


REGENT BUSINESS REVIEW

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The Faith at Work Movement: Opening “The 9 to 5 Window”

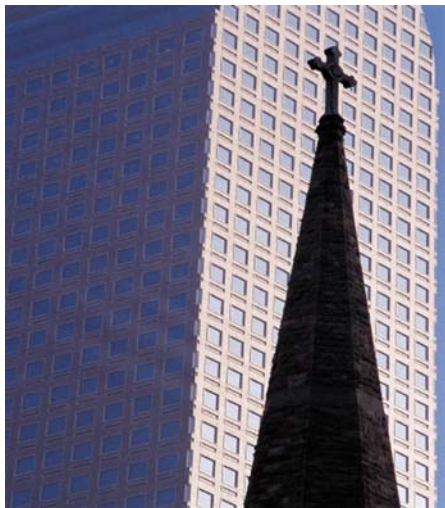
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Regent Business Review is an electronic magazine published at the Regent University Graduate School of Business. The mission of RBR is "to equip and encourage Christians to be more God-honoring leaders and managers." As such, we offer practical guidance 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.

We welcome your ideas about how we can make *Regent Business Review* more useful for you, and we invite you to tell others about this unique resource. For back issues of RBR, or to subscribe, please visit our website (www.regent.edu/review) or contact us at: Regent Business Review, Regent University Graduate School of Business, 1000 Regent University Drive, Virginia Beach VA 23464.

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The Faith at Work Movement: Opening “The 9 to 5 Window”

by Os Hillman

Pat Rainey is arriving at work today at 7 a.m. It's not because her administrative assistant position requires her to do so. It's because she's part of a handful of women and men who regularly meet to pray for the company. They've been doing this for more than a year now, believing that this is an assignment God has given them.

And they have been encouraged to see how their prayer is impacting the company. Over the last twelve months Pat has seen at least twelve people come to Christ in her 225 employee insurance company in Atlanta. She has seen people get physically healed in meetings and she has seen God confirm key corporate decisions. In short, she has seen the supernatural: the Lord is moving in her company.

As you probably know, for years Christians have sought to evangelize a largely unreached people in what is called “The 10/40 Window” – the area of land between the 10th and 40th parallel north of the Equator, spanning from Africa through east Asia. But what you might not know is that there's another window that's opening to allow Christians to introduce people to God: “The 9 to 5 Window.” And it's a window of opportunity that's just as exciting.

You see, Pat Rainey's story is not just an Atlanta story. It's a story that's being recounted in hundreds of organizations around the globe this very day.

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Quietly but persistently, God is revealing Himself to the world through the workplace.

An Overview of the Faith at Work Movement

In November 1999, *Business Week* magazine noted that “five years ago, only one conference on spirituality and the workplace could be identified; now there are hundreds. There are more than 10,000 Bible and prayer groups in workplaces that meet regularly.” Two years later, *Fortune* magazine confirmed the existence of a movement in a cover story on “God & Business,” reporting the marketplace presence of “a mostly unorganized mass of believers – a counterculture bubbling up all over corporate America – who want to bridge the traditional divide between spirituality and work.” The article went on to say:

“Historically, such folk operated below the radar, on their own or in small workplace groups where they prayed or studied the Bible. But now they are getting organized and going public to agitate for change. People who want to mix God and business are rebels on several fronts. They reject the centuries-old American conviction that spirituality is a private matter. They challenge religious thinkers who disdain business as an inherently impure pursuit. They disagree with business people who say that religion is unavoidably divisive.”

In the wake of these articles, the Christian media has also highlighted the movement, with stories appearing in *New Man*, *Charisma*, *Christianity Today*, and *Decision* magazine. Christian leaders, too, are acknowledging the trend. “I believe one of the next great moves of God is going to be through the believers in the workplace,” said Billy Graham. His son Franklin put it in the present tense: “God has begun an evangelism movement in the workplace that has the potential to transform our society as we know it.” And Henry Blackaby (author of *Experiencing God*), who meets regularly with CEOs of Fortune 500 companies to discuss what it means to bring Christ into a corporate environment, observes: “I've never seen the activity of God

this deeply in the business community as I do right now.”

Kent Humphreys, a businessman and the president of Fellowship of Companies for Christ, a ministry devoted to serving executives and CEOs,

Henry Blackaby has recently said: “I’ve never seen the activity of God this deeply in the business community”

wholeheartedly agrees with such assessments: “Leaders in the workplace from every part of the country are experiencing a hunger to be involved and they’re searching the web to find those who are of like heart. Those who are a little further along in the movement understand the principle, but are now more anxious for training and practical helps of what it looks like in their workplace.”

And the movement is not just an American phenomenon. Brenda deCharmoy, a business consultant from South Africa, remarks: “I am beginning to see more and more people and churches becoming aware that the workplace is a key area for God, and we should give it more attention. I think the tide has built quite a lot this last year. There is more questioning by workplace people of the issue of God in their 9 to 5 time. I also see more leaders realizing that going to church and then

leaving God behind does not work in the end.”

Surely it does not, and people in myriad places are appreciating that daily. In fact, in 1998 I began writing a daily email devotional called *TGIF, Today God Is First*. It has now grown to more than 70,000 subscribers. What I have learned from the feedback to my devotional is that people are hungry to know how to effectively integrate their faith life with their work life, and they are energized by the call. One subscriber summed up well what God is doing through *TGIF*: “I never really considered my secular work as a ministry until I read your (devotional)...Now I feel I have as much a ministry as my pastor. I simply have a different mission field.”

Let’s look more closely at that mission field, that “9 to 5 Window.” In several strategic ways, the window is opening wider every day.

The Movement in Major Companies

Larry Julian, a business consultant and author of *God Is My CEO* (which has sold more than 75,000 copies), says he has found an incredible receptivity in corporations to hear what he has to say. “I am seeking more ways to bring my Christian faith into the corporate world where I have spent much of my life. There is an openness that has not been there before.”

That openness is partially evidenced by the number of Christian affinity groups that have been birthed within the

past decade. The Coca-Cola Christian Fellowship was formed in 2001, with 275 people attending the first meeting at their world headquarters in Atlanta. Across town, at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Angie Tracey launched the first government-approved Christian association in an agency, The CDC Christian Fellowship Group. Similar groups have been established at American Airlines, Intel, Texas Instruments, and Sears. In fact, the Christian fellowship at Sears even has its own choir and has produced a professionally-recorded CD, underwritten by the company.

The Movement in Academia

Whereas Christian colleges once primarily focused on liberal arts education, today there are almost 100 business programs in Bible-believing colleges around the world, teaching the next generation of business leaders what it means to lead and manage from a Christian perspective. Moreover, the Christian

There are almost 100 business programs in Bible-believing colleges around the world

Business Faculty Association has grown from its humble beginnings in 1980 to boast more than 400 members and its own academic journal, the *Journal of Biblical Integration in Business*. But the academic movement is not limited to

intentionally-Christian schools. InterVarsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) has launched and/or supported Christian fellowships in dozens of the best secular business schools in the world, including

In 2002, about two dozen books per month were published in the faith at work category

Harvard, Duke, Columbia, Dartmouth, MIT, Michigan, Northwestern, Chicago, Wharton, Virginia, Yale, and the London School of Business.

