

## Coram Deo: Before the Face of God

*Scott Allen and Darrow Miller*

The Bible reveals God as the all-powerful creator of everything (Col. 1:16). He is portrayed as the Supreme Ruler over all creation (Mt. 28:18) who orders and holds together the entire cosmos (Col. 1:17). He is not neutral towards His creation. He loves and delights in it (Gen. 1:31). But all is not as it should be. The Bible reveals sin not as an isolated spiritual ailment, but as something that has radically disordered the cosmos (Rom. 8:19-22). The redemption that God provides through Jesus will result in a new heaven and a new earth (Rev. 21:1) – not just saved human souls. While Jesus is our savior and redeemer, he is much more. He is the savior of the whole world – the redeemer of the entire cosmos (Jn. 3:16). The Bible reveals Christianity not as a religion, but as a comprehensive view of the universe—the only view that aligns with reality. This understanding of Christianity is not new. Indeed, it is very old. It was concisely expressed by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Church at Colosse:

*[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together... For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross*

*-- Colossians 1:15-19*

Here we read Paul's doctrine of creation, his understanding of the sovereignty of God, and his awareness of Jesus as the redeemer of the universe. In short, Paul presents us with an all-encompassing Christian view of the universe. In this passage the words "all" and "everything" appear six times. Centuries later, this same all-inclusive Christian worldview was expressed by the great Dutch statesman and theologian Abraham Kuyper (1837-1920) this way: "There is not a square inch of the universe over which King Jesus does not claim, 'Mine!'" Yet today, for many Christians, this comprehensive view of reality has been obscured.

## **The Sacred- Secular Fallacy**

Today, there is a tendency for some to divide the world into mutually exclusive compartments. One component is labeled “sacred” and has to do with the spiritual life and presumably eternal things. Everything else goes into a “secular” category. For those who hold this divided view of reality, the consequences are profound. While they may love Jesus as their spiritual savior, they may fail to honor him as Lord over all areas of life. An invisible line divides their personal faith in Christ, their church attendance, worship, prayer life, and Bible study from other areas of life such as their work, leisure time, or care for their physical bodies. Anything that is labeled “secular” is assumed to be of little concern to God. Christianity is narrowed down to a scheme for spiritual salvation. The cross is a ticket to heaven and little more.

These are a few of the personal consequences, but there are other consequences as well. When this divided understanding of reality takes hold within a church, it results in the separation of the church from its surrounding culture. Sunday worship services and vocations in “full time Christian service” are assumed to be more valuable than seemingly “secular” pursuits in areas such as the arts, law, politics, social services, care for the physical needs of the poor, and so on. Little effort is made to connect the core doctrines of the Bible to cultural and civic life. Little effort is made to encourage church members to serve as salt and light (Mt. 5:13-16), bearing witness to the truth in all areas of society. Evangelism is pitted against care for the poor. “Full-time Christian service” is pitted against careers in law, business or politics. One compartment is higher and the other lower. The church is sealed off from society. It exists in a Christian “ghetto” with its own sub-culture of language, media, and entertainment. When the divided mindset impacts churches, they become impotent and ineffective at impacting culture. Rather than discipling the nations as Christ commanded (Mt. 28:18-20), the values and dominant beliefs of the surrounding culture begin to influence and shape the church.

Despite this, there is cause for great hope. God is at work in our generation. He is active around the world leading his bride back to a comprehensive, undivided understanding of reality. He is reminding his followers that he is Lord not merely of some limited spiritual realm—he is Lord over all! He created the spiritual and the physical realms and cares for them both. He seeks to be glorified not only in the church building, but also in the home, the school, the company, the courthouse and the houses of government equally. Furthermore, he is reminding his bride that while he passionately and actively seeks and saves lost people trapped in sin (1 Tim. 2:4), his redemptive plan is far grander. He is about the business of redeeming all things distorted through the Fall (Col. 1:19-20). It is this all-encompassing redemptive agenda that he calls his Church to participate with him in.

The 15<sup>th</sup> century European reformers had a motto that reminded them, in a very practical way, of God’s comprehensive concern for all areas of life and all spheres of society. The phrase was “*coram Deo*” which means “before the face of God.” All of life is to be lived before the face of God and to his glory. There is no higher, no lower—no sacred, no secular. God is Lord of all.

