

FALL 2017

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## ACCEPT YOUR CALL TO THE KINGDOM MARKETPLACE

by David Robinson

For centuries, the Church's understanding of what integrating faith and work really looks like has been very limited. **However, today's marketplace is the 21st Century mission field.** When we understand the invitation from Jesus to join His mission,

our marketplace efforts are now spiritual, not secular.

The Church has suffered for a long time from a dualistic mentality called the sacred-secular divide. For much of her history, the Church has adequately equipped its church leaders for the pulpit, but not its marketplace ministers for their call. The Church must do a better job helping people connect Sunday to Monday. If we are to

bring about reconciliation in the fields of business, government and education, we need to think about what it means to be a Christian businessperson, a Christian government official, a Christian educator. These three entities control every city, state and nation.

Many believers have tried figuring this out without much help from their church leaders. If you do not agree just look how Christianity has

lost influence in the marketplace over the past 100 years. Leaders and marketplace ministers in a variety of callings are asking the right questions about what faith-work integration looks like and how it can go beyond just being a nice person at work.

Spiritual capital represents one of the deep connections between faith and work, yet is one of the least exploited opportunities by church leaders. Moral capitalism explains why an economy in which personal virtue prevails is always more successful. With few exceptions, the top of the GDP-per-capita list is exclusively occupied by nations that have a long history of Christianity. The embodiment of biblical values is what really makes a nation and an economy successful.

The Bible shows us the truth about human work as part of God's purpose in creation. The Bible brings the whole of our working lives within the sphere of ministry. By contrast, the falsehood of a 'sacred-secular divide' has permeated the Church's thinking and actions too long. This divide tells us that religious activity belongs to God, whereas other activity does not. However, God is the Lord of all life. "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men," said Paul to the slaves in a pagan workplace.

This secular-sacred divide is a major obstacle in mobilizing God's people in His mission. Christians worldwide must reject its unbiblical assumptions and

resist its damaging effects. They must challenge the tendency to see ministry as being mainly the work of church-paid ministers and missionaries, which is a small percent of the whole body of Christ. All believers must accept and affirm their own daily ministry and mission as being wherever God has called them to operate in His grace and power.

## CHURCH WORK IS DONE IN THE BUILDING— THE WORK OF THE CHURCH IS DONE IN THE MARKETPLACE

Marketplace ministers go places where traditional church leaders seldom visit. What these marketplace ministers do in the workplace must be valued as an aspect of the ministry of local churches. Church work is done in the building—the work of the Church is in the marketplace.

**Thirty-eight of the 'power miracles' in the book of Acts took place in the marketplace, not the church house.**

According to the Pew Research Center, Islam is the only religion growing faster than the world's population, and it will be the

largest in the world by 2070. I believe the only thing that can change those dire statistics is waking up the "sleeping giant," the Church, to equip those who are already employed in today's marketplace to understand their calling as ministers—right where they work. This will happen if they are affirmed, empowered and then deployed to the frontlines to fight this war against the kingdom of darkness.

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