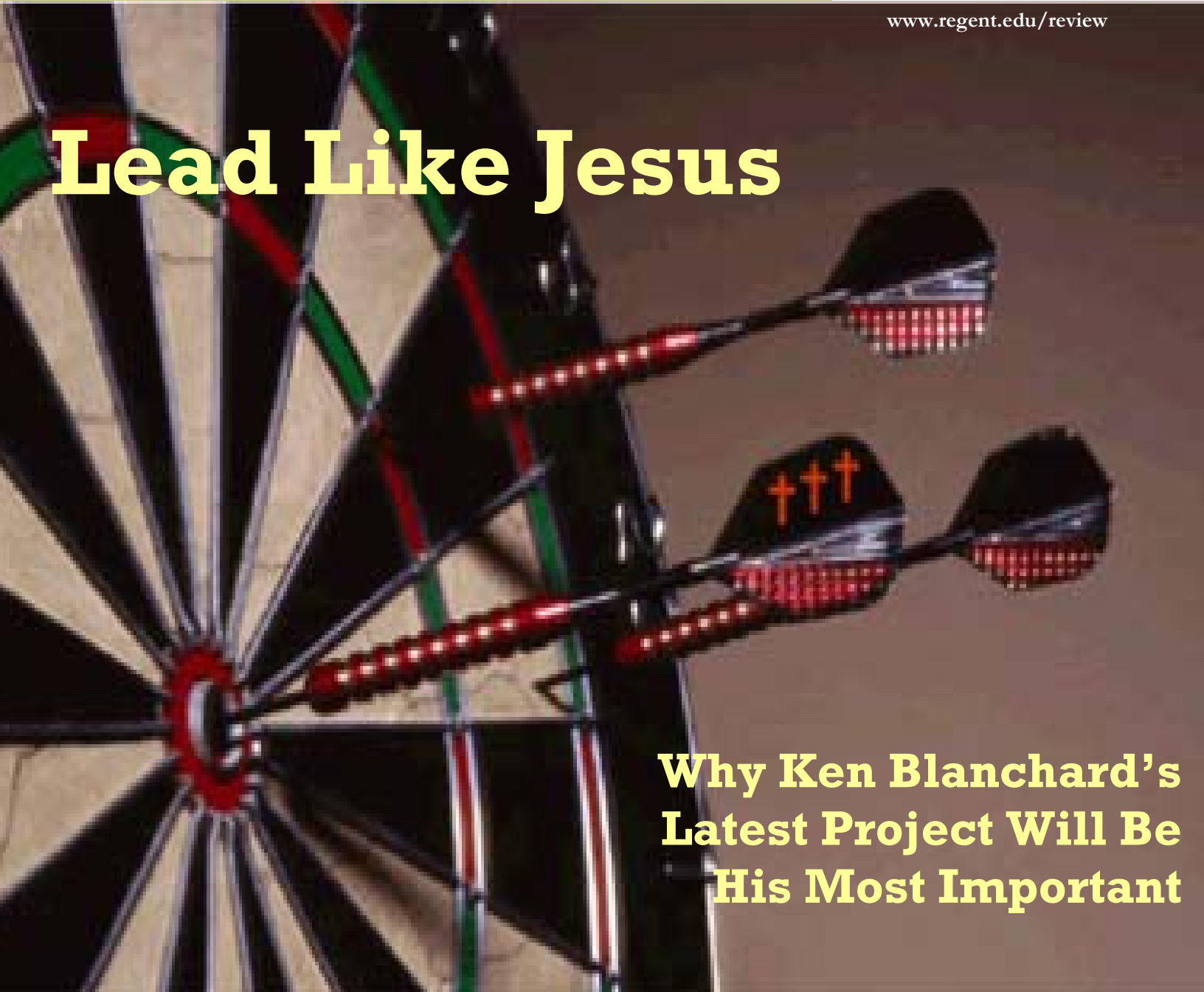


# REGENT BUSINESS REVIEW

ISSUE 10

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## Lead Like Jesus

**Why Ken Blanchard's  
Latest Project Will Be  
His Most Important**

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Maximizing Your  
Ministry**

**How We Used  
Christian Principles  
to Resurrect Morale**

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**PLUS: How to Know What Really Matters in Your Work**



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*Regent Business Review* is an electronic magazine published at the Regent University Graduate School of Business. The mission of RBR is “to equip and encourage Christians to be more God-honoring leaders and managers.” As such, we offer practical guidance about what it means to be an authentic Christian in the workplace, as well as tools for better communication, for character development, and for other building blocks of leadership excellence. Driven by a calling to make disciples in the marketplace, we seek to exhort and coach Christians to “excel still more” (1 Thess. 4:1) in their roles as leaders and managers.

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# **“Lead Like Jesus”**

## **Why Ken Blanchard’s Latest Project Will Be His Most Important**

**Merrill Oster and Mike Hamel**

Not all social entrepreneurs work with people who are on the bottom of the pile. Some focus on the folks occupying the top rungs on the ladder of success, believing that if you can change a leader, you can change a company, a culture, or a country. One such optimist is world-renown business consultant Ken Blanchard. These days he is taking a radical approach to leadership based on over thirty years of research and his own personal encounter with the greatest leader of all time.

Along with his friend, Phil Hodges, Ken has started The Center for *FaithWalk* Leadership, which promotes servant leadership based on the teachings and example of Jesus Christ. This model isn’t just for churches and nonprofits, but for marketplace organizations of all shapes and sizes. Ken shares with executives as well as pastors a message that has transformed his own life and leadership style.

### **On the Verge**

Ken attended Cornell University, where he met and married Marjorie McKee. Both eventually became college professors. However, their teaching and communication abilities would not remain confined to the classroom. “While on sabbatical in 1979,” Ken remembers, “we were invited to a YPO (Young Presidents Organization)

University in Hawaii. On Monday I taught a session on leadership and about 250 of the 1,200 attendees came. Two days later I did a session on motivation with about 700 in attendance. Friday’s session drew the whole conference.

### **“We launched this Center with the goal of challenging and equipping people to lead like Jesus”**

“Some of the people asked what I planned to do after my sabbatical. ‘Going back to the university,’ I replied. They said, ‘You’re crazy! When you’re hot, you’re hot. Start your own company.’ I told them I couldn’t even balance my own checkbook, how could I start my own company? They said, ‘We’ll help you.’ And so five YPOers helped Margie and me start Blanchard Training and Development. When *The One Minute Manager* hit the bookstores in 1982 the phones began ringing off their hooks. The book made the bestsellers’ list in less than a week. It never budged for three years. It was crazy. We almost went under because so many things came at us all at once. That’s when I started asking myself what the Lord was doing.”

