

10 Reasons We Should Stop Separating the Church Place and Workplace

When I teach, I make workplace leaders uncomfortable if they are disconnected to the local church, and I make pastors equally uncomfortable if they separate the church place from the workplace and do not understand marketplace ministry.

Until the day comes that the need to make a distinction between the two realms ceases—our assumptions will be incorrect.

The following are 10 reasons there should be no separation between the church place and workplace:

1. There is no church mountain, only a kingdom mountain.

Isaiah 2:1-4 states:

In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall go and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor shall they learn war any more.

As we can see from the above passage (which comes closest to the seven-mountain message many use in some transformation movements), the mountain of the Lord is also connected to the

temple or house of the Lord—which was a type and shadow of the believing church. Now His church abides in the earth as His temple (See 1 Cor. 6:19).

Also, according to Colossians 1:12,13, all true believers are already positionally in His kingdom, which also places us inextricably in the mountain of the Lord that sends the word of the Lord to the other lesser mountains (which in this passage refers to the nations of the world).

To place the church in the religion mountain is to imply that Christians in one of the other six mountains are not part of the church. Furthermore, to put the church in the religion mountain is also to place it in the same category as the Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus and other non-Christian religions—which is a misleading classification, in my opinion.

For more on this perspective, read my book *Understanding the Wineskin of the Kingdom*, available as an e-book and paperback on Amazon [here](#).

2. There is no separation between kings and priests.

While many in the so-called marketplace movement of the church have referred to themselves as “kings” and those in full time church ministry as “priests,” in Scripture, there is no such separation.

Romans 5:17 says: “For if by one man’s trespass death reigned through him, then how much more will those who receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.” (The Amplified Bible, Classic Edition says, “reign as kings in life.” Hence, all true believers function as both kings and priests, according to the apostle Paul.

The apostle Peter also put the function of the priestly and kingly together in 1 Peter 2:9 when he called the church a “royal priesthood” and “holy nation.”

3. We are to plant the gospel in cities, not in church buildings, according to Acts 1:8:

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you shall be My witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

Based on this Scripture, we are not to think of planting the gospel merely in a building for Sunday assemblies, but in communities, which implies gospel permeation in every aspect of culture—not merely the so-called church place. Thus, the very premise of separating church and marketplace is an unbiblical assumption.

4. All of the original apostles were workplace people, not religious leaders.

According to the Gospels: Matthew was a tax collector; Peter, James and John were fishermen; Simon was a zealot (political activist); and so on. Not one of the original apostles was known as a religious leader prior to being chosen by Jesus. Even Paul the apostle was known as a tentmaker (see Acts 18).

Furthermore, in the leadership of the church of Antioch, Barnabas was involved in real estate (see Acts 4) and Manaen was brought up with Herod the King, which means he was likely politically connected (See Acts 13:1,2).

Consequently, there was no bifurcation between church place and workplace in the minds of the original and early apostles; workplace leaders were also the overseers of the nascent church movement. Just because some of them eventually focused on the ministry of the Word and prayer (see Acts 6:2-4) doesn't take away from the fact that they were experienced and comfortable in both realms.

5. The creation of professional clergy.

This unfortunate development came after the institutionalization of the church in the fourth century and

is viewed as the norm in the contemporary church world, thus further separating church place and workplace in the minds of most people.

However, in Scripture, there is no such thing as the separation of clergy and laity; we are all called to represent Christ as His servants in His kingdom. There are, of course, those called to have a full time focus of overseeing and teaching the church, but they are never viewed as professional clergy in the New Testament; instead, merely as elders and mature believers.

6. The fivefold DNA of Jesus is for the whole church, not just for a select few.

According to Ephesians 4:7-12, the five ascension gifts of the church were dispersed throughout the whole body of Christ, not merely to a few elite leaders in the church.

“But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift ... He gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of service, and for the building up of the body of Christ.”

Hence, the five ascension gifts emanate out of Jesus’s ministry DNA, which means that everyone who has Christ living inside of them has at least one of the five ministry functions of Jesus operating by His grace.

Of course, some of these ministry gift leaders are assigned by God to focus full time on edifying the church, but that doesn’t diminish the fivefold function and calling of the other 98 percent of the believers who serve God in the workplace.

7. The church is primarily called to fill everyone else’s buildings, not just build our own church buildings.

Ephesians 4:10 says “He who descended is also He who also ascended far above all the heavens that He might fill all things.” Consequently, the modern-day mindset of merely focusing on the building of bigger and better church-related buildings was never the focus of the original cultural mandate to influence and fill the whole earth with the reign of Jesus the Lord (see also Gen. 1:28).

8. The Old Testament priests were involved in every aspect of life, not just the religious realm of temple ministry.

Leviticus chapters 11-15 illustrates the fact that the priests were not only responsible for ministering in things related to temple worship but also had to regulate and monitor dietary laws, the physical health of their people, as well as mold and mildew in local homes.

This shows that God had a holistic view regarding the role of the priests and did not limit their role to the so-called religious realm (according to 1 Pet. 2:8-9, all believers are called to be priests).

9. The biblical model shows that the church is a family of families and led by heads of households.

The New Testament qualification of an elder and deacon has to do with managing one's own house, having godly character attributes as well as having a good reputation with those in their local community. Having great preaching skills and leadership capacity are not even mentioned.

These qualifications further narrow the divide between church place and workplace, since the leaders of the early church were vetted primarily by their ability to integrate their faith with their normal family and communal life.

10. The church is about doing life in the kingdom; it's not a building for Sunday meetings or a religious

institution.

Scripture teaches us that the church was called to be a benefactor community to their surrounding city by being zealous for good works that would be a benefit to all people (not just church people. See both Titus 2:14 and 3:8).

In conclusion, as we read the writings of both the Old and New Testaments, we are struck by the holistic, Hebraic mindset of life that seamlessly integrates the church place and workplace without any hint of the dualism so prevalent in the Christian mindset today.