



**ANOTHER
GREAT COMMISSION
OMISSION**

Dave Scott

A Worldview Blind Spot

For many years the church neglected Jesus' Great Commission in its lack of intentionally resourcing global missions, a failure that Robertson McQuilkin termed *The Great Omission*. There is a further area where the church has largely failed to intentionally resource a critical aspect of its Great Commission ministry: the outreach and discipleship of people's work lives.

What are the consequences if we as a church do not have a strategy to equip people's lives at work?

Our answer matters because the American church is at a historical crossroads with serious implications if we do not change how the church engages the world it is called to reach. At the end of WWII, England had the same church attendance that the US does currently: about 35%. Today Britain is largely post-Christian with only 6 % attending church. Britain's quaint village churches failed to change their paradigm and now find themselves stuck behind their own rock walls.

Q: What are the consequences of no work life strategy for the local church's . . .

- **Discipleship?**
- **Worship?**
- **Ministry?**
- **Community?**
- **Evangelism?**
- **Mission?**

Mark Greene, the director of the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity, has warned American evangelicals that either we change the way church is done here or face the same fate of irrelevance. Specifically, he points to the current disconnect between local church ministry and the marketplace as one of the causes for greatest concern.

Tim Keller pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Manhattan agrees. As he has pointed out, the shrinking of Christendom means that the internally focused church must missionally re-embrace equipping people for public life or face ministry obsolescence.

According to George Barna's findings in his book *Revolution*, the problem is alarming. The average evangelical coming out of our churches has a spiritual short circuit between faith and life. Most admit that the church service is the only place they worship God. Half would say they have not even experienced God's presence in the last year. Only 9% of those who call themselves born again have the basics of a biblical worldview. Willow Creek's *Reveal* study similarly found that there is no statistical correlation between church involvement and maturity of actual spiritual living.

The largely secular work lives of American church goers is another painful result of this disconnect. In a recent study Barna found that among the latest generation of evangelical adults, 84% cannot explain what the Bible has to do with their profession. The fact that Enron's convicted former CEO Kenneth Lay was a trustee of his local congregation says as much about the way we do church as it says about him. The double-minded lives we are producing are but reflections of the disconnect in our own approach ministry. With results like these, how can we seriously claim we are fulfilling the Great Commission? We are not teaching Jesus' way of daily living even among our own members, much less proclaiming the full gospel for daily life to those outside our walls.

Reality: Monday is not on the church calendar

Cost: The church that does not bridge the workplace gap cannot help its people bridge the gap of faith and work.

Work life discipleship is like the continent of Atlantis. It somehow fell off the map of the typical local church. Look on the average church's website and you will not find work life even mentioned in the church's all-important stated mission, vision and values. The church does not identify pastoring people's work lives as part of its purpose. Check the budget of your church. Chances are there is no line item for work life outreach or discipleship. In all but a few exceptions, you will look in vain to find a church staff position on the org chart tasked to work life.

So what do you call a priority that is not articulated, funded, or staffed and which has no strategy? Call it what you will, but it is any thing but purpose driven.

Work life Ministry

“A local church’s intentional strategy to proclaim the gospel hope to the marketplace, discipling people’s work lives and mobilizing them to find and fulfill their God-given mission at work.”

The result is that most of our members are missionally ineffective in the way they live out their faith at work. According to Barna, the majority define success in life without mentioning their faith. Fewer than one out of ten wants to be known by others for their relationship with God. Is it any surprise then that, as Barna observes, “the typical church member will die without leading a single person” to Christ?

What is work life Ministry? It is a local church’s intentional strategy to proclaim the hope of the gospel to the marketplace, discipling people’s work lives and mobilizing

them to find and fulfill their God-given mission at work. This missional lens is one vital element to what it means to be a healthy church because it has implications for all the traditional areas of local church ministry. It is a missing piece to the larger picture. The lack of a focused work life missional lens is handicapping each of the core purposes of the church because work is such a major area where those purposes must be lived out.

Reality: No Discipleship of Work

Cost: The church perpetuates Christians living dualistic lives.

