

September 18, 2017
By Robert J. Tamasy

CONFINING FAITH TO COMPARTMENTS?

Compartments can be useful. We have “glove compartments” in our vehicles, even though hardly anyone uses them for gloves – instead, we keep flashlights, maps, repair receipts and other things there. Toolboxes and craft cases have compartments to keep things separated for easy access. But should one’s spirituality – faith – also be kept in a compartment, taken out only for special occasions?

Recently a friend who seeks to encourage and challenge business and professional people to consistently and effectively reflect Jesus Christ in the workplace made this comment to me:

“I try to help my groups to integrate their faith in their business and within their sphere of influence in the marketplace. Unfortunately, they are very compartmentalized and are righteous on Sundays and holy terrors the rest of the week.”

This statement is strong, but also sad. It seems these businessmen and women have failed to grasp the connection between biblical truth they are being taught and its proper application for the work they do throughout the week. Since its inception, this has been a goal of “Monday Manna” – to show the practical relevance of what the Bible teaches to how we conduct ourselves on the job every day.

There is an adage, “East is east, and west is west – and never the twain shall meet.” However, when it comes to faith in Jesus Christ, the Bible says His presence and influence in our lives should be evident everywhere we go, in everything we do. Consider:

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Who are we called to serve? Typically, we go to work believing we are there to serve our company, organization or immediate superior. In one sense, that is true. But the Bible says we have a higher calling than that. *“And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.... Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving”* (Colossians 3:17,23-24).

We share in a unique partnership. It is tempting at times to question the value of our work, the significance of what we do each day. But according to the Scriptures, we are to understand we work in concert with God and His plans. *“For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building”* (1 Corinthians 3:9).

Work fulfillment ultimately comes from God. We often look to our work for meaning and fulfillment, but it can be even more meaningful when done as service to God and others. *“A man can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in his work. This too, I see, comes from the hand of God, for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment?”* (Ecclesiastes 2:24-25).

We represent Jesus through our work. Many outside the family of God will never venture into a church on their own. Our work provides a built-in network through which we can represent Him to others. *“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God”* (2 Corinthians 5:20).

© 2017. 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 numerous other books, including *Advancing Through Adversity* by Mike Landry. Bob’s website is www.bobtamasy-readywriterink.com, and his biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

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Reflection/Discussion Question

1. What are some “compartments” that you commonly use in your life? What is their purpose?
2. How do you react to the statement, “...they are very compartmentalized and are righteous on Sundays and holy terrors the rest of the week”? Do you think this assessment of the business and professional people seems too harsh, or have you experienced this type of attitude yourself?
3. If you were to apply the exhortation to do your work “with all your heart, as working for the Lord,” what do you think that would look like? Would it look different from how you carry out your work now?
4. When you read the words, we are “God’s fellow workers,” or that we are “Christ’s ambassadors,” what does that mean to you? Do you think we can become reality for us while compartmentalizing our faith? Explain your answer.

NOTE:

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

Proverbs 10:5,9, 11:1,3, 16:11, 18:9, 20:14, 21:5-6, 22:4,29, 27:18,21; Ephesians 2:10

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