

July 30, 2018
By Robert J. Tamasy

THE CHALLENGE OF DOING BUSINESS...BY FAITH

Faith is an interesting concept – and a challenging reality. When we are involved in a worship service, faith seems so simple. We sing songs that affirm our faith in God. We might repeat faith declarations that date back centuries. We hear uplifting spiritual messages that remind us of biblical promises we can embrace by faith. But then Monday arrives, and we find ourselves back in the workplace. How simple is faith then?

Over the years I have encountered many people who express and demonstrate much faith in spiritual settings, but seem to abandon their beliefs in the so-called “secular world.” Some church traditions have even taught a divide between the sacred and the secular, but the Scriptures make no such claim. In fact, *Colossians 3:23* boldly instructs, *“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord not for men.”* Faith is not to be confined to one day a week.

But let’s be real. In the midst of business setbacks, whether failing to secure an important contract, not being able to close a much-anticipated sale, struggling to meet a deadline, or failing to receive a much-desired promotion, our faith in God and His direction might not seem as strong as we thought it was while in a safe, worshipful environment. Then we face a dilemma, because *“faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by deeds, is dead,”* as *James 2:17* states.

When I think of people of faith, one who comes to mind is George Muller (1805-1898), who cared for more than 10,000 orphans over his lifetime, and established 117 schools which offered Christian education to more than 120,000 children. What stands out to me is not only the Christian-based

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humanitarian work that consumed his life, but also the strong faith that guided his actions every day.

Citing the impact of faith on his work, Muller wrote, “Trusting the Lord for the supply of my temporal needs keeps me from anxious thoughts like, ‘Will my salary last and will I have enough for next month?’ In this freedom I am able to say, ‘My Lord is not limited. He knows my present situation, and He can supply all I need.’ Rather than causing anxiety, living by faith in God alone keeps my heart in perfect peace.”

Is this the attitude you take when thinking about your daily needs, whether at work, in your family, or for other personal matters? Maybe it will help for us to consider some of the things the Bible tells us about what could be termed “working faith”:

What faith really is. Faith in God, His direction and provision is not tangible, but rather a confident assurance, or earnest expectation, that what He has promised will be fulfilled. *“Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen” (Hebrews 11:1)*. Another translation of this verse states, “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.” Another passage, *Romans 8:24*, elaborates by connecting faith to hope: *“But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?”*

Action is evidence of faith. Faith could be called “belief in action,” like a toddler trustingly jumping into a parent’s arms in a swimming pool, confident he will not be dropped into the water. It could be said, no action, no real faith. *“What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds?... Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do” (James 2:14,18)*.

© 2018. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today’s Workplace*; *Tufting Legacies*; coauthored with David A. Stoddard, *The Heart of Mentoring*, and edited other books, including *Advancing Through Adversity* by Mike Landry. Bob’s biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

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Reflection/Discussion Question

1. If asked to give your own definition of faith, and what it means in your life and your work, how would you respond?
2. Do you typically pursue your work and business responsibilities by faith? Or do you tend to operate "by sight," relying on things you know, can see and touch? Explain your answer.
3. Had you heard of George Muller before? He would be someone worth reading more about, but what is your reaction to what he said about his trust in God freeing him from anxious thoughts and worries?
4. How do you view the connection between true biblical faith and putting it into action?

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more about this subject, consider the following passages:

Romans 4:18-25; 2 Corinthians 4:18, 5:7; Hebrews 11:2-40

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