

R. Paul Stevens Marketplace Lectures
**Taking Your Soul to Work:
Experiencing God in the Marketplace**

Sponsored by Vocatio Creation in partnership with
EFCC Tung Fook Church & HKPES

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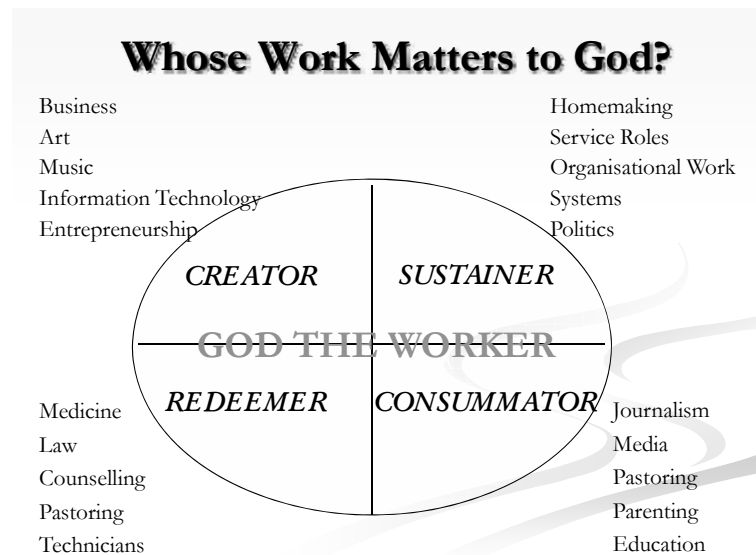
I. Introduction

“Someone asked Abba Anthony [the founder of Eastern monasticism], ‘What must one do in order to please God?’ The old man replied, ‘Pay attention to [these three things]: whoever you may be, always have God before your eyes whatever you do; do it according to the testimony of the holy Scriptures; in whatever place you live, do not easily leave it.’”
(The Sayings of the Desert Fathers: The Alphabetical Collection, trans. Benedicta Ward SLG, 2)

Christian spirituality is a way of life of disciples of Christ. It is the lived experience of God, rooted in the revealed word of God, grounded in community and illuminated by the rich tradition of the church. It is concerned with all of life, not merely piety and not exclusively prayer. It is both individual and corporate, churchly and worldly, inward and outward, concerned with personal relationship with God and with justice in the world. Further Christian spirituality is biblical and Trinitarian.

II. Revelation: Where Is God in the Marketplace?

A. Doing work that reflects and embodies the creative work of God



- B. The fact that we are working at all
- C. In our co-workers – image-bearers
- D. In our relationships with co-workers

E. God is sustaining the factory, office, enterprise

F. Charismatic events

For Reflection

- How have you encountered God in the workplace?
- When do you feel closest to God?
- When do you feel most distant?
- What causes you to celebrate?
- What brings stress, distress?

III. Resistance: Understanding and Grappling with Resistance in the Marketplace

A. Mammon

B. Economic globalization

C. Greed

D. Power

E. The Demonic

F. Technology

Which Ones Do You Encounter?

	Exorcism Intercession	Suffering Powerlessness	Creative Participation	Just Revolution
Metaphysical Explanation	Demons	Structures with Satan	Structures	Evil structures
Vocation	Deliverance	Preaching Prayer Suffering	Regents Work Politics	Civil disobedience
Denominations	Charismatic	Anabaptist	Mainline Reformed	Liberation theology R. C.

For Reflection

- How have you experienced resistance to the Kingdom presence in your work?
- When and how have you observed any or all of the dimensions of resistance: structures, ideologies, forces, institutions and the demonic?
- Have you grappled with the powers by prayer, transformative action, intercession, deliverance?

IV. The New Business Spirituality: Diversion or Opportunity?

- A. A mixture of New Age and traditional spiritualities
- B. Corporate aspect: higher purpose more than higher profit, ecological sensitivity
- C. Personal aspect: self-actualization, autonomy, creativity, spiritual motivation
- D. Cosmic aspect: cooperation, harmony, spiritual evolution and global synergy

V. Disciplines: Patterns of Spiritual Responsiveness That Can Be Used in the Marketplace

A. The Mixed Life: Spirituality FOR the Marketplace

The “Desert” Disciplines:

- 1. Lectio divina
- 2. Lectio continua
- 3. Fasting
- 4. Repentance
- 5. Journal-keeping
- 6. Waiting prayer
- 7. Sabbath

B. Spirituality IN the Marketplace

- 1. Prayer - before, during and after
- 2. Celebration (having objects in your workspace or on your person that remind you of God)
- 3. Meditation

The Active Contemplative: The ways in which the work experience itself invites us to be contemplative and to be found by God:

- a. Why am I so sensitive to criticism?
 - b. Why do I fill up the gaps in my date book?
 - c. Why do I find it hard to give up places, positions and ministries?
 - d. Why am I so competitive?
 - e. Why is it so important for me to succeed?
 - f. Why am I unable to let go of the pain of others?
 - g. Why am I afraid to be alone, always seem to need people?
 - h. Why am I so discontent?
- 4. Hospitality

C. Spirituality THROUGH Work

1. Work reveals our interior life
2. Work is where the Seven Deadly Sins find expression
3. Work is where virtues (Spirit-fruit) can be nurtured

For Reflection

- How in the context of your work, its frustrations and its joys, have you been drawn to God?
- How has your character been formed through the realities of work?
- How, in your work, have you been invited to take up the cross, to deny yourself and to follow Christ?
- While walking in a neighbouring village late one night, a Hassidic rebbe met a man who was also walking alone. For a while, the two walked in silence. Finally, the rebbe turned to the man and asked, 'So, who do you work for?' 'I work for the village,' the man answered. 'I'm the night watchman.' They walked in silence again. Finally, the night watchman asked the rebbe, 'And who do you work for?' The rebbe answered, 'I'm not always sure. But this I will tell you. Name your present salary and I will double it. All you have to do is walk with me and ask me, from time to time, 'Who do you work for?' (Jeffrey Salkin, *Being God's Partner: How to Find the Hidden Link between Spirituality and Your Work*, 29)