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# Speech at Seattle Pacific University Luncheon

C. William Pollard

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SEATTLE PACIFIC UNIVERSITY  
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 25, 1984  
LUNCHEON  
C. W. POLLARD

IT IS OF SIGNIFICANCE THAT YOUR CONFERENCE ON BUSINESS ETHICS IS SPONSORED BY THE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE COALITION AND THAT YOUR INQUIRY AND QUEST FOR ANSWERS IS GROUNDED IN SCRIPTURE. IT IS IN FACT A SEARCH FOR A MEANINGFUL EXPRESSION OF NOT JUST A VALUE SYSTEM BUT A GOD-BASED VALUE SYSTEM THAT EXTENDS BEYOND THE LIMITS OF NATIONAL BORDERS AND PROVINCIAL CULTURES.

BY STARTING WITH GOD AS THE ULTIMATE SOURCE AND NOT WITH THE MAN YOU HAVE RECOGNIZED THE FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE THAT SPLITS OUR WORLD APART.

ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN IN HIS 1978 HARVARD COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS FRAMED THE ISSUE AS FOLLOWS: "I AM NOT EXAMINING THE CASE OF A DISASTER BROUGHT ON BY A WORLD WAR AND THE CHANGES WHICH IT WOULD PRODUCE IN SOCIETY . . . I AM REFERRING TO THE CALAMITY OF AN AUTONOMOUS, IRRELIGIOUS, HUMANISTIC CONSCIOUSNESS.

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IS IT TRUE THAT MAN IS ABOVE EVERYTHING? IS THERE NO "GOD" ABOVE HIM? IS IT RIGHT THAT MAN'S LIFE AND SOCIETIES ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE RULED BY MATERIAL EXPANSION ABOVE ALL? IS IT PERMISSABLE TO PROMOTE SUCH EXPANSION TO THE DETRIMENT OF OUR INTEGRAL, SPIRITUAL LIFE?

IT WAS DIETRICH BONHOFFER, THE VICTIM OF ANOTHER GODLESS GOVERNMENT, A GOVERNMENT WHOSE VERY EXISTENCE WAS ENCOURAGED AND SUPPORTED BY THE LEADERS OF THE GERMAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY. IN WRITING FROM HIS CELL IN BERLIN JUST MONTHS BEFORE HE WAS EXECUTED, BONHOFFER ASKED THE BASIC QUESTION, "WHO STANDS FAST? IT IS ONLY THE MAN WHO'S FINAL STANDARD IS NOT HIS REASON, HIS PRINCIPLES, HIS CONSCIENCE, EVEN HIS FREEDOM, OR HIS VIRTUE, BUT WHO IS READY TO SACRIFICE ALL THIS WHEN HE IS CALLED TO OBEDIENT AND RESPONSIBLE ACTION IN FAITH AND IN EXCLUSIVE ALLEGIANCE TO GOD. THE RESPONSIBLE MAN WHO TRIES TO MAKE HIS WHOLE LIFE AN ANSWER TO THE QUESTION AND CALL OF GOD. WHERE ARE THESE RESPONSIBLE PEOPLE?"

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SOME PEOPLE BECOME SO ENGROSSED IN THE WORK PROCESS THAT WORK BECOMES AN END IN ITSELF. AND SO THE MODERN-DAY WORKAHOLIC IS BORN. WORK BECOMES A HABIT -- MORE THAN THAT, AN OBSESSION -THAT MEANS THAT FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND EVEN RECREATION ARE ONLY AFTER-THOUGHTS.

OTHER PEOPLE REACT TO THE EMPTINESS OF WORK MEASURED SOLELY IN MATERIALISTIC TERMS BY SEEKING AN ALTERNATIVE IN LEISURE. WORK THEN BECOMES A MEANS TO THE END OF LEISURE. SO WHERE I WORK, OR HOW LONG I WORK, AND WHETHER MY WORK HOURS CAN BE SCHEDULED TO ACCOMMODATE MY REQUIRED LEISURE TIME BECOMES THE OVERRIDING FACTOR IN DETERMINING WHETHER I HAVE A GOOD JOB.