The Movement in Publishing

Whenever there is a move of God, people write about it. The faith at work movement is no different. In 2000, Pete Hammond, an executive with IVCF, identified 79 books in the faith at work category. However, in 2002, approximately two dozen books a month were being published in this category, some focusing on leadership and management, others speaking to issues faced by Christian workers generally.

In recent years, some have also founded magazines for Christians who want to understand the faith-work nexus. Among these resources have been *Life@Work*, *The Christian Businessman*, *Business Reform*, and *Regent Business Review*.

The Movement in Ministries

The International Coalition of Workplace Ministries (ICWM) and Scruples.net are two ministries that serve the movement and track its growth. "Ten years ago, we could identify only twenty-five national or international non-profit workplace ministries. Today we can identify several hundred," says Mike McLoughlin with YWAM Marketplace Mission. In fact, a new *International Faith and Work Directory* now features more than 1,200 listings of ministries and organizations that have a focus on integrating faith and work. (You can access this directory online or purchase a copy at www.icwm.net).

Among these proliferating ministries, some of the larger ones are the Christian Business Men's Committee (www.cbmc.com), the International Christian Chamber of Commerce (www.iccc.net), Fellowship of Companies for Christ International (www.fcci.org), the C12 Group (www.theC12group.com), and the Christian Management Association (CMA, www.cmaonline.org). Growth in CMA is indicative of the experience of many of these ministries, accelerating from a handful of members in 1976 to now over 3,500 CEOs, business owners, middle managers, pastors, and church administrators representing more than 1,500 organizations.

Whereas these larger ministries seek to provide a full-service training and

fellowship experience to members, many other faith at work ministries are primarily event-driven, usually offering occasional prayer breakfasts or a speaker series. Typical is Bill Leonard, a real estate executive, who decided to reach out to the hi-tech community by sponsoring a once-a-year "High Tech Prayer Breakfast" in Atlanta (www.hightechministries.org). Every October, leaders in the high-tech community come to hear an inspirational talk that usually has a salvation message integrated into it. Table sponsors bring business associates as a means of introducing seekers to Christ. More than 2,000 were in attendance at this year's event.

The Movement in the Local Church

George Barna, in his book, *Boiling Point*, says: "Workplace ministry will be one of the core future innovations in church ministry." He made this assessment several years ago and it is now just beginning to be realized. But Doug

Through our new work-life ministry, our church could be influencing people through 250,000 touches a week very quickly

Sherman, author of *Your Work Matters to God*, cautions that the local church has been slow to embrace this message. "Our surveys reveal that 90 to 97

percent of Christians have never heard a sermon relating biblical principles to their work life,” says Sherman. I can vouch for those statistics. When I speak to groups and to local churches, rarely do I get more than a few raised hands when I ask an audience whether they have been trained to apply biblical faith in the context of their work life.

Over time, though, I expect to be seeing more raised hands. Doug Spada’s California-based *His Church at Work* ministry (hischurchatwork.org) is one of the pioneering efforts to equip the local church to focus on faith at work issues. Spada’s ministry does this equipping by actually putting the ministry in place in the local church – by creating the infrastructure for a sustainable work-life ministry. His ultimate vision is that churches will be sending out members to minister in the workplace, just as missionaries are sent out to foreign lands. “We help people launch full-blown ministries within their church,” Spada explains. “This isn’t, ‘Hey, let’s meet for breakfast.’ This is more embedded ministry, just like a men’s ministry or a women’s ministry or a youth ministry” (see Spada’s article on launching a work-life ministry in this issue of *RBR*).

Beyond that vision, Spada said, there’s a broader reason for the local church to be creating work-life ministries: spiritual renewal movements, particularly in Western culture, are almost always birthed and driven by the less successful, less affluent segments of a society. Karen Jones, director of workplace

ministry at Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky, agrees: “I believe it is a move of God. I believe it’s cutting edge – the next mission field.”

This year, Southeast will launch its own work-life ministry, which is based on Spada’s model. Jones said her early goal is to involve at least half of Southeast’s members. With 20,000 members, the impact in the community could be huge. “Statistics say you

The International Faith and Work Directory now features more than 1,200 listings of ministries and organizations

have a sphere of influence of about twenty-five,” Jones comments. “So we could be influencing people...through 250,000 touches a week very quickly.”

The 5,000 member Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minnesota, is another church that has adopted Spada’s process. Geoff Bohleen, outreach pastor for Wooddale, says workplace ministry allows his church to reach out to people they never would reach otherwise. “There’s no way our pastoral staff is going to get into all those offices, but our people do,” he said. “Our pastoral staff is so limited in terms of the connections, the relationships (and) the friendships we can have with

people who need Christ. However, we’ve got ‘Wooddalers’ all over the place.”

A Catalyst for Revival

“There is truly no division between sacred and secular except what we have created,” says Dallas Willard in *The Spirit of the Disciplines*. “And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause of Christ. Holy people must stop going into ‘church work’ as their natural course of action and take up holy orders in farming, industry, law, education, banking, and journalism with the same zeal previously given to evangelism or to pastoral and missionary work.”

That message is getting through, as the faith at work movement sweeps across the land. And the potential is great for it to effect genuine revival across the culture.

Peter Wagner, noted church growth expert and former professor at Fuller Theological Seminary, foresees this revival, too: “I believe the workplace movement has the potential to impact society as much as the reformation did. I have read 64 books on this movement and have 54 pages of handwritten notes. It is what the Spirit is saying to the churches today.”

There are other signs the movement is *that* consequential. New Ventures, a division of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association (BGEA), was established to

identify trends in the body of Christ and to determine how they could come alongside ministries to help leverage the resources of the BGEA to these moves of God. They first looked at 53 different categories of ministry and then narrowed it down to twelve. Eventually, they narrowed the list to three, with the workplace movement as one of the three areas where they are now focused.

Consequently, earlier this year, New Ventures teamed with my organization, the International Coalition of Workplace Ministries, to host a workplace conference at The Cove in Ashville, North Carolina. Almost 300 workplace leaders, workplace ministries representatives, and pastors were in attendance. And among the many exciting initiatives and visions to come out of this historic meeting, I have compiled the following list of what we can expect to see in the next five years as a result of God's move among believers in the workplace:

- We will see intentional training in the local church to help men and women conceptualize their work as ministry, with practical application.
- We will begin to view churches as equipping centers that will support Christians in their workplace calling.
- We will begin to see a movement similar to Promise Keepers, with major events around the faith at work theme.

- We will see the men's movement integrate this message into their focus.
- We will begin to see corporations take a more proactive acceptance of faith at work issues.
- We will see prayer impact the workplace even more.
- We will see our first cities transformed because those in authority will become active and passionate about their faith where they work.
- We will begin to see more

God has suddenly and providentially created a "9 to 5 Window." Let us not miss this opportunity to fill it with stained glass

- faith expressed in government agencies, in the entertainment industries, in educational institutions, and in corporate workplaces.
- We will see many people come to Christ as more major ministries embrace this move of God and integrate it into their operations.
 - We will hear of miracles in the marketplace because of new wineskin Christians who are willing to move, in faith and obedience, into arenas that the religious leaders have believed heretofore taboo.
 - Pastors will be the last to embrace the movement, but will ultimately be responsible for the greatest influence

once they do embrace it. It will be the breakthrough for which many pastors have been looking.