Coram Deo is both liberating and challenging. It holds the power to free us from a debilitating mental dualism. It provides a fresh, faith-expanding perspective—one that leads to a newfound freedom to enjoy embodied human life in all its wonder. It opens the door for us to take new interest and delight in God’s magnificent creation. It liberates us to explore vocational alternatives outside of “full time Christian service” and still know that we are both serving and glorifying God.

Coram Deo  
*before the face of God*



As whole churches gain this new perspective, they escape from the Christian ghetto as Christians infiltrate the culture, taking with them the power of God’s Word lived out in human flesh. Coram Deo can lead to social and cultural transformation. Yet it is challenging because it shows us that our faith must impact our entire lives. When we truly grasp this concept, we realize we can no longer withhold certain segments of our life from God. Jesus wants our whole lives—every part—to glorify him. He wants us to join him in advancing his Kingdom in all areas of culture and all spheres of society. For those who have been trapped within a divided mindset, this can appear to be a fearful and radical step. Yet he promises that when we join with him, our burden will be easy, and our yoke will be light. The responsibility of advancing the Kingdom belongs to God, yet he gives us the privilege of joining with him. When we do, he supplies the strength we need to do things we could never do on our own.

**Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer**

To understand the concept of Coram Deo, you must start with God and His comprehensive Lordship over all of creation. His Lordship is true on three grounds.

First, God is the *Creator* of the world and *all* that is in it. The book of Genesis reveals that God’s artistry was both good and beautiful, in harmony with God and with itself. The physical realm, like the spiritual realm, is sacred. It is all God’s creation.

Second, God *sustains all* of his creation today. We see this in Colossians 1:17: “He is before all things, and in him all things hold together,” and in Hebrews 1:3: “The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

Third, in Christ, God is at work *redeeming all* of his creation. The apostle Paul writes, “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross” (Col. 1:19–20). God continues his work of reconciliation through Christ until Christ returns at the end of time.<sup>1</sup>

For these three reasons, the dualistic sacred-secular paradigm is untrue to reality. There is no dichotomy in God’s mind. God has made, sustains, and is redeeming one world, not two, and Christians are called to live in one world.

## Living Coram Deo

The word *coram* is derived from the Latin *cora*, which means “the pupil of the eye.” It is translated “in person,” “face-to-face,” “in one’s presence,” “before one’s eyes,” “in the presence of,” “before.”<sup>2</sup> The second word, *Deo*, is the Latin word for God. The key idea in the phrase is intimate, personal relationship. In this case, God intimately knows me. Nothing is hidden. And I am

Called to Live  
CORAM DEO

**This is our call:**

**We are to live *all* of our life in the *presence* of God under the *authority* of God and to the *honor* and *glory* of God.**

to consciously seek to live all of my life in the presence of God— “before the face of God.” Some have used the concept of “the audience of one” to describe this lifestyle. Puritan pastor Cotton Mather (1663– 1728) put it this way: “Let every Christian walk with God when he works at his calling, and act in his occupation with an eye to God, act as under the eye of God.”<sup>3</sup> Even the great English poet John Milton (1608–1674) captured the sense of living under the gaze of our Heavenly Employer: All is, if I have grace to use it so, As ever in my great task-Master’s eye.<sup>4</sup>

## Made for God’s Presence

What these Christians who walked before us recognized was that humans were made to walk in God’s presence. From Genesis to Revelation, God reveals himself as the “Infinite-Personal God,” to use Francis Schaeffer’s term. In Genesis 1:26, God reveals not only that he is the Personal God but also that he is Community: “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness.”

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<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 1:7-10

<sup>2</sup> William Whitaker, *WORDS*, s.v. “coram,” <http://www.archives.nd.edu> (accessed May 27, 2009).

<sup>3</sup> Cotton Mather, “A Christian at His Calling,” quoted in Ralph Barton Perry, *Puritanism and Democracy* (New York: Vanguard, 1944), 127, quoted in Leland Ryken, *Redeeming the Time* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 106. <sup>4</sup> John Milton quoted in Leland Ryken, *Worldly Saints: The Puritans As They Really Were* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 28.

Before the creation of the world there was the intimacy of communion and communication between the Persons of the Trinity—the One and Many God.