WE ARE FAMILIAR WITH THE BIBLICAL ACCOUNT OF GOD'S CURSE ON ADAM AND EVE. TO ADAM HE SAID: "CURSED IS THE GROUND BECAUSE OF YOU. THROUGH PAINFUL TOIL YOU WILL EAT ALL THE DAYS OF

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SYSTEMS. IT IS AN AFFIRMATIVE STATEMENT THAT OUR SOURCE AND OUR STARTING POINT IS WITH GOD. IT IS A REJECTION OF ALL PHILOSOPHY, THOUGHT, OR ACTION THAT ASSUMES THE SUPREMACY OF MAN, WHETHER THAT PHILOSOPHY OR ACTION ORIGINATES IN AMERICA OR THE SOVIET UNION, IN THE EAST OR THE WEST, ARISES OUT OF CAPITALISM, OR SOCIALISM. BECAUSE OF THIS STARTING POINT, WE HAVE A VIEW, A VALUE SYSTEM THAT AFFECTS HOW WE LIVE WITH OURSELVES, HOW WE LIVE WITH OTHERS, AND HOW WE LIVE WITH OUR FAMILIES. THERE ARE GOD-GIVEN STANDARDS, GOD-GIVEN LIMITATIONS, AND GOD-GIVEN FREEDOMS. THIS GOD-GIVEN VALUE SYSTEM OF OURS IS NOT SOME VAGUE CONCEPT. IT IS SPECIFIC IN ITS APPLICATION. FOR US IN SERVICEMASTER, THESE INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

1. THE VALUE OF A PERSON CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND HIS RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO HIS CREATOR FOR HIMSELF AND FOR OTHERS. WE HAVE BEEN CREATED WITH DIGNITY AND INTRINSIC WORTH. WE HAVE BEEN GIVEN AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY OVER GOD'S WORLD. THIS SPEAKS VERY SPECIFICALLY TO OUR ROLE AS

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MANAGERS AND OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE WHOLE PERSON IN OUR EMPLOY. HE HAS ENDOWED EACH OF US WITH SPECIFIC TALENTS. EACH PERSON IS OF EQUALLY INFINITE VALUE AND DIGNITY BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN MADE IN GOD'S IMAGE. THUS, THERE IS VALUE AND WORTH REGARDLESS OF POSITION, RANK, OR INCOME. THE ISSUE THEN IS NOT SIMPLY IS IT FAIR TO PAY ONE WORKER \$10.00 PER HOUR IN NEW YORK FOR RELATIVELY THE SAME WORK YOU ARE PAYING ANOTHER WORKER AT \$3.50 PER HOUR IN MEXICO. IT IS A MUCH LARGER ISSUE, NAMELY WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE PERSON -- WHAT IS HE BECOMING IN THE PROCESS OF PERFORMING HIS WORK? THE IDEA THAT THE VALUE AND MERIT OF AN INDIVIDUAL SHOULD BE RELATED TO HIS INCOME OR WEALTH IS WHOLLY REPUGNANT TO A CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE WORLD. THE PURSUIT OF AN ETHICAL OR MORAL PRINCIPLE BASED SALARY ON A EQUAL MATERIAL STANDARD; I.E., A WAGE RATE IS HUMANISTIC IN ITS ORIGIN. WHEN ONE COMBINES THIS TYPE OF THINKING WITH EMPHASIS ON THE PROFIT MOTIVE IN A FREE ENTERPRISE SYSTEM, IS OFTEN TO SEEK MORE ALTERNATIVES TO THE USE OF PEOPLE -- BECAUSE PEOPLE BECOME THE MOST COSTLY AND UNRELI-

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ABLE ELEMENT IN THE DELIVERY OF SERVICE. IN A GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED SOCIETY, THE PEOPLE MAY REMAIN BUT WITHOUT CHOICE AND INCENTIVES THERE IS A LOSS OF PRODUCTIVITY WITH INEFFICIENCY AND WASTE. OUR OBJECTIVE IS NOT TO SEEK AN ALTERNATIVE TO PEOPLE, BUT INSTEAD TO GROW AND INVOLVE MORE PEOPLE AND TO TRAIN, EQUIP, AND MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE AND PRODUCTIVE IN THEIR WORK AND SERVICE AND TO RECEIVE THE SATISFACTION AND GROWING EXPERIENCE OF A JOB WELL DONE. A PERSON WITH A PURPOSE TO SERVE AND A CLEAR DIRECTION PROVIDES AN ELEMENT OF DEPENDABILITY AND RESPONSE, GREATER THAN ANY MACHINE.

(CITE EXAMPLE OF ICM -- AUTOMOTIVE PLANS -- 21. PER HOUR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY; OFFICERS WHO STARTED AS TRASHMEN - 18% MINORITY OF MANAGERS - 20% FROM PRODUCTION - MID-EAST CHICAGO UNION PAYOFFS)

2. THE VALUE OF THE FAMILY AS THE BASIC SPIRITUAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL UNIT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERSON. WE REJECT THE IDEA AND TREND SUGGESTED IN MEGATRENDS -- THAT MARRIAGE

