

# Transforming Your Workplace for Christ

Os Hillman • Workplace, City & Nation Transformation

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"Transformation" is a powerful word. Just hearing it, you almost automatically think of radical conversions and incredible improvements. But is it possible to transform your workplace into something Christlike? Jesus thinks so.

Jesus spoke often of the "Kingdom of God", mentioning it 70 times in the New Testament. In the Lord's Prayer, for example, He says, "This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'" (Matthew 6:9-10)

The Kingdom of God, come to earth. Come to our homes. Come to our churches. Come to our workplaces. When I talk of transformation, I'm talking about bringing the Kingdom of God upon the workplace and society.

A daunting task, to be sure. Fortunately, we have a few success stories to give us confidence in the calling. A few people who've already done the unthinkable and combined God and work. People like Jeremiah Lanphier, for example.

The year, 1857. Jeremiah Lanphier was a New York City businessman who wanted to do something significant for God. In a small darkened room, in the back of one of the city's lesser churches, he prayed alone, making a simple request of God; a simple request that was ultimately earth-shattering: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?"

He was approaching midlife without a wife or family, but he had financial means, so he made the crucial decision to reject the success syndrome that drove the city's businessmen and bankers. Instead, he began a businessmen's prayer meeting on September 23, 1857. The meetings began slowly, but within a few months, 20 noonday meetings were convening daily throughout the city.

*The New York Tribune* and *The New York Herald* issued articles on the meetings, officially making them the city's biggest news. Now a full-fledged revival, it spread outside New York, and by the spring of 1858, 2000 businessmen met daily in Chicago's Metropolitan Theatre, and in Philadelphia, the meetings mushroomed into a four-month long tent meeting. Meetings were held in Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, Chicago, New Orleans, and Mobile.

Thousands met to pray because one man stepped out. Annus Mirabilis, the year of national revival, had begun. It was an extraordinary move of God through one man, and it started in the workplace, led by businessmen - a group long considered the least prone to any form of evangelical fervor.

And Lanphier's story isn't the only one. Ed Silvano, author of *Anointed for Business*, tells the story of a Filipino business man who owned a hotel chain. God

saved this man and began an amazing transformation in his life that in turn led to a major transformation in his large scale hotel.

The man owned a 1600-room hotel that covered three buildings. Because of its rates and location, the hotel had become a haven for prostitution, with the rooms being used as much as five times a day. There were over 2000 employees, and the primary clientele were more than 3000 prostitutes. One of Silviso's associates shared with the owner a formula for winning the lost, so he hired 40 pastors and told them to follow these instructions:

- a. Speak peace to the wolves. Bless those who curse you.
- b. Eat and drink with the sinners. Become their friends.
- c. Pray for them and their needs.

These were strict orders. The pastors were not to share the gospel until they'd met these three requirements *two years*. What an investment. But ultimately, it paid off: the pastors followed these three rules and saw every single one of the 2,000 employees get saved. The hotel was upgraded to an executive level, raising the rates and forcing the prostitutes out because they could no longer afford it. They even added a prayer chapel with 24/7 prayer available to anyone by dialing '7' on the telephone. Two years later, 10,000 guests had received the Lord on the property.

That's transformation! And that's the kind of transformation we can see in our workplaces. We just have to find the vision and the willingness to ask God the same thing Jeremiah Lanphier did: "Lord, what wilt Thou have me do?"