we are something more than tourists. We are, in the rabbinic teaching, “partners with God in the work of creation.”

So while poverty has an economic effect, it also has a moral effect. When you cannot work, you can’t fulfill your God-given purpose. You can’t make use of your God-given talents. A healthy economy is large and expanding, yes. It’s also inclusive. It allows every person to reach their full potential — to participate fully in our national life. And public policy should promote this culture of participation.

The question is, how? In Catholic social teaching, there are two key principles:

solidarity and subsidiarity. Solidarity is a shared commitment to the common good. It’s the belief that we’re all in this together, and we don’t let anybody slip through the cracks. Subsidiarity, meanwhile, is a prudent deference to the people closest to the problem. When there’s hardship, we first look to the people in the local community to solve it. And only if they can’t solve the problem on their own do we ask a broader authority to step in. And even then, government must work with the people in the community, not against them.

The idea is not that this is the more efficient way or the more practical way — though it very often is. (And sometimes it isn’t.) The idea is that this is the most personal way, the most humane way — and therefore the best way — to solve our problems. By keeping power close to people in need, you give them a chance to take part — to come up with their own solution, not just to follow someone else’s master plan.

These two principles work together. They reinforce each other. They both recognize the inherent worth of every person.

And they both empower people to make use of their God-given talents. To use a sports metaphor, solidarity is the team spirit, and subsidiarity is the game plan.

But there’s another point of agreement between these traditions. We believe there’s a limit to human ambition. Six days a week, we’re supposed to make the most of our talents — to create and build and grow. But God commanded us to rest on the seventh day — to stop working, to stop building, to stop all the hustle and bustle. That’s because we’re supposed to take time to reflect — to remember that all we have is ultimately a gift from God. And so the proper attitude toward life isn’t pride. It’s gratitude.

That’s the kind of attitude I think we should take toward all public policy — but especially the fight against poverty. Every person in our country is a gift from God, and we should treat them that way.

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*House Speaker Paul D. Ryan, Wisconsin Republican, has served in Congress since 1999.*

# Transforming lives through the dignity of work



**By Gov. Sam Brownback**

I was born in Kansas, a son of the prairie. I worked alongside my parents and siblings on the family farm.

I learned early the importance of family support and honest, hard work. We were not rich. In fact, our county was among the poorest in the state. In my hometown of Parker, the community would come together to help one another.

We valued our family, our friends and our faith. We loved our neighbors as we loved ourselves. We shared our successes and bore each other’s burdens. Families like ours, like many others, wove the fabric of this nation — instilled in so many of us what is often referred to as “the Midwest work ethic.”

By the law of unintended consequences, the federal government hurt that work ethic when it implemented poverty programs in the early 1960s. They built programs that devalued the concepts of work and undermined strong family structure.

The true cost of these programs is not

the trillions of taxpayer dollars spent in the last 50 years. The cost is seen in the diminution of human dignity caused by crippling government dependence. It is seen in programs that penalized strong family structure and which ignored the significance of work.

The war on poverty has failed, trapping people in generational poverty for more than 50 years. As a nation, we’re pouring money into a destructive and failing system that ultimately harms the very lives it aims to serve.

Every man, woman and child possesses inherent dignity, and that self-worth is often best realized in a family and through daily interaction with co-workers.

Pope John Paul II once wrote, “Work is for man and not man for work.” Work is fundamental to the human experience, whereas idleness and dependence on the government degrades human dignity by refusing to acknowledge the unique capacity and potential of every human being.

It is because I believe so deeply that each person deserves a chance at the hope, self-reliance and economic security work inherently brings, that we in Kansas began to reform our welfare programs.

Our premise was simple. Able-bodied adults without dependents would be asked to work or receive job training in order to receive food assistance. These are men and women who are healthy, do not have mental health issues and who are not responsible for the care of another person. Our objective was to help people out

of a gripping cycle of poverty; to help them build a better future for themselves by regaining purpose and hope through work and independence. This is a moral issue, not a financial one. It is one guided by the belief that we have a duty to help our fellow man, to be a blessing to others and share the joy that comes when human resilience and capacity is recognized, and the full worth of each soul is respected.

Americans want to help their neighbors in need, but we recognize that binding people to a government pittance doesn’t accomplish the task. Americans want to help in a way that helps restore personal freedom over the long term. This is why welfare reform passed Congress with bipartisan support in the mid-1990s. I was serving Kansas in the House of Representatives at the time, and the idea of connecting work requirements with food-assistance benefits aligns well with the concept of human dignity and hope for a brighter future.

Over time, states began obtaining waivers that allowed them to eliminate the requirement for able-bodied adults to work in order to continue receiving some benefits; a move that trapped increasing numbers of able-bodied adults on welfare.

Kansas took a different path in 2013, and a new analysis of our welfare-to-work reforms shows higher incomes, more employment and reduced poverty for those leaving welfare and getting a job. To be clear, our goal was to lift Kansans out of poverty and help them obtain the skills to

truly change their lives.

The data bear out this truth: Welfare reform improves lives. In a study conducted by the Foundation for Government Accountability, more than 41,000 individuals were followed as they moved off welfare and toward independence. The number of food-stamp enrollees rising out of poverty has tripled. Able-bodied adults saw income rise by 127 percent within one year of leaving food stamps; nearly half were employed within three months of leaving food stamps; and the average income for those working is now above the poverty line.

These are not just facts and figures. The data reflect a mosaic of men and women whose lives were transformed through the dignity of work. Men and women who now have the opportunity to build the basic pieces of a flourishing life: a strong family, rewarding work and education.

Our faith calls us to help those in need. Our goal is to do so in a way that helps people regain personal independence in a meaningful way, rather than perpetuating crippling government dependence.

Without the opportunity to achieve independence through the dignity of work, we cannot fulfill our God-given potential.

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*Kansas Governor Sam Brownback was elected in 2010 and won a second term in 2014.*



# Work without faith is dead



**By Jimmy Kemp**

“If a man is called to be a street sweeper, he should sweep streets even as Michelangelo painted, or Beethoven composed music, or Shakespeare wrote poetry. ... No work is insignificant. All labor that uplifts humanity has dignity and importance and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence,” said the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

The U.S. economy is failing to thrive, and our confidence — you could call it our faith — is flagging too. In the first quarter of the year, the economy grew at an annual rate of 0.7 percent. That is anemic for the world’s economic engine, which runs on innovation, especially from small businesses.

It is evident since the 2007-2009 recession that neither government intervention nor central bank manipulations stimulate our economy. Instead, we need aspirational workers to generate true growth, organic growth.

A key to developing talent in people is aspiration. Someone — either the individual or a teacher, coach or mentor — has aspired and believed that accomplishment could far exceed current capabilities. I know that was true for me.

On May 25, 1994, I started my first post-college job: backup quarterback for the short-lived Sacramento Gold Miners of the Canadian Football League. Do you remember your first real job? How much belief did you have that you would do your job well and build a lasting, meaningful career? From age 6 on, I believed I would play professional football. After all, I was working in the family business. My dad played 13 seasons in the NFL, CFL and AFL, and my brother played 11 seasons in the NFL. Whatever natural talent I possessed was thoroughly developed by my dad and brother. Each spent hours and hours working with me when I was young.