I was raised in a Christian home with parents in ministry. I grew up in standard-bearer churches committed to evangelism and discipleship. Furthermore as a professional in ministry, I was discipled by the para-church and was actively winning and discipling others. Yet I was never discipled in my calling or work life. Stop and ask yourself, were you?

In Matthew 18:17-20, Jesus commands us to make disciples by teaching people to observe and holistically live the way he did constantly connected with the Father. The local church exists to foster God-glorifying life where it previously did not exist. That is the thrust of the Great Commission. The church’s product is life. It grows lives.

The largest area of people’s waking lives is their work life. We cannot fulfill the Great Commission without this area of life. People spend more time at work than they do even more than at home with their families. Work is also where believers’ faith is challenged with the greatest intensity and frequency.

If we do not have an intentional, systematic and comprehensive strategy for how our local church helps people live out Jesus’ life at work, then it means that the largest segment of their lives is going without intentional discipleship. The sad fact is that except for an occasional sermon, most churches do not have a plan for discipling people in their work lives. To be sure, we have a theology of work. It just has not made it from seminary shelves to where the shoe leather hits the pavement in the lives of Christians today. Our discipleship tracks have been great explaining private devotional faith but somehow overlooked the life of faith in an unbelieving public world. Mainstream evangelical spiritual formation is suffering from tunnel vision.

Then one day researching Jonathan Edwards’ background I came across the discipleship curriculum that he had been trained in by his church in how to have a God-filled work life. I was surprised to find that it was not “calling” as I would have expected from much of the recent surge of Reformed theology inspired writing and teaching on work. Instead it was a spiritual formation curriculum the Puritans called “*Technologia*”, Latin meaning “the study of skill.” *Technologia* was the Puritan’s little-known core curriculum at early Harvard and Yale for teaching the art of God-centered work and worldview. It was an expression of their Second Reformation vision to bring redemption to all of society, *reformatio vitae*, “the reformation of all life.” The vision and worldview of *Technologia* provided the philosophy precepts upon which Edwards built his Christ-enthralled vision of all things. But he was not unique, because Edwards and his fellow students—future pastors and merchants alike—were tested in it in order to graduate from early Harvard and Yale.

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If you asked an engineer in one of our churches what designing computer components has to do with the kingdom of God, my bet is that he or she probably could not pass the test. The reason is that we modern evangelicals have no functional equivalent for the systematic work life discipleship teaching that Edwards took for granted. That is why many today find the Puritan outlook so intriguing. We sense they had something we are missing. In even our best discipleship scope and sequences for spiritual multiplication, we seldom teach the transferable concepts of a God-centered work life.

In Luke 3, when John the Baptist preached the kingdom of God, the immediate response of the soldiers and tax collectors present was, “What shall we do?” John gave them specific answers about the implications of discipleship for their work situations. The modern church like John has been preaching the kingdom, but it has not sufficiently answered the question of what discipleship means for daily life.

The modern church, like John the Baptist, has been preaching the kingdom, but unlike John, has not sufficiently answered the question of what discipleship means for daily life.

Look through our best discipleship curriculum. You will find a glaring omission. We have not been discipling people for their 9 to 5 calling at work. As Howard Hendricks says, “You cannot impart what you do not possess.”

Yet, possess and impart it we must. Tim Keller argues that for the church to be missionally effective in post-Christian twenty-first-century America, one of its core characteristics must be that it “theologically train lay

people for *public* life and vocation.” He explains that “In 'Christendom' you can afford to train people just in prayer, Bible study, evangelism—private world skills—because they are not facing radically non-Christian values in their public life . . .” But to prepare people to live amid the anti-Christian culture of today, “the laity needs theological education to 'think Christianly' about everything and work with Christian distinctiveness.”

Our new missional context as Christians in a hostile culture dictates that “ministry” be redefined: “In a 'missional' situation, lay people renewing and transforming the culture through distinctively Christian vocations must be lifted up as real 'kingdom work' and ministry along with the traditional ministry of the Word.”

Our typical response to our hostile culture is to start talking about worldview. What we really mean is apologetics. We marshal our arsenal of arguments to convince them that they are wrong. We have a great defense, yet no offensive playbook. We are great at arguing why all the “-ism’s” (Buddhism, Atheism, Materialism, etc) aren’t, but have never explained to our own people “what is,” the reality God wants them to live out here and now where they live and work.