Ken told Stephen Caldwell of *Life@Work* magazine:

It struck me that I was either going to get a big head or I was going to find out what was going on. It was too incredible to take credit for...Several months after the book was out, I got a call from Phil Hodges, a longtime friend from Cornell, wanting to know if we could get together...That meeting with Phil marked the renewal of my spiritual journey that had begun when I was a little guy being taken to church by my parents. Afterward, Phil kept calling me, sending me things to read, pushing me to think about my relationship with Jesus Christ. (“Gung-ho for God,” *Life@Work*, Nov/Dec 1999).

“About this time I ran into Bob Buford going to a YPO University in Mexico,” Blanchard continues. “On the flight we talked about God and Christianity. At the end of the trip, Bob said, ‘I’m going to turn you over to a friend of mine named Bill Hybels who will be in Mexico City.’ When I met Hybels, he told me several helpful things, including the difference between religion and Christianity. ‘Religion is spelled d-o, Christianity is spelled d-o-n-e.’ My lunch with Bill really made me think, but I wasn’t ready to suit up yet.

“About a year later,” he recalls, “Margie and I were facing a problem in the company. We turned the presidency over to a man we later found out was doing some things that were inconsistent with what we believed. One evening we met for dinner to decide what to do. On the drive to the restaurant, I finally got it! ‘Blanchard,’ I told myself, ‘you’re trying to do this by yourself.’ Hybels had told me earlier that if I signed on as a Christian, I’d get three consultants for the price of one. I would get the Father who started it, the Son who lived it, and the Holy Spirit who is the day-to-day operational manager. I bowed my head in the car and told the Lord, ‘I can’t do this myself. I need you.’”

Margie and the children noticed the difference in Ken almost immediately and it had a spiritual impact on them. “Margie is much more thoughtful than I am,” says Ken. “With Phil’s help, she came to her own commitment to Christ a few years later, and our kids are moving along in their own ways.”

### Over the Top

As new believers become more concerned about building God’s kingdom than their own, they begin looking for ways to serve. For some, this involves moving into a new job or ministry. Many social entrepreneurs develop parallel careers, starting a new venture while still in their old jobs. Ken has followed this pattern, launching The Center for *FaithWalk* Leadership without leaving his company. He has reoriented his role there,

however. “I changed my title to Chief Spiritual Officer,” he explains with a smile. “I make it part of my job to keep the energy and spirit up among our staff of 250. One thing I do is a morning devotional on voicemail. Initially, some people resented it. They thought I was pushing

## Humble leaders don’t think less of themselves. They just think of themselves less

religion. So I made a deal with them. If I planned to get really Christian, I’d say so up front so they could turn it off if they didn’t want to listen.

“When I turned sixty in 1999, I celebrated for about six weeks. I was very excited about it. I felt that my first fifty-nine years had been preparation for the next thirty-five or forty. One of my projects became talking Bill Hybels and Phil Hodges into writing *Leadership by the Book*. While working on the book, we came up with the idea of creating The Center for *FaithWalk* Leadership. I got a sense that this was my mission, my ministry. We launched the Center as a nonprofit entity later that year with the goal of challenging and equipping people to lead like Jesus.”

The vision of the Center is “to see a growing community of people effectively serving in strategic leadership roles who have surrendered their

ambitions, thoughts and behaviors to the daily guidance of the Holy Spirit. We want to help leaders walk their faith and apply the leadership genius of Jesus to their own organizations,” says the ministry’s cofounder.

“Although many people identify with Jesus as Lord and Savior, they don’t see Him as a viable model for leadership. But in His training of the disciples, Jesus exemplified the heart, mind and methods of a servant leader, and produced extraordinary results with ordinary people.”

“You know the rulers of the Gentiles Lord it over them,” Jesus told His handpicked trainees, “and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave – just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:25-28).

The optimal phrase is “not so with you.” Jesus intended something quite different from what the disciples were familiar with. However, just believing the concept doesn’t make one a servant leader.

“Some leaders can use service as a means to ego-driven ends,” Ken warns. “They serve to accumulate power, recognition, and control. Eventually, they no longer serve people, but have people serve them. The key to a servant leader’s heart is humility. People with humility don’t think less of themselves, they just think of themselves less.”



In their book, *The Power of Ethical Management*, Norman Vincent Peale and Blanchard suggest that it's healthy to feel good about yourself. "But don't get too carried away," Ken adds. "Watch out for the ego. Someone once told me that ego stands for 'Edging God Out.' When we get a distorted image of our own importance and see ourselves as the center of the universe, we lose touch with who we really are as children of God. Our thinking blurs. We lose the sense of our connection with others and with our true selves.

"There are two types of ego-centeredness: *self-doubt* and *false pride*. Both are enemies of humility. People with self-doubt are consumed with their shortcomings and tend to be hard on themselves. People with false pride think they don't need grace and are out of touch with their own vulnerability and sinfulness. Both have a hard time believing that they are loved."

Effective social entrepreneurs are humble servant leaders with a clear vision of what needs doing. Servant leadership isn't an oxymoron. Humility and vision aren't mutually exclusive. The first is the fulcrum while the latter is the lever that moves people. "Servant leadership starts with a vision," Ken insists. "Vision sees a picture of the future that creates a passion people will follow. A clear vision has four aspects:

- **Purpose:** This defines what business we're in
- **Image:** This pictures how things would look if everything ran as planned

- **Values:** These determine how we should behave when working on our purpose
- **Goals:** These focus our energies on the here-and-now

"Once the vision is clear, the next aspect of leadership is implementation – how you live according to the vision. During implementation, the traditional pyramid has to be turned upside down and the leader has to demonstrate different behavior. This is where real servant leadership behaviors begin. For example, servant leaders have to listen more than talk. They have to share credit. They have to be open to feedback. Self-serving leaders hate feedback. Servant leaders love it because their objective is not to protect their position but to serve."

"Because leadership is necessarily an exercise of authority," says Eugene Peterson in his introduction to 2 Corinthians in *The Message*, "it easily shifts into an exercise of power. But the minute it does that, it begins to inflict damage on both the leader and the led. Paul, studying Jesus, had learned a kind of leadership in which he managed to stay out of the way so that the others could deal with God without having to go through him" (1993 Edition, p. 368).