Regardless of my lifetime of preparation, I was nervous on the first day of my job. The veterans were on the field and knew the plays, which sounded like Chinese to me. Since this was an unofficial workout, no coaches were present for guidance. I made plenty of dumb mistakes, but I knew that was part of the process and I believed I was in my right place. Nonetheless, there were moments of doubt during training camp when

my prospects of making the team were dim. One time, a reporter brought those doubts into focus. While competing from the fourth quarterback slot on a team nobody had heard of, and in the shadow of my father and brother’s accomplished careers, the reporter asked why I was playing football in this situation. My response was that I believed I was in my right place and while I didn’t know if I would make the team, I knew I had to try. That response opened a conversation that has yet to end: The reporter and I married three years later.

My faith in God’s plan for my life enabled me to work hard despite the odds for success. I made the practice squad and during the season eventually became the backup when our starting quarterback was injured.

The guys called me “Rudy” after the

movie character who had little talent but was a relentless worker. I took it as an insult since I thought I had some talent.

The next season, having proved my willingness to work hard, the coach let the veteran backup go and gave me the chance to earn the job, which I did. My faith was rewarded and reinforced. I went on to play eight seasons in the CFL. That uncertain spring of 1994 may not have been ideal, but it served as the first step of my career, leading most importantly to the woman I love — the reporter who asked me why.

Hopefully, you have experienced the importance of faith being a force that inspires your work, be it competing on the fields of friendly strife, street sweeping, teaching or building a business. Motivation matters, and regardless of religious faith, people must be inspired to persevere

for a purpose beyond their occupation, or else work becomes a dead end. There is meaning in our labor, and we must pursue that meaning while working our jobs, which when performed with aspiration produce dynamic results — innovative solutions to our common human challenges that ultimately grow our economic pie. So, in no small part, I believe that faith is a key to economic vitality — and in order to remain the world’s economic leader, our society must nurture faith. Paul writes that faith without works is dead. I also believe that work without faith is dead.

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*Jimmy Kemp is president of the Jack Kemp Foundation and executive vice president of federal systems for Group 47.*

## Morality and ethics undergird capitalism and prosperity

*This excerpt is taken from “The American Idea Renewed,” a new collection of speeches by late Republican visionary Jack Kemp on America’s leadership in the world, economic growth, freedom, dignity and opportunity, and the competition of ideas.*

Democratic capitalism has been history’s sharpest weapon against poverty, oppression and tyranny.

Capitalism properly understood, as George Gilder explains, is the systematic behavior of free individuals making productive investments of their time, energy and resources in acts of faith. Specifically, he wrote in “Wealth and Poverty,” “It is love and faith that infuse ideas with life and fire. All creative thought is thus in a sense religious, initially a product of faith and belief.”

Adam Smith, who by the way wasn’t an “economist” but rather a moral philosopher, understood the driving force inside all human beings. “The desire to improve our lot in life,” he wrote, “comes to us out of the womb of our mothers and never leaves until the day we die.”

How could it be that, in the United States of 1776, the year Adam Smith wrote “An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations,” was the same year Thomas Jefferson penned the Declaration of Independence, emphatically declaring, “We hold these truths to be self-evident”?

How could we declare the fundamental principles of free markets and the inalienable rights to life, liberty and property without having studied economics, without there being “economics”?

Our economic system is the natural offspring of our legal system. And, the origin of our common law tradition that was handed down to us from our British ancestors has at its roots, morality as handed down to them through the Bible and the Ten Commandments ... Eventually, these decisions became precedent for future decisions, and thus the birth of an organic legal system.

Interestingly, one of the greatest difficulties faced by common law judges in the past, are similar to the difficult disputes faced by society today; namely, disputes that arise from people from different communities and religions. Richard Maybury discusses “the two fundamental laws” in “Whatever Happened to Justice?” which was designed for high school-level students. In that book, he argues that common law judges finally boiled down these disputes into two fundamental laws on which all major religions and philosophies agree:

One, do all you have agreed to do, and two, do not encroach on other persons or their property.

It is fascinating what Maybury observes about these two fundamental laws. They are stated and restated throughout the

lore of all the great religions:

- The Ten Commandments are strong in support of private property, devoting not one but two commandments to this fundamental issue: The Eighth Commandment says “Thou shalt not steal” and The Tenth Commandment says “Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s house.”
- The Koran says, “Woe unto the unjust who, when others measure for them, exact in full, but when they measure or weigh for others, defraud them.” The Unjust, 83:1.
- And, of course, there is the Golden Rule in both Judaism and Christianity: “Do unto others what you would want others to do unto you.” The same point is made in Confucian philosophy.

Thus, the foundation of capitalism is firmly embedded in morality and ethics. And, just as the Bible warns in Matthew 7:24-28 of the foolish man who built his house on sand, a corporation built without morality or ethics will surely fall with a great crash, just as Enron, WorldCom and others did when the rains of recession came pouring down.

As I mentioned earlier, the study of economics is rooted in our legal tradition, which is embedded in philosophy, which is encapsulated in morality.

T.S. Eliot wrote that, “It is impossible to design a system so perfect that no one needs to be good.” This is simply a restatement of a very simple principle: the state of the human soul determines the shape of human society.

A government conceived in liberty has none of the tools of tyranny. It cannot enforce the savage “virtue” of the French Revolution or shape the socialist “new man.” It depends, instead, on other institutions — structures between the individual and the state — that instill character, purpose and virtue. Churches and synagogues that raise a moral standard. Parents who provide a moral and spiritual example to their children. Schools that teach only the basics of citizenship and character lessons that come from an understanding of the Decalogue as well as the Declaration of Independence.

Edmund Burke called them the “little platoons” that temper our freedom with internal restraint. They enable us to achieve the ideal of the American founding: liberty constrained, not by law, but by character.

*The late Jack Kemp served in Congress and was secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development, as well as a former NFL quarterback. “The American Idea Renewed,” which includes 18 of his speeches, is published by the Jack Kemp Foundation.*



# ‘Come and see’ the Museum of the Bible



**By Steve Green**

**S**ince the day I was born, the Bible has played a significant role in my life. My parents taught me to love it, to cherish its principles and to apply them to everything I did.

Years ago, I committed to reading the Bible every day, and I’ve found it to be constantly fresh, constantly relevant and constantly inspiring. This Book has helped me be a better son, father, husband and businessman, and taught me the principles at the heart of how I work and live.

Today, I am thrilled to serve as chairman of Museum of the Bible, a nonprofit organization where we invite all people to engage with the Bible.

So how exactly are we inviting people to engage with the Bible? Through what we call our “Four Pillars”: the museum itself and its traveling exhibits, education and research.

In addition to being our nation’s capital, with four of the five most attended museums in America, Washington is easily the museum capital of America. The Bible’s words are also chiseled onto many of its monuments and important buildings. That’s why we decided to put all 430,000 square feet of the new museum there. Set to open in November 2017, and only a few blocks from the Capitol, the National Mall and the Smithsonian, we’ll be able to host millions of visitors who, once inside, will be immersed in the history, narrative and impact of the Bible.

