Faith and Work

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Our calling in our workplace is to purposefully connect faith and work.

Key Observations of current faith and work culture

1. Many Christians keep their faith life and work life separate or compartmentalized.

i.e., church is time with God, work is time to make a living

Possible reasons for this separation:

* Some interpret faith and work as an obligation to evangelize in the breakroom, and most people avoid evangelism
* A belief that God doesn’t care about our work – work is just something we must endure.
1. We spend 80% or more of our waking hours at work.
2. Without faith at work or applying faith in work, work will shape you or destroy you

There isno more fertile ground for temptation of sin than in the workplace.

Examples:

* Chasing of money and power
* Ethical issues
* Infidelity
* Broken homes due to:
	+ Behavior of working longer hours and spending less time with family
	+ Bringing baggage from work home to the family
* Work becomes your identity:
	+ If successful in work, it goes to your head
	+ If experience failure, it goes to your heart
1. On Monday, many Christians don’t look, talk, or act like they did on Sunday.

There is a tendency to “blend in with the crowd”

1. People are constantly looking for another opportunity.

People don’t quit companies – people quit people.

1. Chasing a bigger paycheck
	1. “If I get more money I can tithe more”
	2. “I’m in this lousy job, I might as well get paid for it”

*Never ends up satisfying.*

Calling

* *Fixed calling:* a call by God to do a very specific job, ministry, or work in the mission field
* *Formative calling:* a call discovered through time as you evolve in faith through life.
* This requires you to understand the kind of person you’re becoming
* This suggests there is change in you
* **Our vocation (or calling) is not truly found until we are fit.**
* *Example:* “I want to be a professional musician”
* To become a professional musician, you need to learn more than just one or two songs. It takes years of practice, performance, critique, and failure.
* Not everyone makes it as a professional musician. Along the way, some discover they may be better as conductors or recording engineers.
* **We continue to evolve in our faith as we walk in our calling**

Relationships in the workplace

* Cultivating, forming, and maintaining relationships in the workplace is vital, because:

Relationships = Influence

* We are to engage with people in our sphere of influence
* *Sphere: the people around us*
* There is an expectation that there is some amount of influence in that sphere.
* Without a relationship, there is no influence.
* Relationships are hard. They take energy to establish, deepen, and maintain.
* It takes two to have a relationship. Both individuals decide if they want to be in relationship.

Determine your starting point: self-assessment exercise

*While this is a self-assessment, you should perform this activity with a group. Each participant should have a paper and pen.*

Instructions:

* Think of someone in your life (now or formally) that you were just naturally attracted to. This is someone you really enjoyed being around or felt fulfilled being around. This should be someone you knew personally.
* Write down 3-5 of the attributes that best describe this person.
* Share one of these attributes with the group.
	+ One group member should write down each of the shared attributes.
* Once everyone has shared, review the list of attributes created by the group.
	+ Consider: Is there anything on this list that doesn’t fit the person you were thinking about?
	+ Example attributes: kindness, care about me, smart, put me first

*Reflect on these prompts:*

* Wouldn’t it be great if your boss, coworker, spouse, or friend had these same attributes?
* The traits listed by a group are all attributes of Jesus – but there are real people who also demonstrate these collective attributes – to display all these attributes is **achievable**.
* Which of the attributes listed describe you? How big of a gap is there between the attributes listed and your current thoughts, behaviors, and actions in your sphere of influence.

The more you reflect these listed attributes, the more influence you have and the easier it is to establish, deepen, and sustain relationships. The more you reflect these attributes, the more likely you are to have significant influence in others’ lives.

**To change the culture in a workplace, it takes more than a title, and it takes more than one person.**

Getting ready to get in the gym

* If want to experience his presence in the workplace, you must commit your heart to him. You must commit to a lifestyle of repentance and faith.
* The transformation of your heart is required to change how you present yourself as the light of Christ.
* Disciplines matter:

“Spiritual disciplines are habits, practices, and experiences that are designed to develop, grow, and strengthen certain qualities of spirit — to build the “muscles” of one's character and expand the breadth of one's inner life. They structure the workouts which train the soul.” – Richard Foster in *The Celebration of Disciplines*

* To workout our faith, it takes a lot more than just showing up on Sunday. We need to engage daily in time in the bible and prayer.
	+ Going to the gym once per week doesn’t cultivate change. It takes consistency. This is the same scenario with our spiritual disciplines.
	+ You need a consistent, disciplined approached to spiritual disciplines.
* Spiritual disciplines: prayer, worship study, fellowship, fasting, self-examination (alongside other believers), gratitude

What is my calling?

* You must understand how you’re progressing through time and how hard you’re working at that progression to develop your spiritual maturity, so you have more influence in your workplace.
* You’re joining with others to change what’s happening in that culture.
* Avoid “1 Corinthians 3:1-3 moment”
	+ When we give our life to Jesus, we are to engage in the process of renewal
	+ 80% of our time or more could be spent in the workplace – the worst thing would be to be called out on still being worldly and drinking milk, rather than engaging in a process of renewal and eating solid food.

Resources:

*Every Good Endeavor -* Tim Keller

*The Celebration of Disciplines –* Richard Foster