There is a revival coming, revival that is returning us to our roots to understand what the early church understood – that work is a holy calling in which God moves to transform lives, cities, and nations. "Someone recently said that the 'First' Reformation took the Word of God to the common man and woman; the 'Second' Reformation is taking the *work* of God to the common man and woman," notes Tom Phillips, vice president of training for the BGEA. "That time is now. The greatest potential ministry in the world today is the marketplace. Christ's greatest labor force is those men and women already in that environment."

Indeed, we live in historic times. Using the collective hands in companies, ministries, colleges, the media, and the local church, God has suddenly and providentially created a 9 to 5 Window. Let us not miss this opportunity to fill it with stained glass.

Os Hillman is president of Marketplace Leaders (www.marketplaceleaders.org) and director of the International Coalition of Workplace Ministries (www.icwm.net). Os is the author of seven books, including Faith & Work: Do They Mix?, and he writes a daily email devotional called TGIF, Today God Is First (www.freetgifsubscription.net). You can reach him at os@marketplaceleaders.org

Launching a Work-Life Ministry in Your Local Church

by Doug Spada and David Scott

Today, many Christians live schizophrenic lives, balancing commitments to church, home and work, often relegating God to the former. But, as Dallas Willard has written, "There is truly no division between sacred and secular except what we have created. And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause of Christ." Indeed, there should be no distinction between our devotional life and our daily life.

This is reasonably elemental theology, and almost every church would embrace it, but when it comes to *preparing* people for Monday morning ministry – for executing the tenet to live out our faith daily – there is a gaping hole in most churches. That hole, more positively-conceptualized as a discipleship opportunity, involves preparing people to live their faith at work, or what we call "work-life ministry."

Few churches offer anything resembling a ministry in this area. Often, the closest they come is an effort focused on the white-collar business community – a "marketplace ministry," a businessmen's small group, or a 7 a.m. executive prayer breakfast. In doing so, they minister to the five percent who are leaders in their work environments and

ignore the ninety-five percent who are not.

That's tragic, we think, not only because this ninety-five percent is left with little guidance about what it means to be a Christian at work, but

The church is missing one of the greatest opportunities for both discipleship and evangelism. Here's a roadmap to the remedy

also because this majority is surrounded every day by untold legions of non-Christians and nominal Christians to whom they could reveal God. Seemingly, the church is missing one of its greatest opportunities for both discipleship and evangelism. At best a church attracts a few hundred, perhaps a few thousand people each week. Its members, on the other hand, have contact with twenty times that many people in their typical work day.

Work-life ministry fills this gap, assisting believers to see God's agenda for their work lives and teaching them to steward their time, talents, and relationships in God-honoring ways. What does that look like

in operation? And what tools exist to help a church create such a ministry? From our experience with launching these ministries in local churches around the country, here are several essential steps.

A Road Map for Launching a Work-Life Ministry in Your Church

Lay a Foundation of Prayer.

Any effort is in vain without the blessing of God's Spirit. Start the ministry with a campaign of prayer and undergird its ongoing efforts with continued intercession.

Appoint an Active,

Passionate Leader. A work-life ministry needs a "champion," a delegated, activist leader, whether a lay member or a person on staff. This is an absolute prerequisite for success here. Next to God's blessing and the pastor's support, identifying the right individual whom God has raised up is fundamental to the whole effort.

If you are interested in launching such a ministry, but you're not in your church's leadership, begin persuading the decision-makers that this ministry should be a priority. Share with them your vision and passion. Pass on to them the books, tapes, and articles that have opened your eyes to the paradigm of work-life ministry. Begin praying for

them. Invite them to go with you to a work-life related conference. Connect them with other churches who are successfully implementing work-life ministry strategies. God may very well use you to help them catch a whole new vision, and you may be the key to the reformation of your church.

An active, passionate leader is a prerequisite for any work-life ministry to succeed

Add “Work-Life Equipping” to Your Church’s Objectives.

A work-life focus ought to be a central theme integrated into the mission of your church. A one-time programmatic emphasis will probably falter. Work-life equipping is not an event-driven campaign, but a long-term initiative that, if done properly, yields abundant fruit.

Build a Strategic

Framework. Carefully consider what it is that you want to do and what it will take to do it. What’s entailed in equipping your members? And how will you deliver that information? How will you go beyond imparting information and encouragement to generate real passion for living out the faith at work?

One place to start looking for ideas is HisChurchatWork.org. Besides offering conceptual models, His Church at Work also provides a set of turnkey practical tools and strategies that many churches are finding helpful. The organization helps

churches develop the framework for an ongoing process of work-life ministry and, if desired, comes alongside church leaders and their delegated work-life champion to help create and launch the ministry. That includes, among other things, creating a vision, a team, a unique set of online tools, and plan for long-term success.

Promote the Work-Life Ministry. Without visibility, a work-life ministry will not engage and mobilize people in the church. It needs a name, a logo, and a communication infrastructure. It requires promotion in church communications like bulletins, announcements, the church web site, newsletters and emails.

We suggest a month-long, church-wide emphasis to get the ministry onto the average member’s radar screen. The ultimate goal is to integrate it into the entire culture of the church. Sermons cast the vision from up front and lay the groundwork of the basic biblical precepts. Involvement tools and online resources help people get on board.

Plan Ongoing Equipping and Mobilization. Once the framework and tools for the ministry are in place, don’t get complacent. Think through what you can do on an ongoing basis to help your members to continue to learn how to live their faith at work. Here are some practical ideas:

- Pastors could schedule periodic sermons related to workplace topics. Consider including member

testimonies of how God is transforming their work-lives.

- Offer classes on God’s view of work and on calling and vocation.
- To recognize and bless their calling in a formal way, empower believers in their vocations through a church commissioning service.
- Help your members organize Bible studies, prayer groups, and evangelistic outreaches at their places of work. In one success story, Dave Treat with the Workplace Ministry of Willow Creek, organized small groups that meet at commuter rail stations’ coffee shops.

Avoid Vocabulary That Can Derail Your Message.

Ultimately, work-life ministry is a paradigm-shifting effort. For everyone to get the message that their “work matters to God,” we must choose our rhetoric carefully. The question is not what you think you are saying, but what your audience actually hears.

Consider a month-long, church-wide emphasis to get the ministry on the average member’s radar screen

Much of Christian’s confusion about their jobs can be traced to the stumbling block of our vocabulary.

For example, be careful how you speak of “ministry,” taking care to not unwittingly exclude

the spiritual significance of “work.” Even well-meaning categories such as “spiritual gifts,” “evangelism,” “tithing” and “missions,” when given singular emphasis, can leave the impression that work-life only matters as a means to the end of “real ministry.”

Use inclusive language that communicates to the entire workforce spectrum of your church. Most would not describe themselves as “business people,” “executives,” or even “professionals.” Also in describing the ministry, talk about “work-life” rather than “workplace” ministry because not every worker has a workplace, per se. But every worker does have a work-life.

So audit the cumulative message and language of your church. Ask yourself, what are we really communicating to our intended audience?