Recently, we’ve seen a tragic decline in biblical literacy in our country. The average person on the street in all likelihood has no idea just how much the Bible has impacted their life, including the role it played in inspiring the very liberty they cherish today. Yet, as *Life* magazine declared, the printing of the Bible by Gutenberg in 1455 was the most important historical event of the past 1,000 years.

Bridging that awareness gap is exactly why the museum will include an Impact Floor that will highlight the Bible’s influence on topics such as government, music, education and human

rights; a Narrative Floor that will portray the Bible’s iconic stories in unforgettable ways for all ages; and a History Floor that will showcase the museum’s most prized artifacts, as well as pieces from museums around the world.

It is true that this book has sometimes been abused, and we won’t be shying away from that fact. Nonetheless, I have always believed that when its principles have been applied, mankind has been the beneficiary.

In all of this, our goal is straightforward: to invite all people to engage with the Bible in a scholarly, immersive manner, and let visitors come to their own conclusions.

Our approach reflects the same religious liberty the Bible has helped to inspire. The museum will be a place where people of all faiths, and those of no faith at all, are welcome. We’ve even negotiated a number of historic partnership agreements, like the one with the

Israel Antiquities Authority, allowing visiting museums and libraries to have permanent exhibit space at the museum in Washington.

But engaging people with the Bible won’t be limited to Washington. We’ve taken our extensive collection global through our traveling exhibits and will continue to do so. Whether it be the Vatican, Cuba, Israel or other countries around the world (including six cities right here at home), we’ve already attracted over a half-million visitors worldwide.

We’re also engaged in Bible education efforts. As part of our student Bible curriculum, and in collaboration with Israeli colleagues, we’ve developed “Augmented Reality” technology to create a totally new form of interactive textbook that quite literally brings the Bible to life on devices such as iPads and other tablets. The first part of our academically rigorous, tech-savvy curriculum has been

introduced in various schools in Israel as a supplemental course. According to surveys, their students consistently say it is one of their favorite courses. We’ve also introduced a similar curriculum to the American home-school market just last month.

Finally, through our Scholars Initiative, we are sponsoring numerous biblical research and scholarship projects which not only includes some of the most renowned scholars of our time, but also enables qualified and promising young scholars to be mentored as well. In doing so, we hope to encourage a whole new generation of biblical scholars.

Through our four pillars, the Museum of the Bible is quite literally sponsoring a worldwide collaborative effort to engage people with the history, narrative and impact of the Bible.

Founding this institution has been the most fulfilling work of my life precisely because it is so much bigger than I am. It is an organization that invites people to engage with a book whose influence is seen in our art, heard in our music and chiseled on our buildings, and which has inspired our greatest heroes and given us our highest values — a book that is bigger than all of us: the Bible.

Just as the disciples some 2,000 years ago said to the curious of their own day, so we say today: “Come and see.”

*Steve Green is chairman of the Museum of the Bible. He also serves as president of Hobby Lobby, the world’s largest privately owned arts and crafts retailer.*





# Works of art: Tangible evidence of God's beauty, glory



By Roberta Green Ahmanson

**B**eauty is one of those “contested” words.

For many in the art world, it is a bad word, implying one group of people knows better than another. For American Christians, it hasn't fared much better. It just isn't something you talk about.

The “beauty” industry, together with Hollywood images and the art market, gives us a superficial example of what the word means. And then there's the rest of us, who kind of like the word but aren't sure how and when to use it.

But we know it when we see it. We're on holiday by the sea. We look up. The sunset takes our breath away. Beautiful, we say.

Even *The Economist*, in a 2003 special report on the beauty business,

concluded: “Beauty is something we recognize instinctively.” For example, the report said, a 3-month-old baby will smile longer at a face judged by adults to be “attractive.”

Artists, architects and designers who are Christians have created paintings, sculptures, buildings and images we still call “beautiful,” as have many who do not believe. Where the Christian Church has sometimes been ambivalent about art, fearing it is either a distraction or an unnecessary luxury, it has sometimes celebrated and other times ignored or shunned its artists.

Nevertheless, creating works of art is a high calling in the Christian tradition. The iconoclasts of the eighth and ninth centuries were defeated because theologians made the argument that God himself took on human form and created a world full of beauty.

Roman Catholic philosopher Dietrich von Hildebrand refuted the idea that art is superfluous. Rather, works of art are tangible evidence of the reality of God's glory, both now and at the end of time.

He wrote: “An estimate of all things from the viewpoint of their practical and absolute necessity ... is to be found neither in God's creation nor in the Revelation of Christ. In these, on the contrary, the principle of superabundance rules ...”

When artists, be they Christian or not, create works of art, they are participating in God's superabundance in one of four ways.

First, their work bears witness to the

reality of God. Perhaps the most famous example is Hagia Sophia, the church built by Byzantine Emperor Justinian between 532 and 537 in what is now Istanbul.

When the Russian Prince Vladimir was looking for a better religion, he sent his envoys to see this church. As the Russian Primary Chronicle states, the church itself was the deciding factor in their decision to convert to Orthodoxy: “We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth. For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it. We know only that God dwells there among men. ... For we cannot forget that beauty.”

Second, beauty in the form of works of art can and does transform our lives. For example, in his 1939 short story “Barn Burning,” William Faulkner shows us how 10-year-old Colonel Sartoris Snopes, son of an odd-job man who abuses his wife and children, and whose penchant for arson keeps the family on the move, finds the courage to turn his father in and stop the cycle of abuse. Why? Because, for the first time in his life, he has seen love and beauty. Where? In the house of Major de Spain, the man whose barn his father intends to burn down. The house itself is beautiful, its furnishings are beautiful, the people inside treat each other with love and respect. Speechless in the face of such a vision, Colonel Sartoris longs for it. That longing gives him the courage to act. His life will never be the same.

Third, as Emeritus Pope Benedict

XVI has said, works of art enable us to see ourselves more clearly. “Beauty pulls us up short, but in so doing it reminds us of our final destiny ... fills us with new hope, gives us the courage to live to the full the unique gift of life.”

Finally, beauty wants to reproduce itself. In her 1999 book, “On Beauty and Being Just,” Elaine Scarry argued that beauty demands replication: We want to make copies of it; we want more. And that desire is connected to wanting to right wrongs and foster fairness. That is what artists do.

Art points to that which can quench our deepest longing. Artists make works that have the power to change our lives. In the fourth century, Augustine challenged us to respond to God's presence in both the natural world and works of art:

“Please do not be ungrateful to the one who made you able to see; this is why you are able to believe what you are not yet able to see. God gave you eyes in your head, reason in your heart. Arouse the reason in your heart, get the inner inhabitant behind your inner eyes on his feet, let him take to his windows, let him inspect God's creation.”

Roberta Green Ahmanson is a writer and speaker who lives with her husband in Orange County, California. A former newspaper religion reporter, her current work focuses on the intellectual roots of current trends, as well as the relationships between art, religion, culture and history.

## Hollywood discovers faith and values improve the bottom line



By Dr. Ted Baehr

In the past few years, there has been a tidal wave of Hollywood movies based on biblical topics and featuring overtly evangelistic stories. These include “Risen,” “The Young Messiah”

and “Apostle Paul,” as well as “Miracles From Heaven,” “Unbroken” and “Heaven Is for Real.”