Ken is quick to dispel some misconceptions about servant leadership. "Don't make the mistake of assuming this means letting the inmates run the prison. Servant leaders don't relinquish responsibility or try to please everyone. Jesus

certainly didn't. He only sought to please the vision he got from the top of the hierarchy. Vision always comes from the top. That doesn't mean you don't involve others in developing it, but the responsibility lies with the head of the organization, division, department, or family.

"Neither is servant leadership a soft management concept. In fact, effective servant leaders create organizations that have a sound triple bottom line: raving fan customers, gung-ho people, and financial well-being. These are the payoffs for a company – or a ministry – led by someone committed to following the head, hands, and heart of Jesus-like leadership."

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For more information about The Center for *FaithWalk* Leadership, please visit [www.faithwalkleadership.com](http://www.faithwalkleadership.com)

*Merrill Oster has led delegations of business leaders in over thirty-five countries. He is the founder of Oster Communications, the cofounder of the Pinnacle Forum, and is the author or coauthor of several books, including The Entrepreneur's Creed.*

*Mike Hamel is a former pastor. He has interviewed scores of business leaders for various books, including The Entrepreneur's Creed and The Women's Ministry Handbook.*

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# How We Used Christian Principles to Resurrect Morale

Names Withheld \*\*

Early in 2002, we assumed management responsibilities for a 100 person team within a large, Fortune 500 company. We also assumed responsibility for several products that had been causing our customers problems. It was our job to solve the quality issues and to make the customers happy.

But employee morale was relatively low in this group and getting lower due to recent layoffs, a resultant increase in workload, and a general lack of clear guidance from management. Big problem, since accomplishing a turnaround in customer satisfaction might entail an even greater workload for our people, including weekend work. On the surface, the goals to increase both customer satisfaction and employee morale appeared to be quite incompatible in this environment.

Coming from a conservative, Reformed tradition – a tradition that has for centuries spoken to business and workplace issues – this managerial challenge afforded us the perfect opportunity to put into practice some of our most cherished biblical distinctives. And as we'll show in this article, God blessed that effort. But one quick caveat first, and please understand this: *We attribute any good that has taken place in our group to the kindness and mercy of God at*

*work in our organization.* In fact, at times we've felt more like spectators than participants. God has had His

**Morale was low and everyone's workload was about to increase. So how could we possibly effect a turnaround in customer satisfaction?**

hand on our group for some time now and the results have been startling.

## Five Biblical Principles That Built Morale

To remedy the ailments in our group, we selected five guiding principles to implement. These are certainly not the only Biblical principles that speak to management, but they seem to be the ones most emphasized by Reformed Christian theology.

### ***Emphasize Craftsmanship***

Some Christians imply that God-honoring work is reserved to those in "full-time Christian ministry," but others, ourselves included, view all lawful occupations as potentially God-honoring. The

basic theology is that we are to work for God in all that we do, to be his craftsmen, and to honor him with our output.

We put it that way to our Christian employees, but for the many non-Christians who report to us, we have repeatedly emphasized that their work matters, that they should do their work with excellence, and that there are myriad intrinsic rewards associated with producing world-class products. We've stressed, for example, that exceptional computer programmers take pride in every line of code they write, not only so that their programs will function without error (no small challenge in its own right), but also so that their programs will delight the end-users. To achieve these objectives, employees need to have a thorough understanding of who will be using their software and a significant concern for the end-user.

How do we make that happen, especially where there's a crushing workload? How did we get employee buy-in to being "craftsmen"? It was done through more than words. We provided new and interesting activities for our employees. We insisted that our people regularly speak with and visit customers to better understand their needs and to build relationships with them. This affected both competence and caring. Beyond that, we started

an in-house reading group to ensure that our people were familiar with and implementing industry best practices.

Although there's always room for improvement, our quality control people now test their products better than they've

## To gain buy-in, we offered our employees new and interesting activities

ever tested them before – user firmly in mind – performing with more excellence and taking pride in their work. Our culture is changing from malaise and “it's good enough” to a culture of craftsmanship.

### *Unleash Creativity*

One key Biblical principle that's germane to business is this: man has been made in the image of a very creative God (the *Imago Dei*). And while this image has been marred, defaced, and horribly twisted by the Fall, it is nevertheless an integral part of the human condition. It is this “image of God” in man that engenders creativity in our work. It's why we enjoy being creative and find meaning in it. Indeed, this innate creativity can result in sin (i.e., using our creativity for nefarious purposes), but that does not diminish its goodness or our call to be creative.

So, based on this theology, we made it our goal to look for pathways to unleash the creativity of our talented team. We found those pathways in

some of the incentives already in place in our company. In particular, we encouraged patent submissions, technical authorship, and industry conference participation (as opposed to simply attendance) as three concrete ways in which our teams can express their creativity. Additionally, we modeled the way for them, making these kinds of creative endeavors a priority for ourselves as managers. Consequently, and seemingly paradoxically for an overworked group, employees who had only rarely participated in such activities in the past are now embracing the concept, and new ideas continue to abound.

### *Insist on Integrity*

Another principle we applied is insisting on “integrity” – that is, keeping our corporate promises to customers. In practice, that means if a product does not meet the quality expectations of our clients, it's our job to say so. We see our team as the integrity of the company, ensuring that what the customer receives is the high-quality product that we promised upon contract.

However, previous management teams had too often succumbed to schedule pressures and to other incentives to ship products *now*. Before we took over, when the engineers in our group concluded that a product was not ready for the customer, the development or marketing people in our organization would always overrule them and send out the product anyway. And the

mangers in our group (our predecessors) rarely objected, having lost this battle so many times before. They simply would not go to bat for the recommendations of their people or for the customer.

Talk about demoralizing! What purpose did the group serve? What use were they if no one respected their recommendations? An environment where expediency trumps quality is deeply discouraging to those who care about the latter.

Our new approach was to speak the truth in love, to be courageous enough to be unpopular, and not to conform to the culture. We had objective data to show that the customers were increasingly disgruntled and we gathered data on each product that would demonstrate whether it

## We decided to speak the truth in love to our superiors – to go to bat courageously for our employees

was in fact ready for prime time. When it wasn't, we said so, arguing forcefully for integrity. In biblical terms, we “stood in the gap” between the current product and the customers' expectations – between marketing pressures (e.g., no matter how bad something is, it's good enough to ship) and our engineers' quality standards. And as we challenged the process, our employees were both



encouraged and inspired, recognizing that their opinions do matter – that their concerns would be heard.