Keep Work-Life from Becoming Just a “Niche”

Ministry. By nature it is catalytic. All Christians need equipping for a Christian work life. Youth must be prepared for it. Singles, couples, men and women all struggle with it. Senior citizens face significant adjustments related to it. Accordingly, this ministry should cut across and resource almost every other sector of traditional church programming and ministry: adults, youth, families, evangelism, prayer, small groups, and preaching. The transformational potential of a work-life ministry outlook will probably not be realized if it’s relegated to a special interest group ghetto.

The Payoff

Launching and sustaining a work-life ministry in the local church requires a shift in a church’s strategic thinking. It requires envisioning a whole new ministry landscape for the local church. Tall order, for sure, but the payoff is far taller. Consider this: the true scope of influence for any church is not its attendance, but the sum total of the relationship networks of its members, most of whom work. If each person

If each church member has regular interaction with twenty people during the week, then a church of 250 has a potential scope of influence of 5,000

has regular interaction with twenty other people during a given week, then 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! Work-life ministry grows out of the vision to steward this wider ministry opportunity. Its task is to mentally and practically merge the ministry of the church with the daily ministry of its people.

Such a ministry has other payoffs as well. It will not only accelerate the growth of your church, it will enhance the spiritual maturity of your church members. Moreover,

members’ appreciation for their church will likely deepen as the church relevantly speaks to the daily challenges people face and as it equips people for their calling. It keeps God in front of them, empowering them everyday. In one church where they launched a work-life ministry, a member wrote to the staff a message that is typical of the outcome here: “Our workplace ministry and the tools are a great encouragement for me throughout the week. This is an awesome ministry and it helps me to stay focused on what’s really important. Thanks to all that are involved!”

Surely, the church that makes a priority of work-life ministry will have no problem filling its pews. Beyond that, though, it will be filling its pews with more authentic disciples – people equipped to take that 9:00 Sunday message and apply it at 9:00 on Monday.

Douglas Spada, a former nuclear submarine engineer and entrepreneur, is the founder of His Church at Work, a ministry devoted to fostering work-life ministry in the local church. For more information on church-based workplace ministry development, visit www.HisChurchatWork.org or write Doug at doug@hischurchatwork.org.

David Scott, Ph.D., is a writer, speaker, and consultant with Life 2.0, a ministry committed to helping the church embody a more holistic Christian life view. For resources and help implementing a renewed Christian worldview in your church, write to David at dscott@lifetwozero.org or visit www.lifetwozero.org.

Unconcealed Faith, Uncommon Profits: Evidence That They Are Compatible

by Christopher Crane and Mike Hamel

Christianity 24/7 is a calling, to apply a new phrase to an old truth. Jesus cautioned would-be disciples to count the cost before enlisting to make sure they could finish what they started:

“Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? For if he lays the foundation and is not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule him, saying, ‘This fellow began to build and was not able to finish’” (Luke 14:27-30).

Starting a business is also a demanding, all-consuming undertaking. So what’s a believer who wants to be both a committed disciple and a successful entrepreneur to do? It is possible to put God first and run a successful business at the same time – but it isn’t easy. Just ask Ken Eldred. He’s the founder or co-founder of such fast-growing technology companies as Inmac and Ariba Technologies, Inc. He has also worked with other well-known businesses including Click-Action, Office Depot, and Norm Thompson Outfitters. In 1988, the Institute of American Entrepreneurs named him Retail Entrepreneur of the Year for the San Francisco Bay Area.

Ken’s aggressiveness in business is an expression of his commitment to Christ. “When I became a Christian in 1972,” he recalls, “it seemed that too many people were weekend

It’s possible to put God first and run a successful business, but it isn’t easy. Ken Eldred’s approach is both inspiring and instructive

warriors. I had a problem with that attitude. Within six months of becoming a believer, I decided to make Jesus Christ lord of everything, not only on Sunday, but everyday. Becoming a Christian meant I was a new person and I needed to be that person at all times.”

Put the Lord First in Life and Business and Trust Him to Take Care of the Rest

This full-time commitment is why Ken took his faith to work with him when he started Inmac, the first company to market computer products via catalog. The company soon expanded to other countries and eventually generated annual revenues of \$40 million. “We started Inmac with \$5,000

and a grocery bag of connector parts,” says Eldred with a trace of nostalgia. “I put in forty hours a week, and of course nobody would invest in a company like this because VCs [venture capitalists] want you to put in sixty or seventy hours a week minimum. But I wasn’t going to do that. I’d committed to God that He was first; my wife was second and my kids came next. I told Him that He would have to run the business while I was gone because I could only give it forty hours a week. We were probably one of the few companies that grew to the size we did from so little money and so little investment of the founder’s time.”

Not that Ken was “letting go and letting God.” “It was a very intense forty hours, but when I left, I went home and spent time with my family. God defines success differently from our culture. Success means that my relationship with Him is good and growing. It means that I have a quality relationship with my wife. It means that my children know I love them and feel like I’m there for them. And then if the company is prosperous, that’s a bonus. Roberta and I have been married over thirty years and neither she nor my three boys has ever felt as if the business came first. That’s true success.”

Ken’s time at work had boundaries, but it wasn’t compartmentalized or

segregated from the rest of his life. A year after he started Inmac, he asked a pastor how he could make Inmac a Christian company. The wise man told him, "There's no such thing; only people are Christians. But believers can

"Neither my wife nor my three boys has ever felt like the business came first. That's true success."

use their businesses as opportunities to make Christ known." This led Ken to put tracts such as *The Four Spiritual Laws* and *Got Life?* In the office lobby, a practice that generated both light and heat. He vividly remembers the day a very angry employee came to his office and loudly complained, "I don't like those tracts! I've been taking them out of the lobby!" "What do you want me to do?" Eldred remembers responding to her. "You knew they were there before you came to work here, and they will be there as long as I'm president. As we continued to talk she softened and eventually asked, 'How do I become a Christian?'"

Because of that conversation, Ken put a letter in the lobby explaining that the literature didn't represent everyone's views, but it did represent his opinion of what was important in life. He invited anyone who wanted to know more to call his office, which people did every now and then. One might think an open line to the company president would be abused, yet Ken maintains it

never was. "The people who called really wanted to discuss spiritual issues. And because my business was God's business, if He wanted me to take fifteen minutes to talk to someone, that's what I did.

"Believers should not be afraid to be public about their faith," Ken says. "Yes I've taken flak for being so open about what I believe. However, I've also had people who had given me a bad time come back privately and say that they respected the fact that I'm not ashamed of my faith."

Watch Out That Spiritual Boldness Doesn't Create Resentment Toward the Gospel

Many Christians would not be comfortable with Eldred's frankness, especially in light of his privileged position at the top. Harvard Business School professor Laura Nash asked Christian executives what level of witnessing they thought was appropriate at the office:

When does Christian commitment from the chief executive constitute an unfair use of space, and when is it a duty not to be denied simply because the business culture frowns on it? All the interviewees felt they had bore witness in some way in their working life, but the ways in which they deliberately affected the business culture fell into three categories of responses:

- Overt, institutionalized witnessing through the use of language, rituals, and symbols of Christianity.

- Overt but personalized witnessing.
- Indirect or passive witnessing (Laura Nash, *Believers in Business*, p.249).