There are also more independent movies with faith and values, such as “God's Not Dead” and “War Room,” that are racking up significant numbers.

This increased move toward faith and values (and even toward moral principles in blockbusters like “The Jungle Book,” “Furious 7” and “Batman v. Superman: Dawn of Justice”) isn't just the result of one or two successful movies. Nor is it the result of more evangelical filmmakers in Hollywood. It's the result of 20 years of promoting the Annual MovieGuide Report to the Entertainment Industry, which shows how to make more money at the box office.

The work of the filmmaker can be enhanced by faith and moral business practices in varied ways.

Thus, you don't have to make a

biblical epic to make a successful movie with faith and values. You can insert a positive character with faith and values into your story. Or, you can insert positive references to biblical places, biblical characters and biblical principles, such as “Love thy neighbor,” into your story. Or, you can insert some Christian biblical metaphors into the movie, such as symbolic representations of the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Numerous successful movies of the distant and recent past have done this, from popular classics like “Drums Along the Mohawk,” starring Henry Fonda and Claudette Colbert, and “San Francisco,” starring Clark Gable and Jeanette MacDonald, during the golden age of Hollywood, to modern blockbusters, like “Frozen” and “Avengers: Age of Ultron.”

Naturally, the Bible has some important things to say about work.

For example, God tells the Prophet

Isaiah in Isaiah 65:22 that those who work diligently for the Lord, and for the benefit of others, will “enjoy the work of their hands.” Proverbs 10:4 also says, “Lazy hands make a man poor, but diligent hands bring wealth.” This verse is similar to what Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 3:10: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.” Paul adds in Colossians 3:23, however, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”

In the last 20 years or so since MovieGuide began reporting to Hollywood decision-makers its findings in the Annual Report to the Entertainment Industry, the number of movies with strong faith and values has increased 470 percent.

Also, the financial success of such movies has grown exponentially, from

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# Education and vocation: A comeback story



**By Dr. Gregory Alan Thornbury**

Everyone loves a comeback story. And for people of faith who sometimes feel in exile in contemporary society, nothing fires the imagination as much as someone reconnecting to their vocation through their trust in God. In this connection, I am reminded of a story in the life of the great Duke Ellington.

In the early months of 1956, the word on the street was that the Duke was washed up, a has-been, done. No one seemed to remember or care about the greatness of his early career. Bebop was the rage. Dizzy Gillespie and Charlie Parker were the new kings of jazz.

As biographer Terry Teachout explains in vivid detail, by the time Ellington showed up at the Newport Jazz Festival 1956, his band was a mess, and he was recycling old material without anything new and dazzling to show that he could still compete.

When he took the stage, the band limped through the first couple of tunes. His new suite of songs composed with Billy Strayhorn got only tepid applause. But then the Duke called an audible and they launched into “Diminuendo and Crescendo in Blue.” Ten minutes earlier, it seemed as though a fabled career might be over. But 20 minutes later the crowd was delirious with joy as the pinnacle of Paul Gonsalves’ soaring

59-chorus-long tenor saxophone solo crested, to be followed, if not surpassed, by Cat Anderson’s searing high solo. Producer George Avakian described the pandemonium that ensued: “Halfway through Paul’s solo, the crowd became one single living organism, reacting in waves like huge ripples to the music played before it.”

But the Duke wasn’t through. He could have coasted on his career as the greatest musical genius in American history after the triumph in Newport and as a pathbreaking pioneer in civil rights. But he could not. He would not. He decided instead to employ his full resources in the composition of a “Sacred Concert” of music, his great late career masterwork. He wanted to show where

“Sacred Concert” at Grace Cathedral in San Francisco, he substantively revised the piece and decided to perform it again, this time to be recorded for posterity by RCA. The scene for the revised Concert of Sacred Music was performed at the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in New York City the day after Christmas 1965.

“This music,” Ellington declared to the media, “is the most important thing I’ve ever done or am ever likely to do. This is personal, not career. Now I can say openly what I have been saying on my knees.”

The trick for believers in today’s culture is to connect “what they’re saying on their knees” with their life and career, but earlier than did the Duke. This

should lead. Remember that once upon a time, Sunday school actually taught concrete skills like reading, writing and overall literacy. Education should once again be the strong suit of the people of God. We should be thinking of desks instead of pews. If a theology of work could become the thing for which Christian communities are best known once again, we may find ourselves back in the center of cultural conversation rather than at the periphery.

Admittedly, it will be a steep climb. But if we are faithful, we may in fact find ourselves back in the days of Marcus Minucius Felix, the second century Christian apologist whose dialogue, entitled Octavius, sought to set the record straight to a skeptical culture about many misconceptions and outright lies that Roman society had perpetrated about Christians, their beliefs and practices. The response of these believers to the slings and arrows of outrageous accusations was love. But in an age in which powerful voices within the Church, such as Felix’s successor Tertullian — who argued for a withdrawal from culture — St. Jerome reminded us that Minucius Felix knew exactly where he should be after becoming a Christian. He knew that upon becoming a follower of Jesus, he should be right back into the Roman Legal Forum, at the center of social debate, where, we are told, he was one of “Rome’s most notable solicitors.”

What connects the ancient witness of Minucius Felix to the late-in-life vocational confession of America’s greatest composer, Duke Ellington? It is the conviction that one’s calling from God should be displayed not in cloistered quarters, “at the boundaries of culture,” as Dietrich Bonhoeffer once wrote, “but in the middle of the village,” where people can gather to see what the grace of God has done.

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*Gregory Alan Thornbury, Ph.D., is president of The King’s College in New York City.*



the music came from. He wanted the world to know that Jesus Christ, the Creator God, gave him the music to write, a band to lead and a song to sing.

And although he first performed the

can and should be done through the education of the believing community, from childhood through higher education too. And the church should be involved throughout the process. In fact, it

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only a couple of hundred million dollars overall to significantly more than \$5 billion or \$7 billion annually. And that doesn’t include all the money that movies with strong morally and spiritually uplifting content make overseas and on home video.

Success isn’t measured just in percentages, dollars and cents, however.

Numerous filmmakers have told us personally how taking our advice and turning from making movies without

faith and values to making movies with faith and values has brought meaning, purpose, dignity and many blessings to their own lives and the lives of their families.

Thus, even the work of making entertaining movies for a mass audience can be a great benefit, not only with regard to financial prosperity but also to one’s personal growth and fulfillment — especially when you apply biblical principles of faith and values to your endeavors.

MovieGuide’s own work of honoring the people behind family-friendly movies with strong faith and values has itself prospered, as the above

statistics clearly suggest.

God has mightily blessed MovieGuide’s work, but we couldn’t have done it without the faithful support and prayers of our many friends and allies. So, we pray that God will continue to bless this work of our hands, and the work of the filmmakers and friends who have responded so positively to our appeals to honor God and redeem the entertainment industry by applying faith and values.

Adhering to moral business practices and Christian, biblical principles of faith and values is extremely rewarding work. No doubt about it.

For more about our Report to the Entertainment Industry and about our advocacy work in Hollywood, visit [MovieGuide.org](http://MovieGuide.org).