### ***Reward with Recognition***

Not many managers are encouragers. Too few, it seems, habitually recognize their people for a job well done. That's a shame – and shameful – since recognition is relatively easy to confer, is generally low-cost or cost-free, and is something for which almost every employee yearns. Beyond that, Scripture calls us to be encouragers and to build up one another (Eph. 4:29, 1 Thess. 5:11), and it cautions against withholding good from those who deserve it when it is in our power to act (Prov. 3:27).

As we sought to remedy this deficiency in our group, we did several things, from the day-to-day praising of employees when appropriate, to creating new awards, to nominating our people for honors given by our company. In every case we saw the power of this principle in action. Employees are energized by recognition. But in the case of company-specific awards especially, we found it amazing how easy it can be to obtain recognition in large corporate environments. That's because most managers never even bother to nominate their people or their teams for awards. So by making it a habit to submit the names of worthy people for every possible form of recognition (whether cash awards, educational opportunities, attendance at major industry conferences, or any other form of recognition), our people got many of the

accolades they deserved. And that's stimulated a loyalty and commitment to us in a way that no pay raise ever could.

### ***Administer Justice for Bad Performance***

It's not unusual for employees to assume that Christian managers will be more

Our Employee Satisfaction Averages 2002 Versus 2003			
Survey Item	% Responding Favorably		Delta
	2002	2003	
1. How good a job is being done by your manager?	74	79	+5
2. How would you rate teamwork within your area?	85	90	+5
3. My work gives me a sense of personal accomplishment.	74	79	+5
4. Effective two-way communication exists between my manager and me.	76	82	+6
5. People in my area speak openly and honestly, even when opinions differ.	85	92	+7
6. My manager is actively involved in my skills development.	70	79	+9
7. How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job?	55	64	+9
8. My manager coaches effectively.	62	72	+10
9. My area has a climate where diverse perspectives are valued.	85	95	+10
10. Even if I were offered a comparable position with similar pay and benefits at another company, I would NOT take that job.	56	67	+9
11. Considering everything, how satisfied are you with your job?	62	74	+12
12. My area seeks ways to change processes and to improve productivity.	79	95	+16
13. The workload is appropriately distributed among the people in my area.	50	66	+16
14. How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?	56	79	+23

understanding of poor performance than will others. Although it is true that good people have difficult seasons, we think that *continually* tolerating poor performance is actually a form of injustice, since it entails asking the other team members to shoulder extra work on behalf of the under-performers. This is theologically sound, since our God is not only a loving God, He is a *just* God – a God of standards and of accountability. As Christian leaders, we need to safeguard justice as well.

To address this, we started by setting high and consistent performance standards, communicating our expectations to everyone, and making clear that there would be consequences for failure to meet the performance standards. The upshot was a mix of fear and gratitude – fear that we might be as arbitrary and oppressive as others for whom they had worked in the past, and gratitude that the non-productive employees in the group would finally be dealt with. But as time passed and as our employees came to understand that we genuinely did care about them, the fear abated, giving way to a culture of high performance. It's probably safe to say that had we not implemented the other practices noted above, our push for high standards would have backfired, yielding only resistance and resentment.

And as for the chronic under-performers, after appropriate warnings and opportunities to reform, we did carry out some terminations. Justice prevailed here and, as a result, so did stronger performance and morale.

**Every attitudinal metric went up in our group. Every one. And our global measure of job satisfaction actually jumped almost twenty percent in one year**

### **Evidence of the Resurrection**

How do we know that God's principles have worked for us? Each year, our company conducts an employee survey and this year, the results speak for themselves. As shown in the table, every attitudinal metric went up in our group. *Every one.* In some cases, like satisfaction with processes, workload, and decision-making input (items 12-14), the increases even surprised us. And, similarly striking, our global measure of job satisfaction (item 11) – perhaps the most important benchmark, given its breadth –

actually jumped almost twenty percent in one year.

Certainly, some of these results are partly attributed to a general improvement in our company, but almost all of our deltas exceed those of the company, so something more must explain the increases.

That “something more,” we believe, are the Biblically-based managerial principles we implemented. We've found that it *is* important, and profitable, to emphasize craftsmanship, to unleash creativity, to insist on integrity, to reward with recognition, and to justly deal with bad performance. These may be common sense principles to some, but they were anything but common in our group previously.

And while some of our colleagues would ascribe these changes to ingenuity, to diligence, or even to luck, we ascribe them to Providence. The improvements we've observed in our group are nothing for which we alone would claim responsibility. Rather, they were simply the natural result of a reliance on the glorious principles available to us all in God's Word.

*\*\* Authors' names withheld by request. However, if you have a question or comment for the authors of this article, please send it to the editor of Regent Business Review.*

# The Lean Church

## Streamlining Your Ministry for Maximum Effectiveness

Don Pope, Andrew Parris, and Kent Smith

Value versus waste. They may sound easy to distinguish, but if you have ever planned a garage sale with your spouse, then you understand that the distinction may not be simple.

Although some forms of waste are easy to recognize in organizations – people sitting around doing nothing, products ruined by damage or spoilage, scrapped parts, and so on – other forms of waste are not so obvious. They are silent killers of value that simply consume resources, absorb our mental energies, and block the flow of real value. These types of waste, which we'll discuss below, are found not only in poorly managed, inefficient organizations; they have infected, to a greater or lesser extent, the activities of *every* organization.

But American industry is discovering that a fundamental key to competitiveness is distinguishing real customer value from waste. In fact, researchers have even coined a term – “lean” – to refer to the idea of reducing waste and making value flow. And what's true for successful businesses is true for successful churches as well: “lean” churches are more effective at achieving their ministry goals than are other churches. How so? Let's look first at what “lean” is all about and then demonstrate its potential for maximum ministry.