What we are missing in our discipleship is a true “life view”—God’s view of life in this world. We have not been fully teaching people God’s view of daily life and work. We have not equipped them in how to find the work for which he left them here after saving them (Eph. 2:8-10). We have not connected the dots for them between their daily job and his mission redeeming creation. Jesus’ Great Commission command to the church was to teach whole-life observance. We have not done that. We are guilty of partial life discipleship.

Reality: Worship Is Just A Service

Cost: The church’s primary purpose of worship goes unfulfilled during the hours people spend at work.

The church exists to grow the worship of every tribe, tongue and people—near and far. Our purpose is to point people to Jesus as their soul satisfaction in everything they do, to help them to see how to enjoy him and make him known in every aspect of their lives. Paul said, “So here’s what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work and walking around life—and place it before God as an offering.” (Romans 12:1, The Message) But, you cannot offer something as worship that you do not see as worthy. The result is that, unlike Jonathan Edwards, most Christians today have no idea what it means to enjoy God through their job.

The consequence of partial life discipleship is that believers live compartmentalized lives and do not worship God through their work. They go to work only because they have to. It pays the bills. Work is a net spiritual write-off. It does not count. At best, it funds the necessarily limited hours we can volunteer at church.

Work has no spiritual significance in an evangelical values system because it is just about widgets. We all know that widgets don't have souls. If making widgets or selling them or managing people who make and sell them has nothing to do with the kingdom of God, then certainly it has nothing to do with worship. Right? Remember, it is not what we preach but what people hear that counts.

Impartial discipleship short-circuits whole-life worship. People cannot worship God with something that they ultimately believe is unspiritual. Work is off people's spiritual radar screens because it is off the worship screen of their local church. Work as worship is not a routine part of the vision of most local churches. If our people are not working as unto the Lord (Col 3:23), then we as a church are failing at our primary purpose, which is the worship of God himself in all we do.

Reality: No Ephesians 2:10 Life Work Equipping **Cost: The faithful jump through our church hoops yet leave Sunday without seeing God's vision for their Monday.**

C.S. Lewis poignantly observed, "The sense of divine vision must be restored to man's daily work." One of the church's roles is to help people catch God's vision of their work. If our church is not routinely painting the vision of what it means to be on-mission for God in my work life through all our communication, assimilation and spiritual formation channels then people will continue by default to go to work for all the wrong reasons.

The church is like an aircraft carrier. A carrier is run by naval officers, but its mission is fulfilled by pilots. If people come on board and only get the message that the mother ship is the vision, then our mission is aborted before it started. It is easy to get them all excited about the ship, but in doing so they can totally miss the bigger mission and their critical role in it.

The aircraft carrier exists to train, brief, arm and launch pilots to be on-mission. That is how it achieves air dominance. Too many churches are more like cruise ships that have become tourist attractions rather than active catapults that put out to sea to help people catch and fulfill a vision for their God-given mission.

Whose ministry is the local church really equipping the saints for: their ministry or the church's ministry?

The problem is that incomplete messaging in the church results in people getting excited about everything *but* their work. We do a series on missions and people get the wrong idea that to be really spiritual they need to quit their job and move to Africa. They go through a membership class and walk out feeling it was just about spiritual gifts and how to plug in to use them at church.

Nothing was said about their God-given talents and their implications for their calling at work. They get so excited about a church that work pales by comparison. We challenge them to have a ministry, but inadvertently ignore the ministry they already have in their workplace. We celebrate their volunteer service that benefits our programming at church but rarely—if ever—affirm or commission them for their calling to serve at the office every day of the week. We do a campaign on sharing your faith at work, but its subtext is that my work only counts to the degree that I can share my faith.

To be sure, missions, spiritual gifts, service, and evangelism are all Biblical and all need to be taught by the church. But when delivered apart from their complementary wider biblical context alongside vocational God-centered mission, Satan can twist them into an unintended message to disillusion the working believer.