God made man in his image so that man might have relationship with his own kind (other humans) and to have communion with his Creator. The intimacy of God's intention is found in Genesis 3:8–9: "Then the man and his wife heard the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, 'Where are you?'"

This same sense of communion is found in the wilderness wanderings when God instructs Moses to build a tent for him so the presence of the transcendent God may dwell amid the Hebrew camp. The Hebrews were living in tents, and God so desired to identify with his people that he wanted to "tabernacle"—live in a tent—just like his people. "Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them. Make this tabernacle and all its furnishings exactly like the pattern I will show you" (Exod. 25:8–9).

Perhaps the most remarkable demonstration that God's intention is to have humans' dwell in his presence is that he chose to enter history as a vulnerable baby. The Incarnation marks the high point of God's communion with man in that the Son of God became the Man, Christ Jesus. *Young's Literal Translation of the Bible* captures the thrill of the intimacy of the Incarnation in John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh, and did tabernacle among us, and we beheld his glory, glory as of an only begotten of a father, full of grace and truth."<sup>5</sup>

The Greek word used for "tabernacle" in Exodus 25:8–9 in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament), *skenoo*, is the same word used in John 1:14. It means "to fix one's tabernacle, have one's tabernacle, abide (or live) in a tabernacle (or tent), tabernacle" or "to dwell."<sup>6</sup> This is a powerful image of God's desire and intentions for us to dwell in his presence, "before the face of God."

God continues to take the initiative and offers to restore intimacy with us through his Son, Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul writes, "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel" (Col. 1:21–23). In redemption as in creation, we find that God desires for his people to dwell in his presence.

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<sup>5</sup> Robert Young, *Young's Literal Translation* (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1997), S. Jn. 1:14.

<sup>6</sup> Enhanced Strong's Lexicon, s.v. "skenoo."

## Work as Worship

One of the primary themes of the Reformation was that we are justified by faith, and we are to live by faith, before the face of God. The apostle Paul writes of our justification by faith clearly in Ephesians 2:8–9: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.” When we come to God, we come in faith—with empty hands. Good works will not save us. Rather we stand directly before God only by his grace, through faith in the only intermediary, Jesus Christ.<sup>7</sup>

Just as in salvation we stand before God by faith, Scripture witnesses that we are to live *daily* before God in faith. Once dead, we are now alive *in Christ*. Paul writes of this throughout his letters, perhaps nowhere as clearly as in Galatians: “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20). Truly those “who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness [will] reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17).

For Christians who understand that we are saved by grace through faith, the whole concept of work has been transformed to that of worship. Paul told the Roman believers, “Therefore, I urge you, brothers [and sisters], *in view of God’s mercy*, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship” (Rom. 12:1; italics added). Scottish historian and social critic Thomas Carlyle (1795–1881) has captured the wonder of what our forefathers understood: *Laborare est Orare*, Work is Worship. .... All true Work is sacred; in all true Work, were it but hand-labor, there is something of divines. .... No man has work, or can work, except religiously; not even the poor day laborer, the weaver of your coat, the sewer of your shoes.<sup>8</sup>

In 1520 Martin Luther published a short work called *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*. As this tract began to circulate around Europe, it resulted in a firestorm that transformed entire cultures’ thinking on life and work. An anonymous story is told about two priests who read the pamphlet when it reached Holland. The following is part of what they read that so changed their way of thinking:

The works of monks and priests, however holy and arduous they be, do not differ one whit in the sight of God from the works of the rustic laborer in the field or the woman going about her household tasks, but that all works are measured before God by faith alone. Indeed, the menial housework of a manservant or maidservant is often more acceptable to God than all the fasting’s and other works of a monk or priest, because the monk or priest lacks faith.

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<sup>7</sup> 1 John 2:1. <sup>8</sup> Thomas Carlyle, *Past and Present* (1842; Project Gutenberg, 1996), [www.gutenberg.org/files](http://www.gutenberg.org/files) (accessed May 27, 2009)

This tract challenged the two priests about the nature of salvation, the nature of the church, and the nature of work. Up to that point, their church had been open to the parish seven days a week. After reading the pamphlet, they announced that the doors of the church building would be opened on Sunday but closed the rest of the week.