### The Story of Lean

In their highly-acclaimed book, *The Machine that Changed the World*, MIT researchers Womack, Jones, and Roos demonstrated that the key to the success of the Japanese automobile industry was not

**Plain and simply,  
“lean” churches are  
more effective at  
achieving their  
ministry goals than  
are other churches**

cheap labor or robot technology; rather, it was *lean* – the term the MIT team used to describe a manufacturing system that rigorously identified and eliminated waste. When the researchers looked at automotive factories around the world, they found similar problems in most of them: large inventories of parts that needed to be stored and maintained, long delays in the manufacturing process because parts were worked in large batches, a “hidden factory” of workers fixing defective parts, and machines that broke down frequently or required a long time to be changed over from one part to the next. At the best factories, though, they found small inventories and small production batch

quantities, minimal delays, first-time quality, reliable machines, and quick changeovers. Under the leadership of the Toyota Production System, the Japanese had surpassed the rest of the world because they focused on providing customer value and eliminating all “muda” (waste) – everything that consumed time and resources, but did not add value to the customer.

Building on his foundational research in the automotive industry, Womack extended the lean concept to the broader functions of any organization. In *Lean Thinking*, Womack and his colleagues defined five basic steps that characterize the lean approach to improvement. These are as follows:

- **Specify Value:** The fundamental starting point for lean thinking is to define what's valuable from the customer's viewpoint. Ignore assets, technologies, and traditions, and rethink the entire process along customer-driven dimensions. Moreover, define value in terms of the entire customer need, not just in terms of the value that one organization provides.
- **Identify the Value Stream and Eliminate Waste:** How do you

provide value to the customer? Flowchart your “value streams” – those process steps required to provide a specific product or service to a customer. Eliminate or reduce, as much as possible, those activities or assets that do not directly contribute to customer value.

- **Make Value Flow:** Make the value-generating steps flow. While traditional mass-production focuses on perceived efficiencies of large-batch volumes of work filling oversized plants and equipment, lean focuses on providing value as simply and quickly as

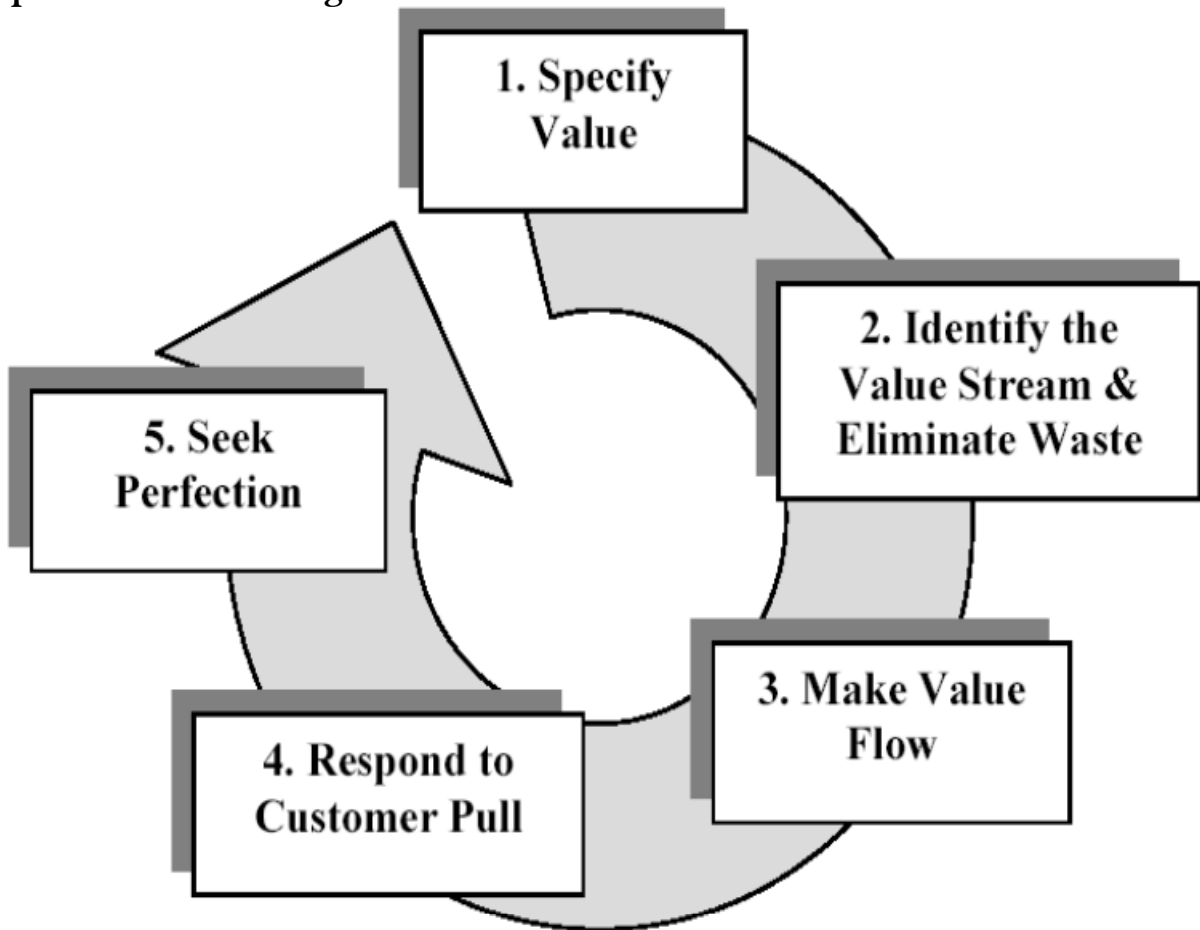
possible, in quantities as small as one.

- **Respond to “Customer Pull”:** Let the customer pull value from you when and where the customer needs it, instead of pushing products and services, often unwanted, onto the customer.
- **Seek Perfection:** Finally, pursue continuous improvement. Organizations that are in direct conversation with customers always find ways to specify value more accurately, and they often learn ways to enhance flow and pull.

### A Lean Church?

It would probably be easy to convince you that applying lean to the airline industry or to a government bureaucracy would bear significant fruit. What may be harder to see is how lean can improve your church. But think about it. There are traditional, “mass production” churches and “lean” churches. A traditional church owns large and expensive assets; a lean church utilizes existing leased or borrowed facilities, as required, and may also have a network of family homes or apartments for meetings. A traditional church is event-driven, with weekly services or scheduled

### Steps to Lean Thinking



lectureships, located primarily in the large, central facility; a lean church centers on routine interactions at varied locations. A traditional church has centralized leadership and administration; in a lean church, leadership is decentralized to equip and counsel more people, better and faster. Most strikingly, in a traditional church, results are measured primarily by activity level and budget performance; in a lean church, results are measured by customer needs being met.