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*Theodore “Ted” Baehr, J.D., is chairman of the Christian Film & Television Commission and publisher of MovieGuide (MovieGuide.org), a family guide to entertainment. An award-winning media authority, he is used by God to redeem the mass media and teach families to be media-wise. His many books include “How To Succeed in Hollywood (Without Losing Your Soul)” and “The Culture-Wise Family.”*



# Enjoying the God-given gift of work



By Lee Truax

**F**or the past several decades, I have met many in the marketplace who suffered from an identity crisis yielding genuine frustration. When work and career have not gone as expected, despondency and depression often followed.

Coming from a Christian worldview, my understanding of identity has long been grounded and rooted in an understanding that there is greater meaning and purpose in my life (and work) endowed to me by my Creator, the God of the Bible.

Identity and purpose have become less clear as we have moved further toward removing faith, belief in God, from so many aspects of our contemporary lives. It now depends on the individual to confer meaning and purpose.

“What does faith have to do with it?” has become a popular internal, if not

externally voiced, question for so many issues we face.

Rather than attempt to argue the larger questions, for a proper understanding of God’s interest in (and, in fact, dominion over all) issues of life, I’d like to take a pragmatic view that integrating the Christian faith into work, labor and creativity can bring purpose and fulfillment in the work experience.

If we recognize and acknowledge work as a gift from God (given to us, the Bible states, prior to the Fall of Man), we are able to explore the original intent and purpose for work in our lives.

I believe that work has been gifted to us by God, which means it comes with certain responsibilities as well. We are to work in a certain way (to God’s standards, if you will) that result in the bringing forth a great value to the society and community where the work is done. Work should be an addictive process, filled with value for the worker and those who benefit from the creative or sustaining act.

Integration of faith and work allows and provides for a purpose-driven view of work. Work is to be done to the glory of God and celebrated as an endeavor that provides joy to the worker and blessings to the beneficiary. Work removed from the faith context (that is given to us by God) has been reduced to purposes far below the high position and calling originally given to it.

Most today see work in terms of the individual rather than for the purpose of glorifying God and enjoying him in our work. We’ve seen work lowered to the purpose of achieving mostly

personal financial benefit. It is not lost on the author that the coming generation is asking more of their work experience. The fact that millennials by and large are looking for significance to their work is hopeful. Their work is often more an extension of their lives.

When the only function of work is profit-centered — for personal gain and wealth — versus the recognition of the divine privilege of expressing the qualities and character of God who granted it, work becomes far less satisfying and far less beneficial to the society and the context in which the work is done. The result is a reduction of work to the world of selfish ambition — the fictional character in the 1987 film “Wall Street” Gordon Gekko’s world of “greed is good,” resulting in harms to society (and the individual) rather than the intended, God-glorifying good.

Work was meant to be an expression of what Christ called the greatest commandment — “*and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.’*” (Mark 12:30-31)

This expression, this act of worship if you will, of doing work that demonstrates the love one has for God and to the benefit of one’s neighbor infuses our work with meaning and joy. Ultimately, the power of a faith-infused work is one that embraces and enjoys the great purpose that God intended for work.

The challenge remains, even for the

Christian, to think properly about work and faith. Many experience great and meaningful experiences in their Sunday worship, but begin their workweek on Monday completely devoid of a connection to their faith. The phenomenon can be called the “Sunday to Monday gap,” the “sacred and secular divide” or practical atheism. Call it what you will, but seeing all aspects of our lives through the lens of our faith in God can often be counterintuitive.

One of the most powerful images of joy in God-centered work is illustrated in the movie, “Chariots of Fire.” When Eric Liddell, the Scottish athlete portrayed in the film, is confronted by his sister over her perceived higher calling of a sacred missionary work to the work Liddell is engaged in, he responds with the blessing of an integrated view of work and faith. In the movie, he says, “I believe God made me for a purpose, but he also made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure.”

Exercising and enjoying the God-given gift of our work — the expression of our skills and talents in proper perspective — is our great privilege from God. It is in the infusion of our work with our faith that allows us to enjoy and reflect the pleasure of our God.

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*Lee Truax is president of the Christian Business Men’s Connection and a 25-year veteran of the technology industry. He has personally enjoyed the process of applying faith to work and challenging others to do the same.*





# Carry Sunday's beliefs into Monday's workplace



By Terence Chatmon

**F**ear and uncertainty have never been the garments of the faithful.

Most Christian business leaders who attend church on Sunday have yet to experience the transformational impact of a small group of like-minded individuals who are committed to each other and seeking to grow and have a spiritual influence through their businesses.

Those who wonder what would happen if their Sunday beliefs were carried into Monday behaviors will experience the bonding with other business leaders as they grow in their faith, focusing on how to lead their company for Christ.

They will grow closer to the Lord. They will increase the value and impact of

their lives, and more effectively reflect the love of Jesus across the platforms of their lives — business, community, family and church.

Our culture needs leaders to demonstrate their faith through their lives, even in the workplace.

But Bibles get left behind almost every Monday. In this presidential election, the Word of God has been left out of the debates. I firmly believe the topic of the Bible belongs in the debates as well as the workplace.

I know a man who agreed with me. In fact, his Bible was likely on his desk during one of the greatest consumer-product crises this nation has ever seen.

This crisis, known as the Tylenol tampering incident in 1982, involved several deaths in the Chicago community, and sparked officials to broadcast urgent warnings over public broadcast systems and loudspeakers from police vehicles for weeks. A nationwide recall of the acetaminophen product was issued, involving an estimated 31 million bottles with a retail value of over \$100 million. This crisis led to reforms in the packaging of over-the-counter substances and to federal anti-tampering laws.

The leader of the company, James Burke, didn't separate faith and work. He carried his faith with him to work daily.

He lived by its creed and truth. On those days, with his company under attack, our company president had been at work with his Bible — probably a big thick one — to lead and guide his path. As an entry level territory manager at McNeil Consumer Products Company, a subsidiary of Johnson & Johnson, during this time, I had been on the very front line of the incident, and it was prayers and God's Word that sustained us through it. The example of James Burke, who was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for his business leadership before he passed away in 2012, sustains me as a leader some three decades later.

God intends you to use your business experience to honor and glorify Him. This life is a journey with winding roads and peaks and valleys. Who else knows the journey better and can serve us as a guide on this path? Faith in the workplace is a non-negotiable. We are called to work and to live a fully integrated and balanced life. There should be no sacred and secular divide or split in living out of faith in the workplace and life. Eternal values should take precedent over temporal values.

Faith in the workplace can truly transform businesses, lives, communities and nations. We have to be bold, courageous, and lead with faith. A Kingdom leader is at his or her best when ...

• They are mature and equipped in their

faith.

- They are a servant leader.
- They have the characteristics of humility, dependency on a greater power, sacrifice, forgiving, and able to surrender it all.
- They understand God is the sovereign one and in control of all things.
- They are motivated by the love of Christ and faith-focused.
- They have discovered a larger purpose for their work, business and life.
- They are family-faithful and truth-driven.
- They consciously focus on Kingdom capital and financial stewardship.

Don't leave your faith at home or in the car. Transport it with you into the all of life, even the workplace.