Ken's response to Nash is, "All of the above and in that order." And he has been effective because of his integrity, consistency, love for people, and love of Christ. Such boldness is not without pitfalls, and Ken is candid about some of his mistakes. "At one stage of my life I shared my faith very aggressively at work. I would often talk to people who were busy or in a hurry. Some of them got upset because they had things to do. I had to learn to be more sensitive to their time. If they were interested in spiritual things, I needed to set up a lunch or some other time to meet so as not to interrupt the business day.

"I had a similar issue with a Bible study I used to conduct during the lunch hour. I was not always sensitive to when

The Bible tracts in the lobby generated both light and heat

people needed to be back at their desks. 'I'm late,' some would say, 'but I was with the president.' Their supervisors got mad because I was messing up their work schedules. Finally, I put someone else in charge of the study and backed away. It faded and disappeared after that."

While Eldred's vigorous Christianity caused some

occasional friction, he never had employees claim they were treated unfairly because of their spiritual views.

"Everyone could see that promotions were based on a person's work, not their beliefs," says Ken. "I once asked a fellow executive who wasn't a Christian, about religious discrimination. He said, 'Don't worry about it, Ken. It's because of you that we have so many non-Christians throughout this organization, including at the highest levels.'"

As Inmac grew, Ken faced the dilemma of every successful entrepreneur, the lessening of his influence over the values initially set in place. "We got to fifteen hundred employees in ten countries," he says, "and it bothered me that I could no longer keep track of the spiritual temperature in the company. I wrestled with how to make sure we were still doing things according to a godly standard. As I was praying about this, God said, 'Look, Ken, I know you have given me your business. If something is not right, I will bring it to your attention. If I do, then I want you to fix the problem. If I don't, don't go looking for trouble.'"

Here's one example of how this arrangement worked. "At one point in our history people were buying software and passing it around the office," Ken relates. "The software companies said, 'Hey, wait a minute! You only have the right to use the software on one computer.' God brought this to my attention and I asked the IT manager if this was going on. He said 'yes.'"

When I told him it was wrong, he replied, 'Everyone does it.' 'I don't care if everyone does it,' I answered. 'We need to do what's right before God.' The man wasn't a Christian, but he accepted what I said. I asked what it would cost to pay for all the software we used. He came back two weeks later

One day, I sat down with my four non-Christian employees and said: "God told me we're going to have a \$7,000 day today" – more than three times our normal day. The looks on their faces said: "I'd better update my resume"

with a figure of \$250,000, which we couldn't afford. I told him that God would provide the funds; no more sharing software. Well, the year went by and we made our numbers in spite of the [money] spent on software. I don't know how God did it, but it worked and we all learned a valuable lesson."

Eldred found other opportune moments to bring up God. One of his favorites was during the hiring process. He would tell prospective hires how important it was for him to know what motivated them as employees. After they responded, he would say, "You need to know what motivates me as an employer in order to

understand how I operate and why things happen the way they do around here.' Their motivation didn't have to be the same as mine; it never affected the hiring process. But the discussion gave me a chance to share my faith with people."

Raise Awareness of God Through Public Acts of Dependence Upon Him

Overt displays of faith such as those mentioned earlier can create sharing opportunities. Praying as part of normal business operations can be another door opener. If done flippantly, it can easily backfire, but it can be very powerful if done carefully. Reaching back into Inmac's early days, Eldred tells of the time, "I had four or five employees, and none of them were Christians. Sales were way down and we were worried. My wife and I were praying and the Lord showed us that we would have a \$7,000 day that Monday instead of our average \$2,200. I sat down with my employees and said, 'God told me that we're going to have a \$7,000 day.' The look on their faces said 'I'd better update my resume. This guy's flipped his lid!'

"As the day wore on, our customer rep came into my office to announce that we could actually have a \$5,000 day. I said, 'No, Nancy, \$7,000 is what we're expecting.' At 5 p.m. we added the total twice and it came to \$7,050. The employees were just as excited as I was. Talk about making an impression!"

Prayer is so important to Ken that it permeates his leadership style. It was standard operating procedure at banquets, meetings, and company lunches. If an employee or executive came to him with a difficult personal issue, Ken would offer to pray with them. "I've never had anyone say no," he says. "I've seen men cry who have never shed tears before because they were so deeply touched by someone caring enough to pray with them."

Inmac merged with Microwarehouse in 1996 and this provided another chance to talk about Jesus. The day of the merger, Eldred told the new chairman, "You're taking over a company that's been very important to me. I've built it from scratch to around \$400 million in revenues. I'm happy for you to have it, but I want to give you something important.' At that point I shared my faith in Jesus Christ. After thirty minutes he thanked me and then went into the then-president's office. 'Eldred just talked to me about

Jesus,' he stammered. 'Is he serious?'" The president, who is also a Christian, smiled and said 'Yes he is.'"

Ken left Inmac after the sale and co-founded Ariba Technologies, Inc., an Internet-based B2B platform. He and his wife Roberta also started Living Stones Foundation to encourage Christian work around the globe. Their horizons have broadened as their wealth has increased. Still, their foundation remains the same, a commitment to put Christ first in everything. They have proven the reality of Jesus' promise, "But seek first his [God's] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33). They have also taken to heart His warning, "If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in glory" (Luke 9:26).

Given the rewards of commitment and risks of concealment, Ken thinks the

biggest mistake Christians can make is remaining quiet about their faith. It's a mistake he's determined not to make.

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Christopher Crane bought COMPS Infosystems Inc., a commercial real estate information company, in 1992, grew it substantially, took it public, and eventually sold it in 2000. The year prior to the sale, Chris won the USA Today / Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year award in San Diego.

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

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Are You Too Busy for God?

This Minor Prophet Describes the Major Consequences

by Michael Zigarelli

One of the great pleasures of my life is being a dad. Interestingly, though, I never really wanted to be a dad. Never had any intention of it. Then one day, three years into my marriage, my wife blindsided me: "Hey, Mr. Exegete. Doesn't this Book say 'you will be fruitful and multiply?'"

I guess she had a point. How can you argue with Genesis? But I figured that I could still get away with having only one child since, technically, one times one still constitutes multiplication. God had a different kind of math in mind, though. And so did my wife. So currently I have one times four kids, ages three through eight. After the most recent child was born, I was adamant that we name him "Omega."

But they're the cutest little things, if I do say so myself. Every week after Sunday school, for instance, I ask them about what they learned. In recent weeks, the conversation has gone like this:

"What'd you learn about in Sunday school today?"

"Jesus."

"Yeah?" I say, probing for more than two syllables. "And what did Jesus do?"

"He blew a horn and the walls fell down!" I see...

A week passes and I ask again: "What'd you learn about in Sunday school today?"

"Jesus."

Twenty five centuries ago, a prophet named Haggai warned Israel about the bitter fruit of their busyness. That warning is at least as relevant today

"Yeah? And what did Jesus do?"

"Jesus told a BIG LIE!"

Oh, really? Must be that new-and-improved version of scripture I've heard so much about.

A week passes and I ask again: "What'd you learn about in Sunday school today?"

"David and the big, bad giant."

Ah, good. Something new.

"Yeah?" I say. "Do you remember the big, bad giant's name?"

"His name was...Jesus!"

That's classic stuff, isn't it? And 100 percent true. I suspect I may have to find myself a new church.