The question is not “*can* lean apply to the church to improve ministry?” The question is simply “*how* can churches adopt this system to be better stewards and disciplers?” Here’s how to do it using Womack’s five-step framework:

### ***Step 1: Specify Value***

To specify value from a Christian perspective, start by identifying the core *needs* of people and the processes that meet those needs. Be prepared,

though, to question assumptions about what matters and how it’s delivered.

We might begin by considering three deep human needs: the need for God Himself, the need for purpose, and the need for community. Clearly, it is “valuable” to meet those needs, so a church could “specify” meeting these needs in its core values.

Next, we would inquire into the *processes* by which our church could meet these needs (that is, the processes by which it could produce value). For example, many churches would say that they have processes that address core value issues such as “teach the Word of God as revealed in Scripture,” “train up the children in the way they should go,” or “care for widows.” However, a closer examination of the effectiveness of these processes, from the customer viewpoint, might reveal some uncomfortable surprises. Ask the average church member to summarize the storyline of the

Bible, drawing a timeline of the major characters and events. Ask the children “who is God?” Or pick two or three widows in the congregation and ask them how many times they have been visited by non-relatives from your church. The answers to these questions may demonstrate that a high level of activity and attendance is not synonymous with process effectiveness.

Note that in all of this, the church is specifying value as “value to God,” not to man. Large, expensive, ornate facilities are not intrinsic to any of the basic spiritual purposes or processes, although they seem to have great value to man. Such things tend to be enormous consumers of budget and mindshare in the church, but may contribute relatively little to what God actually values.

Also note that value does not include attracting numbers for numbers’ sake (for example, drawing customers by providing entertaining

## **The Value of Lean**

A quick illustration will clarify the problem of traditional mass-production and the promise of “lean.” Womack points to the airline industry. The customer’s need is simply to travel from one mid-sized U.S. city to another in a manner that is safe, fast, low-cost, and hassle-free. However, the dominant air travel system (and one that is losing money) is organized around the principle of moving large batches of people through oversized airport hubs using large aircraft, so that the airlines can utilize their expensive assets. This seldom gets individuals from point A to point B in a manner that is quick, simple, and hassle-free. The flow is bottlenecked at multiple points in the process as people wait for tickets and luggage check-in, and as flights get routed through congested hubs where the aircraft wait for takeoff and landing.

Lean systems tolerate none of this. They facilitate smoother passage more cost-effectively, and all of us are the beneficiaries. For example, Southwest Airlines and a few other recent start-ups use a leaner approach. They fly smaller aircraft on more frequent schedules directly between more points of origination and destination, using smaller, less expensive airport facilities that are closer to the heart of the cities served. And the results are phenomenal. Just ask their customers and owners.



communication that is impotent to change hearts). In his book, *Selling Jesus*, Douglas Webster reminds us of Jesus' own approach when large, spiritually-shallow crowds began to form. Jesus put on no show, but spoke with startling frankness about the demands of genuine faith (e.g., John 6).

### ***Step 2: Identify the Value Stream and Eliminate Waste***

After specifying value (from God's perspective) and the processes for pursuing value, list what is involved and essential in performing these basic processes without waste. One way to begin here is to identify the activities and assets that require most of your time, budget, and other resources, and then to examine that list for the items that are not directly related to creating value for your "customer" (e.g., church members, the community at large, etc.). An honest appraisal may unearth a lot of things that are part of the fabric of church tradition, but, in the interest of good stewardship, need to be re-focused or phased-out altogether. Some examples might be:

- Too many committee meetings, too much committee control / oversight, or excessive required approvals
- Things that are done because "we've always done that"
- Evangelistic events attended almost exclusively by believers
- Sermons that don't address the congregation's needs (i.e., sermons that don't connect with people or

exhort, encourage, and educate them in their Christian walk)

- Members referring needy individuals to one of the staff members, because the members don't know how to help or what the church process involves
- Anything done strictly to maintain, operate, and pay for a large facility and property

**An honest appraisal may unearth a lot of things that are part of the fabric of church tradition, but, in the interest of good stewardship, need to be re-focused or phased out altogether**

### ***Step 3: Make Value Flow***

We inhibit the flow of value in our churches when we try to "batch-process" everything once a week "at church."

Significant needs fall through the cracks. Instead, consider supplementing your efforts to meet needs by tapping into the free services of others in the community, for instance local government and non-profit agencies. In doing so, you can *actually help* a family struggling with drug and alcohol abuse, a family being crushed by debt, and women and children suffering from mistreatment at home.

The church has unique expertise in many areas, but its limited resources mandate that it partner with those who have the expertise or funds that it does not. As a result, the church will minimize the poor use of its resources and the delays in creating "value" for its members. Assistance to needy families must flow across organizational boundaries.

One example of a not-for-profit agency's effective use of this strategy is the People Assisting the Homeless (PATH) organization in Los Angeles. In 2002, PATH opened the PATHmall, a drop-in facility for homeless people in which nineteen different social service agencies are co-located and collaborate closely. The time in responding to people's needs (the value stream) was reduced from weeks of wandering from agency to agency to a matter of days or hours. Your church could do something similar by making available a network of help resources to people. This is lean. This is 'efficient' from the customer standpoint. And overall, this is a more effective way to meet needs.

### ***Step 4: Respond to Customer Pull***

To understand the pull idea, imagine you are a "customer" of your church – a member family having serious problems with a teenage daughter, a non-member wanting to learn more about the Bible, a missionary seeking support, an elderly church member needing help with utility bills. How would that person seek help from your church? Is it

## The Lean Church: Three Versions

**Mission Arlington** ([www.missionarlington.org](http://www.missionarlington.org)): Begun in 1986 by veteran missionary Tillie Burgin, their goal from the outset has been to make spiritual life and family available to the vast numbers of apartment dwellers who do not easily fit more conventional churches. Now, on any given Sunday, 3,700 people meet in some 250 small gatherings, mostly in apartments in and around Arlington, Texas. For the people of Mission Arlington, these are gatherings of their church, their spiritual family.

Over the years the church has developed an impressive array of services for people in its reach, from medical and dental care and counseling, to help with food, clothing and furniture. A simple request can lead to wide range of help becoming available. These services are seen supporting the core task of welcoming people into a true spiritual family. Mission Arlington is widely studied, and similar efforts are underway in other American cities.

