

Taking the Gospel to Work: What Is the Etiquette?

I have been hanging around the faith-and-work corner all of my adult life. At times, I tried to add catalytic thinking and enthusiasm to the category at large (like the *Life@Work Magazine* of old or of late).

Other times, I found myself in deep research and learning from the Scriptures as well as the thinkers of the past and the leaders in the present. And still other times, I simply sat down on a bench and just lingered, listened and watched people with faith go to work every day.

Here are a few principles I've discovered through this process:

It seems to me that every Christian on the planet falls into one of four categories regarding the gospel/work conversation:

1. Those who don't think the gospel has any relevance or place in everyday work life.
2. Those who think it does belong but believe its only footing is in the soft, private attitude elements.
3. Those who want to take the gospel to work but find themselves confused, unmotivated or alone in that aim.
4. Those who have discovered that the reach, power and intent of the gospel can revolutionize any worker ... doing any work ... in any setting.

Over the last two years, I have refined a framework that I believe can help veterans of faith as well as new pilgrims of faith move into the fourth category above. This framework is based on my 25 years of working with Christian leaders.

It is called "The Baseline and the Blue Sky," and it's explained in my new book *The Gospel Goes to Work: God's Big Canvas of Calling and Renewal*.

We need a Baseline that outlines the bare essentials or the lowest common denominator for any Christian ... doing any work ... in any setting. Some things in life and work apply to all of us, regardless of who we are and what we do. These baselines apply:

- Whether you are a baby boomer or a millennial (your age doesn't matter)
- Whether you are the CEO or a first-year newbie or even if you own the company (your rank doesn't matter)
- Whether you live in Denver or a small town in Alabama (your location doesn't matter)
- Whether you are working at Wal-Mart or a NFP or a small local coffee shop (your work setting doesn't matter)

But we also need help in thinking and framing the differences in our personality, calling and work. That is what I am calling the Blue Sky. This is where we figure out the differences in what we "can do, can't do and must do" in taking the gospel to work.

- Some leaders in some companies can pray publicly with people during a crisis. Others can't.
- Some organizations can direct a percentage of their profits toward faith-based causes at the end of each year. Others can't.
- Some leaders will express their faith in one manner while others will carry a dramatically different appearance.

We need a blue sky big enough for variety and particularization.

Chuck Colson once said: "*Christians are called to redeem entire cultures, not just individuals.*" As the gospel goes to

work with its full reach, power and intent, the culture is redeemed. I believe that is precisely what the New Testament writers had in mind when they gave us those three transformational metaphors of salt, light and sweet perfume.

I love the weekends. But I have to tell you, I love the weekdays just as much. Somewhere back in my younger life, the passion around taking the gospel to work grabbed me and has never released me. I hope this book can share a bit of that with you.

"I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help Him. I ended up by asking God to do His work through me."
—Hudson Taylor

Right now, you can order *The Gospel Goes to Work*. When you do, I'll also send you my exclusive e-book devotional, *Guidance for the Daily Grind of Work*. All you have to do is fill out this form with your email address and order number. After you submit the form, your e-book download will be emailed right away!

If you want to take a closer look at what the Bible says about how your job intersects the gospel, *A Man and His Work* offers an inspiring vision of work from God's bigger perspective.

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