Well, as you can imagine, like most people, I'm pretty busy in light of the work and family responsibilities. I hadn't given too much thought to the consequences of that lifestyle until awhile back when something was published with my name and title on it. It was supposed to read: "Michael Zigarelli, Associate Professor of Business." Instead, there was a typo so that it read: "Michael Zigarelli, Associate Professor of Busyness."

I chuckled at the typo. I got a kick out of it...for about ten seconds. Then it hit me. Most weeks, that typo would be more accurate than my business card! That epiphany sent me back to the scriptures for some guidance – guidance beyond the comfortable, well-worn passages cautioning us not to hurry through life. What I found was, for me, quite revelatory. I share it with you here in the hopes that you won't make as many mistakes as I did before God gave me this insight.

Without going into detail about how I landed in this dusty part of my Bible, I found tremendous wisdom from a prophet named Haggai. Twenty-five hundred years ago, Haggai told the people of Israel about the fruit of their busyness, about how it inhibited their relationship with God, and about how a weak relationship with God

was undermining their life satisfaction. A timeless, cut-to-the-chase message if ever there was one. But let me back up for a moment and offer some context.

Haggai was a post-exilic prophet. That is, he taught and wrote after the Babylonian exile. After many of the Israelites returned from captivity in about 538 B.C., they began rebuilding the temple that was destroyed decades earlier. But as of 520 B.C., when Haggai enters the scene, the temple still lies in ruins.

This is not a trivial matter since the temple wasn't just any building. And it wasn't just a place of worship and sacrifice. In Old Testament times, the temple was first and foremost a place for God to dwell among His people. He didn't dwell in the hearts of believers, as he does in the New Covenant. For God to be among and in relationship with His chosen, there needed to be a temple.

These folks had been doing things of worldly value rather than seeking God

Consider, then, what is implied by a temple lying in ruins. Relationship with God is not a priority for these people. It's not even on the radar screen. Why is that? Verse 2 of Haggai 1 gets us started on understanding this:

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come for the Lord's house to be built.'"

Uh-oh. Hold on. "The time has not yet come"? It's been well over a decade, people. What's the problem? Militant opposition like Nehemiah faced? At first, but not for this long. Not enough building materials? As we'll see in a second, that wasn't it. Maybe the architect's still back in Babylon. Nice try. Verses 3 and 4 tell us what the real problem is:

Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai: "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?"

"Paneled houses"? At the time, a paneled house was an extravagantly built house. Something that required a lot of time and effort to build. Something with multiple rooms, modeled in cedar. Something that takes significant resources to build and that one cares for meticulously. Apparently, these folks had been busy doing things that have worldly value rather than doing something about which God cared. And God, through Haggai, strikingly called their attention to it: "*Is it time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains in ruin?*"

That caused me to stop and think: what am I so busy doing? What are my priorities? Do they align with God's priorities? Some do, but where

does relationship with God fall on that priority list? I confess that this was not a comfortable question.

Let me ask it of you anyway, because it's an important question. How's your relationship with God these days? What's your "temple" look like? Have you built it?

Where is "relationship with God" on our daily priority list? For me, that was not a comfortable question

Do you attend to it? Are you taking the time to maintain it? Or has your schedule relegated the development of your relationship with God to perpetual back-burner status? Is it a project that you're always intending to get to, but for various reasons, you never quite get there?

If your temple is lying in ruins – if God is regularly crowded-out of your life, like He was for the Israelites – then these consequences, described in verses 5, 6 and 9, will probably resonate with you:

Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it. ... You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little.

What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house."

What's the corrective? Start by scheduling time with God every day – meaningful, private, non- negotiable time

Do those outcomes sound familiar? Have you experienced this in your own life? Has all your busyness brought you real life satisfaction, or has it brought you something that's closer to the opposite? Have you reaped commensurate to what you've sown? Has all of that time and effort exhausting yourself brought you the quality of life God wants to give you? Or is your experience closer to: "You plant much but harvest little... You earn wages only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

Measure it this way. How often do you get to the end of the day, fall into bed and say: "What did I do today? I was going full throttle all day, but what did I *do*?" Or measure it this way: How often do you achieve some goal, large or small, only to ask yourself: "Is that all there is? Isn't there something more? Why don't I feel satisfied?"

You see, living a life that was too cluttered to spend time with God only brought the people of Israel dissatisfaction

and discontentment. That's because, as some people learn too late, *a life without God is ultimately an unsatisfying life.*

If you're a busy person who's still finding yourself to be restless, dissatisfied, or frustrated with a feeling of purposelessness, perhaps it's time to examine at that temple of yours. I'd submit to you that rebuilding it (i.e., spending time with God every day) is a better pathway than is busyness to satisfying all of your responsibilities – and to satisfying them with real excellence. It's a better pathway to success in leadership. A better pathway to success as a spouse or a parent. A better pathway to a meaningful career and a God-honoring legacy.

And one other thing: it's a better pathway to enduring life satisfaction, to finally filling that void inside of you. Running around to accomplish a lot of things is not the answer. Those things can't fill what theologians have called a "God-shaped void." There's one and only one thing that fills a God shaped void.

Have you been working hard for years, accomplishing a lot, only to ask the questions: "Why am I not satisfied? Why do I feel like I've planted much but harvested little?" Have you wondered: "What more can I do to be happy? What's missing here?" Perhaps what's missing is quality time with God. Perhaps your personal temple needs to be rebuilt. Perhaps busyness and over-commitment have prevented you from doing the things God says should be a permanent

part of your schedule – spending time with God and making a priority to grow in the knowledge and love of Him. And maybe that's why so many of us have yet to experience that inner peace, fulfillment, and contentment we long for in life.

Well, what's the corrective? There's a lot of advice out there on how to rebuild a relationship with God and on how to beat busyness. I'm not going to give you a top ten list, though. Not even a top three list. There's only one thing that seems to work over the long haul for people, so I suspect that it will work for you as well. It's a simple solution: *schedule time each day with God.* Meaningful, private, non-negotiable time with God everyday.

You schedule everything else in your life that's important to ensure that it gets done, so

No matter how long we've neglected God, He assures us that it's never too late to rebuilt our temple of relationship with Him

schedule this as well. And stick to it. Rebuilding your temple – your relationship with God – takes commitment, and it takes time each day. There's truly no substitute for it.

Let me close this by offering you both a challenge and some encouragement. Back in Haggai 1, we learn about the

people's response to God's call. Verse 12 says:

Then Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high priest and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the message of the prophet Haggai.

They *obeyed God* and rebuilt the temple. They threw off the idol of busyness and again invited God to dwell among them. They rolled up their sleeves and got to work, finally fixing their eyes on God.

They didn't do it immediately, though. The end of Haggai 1 tells us that they responded twenty-four days after Haggai delivered God's message. Twenty-four days! I'd like to challenge you to do better. I'd like to challenge you to get a personal building program together and running well in fewer than twenty-four days. Psychologists tell us that it takes about three weeks to really develop a habit. Well, that fits the timetable perfectly.

If you want to be a God-centered person and you desire real, God-defined success in every area of life – and if you want personal fulfillment and genuine life satisfaction as an added bonus – then get yourself on a regular schedule with God. Pray, sing, read His Word, or just to be still and listen. *But schedule the time.*

And one last thing: please don't think that what you've done is unforgivable, that you're somehow unworthy of relationship with God. Don't think you've been too neglectful for too long. Look at God's response to His children in verse 13:

Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: "I am with you," declares the Lord.