.....  
*Terence Chatmon is president and CEO of Fellowship of Companies for Christ International (FCCI), a global movement of CEOs and business leaders, united by a single vision: "Transforming the world through Christ, one company leader at a time." FCCI equips and encourages Christian business leaders to operate their business and conduct their personal lives in accordance with biblical principles. For more information on the organization of FCCI visit [www.fcci.org](http://www.fcci.org). Send us a picture of your Desk Top Bible to [info@fcci.org](mailto:info@fcci.org).*

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# The truth about bringing your faith to work: 'Walk the talk'



By Diane Paddison

**A**s the founder of 4word, a ministry organization for women in the workplace, I spend significant time speaking to and mentoring Christian professionals worldwide.

I'm often asked about how Christians can or should "bring faith to work." My answer is simple: If you are showing up to work, then your faith is too.

How that faith plays out in the office is much less about your strategy for showing it to people and much more about the health of your personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

The Bible does not support a distinction between "spiritual life" and "work life," or between "God's work" and "secular work." Work is not an accident of human development, or — as I've heard suggested — a byproduct of the Fall. It is a principal part of God's original design. Adam and Eve were placed in the Garden of Eden, not to leisurely enjoy God's creation, but to "work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15).

God isn't confined to the ministry sector, and neither is His important and purposeful work. Every single time you do what God has called you to do, it honors Him, whether you are worshipping on Sunday or filing documents on Tuesday. Each and every act or omission we perform can be meaningful in ways that only God knows.

## Work to bring God pleasure.

Many people today look to work for meaning and inspiration, believing that the "right" job will be fulfilling and energizing. If your job is draining or boring, conventional wisdom goes, then it must be the wrong job.

And maybe you are in the wrong job. But you need to know that no job alone can satisfy your soul. A job can be exciting, it can look important, it can earn you social approval and money, but it might just as easily lose you those

things. Even the best jobs can't look or feel good all the time, and even the best jobs end, sometimes poorly.

Work alone can only ever be work. It's the "why" that makes it "more." When you work to bring God pleasure, it breathes life into your efforts.

In my favorite film, "Chariots of Fire," the character Eric Liddell, a Christian Olympic runner, wrestles with whether he should give up running for the mission field. Ultimately, he chooses to run because, he says, "I believe God made me for a purpose, but He also made me fast. And when I run, I feel His pleasure ... to win is to honor him."

This is exactly the way God wants us to approach our work. If God has called you to work in the marketplace, your obedience there pleases Him.

At the time, I thought, "This is it! This must be the big opportunity that God has been preparing me for." But even in that executive role, I felt the closest to God and the most impactful by doing small things, like working hard, behaving honorably and building relationships with the people around me. It was my small acts of obedience that pleased God, not my big splashy position.

## Focus on actions, not results

Most people in the business world, including me, struggle with this one. We are a community of achievers. We get things done.

In business, results are everything. But God doesn't need us to deliver results. Our value to Him has nothing

for acclaim and self-protectionism. Even for those who do succeed, the resources any career can offer you are finite.

But God's grace knows no bounds. Because we recognize that everything we have is a gift of grace, Christians have the freedom to go "all out" — and to make mistakes. We have the freedom to choose the right — or better — thing over the expected one, to turn down a promotion that is wrong for your family, or to offer forgiveness or support to a colleague who maybe doesn't deserve it.

Your responses to difficult situations and your attitude toward work will say more to people about your faith than words ever could. God is with you in every step of your workday, whether you realize it or not, and His presence in us changes everything.



When I started out in commercial real estate, my job didn't feel particularly meaningful — paperwork, spreadsheets and endless meetings. But as my understanding of the work developed, and I started to build relationships with clients and coworkers, I sensed the impact I could have on people's lives. Gradually, my career advanced until I was overseeing 4,500 employees directly, and nearly 30,000 indirectly, as a member of the Global Executive Board of CBRE.

to do with our utility or ability. He's not depending on us to get good press or fulfill any quota of new believers. It's not the results that God is after, it's the relationship. Every action you take in faith is a step toward God. He alone controls the results.

This is the true power and freedom of Christians in the workplace. Marketplace culture incentivizes cutthroat competition; it is dominated and constrained by profits and losses, by desire

*Diane Paddison is founder of 4word, the only national organization serving Christian women in the workplace ([www.4wordwomen.org](http://www.4wordwomen.org)). She is author of "Work, Love, Pray: Practical Wisdom for Young Professional Christian Women and Those Who Want to Understand Them" (Zondervan, 2011). Richelle Campbell, an attorney and blogger at 4word, assisted with this article.*





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# Vocational stewardship for the common good



By Dr. Amy L. Sherman

**C**hurches often teach people about “financial stewardship” — seeing the resources they possess as belonging to God and thus accountable to him for their disposal. Churches need to do better at teaching their members about “vocational stewardship” — seeing their jobs also as God’s provision, and deploying their talents through their work in ways that express love of neighbor.

By “vocational stewardship,” I mean the intentional and strategic use of one’s vocational power (skills, knowledge, network, position, platform) to advance human flourishing.

Too often in Christian circles “faith/work integration” is adverbial. We focus on the kind of employees we ought to be: ethical, caring, hard-working, conscientious. This is a vital part of such integration, but it’s not the whole. For the work itself matters. *What* we do — not just *how* we do it — matters.

Vocational stewardship starts by asking: What are the hallmarks of human flourishing from a biblical perspective?

Scripture teaches that these include justice, beauty, peace, wholeness, economic flourishing, joy, community, dignity and intimacy with God. Then we ask: How can I deploy my vocational power to advance these values in my workplace, community and nation?

Consider businesswoman Wendy Clark. At age 20 she started Carpe Diem Cleaners in Durham, North Carolina. Initially, her sense of what it meant to be a Christian businessperson was that her company could generate profits — and then she could give generously to her church for its compassion ministries.

But now Wendy understands that her business *itself* is a means of ministry. She’s advancing economic flourishing among her employees — mostly single Hispanic moms. She works hard to schedule cleaners’ hours in ways that enable them to balance work and family. And instead of holding the company’s annual professional development training in the Durham office, she takes the women — and their kids — to a family camp out in the country. That way, the families get a special vacation they probably wouldn’t have had otherwise.

Elizabeth Weller has joined her passion for agriculture and her formal study of social work and religion in an initiative that advances wholeness.

As an undergraduate, Elizabeth pursued her love of farming during summer breaks, gaining practical skills working in an Appalachian orchard and later a small farm in Virginia. After graduation she worked at the Gould Farm in Massachusetts, discovering how farm work can be used as a therapeutic avenue. Today, she

and her husband operate The Amazing Heart Farm outside Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. It’s an agriculturally based center for individuals who have suffered trauma or loss.

Matthew Price has deployed his legal training to advance justice for the poor in Uganda. There he mentored paralegals and law school students from the Ugandan Christian Law Fellowship (UCLF), training them to provide representation to victims of illegal detention. Matthew and his team visited police stations and jail cells to advise prisoners of their rights under Ugandan law. By the end of his first year in Kampala, Matthew and the UCLF lawyers had offered representation to over 200 prisoners, helping them taste justice through acquittal and release. Today, lawyers and criminal investigators with the International Justice Mission are deploying their skills similarly, strengthening public justice systems abroad by partnering with local law enforcement agencies to rescue human trafficking victims and prosecute the perpetrators.