The omissions are subtle, yet they give a clear implicit message: my work does not matter. My job has nothing to do with church or the Kingdom of God and, therefore, nothing to do with my ultimate life mission. Here is the irony: the more excited and involved I am at church, the more I know my job is a waste. Needless to say, if that's the case,

our Ephesians 4:12 efforts to equip the saints are having counter productive results on their vision for their God-given Ephesians 2:10 work of service. Sunday is supposed to be about Monday.

Reality: No Fostering Of Christian Community At Work

Cost: The local church fails to consistently grow small group community precisely at the place where people have the most relationships.

Question: Where is the largest existing regular community in your city? Answer: At work. Jesus used these natural work relationships of his disciples to help recruit his followers. Matthew 9:10 tells how, “While Jesus was having dinner at Matthew’s house, many tax collectors and ‘sinners’ came and ate with him and his disciples.”

To grow community you have to go where the people are. Today people don’t gather daily in the temple. Sadly, they do not even eat most of their meals at home. Every day, however, most meet and interact with many people at the office. They probably have more conversational time with colleagues at work than they even do with their own spouses. The average person regularly interacts with twenty to fifty people each week through their work. They would be doing well if they could even name five people in their neighborhood.

Yet, where do we as churches spend the bulk of our time, money and staff encouraging community? In their neighborhood. The point is not to shut down neighborhood small groups but to point out the opportunities for community that we have missed by not having a strategy to pastor the church’s purposes in the missional area of people’s work lives.

Q: Where do we spend our money and staff trying to foster small groups? A: Neighborhoods

Q: Where do people know the least people? A: Their neighborhood

Q: Where do people know the most people? A: At work.

The fact is that community already exists at work. It just needs to be channeled for spiritual purpose. The world of work already has multiple layers of natural relational networks: coffee pot friends, lunch buddies, cubicle mates, acquaintances within the company, those above and below me, contacts in different departments, outside vendors, clients, competitors and peers across my vocational field. These affinity groups gather at regular intervals and are connected by natural communication channels.

By tapping into these existing relational networks and fostering purposeful community where people work, the church better fulfills its purpose of fostering committed Christian relationships. Christians in a workplace small group find fellowship, discipleship, encouragement and prayer support

where they need it most: on the battlefield.

A local church also can offer outreach-focused small groups in the workplace. These provide its members with a better platform for ministry. They can invite spiritually-searching coworkers into a work life small group that meets in the workplace near them discussing felt need issues they are facing today.

The church is then touching people through their work life and feeding their spiritual discipleship journey before they ever darken the door of the church. Instead of asking them to come to us, we have to go to them. This change in the direction of the “Walk Arrow” is a fundamental shift in becoming a more missionally effective church in the Post-Modern era. But such “missional” and “incarnational” church ministry cannot be fostered without the church building a bridge to the workplace.

The church cannot hope to transform a place where it has not presence. By fostering intentional community in the workplace we create new portals into people’ lives for the local church’s transformational discipleship. Doing so increases the length of the church’s ministry reach to those who would otherwise have no contact with the gospel.

Bottom line: a church without a strategy to foster the purpose of community in the workplace is a church that has missed one of its greatest opportunities for life transformation.

Reality: No Strategy For Marketplace Evangelism

Cost: The workplace is not being intentionally permeated and effectively transformed as God commands us.

The evangelism modeled in scripture was predominantly a proclamation of the gospel in the marketplace. Jesus did most of his evangelism in the public square. Of his 132 public appearances in NT, 122 were in the marketplace. Of the 52 parables Jesus told, 45 had a workplace context. The plan he gave for expanding the outreach of the church was one of reaching people in cities where they work. He said, “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). When you read the book of Acts, you see the apostles repeatedly proclaiming the gospel in the marketplace, the “*agora*”, the public square. Of 40 miracles recorded in Acts validating the gospel, 39 occurred in the marketplace.

But today the workplace has been called the “9 to 5 Missions Window,” compared to the “10/40 Missions Window” of the Muslim world because both are unreached groups with comparatively little in committed ministry resources. Go anywhere in the world and the marketplace is where you will find the largest group of unreached people gathered each day and yet proportionally it receives little or no intentional ministry focus by the local church.

