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Examples of Calling and Work

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Emerging Leaders Conference
Philadelphia PA
June 7, 2012

“Business As a Calling”

1. Greetings – Review people and organizations represented – (pick out some names)
 - Week of learning & development
 - Some great teachers – Jim Plueddemann

2. I would like our time to be a dialogue – a time of questions and discussion, not lecture
 - Review summary of my journey in life

3. You are young / emerging leaders from ministry or mission organizations – why should we be talking about business? Or Business As a Calling?

4. Is the Doing of Business an Issue in our World = what do you think about when the term business is raised?

5. Recent trip – Europe
 - Big issues
 - Economy – Euro / Greece / Spain
 - Faith – Equality = neutrality in public square

- Cross
- Prayer
- Council in Restorative (?)

6. What is Your Business?

(Developing People)

7. Discussion and Role Play

A. Two of you here met for the first time – over a cup of coffee – you have a conversation about what you do and the organization you represent and how you got there (pick person)

B. Change the Circumstance

We are now at a conference for emerging Christian business leaders

8. Read letter from student:

Listen to this letter I received from a graduate of a Christian college. It reflects what may be some common understandings or misunderstandings of how God works and calls us to a purposeful life.

The student starts out by saying:

“I am very happy to report that, by God’s grace and fullness, I actually did graduate. For the first time since age five, I am not a student.

“It’s been a good four years of learning. I was an English major and a Bible minor. I can now read in the Greek New Testament. I know phrases like: inaugurated eschatology and hermeneutical fallacy. My interpretation of scripture has increased in both caution and confidence.

“I have made wonderful friends here, in breakfast Bible studies and noon prayer sessions for missions, in afternoons in the fall playing football and in the spring playing baseball, and late nights in the dorm having fun. The farewells will be very difficult.

“So, what’s next? I am moving to Kansas City where I will be closer to my family. I’ll find a job and pay off my student loans. What kind of a job? I really don’t know – construction work or some type of administrative work for a business? I also will apply to various mission agencies. I feel called to the mission field and, in a year or two, I hope to be in full-time Christian service. Where, I don’t know. Ethiopia? Papua New Guinea? India? I will wait for God’s call to the right place.

“Please pray for me in the next couple of months. It is going to be quite a transition and, frankly, I am not looking forward to it. For the first time, I am leaving a Christian community to live among ordinary, working Americans. I am expecting a considerable amount of uncertainty and

loneliness, but I hope to develop some friends at the local church I will be attending.”

So, what is this student saying? Could it be that his view is representative of a common understanding of “Calling” within our evangelical culture?

Is there some form of hierarchy in God’s calling with a special place for what people often refer to as “full-time Christian service?” Will we somehow miss out if we don’t do something that fits into this category? Should we think of God’s call in the context of a location or special place of service? Is it only about what we should do and the place where we should do it or is it more about who we are and who we are becoming in our relationship with God? And by the way, where does ordinary work with those ordinary people fit in -- the ordinary people that God so loves and for whom Jesus died?

9. What does Scripture say about God’s call?

Philippians 3:13, 14	Galatians 5:13	Ephesians
Forgetting what lies behind I press for the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus	Called to freedom – thru love to serve love your neighbor as yourself	Walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called
Whatever you do – do all to the glory of God – I Corinthians 10:31		

10. What do we say about the purpose of business?

- A. A place to work
- B. Producer of goods & services
- C. Producer of "**Profit**"

— What is "Profit" / Good / Evil ?

— What do we often think of when we talk about profit – "Greed" ?

— Is it a virtue or a vice ?

— What did Jesus say about it ?

- "What does it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?"
- "No man can serve two masters / God and money"
- Psalm 26: God owns it
- Luke: parable of stewards: We should produce it / we are stewards
- Luke: We should be shrewd in gaining it and using it

It is an essential means in life – Generator of capital

1. Family
2. Church
3. Missions/ministry
4. Government (Taxes)

It is business that generates for all of the above

But as an end goal results in poverty of the soul

D. A Developer of People

— What they do

Who they are

Fail

Perform

Recognize

Ignore

Cycle

of

Development

Confidence

Serve

Arrogance

Self

E. A Mission – Business as a Mission

F. A Vehicle (Drucker comment – Vehicle for Distribution of Your Faith)

G. What It Is Not – an Institution!

ServiceMaster – Objectives

What they mean

- End – Means
- First - not a standard for exclusion
 - Faith affirmed but not imposed
 - Definition of God (personal)
 - What is common between God & Profit (People)

Stories

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| — Joe Kirday | — Japan opening exercise |
| — Susan | — Chinese trainee |
| — James Smith | — Europe Leaders – Oxford |
| — Saudi Trainee | — Wife |
| — Saudi Sheik | |

As part of expanding our business to China, I made several trips to China.

After one of those trips, I received a note from one of our Chinese employees who had been traveling with me as an interpreter. Here is what Shu Zhang said:

“When I grew up in China, religions were forbidden and Mao’s book became our Bible. When I was five or six years old I could recite Mao

quotations and even use them to judge and lecture the kids in the neighborhood.

“Mao said, ‘Serve the people. Leaders should be public servants.’ This coincides with some of ServiceMaster’s moral standards. When I think deeply, I see the difference that makes one work so successfully and the other collapse fatally. It must be the starting point of ServiceMaster to honor God, and that every individual has been created in His image with dignity and worth.

“ServiceMaster is designed to be a big, tall tree with strong roots which penetrates extensively to almost every corner of a person’s daily life. It is still growing in mine. And I am still learning”.

Shu is a thinking person. She felt accepted and respected in her work environment. She was confronted with life choices that went beyond doing a job and earning a living; choices about who she was becoming and how she could relate to God. She was growing and developing an understanding of herself and the purpose and meaning for her life.

For me, the world of business has become an opportunity for fulfilling and living my faith; an opportunity that has reached from a janitor’s closet in Saudi Arabia to the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, China – from sweeping streets in

Osaka, Japan to ringing the bell of the New York Stock Exchange. The marketplace has provided a wonderful opportunity for me to embrace and engage those who do not believe the way I do, but whom God loves and who, by my words and actions, should see the reality of His love.

The global market place provides a wonderful opportunity for followers of Jesus Christ to live and share their faith. There is a common language of performance in the market that **crosses** secular, cultural, and religious barriers. When there is performance people listen. And yes, as some people listen they respond to the redemptive message of God's love.

It is, I believe, a high calling of God; a calling that for us at ServiceMaster grew to involve the management and employment of over 200,000 people, delivering services to over 10 million customers in the U.S. and 45 other countries.

God has called each of us to be in the world but not part of it. He has called us to be excellent in what we do, whether we call it a job, profession, or ministry, and when we excel in what we do, whatever that may be, as a lawyer, business person, minister, missionary, or educator, and live our faith in a way that cannot be ignored or contained, we have the platform to proclaim and share our faith. The choice is ours.

Poverty story?