For architect Jill Kurtz, faith/work integration has involved specializing in “green design” and offering affordable design services to nonprofits and small businesses that are typically unable to access expensive architectural firms. She’s also now teaching “public interest” architecture to students at Kansas State University.

Oceanographer Jorge Vazquez expresses his faith by advancing environmental stewardship through his vocation. A love of creation was instilled in him as a child through long walks with his father along the beach. Today, as a scientist

with NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, Dr. Vazquez works to improve the quality of sea surface temperature data records, an important element in the quest to understand and monitor global warming.

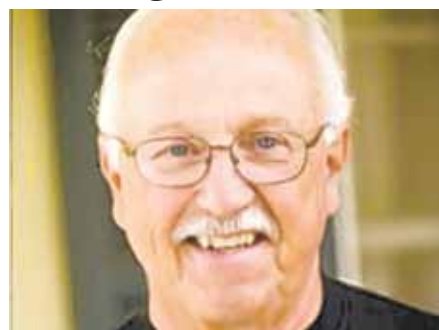
With intentionality, many of us can creatively advance human flourishing — what the Judeo-Christian worldview describes as “shalom” — in myriad ways. An engineer might advocate product reforms in order to promote better worker or consumer safety. A middle manager could design a new internship program at her firm that provides fresh economic opportunities for minority teens.

If we can’t “bloom where we’re planted” in these ways, because of our lack of seniority or other barriers, then we can donate our professional skills to a nonprofit that’s engaged in community development. That’s what young Christian marketing, IT, business, graphic design and human resource professionals in the Big Apple are doing through Hope for New York’s “Professionals in Action” program.

Through vocational stewardship we can experience more joy and meaning in our work. Simultaneously, we promote the common good and offer our neighbors tastes of shalom. It’s a winning combination.

.....  
*Amy L. Sherman, Ph.D., is a senior fellow at the Sagamore Institute for Policy Research, where she directs the Center on Faith in Communities. She is the author of “Kingdom Calling: Vocational Stewardship for the Common Good” (InterVarsity Press 2011).*

## Jesus and love: The greatest leadership role model of all time



By Ken Blanchard, Phil Hodges and Phyllis Hennecy Hendry

The world is in desperate need of a different leadership role model. We have seen the negative impact of self-serving leaders in every sector of society throughout the world.

Looking at the world around us, it is easy to assume that the only way to lead is to look out for ourselves. Looking at Jesus offers a different perspective. We hear His words “Not so with you.” We see Him wash His disciples’ feet. His words and

actions model a new way of leadership.

Our experiences and learnings in the last 10 years with our Lead Like Jesus ministry have continually reminded us that the most important thing in leadership is the leader; the most important part of the leader is his or her heart; and the most important connection to a leader’s heart is God.

Most leadership resources focus on management techniques, competencies,

strategies and tactics while ignoring the most important part of leadership — the leaders themselves. At Lead Like Jesus, we believe real, lasting change starts on the inside. When a leader chooses to allow Jesus to transform him or her from the inside out, that choice will have an effect on everyone and everything that leader influences. We are clear: You can’t lead like Jesus without Jesus.

A tremendous benefit happens in

the lives of people who lead like Jesus: freedom. Jesus is the only one who offers a model of leadership that’s built on freedom and complete security in Him and His power at work within us. While the world continues to throw solutions at us that are built on self-empowerment, self-reliance, competition, peer pressure and performance, leading like Jesus frees us to reach heights of influence we never would be able to reach on our own. When we are free from pride and fear, free to humbly accept feedback and admit our mistakes, and strong enough to overlook offenses and forgive the errors of others, we can lead people and help them reach their full potential.

Still, in the perspective of some leaders, leading like Jesus is “soft” or impractical. For this reason, many leaders continue to bypass it. The results of this way of thinking are clear: continued struggles, dissatisfied employees, frustrated leaders, broken

» see **LOVE** | C27



# Thy Kingdom come ... at work?



By Mike Sharrow

**W**hy don't people say "TGIM?" TGIF (Thank Goodness it's Friday!) is a popular exclamation for those longing for the end of a workweek and "real life" to begin.

When I tell people how excited I am for Monday — TGIM — I get responses suggesting I am clearly odd. I get it. Many people do not enjoy their jobs. Even folks who own businesses often feel like slaves to their companies.

What if work was not only sacred (matters to God) but also the very setting to change the world? What if Monday was D-Day, the launching point of a campaign to experience and witness the very Kingdom of God?

While delivering the most radical campaign speech in the history of human leadership (the "Sermon on the Mount"), the apprentices of Jesus asked their rabbi how they should pray. Jesus had been announcing that a new "kingdom" was beginning and inviting folks to experience it. In modern language, it was the introduction of the "Jesus administration." Jesus responded with words millions of Americans can recite as part of our post-Christian social conscience:

*Our Father in Heaven,  
Holy is Your name!  
Thy Kingdom (the Jesus administration)  
come,  
Thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in Heaven.*

When Jesus instructed this model prayer, what exactly was he suggesting? For people to live for the weekend and then think about harps and clouds? If the life of Jesus or his disciples is any indication,

evidence would suggest that the thrust of this prayer is something entirely more radical and domestic. Something is to come, to be done, "on earth," which would seem to include where we go to work. Right here and now.

What does it mean for the "Jesus administration" to intersect the American marketplace? What would it look like to pray and live "Thy Kingdom come — at work?" Certainly, we are called to gather in and serve via local churches, but Sundays are like the locker-room huddle, whereas the workweek is where we get in the game.

Of the 132 biblical stories of Jesus, 122 happened in the marketplace. A vast majority of his teaching, healing, disciple-

invitation of the Lord's Prayer in business? The same year that the "balanced scorecard" entered the American lexicon (1992), the leaders gathered around C12 Group roundtables began working out a paradigm for an eternally balanced scorecard ultimately called the Five-Point Alignment Matrix. It frames the question, "What would be impacted by praying 'Thy Kingdom come — at work?'" Everything.

The policies of the Jesus administration affects hiring, employee benefits, product and process quality, leadership, accountability, contracting, disputes and corporate citizenship. What if a business was not merely an economic engine called to a minimalistic ethic of "do no harm," but

- Unprecedented generosity. (Last year, the 1,200 member companies of the C12 Group unleashed an estimated \$250 million in ministry giving.)

- Cultures so healthy that turnover declines, performance increases and companies flourish at all levels.

The results have been incredible: tens of thousands of people coming to know Jesus through workplace encounters, God glorified by companies that reflect the Jesus administration, businesses outperforming peers and achieving all of the accolades of the marketplace for financial and culture achievements, and transformed lives.

You can read books, join peer groups, seek counsel and consume massive resources on the implication of faith-fueled work. On Monday, however, will you dare to recite the Lord's Prayer at your workplace, in the business God has destined you to steward for him?

Saying and believing those simple words will change what you do, how you do and why you do everything. Living out the policies of the Jesus administration will transform you, your department and the company, and can literally change the world. Less than 40 percent of Americans attend a local church, but 90 percent will go to work on Monday. If you will really pray "Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done — here" at your workplace, and then live it out, you might find yourself saying TGIM just like I do. Those who work with you will, too.