**Duncan Compassion Center:** When the Northside and Westside churches in Duncan, Oklahoma merged to form the Chisholm Trail Church, the former Northside facility was left vacant and was seemingly useless. However, God launched a new ministry by using this old facility and some Christian physicians who had been involved in medical missions in Nicaragua. Dr. Kent King, who had been a leader in the Nicaragua mission, observed: “when we came back (to Oklahoma), we realized how great the need was here. We saw a lot of poverty in Nicaragua, but looking around Duncan, we saw a lot of poverty here as well. I am still so amazed at how God opened this door for us.”

The former worship facility was renovated, and the physicians opened a multifaceted “Compassion Center,” providing healthcare exams, a pharmacy, a food pantry, a clothes closet, optometry, and legal counsel to the needy. All services, including medications, are provided free to local people who lack adequate private or government health insurance. Through this Center, the gospel message is being lived-out daily and it’s reaching people who would have never heard it otherwise. (Summarized from “Missions from the Third World Come Home” by Joy McMillan, *The Christian Chronicle*, January, 2004).

**Awakening Chapels** ([www.cmaresources.org](http://www.cmaresources.org)): In the past five years, Awakening Chapels has planted more than 300 “organic” churches – house churches – with the number now doubling each year. These churches focus on simple, reproducible structures and target unreached “pockets of people,” mostly in America’s southwest. Founding leader Neil Cole explains:

“Most churches today are trying to figure out how to get lost people to come to church. The key to starting churches that reproduce spontaneously is to bring the church to the lost people. We’re not interested in starting a regional church, but rather in churching a whole region.

“The house church, more than any other model, is best prepared to do just that because it is informal, relational, and mobile, not financially-encumbered with overhead costs, and it’s easily planted in a variety of settings. It also reproduces faster and spreads farther because it can be a decentralized approach.” (House2House Magazine, 2002 Special Edition, p. 24)

Simple and reproducible also defines Cole’s approach to training new believers and leaders. In his book, *Raising Leaders for the Harvest*, he outlines principles that are now being taught across the country in an intensive training event, The Organic Church Planter’s Greenhouse.

or with whom they should speak? If your church is like most, chances are that it's less obvious than it should be.

To respond in a timely way to the sundry customer "pulls" that exist, why not establish a "Help Line" for those in your church or community to use when requiring assistance? Create a team of church members to man the help line – people who are trained and gifted in responding to these kinds of customer pulls – and then regularly publicize the help line, both internally and externally.

One organization that acts as a subcontractor of this help line approach is WINN Ministries in Denver, Colorado. WINN assists churches in responding to the material needs of its congregation and community by collecting and distributing according to people's requests for food, clothing, furniture, and the like. In this way churches are able to respond to customer pulls when they are expressed, and they themselves don't have to store the wide variety of goods required to meet those needs.

### ***Step 5: Pursue Perfection***

Once you have established value-generating processes that flow, there needs to be an ongoing mechanism to monitor the value streams and to continuously improve them. Consider designating a team (or at least a person) to strive for small, ongoing upgrades in

service. The team should establish performance measurements for each process, assess actual results, and recommend adjustments to the system. Since the customer value created by churches can be difficult to quantify, the team could develop surveys for your church members and surrounding community to track to what extent you are providing real value. Be prepared to believe the results of the surveys and be responsive to issues that are identified.

### **A Call to Stewardship**

Many church leaders have at their disposal a treasure trove of physical assets, budget, staff and member expertise, volunteer time, and Christian goodwill in the hearts of their membership. The responsibilities of stewardship demand a serious fresh look at how these resources are being used for the kingdom. Are time, talents, and money being used to operate a traditional mass-production church with high levels of perceived activity, or are they focused at the everyday hearts and lives of the people we are trying to reach? Lean principles can help any organization, including a church, eliminate hidden waste that inhibits mission achievement, generating instead "an ever-flowing stream" (Amos 5:24) of value that maximizes the impact of the ministry.

For more information about lean management, visit the Lean Enterprise Institute at [www.lean.org](http://www.lean.org)

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## TOOLKIT

# Four Ways to Measure Your Love for God

**“Love God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind”**

It doesn't get any more fundamental than this. In the New Testament, this is the first commandment, as taught by Jesus Himself (Matt. 22:37), and in the Old Testament, this is the Israel's credo (Deut. 6:5). It's the bedrock of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the consummate answer to the timeless question: "what is the purpose of life?" And it's the Bethlehem Star, so to speak, for those of us sojourning toward Christ-likeness: if you want to be a disciple, follow this command to love God with your whole being.

But how do you measure it? How does a Christian evaluate the most critical area of his or her life?

**This free and anonymous online tool is available at [Assess-Yourself.org](http://Assess-Yourself.org)**

A new, free and anonymous online tool is designed to provide at least a few answers. Developed by researchers at Regent University, the "Love for God Scale" (LGS) is a thirty-four item survey that estimates four aspects of our love: humility before God, pursuit of relationship with God, love for others, and the fearlessness of our faith. The LGS also includes twelve questions to help users assess the extent to which they have a Biblical worldview ("do you love God or god?"). In all, if completed

carefully, the survey requires about twenty minutes.

To use the Love for God Scale, go to:  
**[www.assess-yourself.org](http://www.assess-yourself.org)**.

## Bookshelf

**Re-Imagine!**  
**Business Excellence in a Disruptive Age**  
Tom Peters (DK Publishing, 2003)



Tom Peters has spent a lifetime giving advice to business leaders around the world. Sometimes controversial, but always entertaining and thought provoking, Peters continues on this trajectory in his latest book, *Re-Imagine!*

"If you don't like change, you'll like irrelevance even less," he says with shades of his wit and wisdom. Consequently, Peters urges the reader to leave their comfort zone and to dispense with traditional management practices – practices like seeking incremental improvements and listening to your customers – practices, he says, that ultimately culminate in organizational failure because they cannot respond to fast-changing market dynamics. Instead, much like the new war on terror, managers must engage the marketplace with leaner, more agile organizations, equipped with the right strategy, tactics, and weapons to win the "new war" in business.

In fact, Peters predicts, audaciously, that we are on the verge of the "biggest and most profound wave of economic change in a thousand years" and

announces, equally audaciously, that “white-collar employment as we’ve known it is dead.”

What’s alive? Self-determination. Peters calls on each individual to take charge of his or her own destiny in a marketplace that values a new skill set. Business people today must be more entrepreneurial-minded and must prepare for lengthy periods of self-employment and project-specific jobs. The down side of his prophecy is the end of job security; but the significant upside is that people and organizations now have the opportunity and freedom to “re-imagine” themselves in a way that will capitalize on these new market dynamics.

