

# Living Our Faith at Work

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"You are our letter, written in our hearts, known and read by all men."  
II Cor. 3:2

The best way to evangelize anyone anywhere is to simply live our faith. Our most effective witness as individuals, a church, or a company is to embody evangelism as a lifestyle rather than a contrived program. People sense the difference between the authenticity of our love for them in Christ and our targeting them as part of our "soul-winning" endeavours. As in all things, only the real deal works.

Permit me to point out four major issues surrounding the important matter of effectively sharing our faith at work. While there are obviously other related issues, here are the ones I feel are most relevant:

1. Our faith and worship must be demonstrated through our work.
2. More than words, our lives witness to our faith.
3. Loving people necessitates bringing God into our conversation with them.
4. All of us must be trained and constantly growing in our skills of "fishing" for men and women.

Let us now examine each of these critical issues in order.

## **Our Faith and Worship Must Be Demonstrated through Our Work**

Most Christians believe that the word "worship" describes something we do at church services when we join the congregation in singing, but "worship" means much more than that. The Hebrew word itself describes a heart attitude far more than a particular action. To worship God means to reverence Him, honour Him, and submit our lives to Him. That is what the word literally conveys in the original language. In other words, to worship God is to posture ourselves in reverence before Him in the totality of all we do in life. Worship is then a lifestyle, in the Christian reality, and true worship draws the Holy Spirit into any activity or environment.

As I point out in my book, *Doing Business God's Way*, work is a holy, eternal calling. Therefore, our work should be an act of worship before our Master who ordained it to be so. To "evangelize" is to invoke the presence of God into the interaction of human beings, especially among the yet unsaved. If then, my work is done self-consciously as an act of faith and worship, I can expect God's presence to attend it and call attention to it. Our first form of evangelism in the workplace, or anywhere else, is the incarnating of God's pleasure in our obedient, excellent work as a demonstration to all men of the manifest reality of His presence and life.

## **More Than Our Words, Our Lives Witness to Our Faith**

Since most adults spend more time at work than anywhere else, it is my conviction

that the workplace ought to be the most opportune setting for believers to draw others into their eternal destiny in God. It is the "evangelistic" context with the greatest potential. It is precisely for this reason that our spiritual enemy has made the workplace "off limits" to the church in terms of adequately training people how to successfully display Christ there.

There is, however, even a more taxing problem than being inadequately trained by the church, and it is this: At work, people see the real us; they read our faces more than our tracts and listen to our soulish nonsense more than our "religious conviction." If we're not "living our faith at work," no other "witness" sufficiently counteracts the real us we have put on display. It is for this reason I am so excited about the Holy Spirit's growing focus on Christ in the marketplace. It is going to force millions of believers to put up or shut up or at least shut up until they grow up.

### **Loving People Necessitates Bringing God into Our Conversations with Them**

Real love, rather than duty-driven "religious love," mandates that believers live their faith enough to legitimize their verbal sharing of it. If you love me, show me; then tell me. Our grand problem as believers is that we simply love ourselves more than our neighbour or, in this case, our co-workers. I am sometimes amused by the quest for a so-called "Christian business." By that, many believe that if you are basically honest, pay your taxes, have some Bible verses on the wall and no Playboy magazines in the men's room, you have a "Christian business." Good start, but no cigar.

While we should discuss this issue in much greater depth, my comment on "Christian business" is this: How is the love of Christ and the living out of His law-word principles permeating the business from top to bottom? The law of love in the heart of believers covers people in prayer and seeks non-plastic ways to share God's love, life, and gospel with them. We should be praying and seeking ways to find genuine opportunities to demonstrate and speak the truths of the gospel with those in the workplace - ways they can see and with words that don't reek of religious platitudes or preachy superiority. This observation leads us to our final point of this essential discussion.

### **All of Us Must Be Trained and Constantly Growing in Our Skills of "Fishing" for Men and Women**

Jesus told Peter in Matthew 4:4, and by implication to all believers, that He would make Peter a "fisher of men." Fishing requires skill and a great deal of focused attention if one wants to be truly successful. As a general rule, Christians tend to be lousy fishermen.

This issue takes us into the heart of one of my main passions: How do we as believers successfully get into the "public conversation"? The world is having a conversation, and we aren't in it because unbelievers are not focusing on what we believers want them to be discussing. The world is talking about economic security and prosperity; we want them to be talking about their after-lives. They are talking about taxes and education; we want them to be talking about the scriptures. They are talking about job security, crime, and education; we want them to be talking

about Jesus, heaven, and the anti-Christ! Let's deal with it, Christians, you catch fish using their food (bait), not the food we want them to be feeding on!

In order to fish with bait the world's fish are biting on, it will require believers to do a glorious thing. We must study what the scriptures say about crime, education, taxation, national defense, building successful relationships, and economic prosperity deeply enough to intelligently get into their conversation and evangelize like Jesus did. We must practice spiritual jujitsu and use what people give us of themselves and their real concerns and then gently lead them in the direction of Christ using those concerns. This kind of biblical evangelism in the marketplace will not only "catch" the attention of the unbelievers, it will impact and transform believers in remarkable ways. We will actually learn the scriptures as they relate to here-and-now-reality and how God wants to release His Kingdom and will on earth as it is in heaven, prior to Christ's return.

The Spirit of God is pressing the issue of understanding biblical, economic realities and the ministry of believers in the workplace with a powerful and growing insistence. This necessitates a much deeper knowledge of the scriptures, a fundamental change in the way local churches equip their people for broad-based ministries, and a much more elective level of general evangelism. From a more historical perspective, here is what excites me - Martin Luther ushered in the revelation of the *priesthood* of all believers, and now the Holy Spirit, using the marketplace, is ushering in the *ministry* of all believers! Go, God!