*Mike Sharrow is the CEO and president for the C12 Group (C12Group.com), the nation's leading Christian CEO and executive roundtable operator, serving 1,800 members across 90 U.S. markets in 32 states. Since 1992, the C12 Group has been "building great businesses for a greater purpose," with a mission to advance the Kingdom of God in the marketplace through the businesses and lives of those Christ calls to lead companies for him. Mr. Sharrow resides in San Antonio with his bride, Jacqui, and their two daughters, and is a graduate of Trinity International University.*

## C12 FIVE-POINT ALIGNMENT MATRIX®



making and engagement of society happened during business hours on business days in places where people least expected to encounter God. Of the 40 miraculous events recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, 39 occur outside of any religious setting. Life-changing ministry intersecting common people in common places is biblically normative and was the context of the greatest social revolution in the history of mankind.

What would it mean for followers of Jesus in the marketplace to embrace the

a sacred platform poised for significant impact on society? What if truly great businesses are intended for a greater purpose via the wild invitation of the Lord's Prayer?

In nearly 25 years of serving marketplace leaders, we have found the answers to be things like:

- A view of all people as created in the image of God and treated as such.
- Strategic planning shaped by biblical principles.
- Cultures reshaped by the Jesus administration's values and servant leadership.

## LOVE

From page C26

families, split churches, and chaotic, poor performing teams and organizations.

Try to imagine leaders who lead like Jesus. Leaders who love those they influence so much that they help them get from where they are to where God would have them go. Leaders who hold people accountable, encourage them daily, confront challenges, and bring authenticity, character and integrity to every interaction. Leaders who want to guide others on the same path. Now imagine a world full

of those leaders.

There is no need to search further. We have the perfect leadership role model in Jesus. We simply need to follow Him and allow Him to work in us and through us.

Even though we have been declaring for many years that Jesus is the greatest leadership role model of all time, we have not realized the full extent of leadership gifts He offers us. Jesus is not only the greatest servant leader but also the greatest visionary, the greatest team builder, the greatest team motivator, and the greatest change agent of all time. In fact, we cannot think of any attribute of leadership that Jesus did not model for everyone as He

trained His disciples. Now, more than 2,000 years later, Jesus still has more followers than any leader the world has ever had.

We have also learned that leading like Jesus is love-based leadership. In fact, God intends the primary outcome of our leadership and influence to be showing people Jesus' love. Leading like Jesus is essentially a matter of the heart. It is also the highest thought of the head, it is the principal work of the hands, and it is both expressed through and replenished by the habits.

The formula Everything - Love = Nothing is not of our making. It is the irrefutable law of the kingdom of God, perfectly

fulfilled by Jesus. It is also the defining characteristic of the leadership model of Jesus: Leading like Jesus means loving like Jesus.

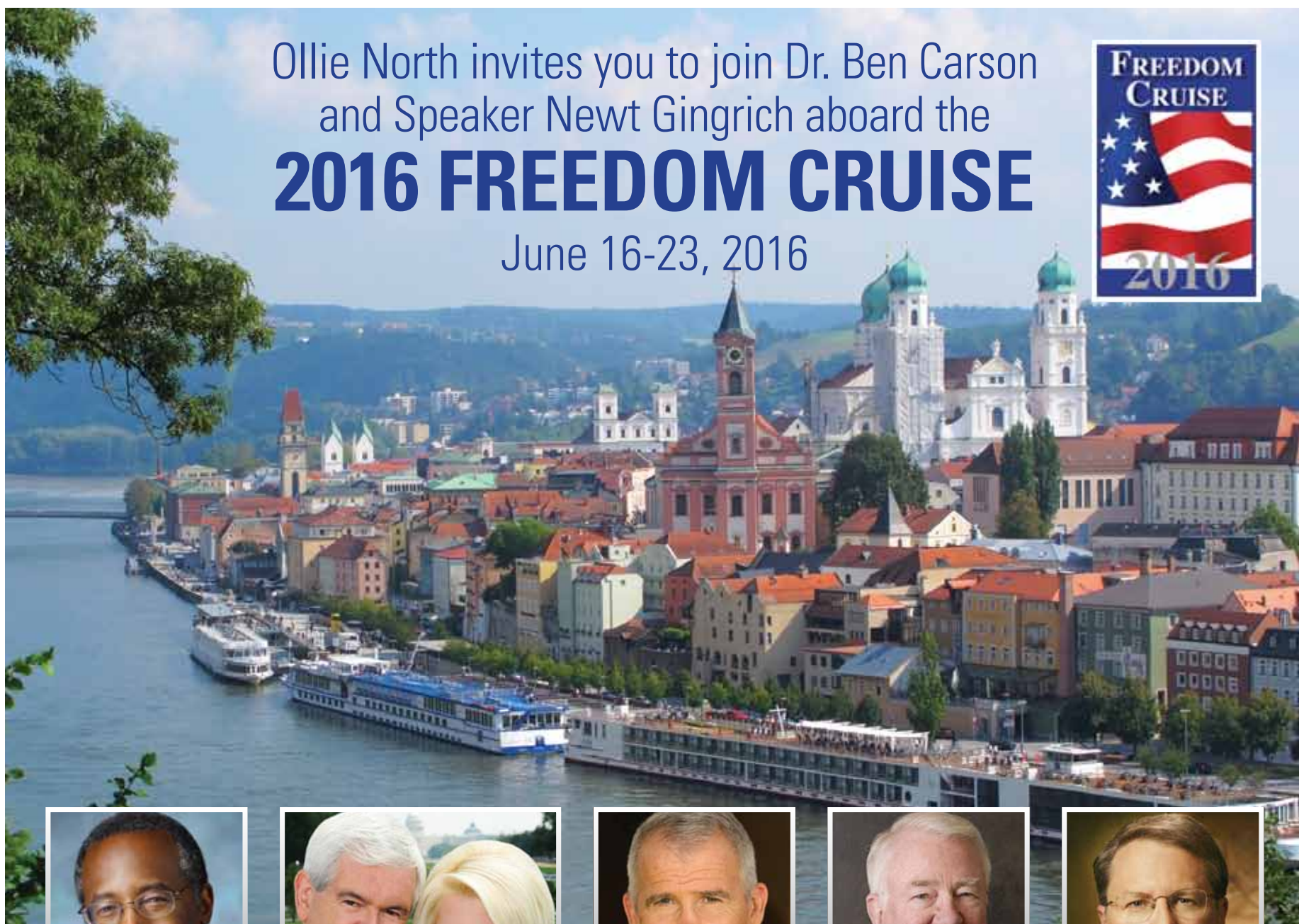
Whose model of leadership are you following?

*Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges are best-selling authors and leadership trainers. In 1999, they co-founded the Lead Like Jesus ministry, which seeks to help men and women of faith walk their talk in the marketplace. Phyllis Hen-necy Hendry is president and CEO of the Lead Like Jesus global ministry.*



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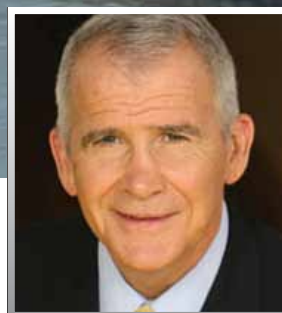
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