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AND THE FAMILY UNIT IS JUST ONE OF MANY OPTIONS FOR ADULT LIVING. THE FAMILY UNIT IS ORDAINED BY GOD. WE MUST SUPPORT IT, ENCOURAGE IT AND PROVIDE AN ENVIRONMENT FOR IT TO GROW AND STRENGTHEN AS AN INTEGRAL PART OF OUR BUSINESS. IT IS NOT JUST GOOD BUSINESS OR SOMETHING NICE TO DO TO INVOLVE SPOUSES OR ENCOURAGE MANAGERS TO LEAD AND SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR FAMILY AND HOMES, NOR IS IT SOMETHING THAT CAN ONLY BE IMPLEMENTED IN THE AMERICAN CULTURE (JAPANESE WORD FOR WOMAN BACHROON) -- IT IS A GOD-BASED VALUE THAT WE MUST HONOR. HERE CITE WORK IN JAPAN OF AOM AND MANAGER ON RELOCATION.

3. THE VALUE OF WORK AND LABOR AS A CALLING AND MINISTRY TO GOD AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSON. WORK IS NOT JUST A JOB, A WAY TO EARN A LIVING, 9 TO 5 MONDAY TO FRIDAY -- A WEIGH STATION UNTIL RETIREMENT. GOD HAS PROVIDED WORK AS A VEHICLE FOR US TO LEARN TO GROW AND IN SERVING OTHERS WE HAVE A VERY SPECIAL MINISTRY.



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THE REASONS GIVEN FOR WHY PEOPLE WORK GENERALLY FALL IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

FOR SOME, WORK IS VIEWED AS A NECESSARY EVIL, INESCAPABLE, BECAUSE WITHOUT WORK ONE CANNOT SURVIVE.

SOME PEOPLE VIEW WORK AS A MEANS TO AN END. THIS VIEW IS DESCRIBED BY ROBERT MICHAELSON AS THE "AMERICAN GOSPEL OF WORK." THE BASIC AFFIRMATION IS THAT HARD WORK WILL PROVIDE ALL THAT ONE NEEDS IN LIFE, WITH THE "NEEDS" BEING DESCRIBED AS MATERIALISTIC ACCOMPLISHMENTS, POWER, SOCIAL STATUS, OR SOME COMBINATION OF THESE. THUS, I WORK BECAUSE I WANT A BETTER LIFE, A BETTER LIFE MEASURED IN THE SIZE OF MY HOME, MY BANK ACCOUNT, MY TITLE OR AUTHORITY. THIS MOTIVATIONAL LADDER OF SUCCESS OFTEN GENERATES FRUSTRATION. SUCH A PERSON IS CONDEMNED TO BE ALWAYS STRIVING, BUT NEVER ATTAINING, BECAUSE AT EACH NEW RUNG OF THE LADDER THERE IS A STILL HIGHER RUNG TO CLIMB.

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SOME PEOPLE BECOME SO ENGROSSED IN THE WORK PROCESS THAT WORK BECOMES AN END IN ITSELF. AND SO THE MODERN-DAY WORKAHOLIC IS BORN. WORK BECOMES A HABIT -- MORE THAN THAT, AN OBSESSION -THAT MEANS THAT FAMILY, FRIENDS, AND EVEN RECREATION ARE ONLY AFTER-THOUGHTS.

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YOUR LIFE. IT WILL PRODUCE THORNS AND THISTLES FOR YOU AND YOU WILL EAT THE PLANTS OF THE FIELD. BY THE SWEAT OF YOUR BROW YOU WILL EAT YOUR FOOD UNTIL YOU RETURN TO THE GROUND, SINCE FROM IT YOU WERE TAKEN. FOR BY DUST YOU CAME AND TO DUST YOU WILL RETURN."

ARE WE TO CONCLUDE THAT, IN GOD'S ORDER OF THINGS, WORK IS A RESULT OF SIN, AND THAT TOIL AND SORROW IN OUR WORK SHOULD BE THE EXPECTED NORM, NOT THE EXCEPTION?

IS THIS VIEW OF WORK AS A CURSE CONSISTENT WITH THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION? IN THE BEGINNING GOD WORKED AND THEN RESTED. BOTH WORK AND REST WERE GOOD IN PRODUCING RESULTS, ACCORDING TO GOD'S SOVEREIGN PURPOSE. IN FACT, WHEN ADAM WAS PUT IN CHARGE OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN BEFORE THE FALL, HE WAS TOLD TO WORK IT AND TAKE CARE OF IT. WE ARE REMINDED BY THE APOSTLE PAUL IN HIS LETTER TO THE COLOSSIANS, "WHATEVER YOU DO, WORK AT IT WITH ALL YOUR HEART." PAUL CONDEMNS IDLENESS AND SETS