"I am with you."

Has God been good to you? Has He done wonderful things in your life, delivering you like He delivered His people from Babylon? And in spite of that,

have you neglected that temple? Been too busy to really invite God into your daily life? If that's the case, know something: He's not mad at you for it. He's not unwilling to allow you to try again. That's the biggest lie in Satan's arsenal! God loves you well beyond the love you've ever had for anyone or felt from anyone. Beyond any love you could ever fathom. And He's calling you back into a fuller relationship with Him this very day. God assures you, as He assured His people through Haggai, that no matter what has happened and no matter how long it has been – even if it's been fifteen years since you had an active and growing relationship with God – "It's never too late to rebuild that temple of relationship with Me, for *I am with you.*"

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TOO BUSY?

Here Are Ten Practical Time-Management Tips

Samuel M. Natale

Tip #1: Since most of us are of good heart and willingness to help, there is a tendency to say “Yes” to things before we have a chance to really think them through. Hence, my first tip is: **Never (and I do mean NEVER) carry your appointment book with you.** I know, it’s hard to imagine life without it, but if you do not have the book with you, you must take a break from any request for your time to go find your book and check your availability. This permits you space to get sane about what you really can do...or not do. Once you locate the book, take a broader view of your commitments and see where and how this request fits.

Tip #2: Safeguard your peak performance time. Time of day is a critical determinant of your productivity. I recently sat on a dissertation committee where the student explored how each of us has a most productive time of day. There is apparently a genetic and developmental issue that determines when each of us is “at our peak.” Identify this peak time and protect it for your highest priorities.

Tip #3: Say “no.” It’s a wonderful word, but few of us use it with the frequency it deserves. To be honest, our inability to say “no” is usually more about our desire to be liked and affirmed – and to avoid others’ disapproval – rather than about our desire to be helpful to others. Indeed, we should be helpful to one another and to our common missions, but that means fitting our abilities with the situation at hand and deciding whether our skill set and time permit us to productively satisfy the request. Saying “no” does not mean that you don’t care about the other person, but that simply, for many possible reasons, the other person’s request cannot be a priority for you at that moment.

Tip #4: Prioritize your “to-do” list. A to-do list is a critical tool, but it needs to be used sensibly and it needs to be prioritized. Too often, our hastily scribbled list becomes a catch-all for all the things we can think of that eventually need to be done. So, by the end of the day, we have heroically completed twelve of the twenty-four items on our list. Problem is, none of the items was time-stamped as “important” or as having primacy over the others.

You see, the “to-do” list is only as good as the prioritizing it contains. The A’s should be the urgent/primary things; the B’s should be those things that are good to get done; the C’s....well, if we don’t get those done and we have prioritized them correctly, they’ll either disappear or come back in another form later.

Tip #5: Use the “Pareto Formula” as an important control mechanism. It suggests that, generally speaking, we get eighty percent of our results from twenty percent of what we do. Just check your closet and notice that you wear twenty percent of your clothes eighty percent of the time. Many successful executives report that determining their critical twenty percent – and then giving their best time to those initiatives – makes an enormous difference for them in time use.

(continued on page 21)

Time-Management Tips (continued from page 20)

Tip #6: Delegate – sometimes. Delegation is an important and frequently-mentioned technique in the time-management literature. But, truth be told, that makes me smile since in these days of more work with fewer people (and since I am not a millionaire), I often find it difficult to find anyone to whom I can delegate.

Delegate where you can, of course, but remember that when you delegate a project, you retain responsibility for its completion. A deadly trap (and one inexperienced managers often make) is to delegate that which they do not know how to do. Sure, it seems like it saves time, but it actually costs you more time later. How can you supervise accuracy and efficiency when you do not know what should be done or how it should be done? So yes, delegate (when you can find someone), but just delegate those things that you understand how to do.

Tip #7: Don't think of personal time as "free" time. It may sound trivial, but when we name time as "free," then it is available to other people and projects. Personal time should be used for the things you really need to do individually, from personal care to exercise to reading and meditation.

Tip #8: Practice "sacred selfishness." This is a concept taken from a Bud Harris book of the same name. He defines it as "making a commitment to valuing ourselves and our lives enough to pursue the decision to become people of substance." The idea is that we should make enough space in our lives so that we can be excellent and so that what we do has meaning and significance. The scholastic adage "Nemo dat quod non habet" (one cannot give what one does not have) is pertinent here. We can't get the job done well if we're burnt out.

Tip #9: Don't let the telephone tell you what to do. There are few conveniences greater or more intrusive than the telephone. But the issue is control. YOU must control it and not the other way around. Just because someone calls does not mean that you must take the call. Obviously, you need to return urgent calls, but some people act as if every one of their calls is urgent. YOU need to make the decision which call is necessary to answer, not your caller. In fact, it may not be a bad idea to screen all calls and take only those that appear or are truly important. As for calling back, simply group your calls and return them either before lunch or before quitting time, when people are eager to get on with their lives rather than dally on the phone. It actually works, believe it or not!

Tip #10: Don't let the door tell you what to do. As with the phone, you don't have to answer every knock on the door. If you're in the middle of a project, it may be more sensible simply not to answer the door. A "Do Not Disturb" sign can work on some occasions, though there is a tendency for many visitors to think that the sign is not meant "for them." But when a sign is not appropriate, then it is usually fine to close the door and ignore it, permitting you to stay on task. Then, be available at a later time for those who may need your attention. And here's a bonus: this technique also effectively blocks the "time eaters" who roam the halls looking for something to occupy themselves!

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Return to Honor

by Randy Kilgore

*Suffer hardship with me, as a
good soldier of Christ Jesus*
2 Timothy 2:3

Twenty-one steps. Turn to face the tomb. Pause for twenty-one seconds. Twenty-one steps in the opposite direction. Turn to face the tomb. Pause for twenty-one seconds. Twenty-one steps in the opposite direction... Twenty-four hours a day. Three hundred sixty-five days a year. Rain, sleet, hail, thunder, lightning.

For the first time in the history of the Tomb of the Unknowns, soldiers guarding the burial site of these honored dead at Arlington National Cemetery were given permission to leave their posts for safety if Hurricane Isabel posed a threat.

The guards' response? Not a chance!

So, through driving rain and mind-numbing winds, while the city of Washington scurried for cover, the soldiers of the 3rd U.S. Infantry (Old Guard) marched twenty-one steps, turned to face the tomb, paused twenty-one seconds in respect for soldiers who died for their country "known but to God," and then paced off twenty-one steps in the opposite direction.

Who could not be moved by that tribute?

Christians sometimes resist military analogies when thinking about their faith. Scripture does not. In fact, terms like "fellow soldier," "soldiers of Jesus Christ," and "armor of God" are recurrent,

**Every moment of
every day, we choose
by our actions
whether we will glorify
or abandon God**

recognizing duty, honor, and sacrifice as some of our most noble qualities.

Our gift of fellowship with God was purchased at a terrible cost. The agony of Jesus' prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane the night before His death moves us beyond words...or it should. The malicious assault on His physical body moves us to genuine, humble gratitude...or it should. The assumption of our sins by a sinless Person encourages our passionate pursuit of whatever duty to which He calls us...or it should.