A healthy reproducing local church with an intentional comprehensive strategy for effective Work life outreach and discipleship is the biggest missing piece to reaching the marketplace at home and abroad.

Make no mistake about it, the *local church* is the crucial *missing piece* to reaching the marketplace, whether it be here or abroad. Unlike the para-church, the local church already has a force of missionaries to reach this field. They are indigenous and fluently speak the language of these lost masses. They need no financial support as they are paid to go to this mission field every day. They do not need to build bridges as they already have existing relational networks there.

But this missionary workforce does need training and equipping in the unique challenges of sharing one’s faith at work. They need constant encouragement. Pastors need to be visiting them in their places of work. They need vision for their mission field cast repeatedly and often from the pulpit. Their missionary status should be commissioned. And the church needs to mobilize a concerted prayer effort to ripen the spiritual harvest of lives all around its people in the workplace.

Reality: No Business-As-Missions Mobilization

Cost: The interconnectedness of the new global economy is not being fully leveraged for the Kingdom of God.

In new the global economy, you don’t have to be a missionary to have regular contact with people around the world. For many Americans in business global travel is the norm and communicating around the globe is a daily occurrence. People’s work skills are one of their most natural entrées to the needs of people in another part of the world. This has enormous untapped potential for short-term missions mobilization and long-term international missions partnership development through the local church.

The problem with this potential missions force at home and abroad is that they just do not see themselves as missionaries. They do not see their workplace as a mission field. To them it is where they have to go to get a paycheck. They do not see their skill as a ministry tool. To them it’s just what they do at the office. Their Monday is nothing special; it’s just another day on the job. It is the church’s responsibility to envision, equip and mobilize them to fulfill this God-given Great Commission errand. The church needs to be an entrepreneurial greenhouse for lunching such “business-as-mission” enterprises that advance the Kingdom of God where it otherwise could not publically go.

A healthy reproducing local church targeting the workplace is a critical missing piece to fulfilling the Great Commission both in Jerusalem and in the ends of the earth. The Moravians were one of the earliest missionary movements that discovered the power of transplanting their lives and vocations to unreached places. Theirs was an holistic incarnational witness. The church has the God-given global responsibility to disciple people's whole lives.

When it comes to sending members on short-term missions, people's work skills and work connections are one of the most natural entrées to the needs of people in another part of the world, especially those otherwise closed to the gospel.

Only the church has the missionary people and missionary resources necessary to accomplish this mission. The local church that is not intentionally mobilizing and equipping its people for this mission field using their skills and vocations in the marketplace will have limited impact on it.

A church without a plan to envision, disciple, equip and mobilize its people for the mission of their work lives is an aircraft carrier whose planes are parked and rusting on deck. The mission has not been mapped in the briefing room. The runway lines have not been painted for takeoff. The enemy owns its airspace. It is a ship missing much of its purpose. People's work lives constitute one of the largest untapped

markets for local church ministry impact today. This kind of transformation of a sector of life and society, however, does not happen by accident. It must be purposefully driven. The consequences for this lack of intentional missional ministry to people's work lives go to the very foundations of the purposes of the church itself. Work life is a missing core component to a fully developed, reproducing healthy church.

Reality: Pastors Don't See The Work Life Blind Spot

Cost: A flock leaves the fold not prepared by their shepherd to face the challenges of life in the field.

When Jesus looked at the people in the city of his day, Matthew says, "he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36). When Jesus looks at the crowds coming out of our churches on Sunday heading toward another week of work, he sees that they are harassed too.

They are harassed by the stresses of too little sleep, a torturous commute, impossible bosses, fractious co-workers, inadequate health insurance, the stalking specter of unemployment, cursing customers, the ever-present juggling of career and children, and the threats of constant corporate change—just to mention a few.

Worst of all Jesus sees that in many ways they are still sheep without a shepherd. The church has long prided itself on pastoring people, but it has somehow overlooked the pastoring of its people's work lives. Imagine a shepherd that only cared for the sheep when they were at home at night and on weekends.