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HIS OWN WORK OF TENT MAKING AS AN EXAMPLE FOR OTHERS. THE BIBLE IS WRITTEN FOR A WORK-A-DAY WORLD, AND DESCRIBES A PLACE WHERE BOTH GOD AND MEN ARE ACTIVE AT WORK. THE BIBLE IS, IN FACT, A BOOK BY WORKERS ABOUT WORKERS, AND FOR WORKERS. SO THEN, IT IS NOT WORK THAT IS TO BE CONDEMNED. IN FACT, WE ARE ENJOINED BY SCRIPTURE TO DO BOTH GOOD WORKS AND GOOD WORK. OUR WORK, EVEN IN THE MARKET PLACE CAN BE BOTH A CALLING AND A MINISTRY AND THERE NEED BE NO DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE SERVED AND THE SERVER. WE ARE ALL IN FULL-TIME CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

4. THE VALUE OF COVENANTS AND COMMITMENTS AS THE BASIS FOR COMBINED EFFORTS AND CORPORATE ACTION. GOD ESTABLISHED THE USE OF THE COVENANT AS A MEANS FOR ASSURING AND CREATING JOINT ACTION AND RESPONSE FROM HIS PEOPLE. OUR COLLECTIVE MINISTRY IN SERVICEMASTER IS ONLY POSSIBLE BECAUSE OF THE COVENANT AND COMMITMENTS OF OUR MANAGERS AND LEADERS. SOME OF THESE HAVE BEEN FORMALIZED BY WRITTEN CONTRACT. OTHERS REPRESENT AN

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ORAL PROMISE OR STATEMENT GENERATING RELIANCE OR ACTION BY ANOTHER. THE INFLUENCE AND BINDING CHARACTERISTIC OF THESE COVENANTS GOES FAR BEYOND ANY LEGAL DOCUMENT. IT EXTENDS TO THAT GROUP WHO ARE RELYING UPON THE LEADER FOR THEIR FUTURE AND IT IS THAT GROUP TO WHOM THE LEADER IS TRULY BOUND -BOUND WITHOUT ANY FORMAL WRITING, BUT BOUND TO PROVIDE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PEOPLE HE IS LEADING. 1) ALLOWS ME TO INVEST MYSELF IN OTHERS; 2) INVOLVE MYSELF - EVEN AT MY OWN RISK IN THEIR DEVELOPMENT; 3) TO BE CANDID AND DIRECT IN MY APPRAISAL AND REVIEWS; 4) TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO BE FAIR IN JUDGING THEIR PERFORMANCE IN RELATIONSHIP TO THEIR COMPENSATION AND NOT RELAY ON SOME ARTIFICIAL SCALE OR POINT SYSTEM.

5. THE VALUE OF PRODUCED WEALTH THAT IS INVESTED AS IT IS DISTRIBUTED, AND NOT ACCUMULATED AND RETAINED FOR PERSONAL INTERESTS. THE PRINCIPLE HERE IS THAT THE RESOURCES -- WEALTH THAT GOD HAS PROVIDED IS HELD IN TRUST BY US - WE ARE NOT THE ACTUAL

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OWNERS -- GOD IS -- WE ARE TO USE IT, INVEST IT, ENJOY IT,  
ALL AS STEWARDS AND NOT TO DISSIPATE IT OR WASTE IT. THERE  
WILL BE A STANDARD OF ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ALL OF US.

SOME HAVE CONCLUDED THAT EQUALITY AND A REDISTRIBUTION OF WEALTH  
IN WHICH EVERYONE SHARES EQUALLY IS THE ONLY ECONOMIC SYSTEM THAT  
IS CONSISTENT WITH CHRISTIAN VALUES -- PROFIT = SIN. THIS ASSUMES,  
HOWEVER, THAT THE WEALTH TO BE SHARED ALREADY EXISTS LIKE A NATURAL  
RESOURCE. AND THAT THE ONLY REQUIREMENT IS TO SEE THAT IT IS  
DISTRIBUTED EQUALLY. UNFORTUNATELY, IN ORDER TO DISTRIBUTE WEALTH,  
YOU WOULD HAVE TO PRODUCE WEALTH. IN AN ACTUAL PRACTICE, THE  
REDISTRIBUTION POLICIES OF SOCIALISM INVARIABLY SEEM TO DEFEAT  
PROFICIENCY AND PRODUCTIVITY AND MORE OFTEN PRODUCE A SHARING  
OF PROVERTY INSTEAD OF SHARING WEALTH, WITH ONLY A PRIVILEGED  
FEW OF THE "GOVERNMENT" CLASS MAINTAINING A REASONABLE STANDARD  
OF LIVING.

THUS, FOR A CHRISTIAN THERE CAN BE NO PERSONAL ACCUMULATION PLAN

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- GROWTH IS NOT AN OPTION BUT A MANDATE.