

BEING REPURPOSED, NOT REPLACED**By Chris Simpson**

or many of us in the marketplace, our work – what we do – is a large part of our identity. What impact should it have then when striving to incorporate faith into how we carry out our vocational responsibilities? We find the best example in how Jesus Christ addressed this when choosing His closest followers.

When Jesus called Peter and Andrew, He did not strip them of their identities. “And He said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men’” (Matthew 4:19). Jesus did not say, “Forget everything you know.” Instead, He spoke into their vocation as fishermen and redefined it: “Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men.” In essence, He was saying: Everything you’ve been shaped by – your skills, your instincts, your daily grind – I can use that. But now, for something eternal.

Jesus did not replace their identity; He repurposed it. And this is precisely how He calls us today. We often assume that following Jesus means walking away from the career, the training, the story we have lived up to this point – as if being His disciple requires starting from scratch. But that is not the gospel. The call of Christ is not to abandon our past, our skills, our experience, but to surrender them. It is not about becoming someone else – it is about letting Him redeem who we already are.

God has sovereignly authored your experiences, your gifts, your network, your education, and even your struggles. To discard them would not only be wasteful – it would be unfaithful. It would imply that God has not been at work all along preparing you for usefulness in His Kingdom. But He has been at work. Always.

I witnessed this firsthand during my time with the United States Secret Service. The mission was demanding: to secure environments, protect lives, anticipate threats. I took that mission seriously. But I began to realize that God had not called me out of that mission to serve Him – He had called me to filter it through my faith.

One day, deep in the Cambodian jungle, we were preparing for a visit by the First Lady, the President’s wife. It was just another advance site. But God had other plans. That day became the starting point of forming a Gospel-centered relationship with another agent from New York. That conversation, born out of professional proximity, turned into years of mentoring, prayer, and discipleship – until the Lord ultimately called my friend and fellow agent to his eternal home. The whole thing unfolded not in spite of my profession, but precisely through it.

This is how Jesus Christ works. He does not waste a moment of your story. The very things you thought were secular, irrelevant, or “just your job,” might in fact be the very instruments through which He calls others to Himself. So don’t think the invitation to follow Jesus means leaving everything familiar behind. It means placing everything you are and everything you have been given into His hands – and trusting Him to repurpose it for His glory.

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You were gifted for a reason. You have been placed where you are on purpose. To separate your calling from your context is to misunderstand both. The call of Christ is not to discard your story; it is to declare a new purpose over it: **Same hands. Same instincts. But...New mission. New Master.**

© 2025. Christopher C. Simpson is dedicated to fostering a bold and triumphant Christian faith within the global marketplace, driven by a deep conviction in the Gospel's transformative power. Before becoming President of CBMC International, Chris dedicated 28 years to a distinguished career in the public sector – as a Commanding Officer in the U.S. Marine Corps; and serving in the U. S. Secret Service, responsible for protecting seven American presidents and leading elite teams in complex, high-stakes international missions. With his wife Ana, a native of Nicaragua, and their three children, Chris resides in Boca Raton, Florida.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. In what ways has your career prepared you for Kingdom impact—perhaps without you realizing it at the time?

Follow-up: How might your current skills, relationships, or position be uniquely positioned for Gospel influence right now?

2. Jesus repurposed the disciples' vocation rather than replacing it. How might this challenge our assumptions about what it means to "serve God" in the marketplace?

Follow-up: Have you ever felt pressure to separate your faith from your work? Why do you think that divide exists?

3. Reflecting on your own story, where do you see signs that God has been at work "redeeming, not discarding" your past?

Follow-up: What part of your professional journey do you now view differently because of your faith?

4. What would it practically look like to "filter your mission through your faith" in your industry or company?

Challenge for This Week

Are there conversations to be had, decisions to be made, or relationships to be established or strengthened this week through which you can intentionally start to live out these truths? That God does not want to replace your identity, or re-place you somewhere else, but to repurpose who you are, what you do, and where you are to be actively engaged in His Kingdom work?

If you know of someone who seems to have a good understanding of what it means live out his or her faith in the workplace, you might want to set a time to meet and talk about what they have learned.

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:
Genesis 50:20; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 7:17; Ephesians 2:10; Colossians 3:23-24

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