The key to developing the kind of church needed to fulfill the Great Commission in the marketplace is the church's pastor. Every aircraft carrier needs a captain to lead it into battle. People need their pastor to shepherd them in their 9 to 5 calling just as intentionally and vigilantly as churches shepherds their worship, their youth group, their children's ministry, their family life or their prayer life. We must pastor the "church scattered" Monday to Friday just as intentionally as we pastor the "church gathered" on Sunday.

"Seeing the crowd, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd."—Matthew 9:36

But the average pastor does not see this ministry blind spot. They were raised in American evangelicalism's implicit dualistic value system where ministry matters above all else. As pastors, they were the lucky ones who got the "higher calling." In the church they grew up in, the main role of the leading business people was just handing out bulletins and passing the offering plate. Pastors cannot relate to the business lay world because they usually went from college to seminary directly to the local church and never experienced the realities of the unbelieving workplace. Their seminary education taught them all the fundamentals of the pulpit point of view.

When a pastor enters the local church, he encounters the catch-22 of the unrealistic personal and organizational expectations placed on him by the reality of American consumer Christianity today. People expect the pastor they hire to produce the kind of church that they are used to. Sunday comes every week. The church is his caged world. By default he preaches its main concerns. As the leader of the church he is expected to use his time fixing the church's problems. He is on call 24/7 with the crises of its people. There is only so much of him to go around. Understandably, the main view from the pulpit is not the marketplace but the church.

To be considered successful, this pastor must grow this machine called the church. It consumes endless congregational man-hours with an org chart that must constantly be refilled with volunteers. So the pastor builds a process to assimilate people, their gifts and time into the work effort of the church. And if he succeeds in increasing the numbers of the church, the ultimate proof is the serial construction of bigger buildings, a business model that requires the constant raising of capital to fund its expansion.

The key to developing the kind of church needed to fulfill the Great Commission in the marketplace is the church's pastor. We must pastor the "church scattered" Monday to Friday just as intentionally as we pastor the "church gathered" on Sunday.

In this corporate church matrix in which all of us American Christians are culpable, the lay person is just a potent convert to the church, a potential volunteer, a potential new leader, a potential financial giver. All of this organizational inertia creates an institutional bias making the Sunday morning activities of the church the all-important center of the kingdom of God. Any vision placing the real center of kingdom focus elsewhere such as the work lives of his people at the office during the week is an organizational threat to the church-centric mentality of the average pastor and the people who hire him. Ironically, the Christian consumerism of the laity is hampering the church in discipling and mobilizing them for their mission at work.

Everyone loses: pastors, the people, the Kingdom of God not to mention a lost and dying world.

So we pastors must re-grind our ministry lenses. If Work life is a significant untouched sector of the Great Commission, then we must "reverse-engineer" the local church to best organize it do whatever it takes to reach and disciple people's work lives. We must ask ourselves, how must we most effectively position and structure the church to equip and mobilize people's work lives? If Work life is not on the map of a pastor's battle plan for the local church, then his people will remain largely out of action. Work life Ministry happens when church leaders take seriously Jesus' Great Commission, not just to raid the marketplace collecting evangelistic scalps or passing the plate for the next building campaign, but to grow an authentic presence on the public square making disciples whose life is salt and light to all those they work around.

Jesus knew that sheep need shepherding. He knew the church needed intentional leadership to fulfill its purposes. His delegation of missional responsibility was deliberate, clear and direct. It was to you and I, the leaders of the church, that he entrusted the intentional direction and purposeful growth of the church. He said to Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "You know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs" (John 20:15). It is time we leave the warm familiar comfort of the barn and take our shepherding out into the field to address and disciple the problems, issues and challenges of people's work lives.

Seizing The Missional Moment **Planting and Growing Work life Churches has the potential for significant Great Commission momentum.**

As Jesus promised his followers, "Greater works than these will you do!" (John 14:12) Historically workplace ministry has been a para-church ministry phenomena. But why cannot the church return to the "agora" or marketplace in which it originated? What if the missional movement of saturation church planting that is currently afoot took hold of this tool of work life missional ministry?

The first step to reaching our post-modern world is finding a way to establish a relational connection with them. Whether it is here in American cities or around the world, the workplace provides the most natural place to make that connection. It is the melting pot where everyone meets.