Sixty seconds each minute, sixty minutes each hour, twenty-four hours each day, we Christians stand guard over the honor of God. As we do,

we choose by our actions whether to glorify or abandon Him. Every breath we take, every job we do, every person we encounter, every crisis we face presents an opportunity to serve God – to honor Him by remembering our duty to Him and our willingness to sacrifice our very existence, if His service demands it.

Even in the hurricanes of our lives, when the driving rain of pain and the mind-numbing winds of temptation bait us to seek the shelter of inaction or even disobedience, a tomb filled and emptied two thousand years ago beckons us to pace our own twenty-one steps, to pause to honor Christ, and to then take the next faithful twenty-one steps of service, guarding the glory of the One whose sacrifice gives us eternity.

Grant us strength, O Lord, this very day to persevere, returning honor to Your name in the culture where we serve.

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Bookshelf

Giving Back: Using Your Influence to Create Social Change by Merrill Oster and Mike Hamel (NavPress, 2003)

Clout: Tapping Spiritual Wisdom to Become a Person of Influence by Stephen Graves and Thomas Addington (Jossey-Bass, 2003).



We think of people with influence as powerful, wealthy, or well-connected. But those people aren't the only influencers. Christians who are not powerful, wealthy, or well-connected can have tremendous influence over their workplaces, communities, and even their nation, if they understand the keys to success here. Two recent books purport to present those keys, helping Christians use the influence they never knew they had to bring about changes that they never thought possible.

In *Giving Back*, Merrill Oster and Mike Hamel describe

sixteen influential people – “social entrepreneurs,” they call them – to demonstrate how individuals have effected change through their knowledge, experience, spiritual maturity, and sheer will. To teach us how we too can effect change, each of the entrepreneurs (only one of whom is female) reflects on his or her personal journey and on what ultimately generated impact. From these stories, Oster and Hamel then glean five “Rules of Engagement” for would-be influencers. However, these “Rules” are not the centerpiece of the book (although they probably should be). In fact, the authors offer only a few pages of real application near the end of the book for people who desire to put these rules to work in their own lives.

By contrast, consultants Stephen Graves and Thomas Addington take a much different approach in *Clout*, offering deeper and more practical insight into how to gain clout (i.e. influence). Their model of influence, so to speak, includes, among other things, having strong character, solid values and ethics, clear understanding of the larger issues, and a good mentor to guide us into the best use of our lives. They also identify the conditions under which influence turns bad, cleverly calling it “influenza.”

Ultimately, Graves and Addington point to Jesus as the prototypical influencer,

labeling his approach “Class-Seven Influence,” and showing that in the end, influence is not about whom you know or even what you know, but about who you are and how you use your gifts and relationships.

Some readers will be inspired to become more influential by the examples of social entrepreneurs in *Giving Back*. Those looking for practical guidance will find better direction from *Clout*. However, one notable shortcoming of these resources is that they do not actually help readers to discern their own spheres of influence or their giftings in this area. These books are indeed worthwhile reads, but we would also benefit from having a more comprehensive book that includes not just inspiration and helpful advice about why people are influential, but also insight into how to discover our personal areas of influence and, co-laboring with the Holy Spirit, how to leverage those areas to make a lasting impact on the world.

Reviewed by John R. Throop. Dr. Throop earned his D.Min. from Fuller Theological Seminary and he is currently is president of The Summit Planning Group in Peoria, Illinois. He is also an Episcopal priest. You can reach him at throop@consultsummit.com

The Hardest Prayer of All

by G.D. Watson

I am convinced we have far too shallow views of that command to pray for our enemies. It means vastly more than to say, "God bless our foes." It means that we are to take them on our heart in good earnest, and intercede for them – particularly, lovingly, perseveringly – pray for them till out of a living heart we can unite their highest welfare with our own.

I have been blessed all my life with a few enemies; at a few periods in my life with a great many, and sometimes they have been exceedingly bitter. But in reviewing the past, I notice that I have had the fewest enemies and the most popularity when I was the least spiritual and the farthest away from God, and that, when I have had deepest fellowship with Christ, I have been the most misunderstood by religious people and the most intensely hated by bad people. I can recall many seasons when I felt it a necessity to pray especially both for positive enemies and for Christian people, who had greatly injured me while they did not intend to be my foes. One such circumstance occurred in the early summer of 1895. A certain very bitter enemy had done many things to greatly damage both me and my family. I had often prayed for him in my secret devotions, but one day I felt drawn to go off alone into a forest and spend some hours in pleading to God

for him and his family. At the beginning of my prayer, I tried to exercise great charity for the man by putting myself in his place and looking at my own miserable self from his standpoint. But the Spirit soon showed me that was the human

Praying for our enemies is hard, but I find that the more I pray for someone, the easier it is for me to think well of him and to look at his conduct in the most favorable light

way and not the Divine. It came to me that what I needed was to love that man with the identical same love that Jesus had for him – to pity, sympathize with, and feel toward him exactly as God felt, up to my capacity; that I was to be a living vessel in such union with the Holy Spirit that Jesus could love him through me and pour His Divine love through my affections. It was revealed to me that in order to love him as Christ loved, I must utterly abandon my being to the Holy Spirit for the purpose of becoming a channel of the perfectly unselfish, impartial,

disinterested, tender, and boundless compassion of God. I complied with the suggestion of the Spirit and before I had prayed an hour, the fountains of my soul were broken up, my tears flowed like rain. I felt a warm, soft love for him. All his welfare of body and soul, all his family, all his temporal and eternal interests, became very precious in my sight.

As I continued to plead with God for his soul's salvation and for all his welfare in detail, suddenly that Spirit opened to my mind what a lovely Christian that man would make if he was thoroughly washed in Jesus' blood and filled with the Holy Spirit. I seemed to see his soul and all his gifts and powers – now so perverted by sin – how lovely they would be if transformed by Divine grace! As I viewed him under the possibilities of saving grace, he seemed transfigured in my vision. I then prayed that I might feel a Christ-like grief for any trouble that might befall him. From that moment it has been easy and sweet to pray for him, and I never think of him except with a peculiarly tender love.

A few months after, that man had a great calamity which brought pain and sadness to my heart, yet I was accused of praying the misfortune upon him. Our neighbors and acquaintances can never really know what is in our hearts till that great day. It is infinitely

more essential that we actually love our fellows than that we convince them of our love. If Jesus was unable to convince men of His love to them, are we greater than He? It is the deep reality of having the Christ-love flow through us to everybody that we need, far more than the success of showing it to people. I find the more I pray for anyone, the easier it is for me to think well of him and to look at his conduct in the most favorable light.

Not only must we pray long and fervently for our positive foes, but pray much for religious people who are cold and severe to us, for if we do not keep our hearts warm and pure and very tender to everybody on earth, we lose that sweet sense of oneness with Jesus, which is worth more than all the friendships of creatures. It is not my calling to make people love me; it is my great business to have perfect union with the Holy Spirit and to love all with God's love, whether they love

or have confidence in me or not.

Excerpted from: Soul Food, Chapter 25, "Praying for an Enemy" (1895), by G. D. Watson. George Douglas Watson (1845-1923) was a gifted evangelist who preached throughout the United States and the world, leaving a legacy of intimacy with God and a reputation for offering spiritual meat, rather than just milk, wherever he preached.

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