

WAYS GOD IS AT WORK IN YOU – AT WORK

By Robert J. Tamasy

Have you ever thought of your work as more than a job? Perhaps you are among the people that regard your work as an opportunity of ministry. But have you ever considered your work could be a place where God is at work *in you*? Keith Welton, a pastor who has spent time in the corporate world, has written *Working for Glory: A Theology for Doing Work that Matters*. Drawing from it he wrote an article, “Six Ways God’s at Work in You,” that appeared on desiringgod.org. I have borrowed his bullet points, adding my own thoughts. Basically, Welton suggests God is using the workplace to:

Focus your faith. There are few places where our faith can be exercised more vigorously than where we work. When we make plans and they fail, or when even good plans present unexpected challenges, we often find ourselves wondering, “What do I (we) do now?” At such times it helps to remember the promise of Proverbs 3:5-6, which tells us to, “*Trust in the Lord will all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight.*”

Focus your heart. Motivations are very important for approaching our work. Are we doing it solely for the income, to receive recognition, or some other self-oriented reason? Or is our desire to honor God through our work, as Colossians 3:23-24 urges us: “*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*”

Focus your hands. We all need direction, a sense of purpose in our lives, and work can help in providing that. But Ecclesiastes 9:10 offers this sobering observation: “*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.*” So we are to do what we can, the best we can, while we can.

Focus your love. As Galatians 5:14 tells us, “*For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”* And what better place is there to encounter our “neighbors” and demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ to them – even those who seem unlovable?

Focus your mind. We have all discovered many of the practices and philosophies of today’s business and professional world run counter to the teachings of the Bible. So in our quest to succeed and advance at work, we also must strive to keep in mind God’s truth and apply biblical principles to responsibilities, challenges and opportunities we confront each day. “*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will*” (Romans 12:2).

Focus your witness. CBMC reminds us part of the role God has entrusted to us is to serve as “marketplace ambassadors,” representing Jesus Christ just as a nation’s ambassador would represent it in another country. Jesus commanded His followers, “*...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth*” (Acts 1:8). For some of us, “Jerusalem” is the office where we work. Traveling for business, we may also venture to other cities – even other parts of the world. When we do, we should keep in mind that we do so as ambassadors of Christ.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What do you think of the concept that God is at work – in you – where you work? Has that ever occurred to you before?
2. Why do you think the workplace could be a critical place in God's desire to enable you to grow and develop in your faith and in being as His servant and ambassador?
3. Which of the six "focuses" cited seem to stand out most strongly as you consider your workplace responsibilities and challenges?
4. If you haven't seriously considered that God might be working *in you* where you work, what difference might it make to keep this idea prominent in your thinking as you approach each workday?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

1 Corinthians 3:9; 2 Corinthians 5:20, 6:1; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:17; 2 Timothy 3:17