

God at the Office



Christ is marshaling an army of professional women to advance His kingdom in the corporate world.

Someone once said, "People of vision see the invisible, hear the inaudible, think the unthinkable, believe the incredible and do the impossible." No one better exemplifies this adage than Christian women in the marketplace.

These visionary women are discovering their call from God to affect every arena of life. They are setting high standards of integrity and morality in their places of work. They are using their spiritual gifts and anointing, which have traditionally found expression only within the walls of a church, to bring success and favor in the secular world.

For women to succeed in this arena they must be willing to give up their old mind-sets. Hanging on to the old will keep them from the success and purposes God has for their lives.

What does this mean? If we aspire to be fruitful for God's kingdom in the marketplace, we must begin by exchanging our congregational

mind-set for
a biblical worldview.

For
too long, Greek thinking has influenced Christians.
Historically, the
Greeks possessed a worldview that divided the spiritual realm
from the
created realm. This view of reality saw church—that is, one's
faith—as
separated from life and work.

Writings
from Plato, the famous Greek philosopher, teach that the
created world
around us is not the "real" world. The real (ideal) world is
in the
eternal and is detached from the temporal. This real world can
be known
only through concepts and perhaps only after death.

Contrasted
to this Greek thinking is a Hebrew, or biblical, worldview.
Hebrew
tradition based upon the Word of God holds to the truth that
God is
everywhere. He is omnipresent and desires for us to come into
relationship with Him through His creation.

According
to this view, the spiritual or unseen realm is one with the
created
realm. The spiritual realm does not exist in a separate or
removed
dimension. Therefore, God is in union with all of life in
creation.

The

Bible tells us that “[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together” (Col. 1:15-17, NIV).

God did not intend for us to inhabit the earth with a distinction between the heavens and the earth, between divine things and natural things. All things are to express and manifest the attributes, nature and power of the Son of God.

THE HIGH CALLING OF WORK

Marketplace women are to manifest the image of the Lord in their places of business. Their work is a high and holy calling.

In fact, the word “work” in Hebrew means “worship.” Your work is to be an expression of worship to the Lord.

God’s people have been assigned the task of being His stewards on the earth. They are to represent Him by being His image bearers and tending the earth as His representatives. Their job is to bring transformation wherever God sends them.

When

marketplace women do this, God's glory is released through them at

their places of work. "'As long as it is day, we must do the work of Him

who sent Me,'" Jesus said (John 9:4).

I

remember growing up with a Greek mind-set, one which held that the only

"holy ground" was inside the church building. I had the idea that when I

left church, I was going into the devil's territory.

And

the devil was big and bad! I needed to brace myself for an onslaught

from the enemy. The only safe place for me spiritually was inside the

church walls.

In our church

we read a Scripture that said, "Come out from them and be separate" (2

Cor. 6:17). Attempting to be obedient, we misapplied this verse to our

lives, abandoning our responsibility as Christians to impact the

government, the educational system, the financial institutions, the arts

and media. We did not understand that Christians are to bear the image

of God in our places of work. We did not understand that we are to

steward the earth and help bring transformation on the earth.

Thankfully,

God has opened our eyes, and today He is raising up powerful

women in
the marketplace who have a biblical worldview. These women are
using
their God-given gifts and abilities to demonstrate, not only
for
Christians but also for the world, how good God is.

Diane DeJoy is one of them. She, like so many women today, is
making a difference in the workplace.

She
knows she has a high call of God on her life. But her call is
not to
preach from behind a pulpit. Her call is to implement kingdom
principles
in her sphere of influence.

Fulfilling
it has not always been an easy task. Diane paid a great price
to stand
for righteousness and integrity in the workplace.

While
working as a controller for a large corporation, she
discovered that
someone had made false entries in the financial journals of
the company.
Diane tried to deal with the situation but was told by the CFO
that she
had to “cook the books.”

After
refusing to cooperate with the scheme, she was fired. As hard
as it was
for Diane personally, the Lord strengthened her, and one day,
her
supervisor at the company, the divisional vice president, came
to her

with tears in his eyes. He had watched how she conducted herself at work during that devastating time. Now he wanted her to know that her example was instrumental in his receiving Jesus as his Savior.

