

MONDAY MANNA

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GREAT COMMISSIONS...AND THE GREAT COMMISSION

By Robert J. Tamasy

If someone were to ask why you go to work, how would you respond? There are many possible answers to that question: To earn a living and pay bills; To earn enough money to support one's desired lifestyle; To build a rewarding career; To find expression for one's skills, expertise and interests. Some might sarcastically reply, "To fill in the time between weekends, holidays and vacations."

For people in sales, one of their primary motivations at work is to receive greater commissions. The more they sell the more money they can make. But have you ever considered a different type of commission to pursue – at least for those who serve Jesus Christ in the workplace?

Just before leaving His followers and ascending to heaven, Jesus gave what is commonly referred to as His "Great Commission": *"Therefore go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you..."* (Matthew 28:19-20). Without question, this is very unlike any sales commission – it involves no monetary exchange. However, in some ways, it is far more valuable than the highest commission one could ever earn in selling products and services.

What does this have to do with the workplace? That is a valid question. In reality, it provides a very meaningful answer to the question of why we go to work. Because although earning income and finding fulfilment in our vocations are important, the Bible states, *"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus"* (Colossians 3:17). So for those of us who profess to believe in Him and follow Him, we have been placed in our respective workplaces to serve Him and others.

One way is to participate in His commission to "make disciples," which means to invest in others, helping them to understand what the Bible says, how it relates to the marketplace as well as one's personal life, and how to grow in their faith so they can pass it along to other people. Today there are many who would say they believe in Jesus Christ, but their lives would suggest that they do not. Part of "making disciples" in the workplace is teaching and demonstrating how to "do it all in the name of the Lord." Here are some other things the Bible says about being a disciple of Jesus Christ in the business and professional world:

Serving as an example. Someone has said, "I would rather see a sermon than hear one any day." As we strive to apply biblical principles and uphold God's commands and standards, we model for others what that should look like. *"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me – put it into practice"* (Philippians 4:9).

Being His ambassadors. Just as ambassadors from one nation serve as its representatives in foreign lands, as disciples of Christ we are instructed to represent Him in a "foreign" environment where matters of faith are often discounted. *"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).

Bringing light into the darkness. In a time when illegal, immoral and unethical behaviours and practices seem rampant, striving to serve God and uphold His commandments can separate us from many of our peers in a positive way. *"Do everything without complaining or arguing, ...children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe"* (Philippians 2:14-15).

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. Why do you go to work each day?
2. Do you think participating in Jesus' "Great Commission" is a genuine motivation for pursuing a career and success in the marketplace? Why or why not?
3. How would you respond to someone who argued that matters of spiritual faith – including following Jesus Christ – are "religious" matters and should have no bearing on how we live, work and conduct ourselves in the workplace?
4. If you agree that Jesus' mandate to "go and make disciples" can and should apply to the business and professional world, how should we strive to do that while also fulfilling our specific roles and responsibilities to the companies and organisations where we work?

NOTE:

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

- Ephesians 2:10, 4:17-18, 5:8-11;
- Colossians 3:23-24;
- 2 Timothy 2:2, 3:16-17