But we have to touch the lost where they have a felt need. One of the greatest sources of disillusionment in people's lives today is their work. The Gallup 2013 State of the American Workplace Study found that 70% of Americans feel emotionally disengaged from their job. People are acutely feeling the brokenness of the fall in their jobs and Jesus is the only source of redeeming hope. Jim Clifton, in his recent book, *The Coming Job Wars*, explains how this is not just a US phenomena. He reports that the number one need people around the globe identify in the lives is meaningful work. The field is ripe to hear the hope and goodness of the Lord who brings meaning to even the most demeaning work (Ephesians 6). The many trying issues of work today provide us with ample relevant touch points.

Our church growth and church planting strategies just need gene therapy adding the Work life Great Commission DNA. In *Boiling Point* George Barna predicted, "Workplace ministry will be one of the core future innovations in

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church ministry." As Mark Greene and Tim Keller have warned, the day to innovate and reproduce that kind of local church is now. Many sense this growing wave of a move of the Spirit of God in the marketplace. Dr. Billy Graham has said, "I believe one of the next great moves of God is going to be through the believers in the workplace." Peter Wagner has concluded, "Societal transformation is high on God's agenda and the chief catalytic force

to bring it about will be Christians ministering in the marketplace." Henry Blackaby has observed, "I've never seen the activity of God this deeply in the business community as I do right now."

Most of this activity to this point has largely been isolated to the para-church and corporate chaplaincy movements. Some innovative churches have begun developing various work life initiatives as well. But these are exceptions that prove the rule. Jesus gave the commission and mantle of Great Commission responsibility primarily to the local church. When will we obey? As Jesus said, "Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest." It is time for the church to help people see and reap the harvest of the fields they go into every Monday morning.

Conclusion

"A City On A Hill"

Three Hundred and eighty years ago there was a Christian businessman in England named John Winthrop. A friend of his, John White, shared with him his burden for reaching for Christ a vast continent that was a spiritually dark wilderness. Winthrop was infected with the vision for establishing multiplying "Godly plantings" of community in this far off land untouched by the gospel. These Godly businessmen charted a corporation as a vehicle to launch what they saw as a Great commission endeavor. It was named the Massachusetts Bay Company. Winthrop was asked to be its CEO. He hired a fleet of boats and leaving hearth and home, he risked his life and fortune crossing the Atlantic to take the gospel half way around the world. He knew not what he would face or what his mortal fate might be. He was willing to risk it all.

On his way to America, Winthrop—though a layman—preached a sermon about how this new "the city on a hill" in the new world would be judged by how godly it went about its business.

He said, "For we must consider that we shall be as a city upon a hill. The eyes of all people are upon us. So that if we shall deal falsely with our God in this work we have undertaken, and so cause him to withdraw His present help from us, we shall be a story and a by-word through the world. We shall open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God, and all professors for God's sake."

John Winthrop had been disciplined by his church in his work life and saw how his business could be a light and platform for advancing the gospel.

John Winthrop had been disciplined by his church in his work life. His faith as a follower of Jesus Christ defined not only how he saw his business, but also his vision how that business could be a light and platform for advancing the gospel.

The question for us as Christians today is are we going to continue business as usual? Will the church change to see the marketplace as “its business”? Are we going to keep our faith comfortably compartmentalized from our consumerized work lives? If so, we will remain “a story and a by-word” to our unbelieving culture that will “open the mouths of enemies to speak evil of the ways of God.” Or are we—the church—going to going to fulfill the Great Commission and our Godly errand planting and growing multiplying churches that disciple business to be “a city upon a hill”? If not, how can we re-reach the still lost continent American again and from it the world?

About The Author

Dr. Dave Scott is pastor, historian and church ministry innovator whose life mission is to live a God-filled life and help the local church embody and communicate God’s whole-life alternative to a spiritually curious world. Dave’s work life spiritual formation resources have been used by churches of all sizes to help equip the work lives of their people. For more practical help on steps towards a God-filled work, see his recent book, *Monday Morning Atheism: Why We Switch Off God at Work* available in paperback and Kindle versions at Amazon.com.

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