Diane,
along with other professional women, is courageous in her calling. She embraces a biblical worldview and understands that God can give her a strategy for success in the place where she works.

Women
in the marketplace often contend with a number of difficulties. Some face lack of promotion, sexual harassment or other challenges simply because they are women. Yet these professionals are making godly decisions as a result of their understanding of the call of God on their lives.

WILLING TO TAKE RISKS

God
is also raising up women in the marketplace who are risk-takers. These women are willing to step out of their comfort zones and do what few women are willing to do.

My
friend Dr. Betsy Neuenschwander went through medical school when few women were being educated to become doctors. To be accepted in her field, she felt she had to work harder, make higher scores on

her exams
and curry the favor of her professors.

But
Betsy did not allow those obstacles to stop her from pursuing
her
career. She realized the Lord was preparing her to help
transform
nations. She knew she had a God-given destiny to fulfill.

To
be a risk-taker, a woman must be willing to face the unknown.
She has
to deal with the fears designed to hinder her from her
destiny.

Fear was a major stronghold in my own life when I was young.
Name a fear, I had it!

But
after I became an adult, I attended a meeting in which a woman
spoke on
the fear of the Lord. She made a statement that changed my
life
forever. "You will never walk in the fear of the Lord until
you lose the
fear of man," she declared.

At
that moment I realized for the first time in my life that I
was
consumed by the fear of man. Revelation opened my heart to
realize that I
had spent my life trying to please people more than trying to
please
God.

Immediately, I fell on
my face and cried out to the Lord. "Forgive me," I wept. "Help

me to
want to please You more than I want to please people.”

Walking
out that commitment to the Lord has not been easy for me. In
the early
days of fulfilling my call, it was difficult for me to speak
to more
than three people at a time. I could not get a sound out of my
mouth.

Clinging
to my commitment to the Lord, I would sense the gentle nudging
of the
Holy Spirit: “Is this the fear of the Lord or the fear of
man?” I had to
make a choice. “I choose the fear of the Lord,” I would reply.

I
had to run into my fear rather than running from my fear. I
could not
reach my destiny and do what I am called to do if I still had
fear in my
life.

Today, traveling to
the nations and often speaking to several thousand people, I
never
experience fear. In fact, it is hard for me to remember I was
fearful at
one time. I am one of the boldest women around!

God is faithful to deliver us from all our fears (see Ps.
34:4). He wants His women to be all He created them to be.

Often
women business owners and employees in the marketplace are
fearful
about expressing their faith at work. They are not sure what

they can
legally say and do.

Getting
legal counsel can help business owners remain safe. An article
appeared
in Fortune Small Business magazine several months ago, in
which Ellyn
Spragins described the “dos and don’ts” for business owners
regarding
the application of their faith in the work environment:

“Civil
rights legislation bars employers from making any employment
decision
based on religion, but it covers only firms with 15 or more
employees.
Smaller companies are free to use religion as a reason to
hire, fire, or
promote an employee—as long as they’re not located in a state
whose
laws cover smaller businesses....Smart business owners know the
law and
find ways to make employees of all faiths—or none—feel welcome
at their
companies.”

Women in the
marketplace are God’s instruments to capture the attention of
those
around them and to demonstrate kingdom principles in their
spheres of
influence. God wants the workplace to be a microcosm of His
kingdom on
Earth. From that place, change can come to the rest of
society.

It

is no longer enough just to plant churches. Humanity has a great need for women to influence business, education, the arts, the media, finances, the government and every other arena of society.

Women

in the marketplace have an opportunity today to be part of the solution for the many problems found in society. With the help of the Lord, you and I can make a difference.

I once read, "When your life is over, the world will ask you only one question: 'Did you do what you were supposed to do?'"

In

whatever sphere of influence God is calling you to, you can make a difference. You can "do the impossible" and help bring His kingdom to Earth. So throw off your old mind-sets, cast off your fears and become a risk-taker for Him.

Read a companion devotional.

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