Ultimately, Peters condemns our current “built to last” mentality as dangerous thinking that leads to underperformance and sometimes, to the death of

formerly-successful companies. It is no longer sufficient to push the envelope and to think outside the box, he concludes. To survive we must move faster, ripping the envelope and burning the box!

As you might expect, given Peters’ provocative pronouncements, it’s hard to read *Re-Imagine!* without gaining new insights and perspectives. So read at your own risk, especially if you’re among the lethargic legions who don’t like change.

*Reviewed by Russ Wendell. Russ spent nearly twenty years in senior-level positions in engineering and marketing in the telecommunications industry. He is now a Director for Advancement at Regent University in Virginia Beach, VA. You can reach him at [rwendell@regent.edu](mailto:rwendell@regent.edu)*

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## REVELATION

# How to Know What Really Matters in Your Work

Michael Zigarelli

*"Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on the mountainside and sat down...and he began to teach them" (Matthew 5:1-2)*

If you're like I am, you work for a living. It's not always fun, it's not always meaningful, but most months it pays the bills.

Let me ask you to take two minutes and think about this job of yours. Think about the tasks involved, the people with whom you typically associate, the work environment, the product or service you provide. Think about what you like and don't like about it. And think about what you're doing in your work life that matters the most.

That last one is kind of tricky. Many of us can rattle off our daily routine to anyone who asks. And we could talk for days about what we enjoy at work and (especially) what can be improved. But identifying what *really matters* in our work – what has lasting significance – is another question. A critically important question.

To better answer it, come at this from another angle. This approach has been helpful to a countless number of my undergraduate and MBA students. Fast-forward the tape of your work life to a few years down the road. You're now retiring. There's a dinner to honor you and all the others in your cohort who have earned

the gold watch (or pewter plaque, depending on the generosity of your employer). Look around the room. Who's there? Who is speaking with whom? What's the mood in the place? Do people seem to be

### Here's a powerful exercise for gaining perspective and building a God-honoring legacy

enjoying themselves? From across the room, a co-worker glances over at you and whispers to a friend. The friend responds with a nod, eye contact and a casual wave. A lot of people are talking about you tonight because this is your night. What are they saying?

The time comes for the obligatory short speeches commemorating, thanking, sometimes roasting the retirees. One by one, employees come to the microphone to share stories and raise a glass. Some stories are funny, some are touching, some seem merely polite. Obviously, there wasn't much to say about *that* person. Then up steps the person slated to say a few words about you, your career, your contribution...about all you've

meant to the organization. What will this person say? What is it about you that will be remembered as significant? What is it about all of those years – about all of that effort – that this person thinks *really mattered*?

If you would, let that set in for a second. Don't sell yourself short by rushing through this exercise. What's being spotlighted in this short speech? Accomplishments? Securing clients? Work ethic? Your personality? What will stand out when others reflect on the job to which you gave your life?

Now take this scene one last step. Imagine for a moment that the person at the podium is not your co-worker, but Jesus Christ Himself. You didn't know he had a ticket to this shin-dig, but there he is, scars and all. He even managed to somehow get around the jacket-only requirement.

Unlike the other speakers, though, he elects to sit down with the microphone – and right next to you. The room falls strangely silent – more quiet than it was for the others – as he says your name. A smile comes to his face, a smile of caring, a smile of friendship. He says your name again. "I'm going to tell you good folks what this employee did at work all of these years that really mattered," he begins.

You listen in awe at what's chronicled over the next few minutes. Everyone in the room is captivated by just how different this speech is from all the others. What Jesus emphasizes as important is quite unlike what was emphasized by the other speakers. Had you only known Jesus' opinion about what your goals should be on the job...had you only been able to see what was preventing you from pursuing those goals...had you only heard His words decades ago...

### What Matters Most in Your Work?

What matters most in the Christian's work life is not what matters to the world. It's not the size of the paycheck, the impressiveness of the business card, the prestige, or the number of battles won. It's not even your productivity or the quality of your work, although hard work is certainly a worthy pursuit. Instead, when it comes to your job, *what matters most to the Man with the microphone is the extent to which you were Christ-like from 9 to 5.*

Stop the presses! This is a revelation, right?

Hardly. Many of us Christians know this implicitly. We hear it pretty regularly from the pulpit. Problem is, our thinking gets transformed from Sunday to Monday. Invisible but powerful workplace realities create obstacles to Christ-likeness on the job. Some are work environment realities, some are innate to our nature, but all of them relegate God's priorities to the back seat. By Tuesday, they may fade from the rear-view mirror entirely.

From what I've seen, that's a source of continuing frustration for many Christians. We struggle with it. We feel guilty about it. We may even recommit for awhile to doing things differently on the job. Somehow, though, many of us backslide into this traditional mind-set about how we should think and act in the workplace.

Perhaps you too have had some personal experience with this. Perhaps you've made some

effort to apply your faith in the workplace, only to be repeatedly discouraged by the results. Perhaps you've even reached the point of concluding that real, enduring change is hopeless for you. *It's not.* It's just a matter of seeing more clearly – maybe for the first time in your life – the many obstacles that have prevented you from modeling Christ on a daily basis. And then it's a matter of cooperating with God to defeat them.

What's keeping you from being more Christ-like in your job and in your career? What are the barriers that have always stood in your way? And how can you overcome them to pursue what really matters at work? These are questions worth exploring long before your retirement dinner.

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## HELP YOUR CHURCH LAUNCH A WORK-LIFE MINISTRY!

***"The workplace is where a majority of a church congregation spends a majority of their time interacting with a majority of the un-churched world!" Doug Spada, Founder, His Church at Work***

Each church member has regular interaction with about twenty other people during a given week at work. That means a church of 250 has a potential scope of influence of 5,000, and a church of 5,000 has a potential reach of 100,000. Each week! "Work-life ministry" in your church makes that evangelistic vision a reality. And beyond accelerating the growth of your church, it will enhance the spiritual maturity of your church members. Additionally, members' appreciation for your church will deepen as a result of work-life ministry, since the church is more relevantly speaking to their daily challenges and is equipping them for one of their great callings: work.

*His Church at Work* was created specifically for this purpose, providing churches with the infrastructure, resources, strategy, and encouragement to launch and sustain an effective work-life ministry. To learn more, visit us at [www.hischurchatwork.org](http://www.hischurchatwork.org)