That was a shocking change. What could they have been thinking? Through Luther's writings, the priests had come to see that the work their parishioners did six days a week was no less sacred than the work they themselves did, that is, if each worked *in faith*. They understood that people did not need to visit the church building daily to do their "spiritual" service or to add a measure of holiness to their days. Both the clergy and the "laity" were to live every day of the week, every hour of the day, in all they did, *coram Deo*, before the face of God. Both those laboring in the community's church and those laboring in the community's fields, houses, and shops had the potential to worship God in their work. It was not the nature of one's work but the faith with which one worked that mattered.

### **Soli Deo Gloria**

No less now than in the sixteenth century, whatever our occupation, we are called to live twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, before the face of God and to worship God with all of our life, including our work. God is the beginning and center of all things. Since the time of man's rebellion against God, as recorded in Genesis 3, man has chosen to "be as God." Man has put himself at the center of the universe. There is no greater manifestation of this than the secular materialism of post-Christian Western society. Individually and corporately, in family, church, and civil society, we need to let our lives be framed by the great statement used by the Reformers—*soli Deo gloria*, for the glory of God alone.

What *is* God's glory? What does it mean to live in and for God's glory? And why are we meant to do so? Scriptures across the Old and New Testaments witness to the nature of God's glory. First, Scripture reveals that God's glory is part and parcel of reality; it is a result of who he is, a fact of his unsurpassable, infinite greatness and goodness. The apostle John expressed God's glory in this way: "God is light; in him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). God himself is the light we all see by. Therefore John wrote of Jesus, "In him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it" (John 1:4–5). The Old Testament tells us, "The sun will no more be your light by day, nor will the brightness of the moon shine on you, for the LORD will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your

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<sup>9</sup> Martin Luther, *The Babylonian Captivity of the Church* (1520; Project Wittenberg Online Electronic Study Edition, 2002, [www.ctsfw.edu](http://www.ctsfw.edu) (accessed May 27, 2009).

glory” (Isa. 60:19). The New Testament affirms this: “The city does not need the sun or the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and the Lamb is its lamp” (Rev. 21:23). God is life and light; outside of God is death and darkness. That’s just the truth. God’s glory is *our* light.

Second, the whole of Scripture shows that we glorify God by making the truth about God known to others, not from God’s point of view so that he can say “I’m great!” or “I’m good!” but so that the whole earth *experiences* his greatness and goodness, so that his whole creation is restored to his original intentions. Where God reigns, there is life and light. Where God reigns, his truth, justice, and beauty are manifest. We work for the day when “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab. 2:14).

In a Holy Scripture full of mysteries, we find a God so great, so full of glory, that no human can see him and live.<sup>10</sup> We see a God who inspires people to call out to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!” (Rev. 6:16). Yet he is a God who for our sakes “made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Phil. 2:7). With these truths in mind, let’s look at more of what Scripture says about the glory of God.

*All glory is found in God because all belongs to God.*

Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head overall. (1 Chron. 29:11)

For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. (Rom. 11:36)

*God’s glory is rooted in his nature and character. From eternity, he, the One and Only God, manifests goodness, love, faithfulness, and wisdom.*

Then Moses said, “Now show me your glory.” And the LORD said, “I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.” (Exod. 33:18–19)

When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, “He is good; his love endures forever.” (2 Chron. 7:3)

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<sup>10</sup> Exodus 33:20.



Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness. (Ps. 115:1)

To the only wise God be glory forever through Jesus Christ! Amen. (Rom. 16:27)

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen. (1 Tim. 1:17)

*The nature of God's glory is revealed in his works of creation and redemption.*

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. (Ps. 19:1)

Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous deeds among all peoples. (Ps. 96:3)  
To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power forever and ever! Amen. (Rev. 1:5–6)

*What would seem impossible—that the glory of the infinite God be made manifest in human form—became a reality. The life of Jesus Christ perfectly and tangibly represents the glory of the one eternal God.*

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being. (Heb. 1:3)

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2 Cor. 4:6)

If we want to understand God's glory, we need only look at the face of Christ. As we consider what it means to live constantly in the presence of God and work solely for the glory of God, we can meditate on the Christ who does nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but in humility considers others better than himself (Phil 2:1-11). This is the God who longs to dwell with us, who invites us to live intimately in his presence. This is the God who calls us to work with him—*solī Deo gloria*.

## Beyond Dualism to Consecration

Paul encourages us, "Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men" (Col. 3:23). *Whatever you do* means just that. Gerard Manley Hopkins said in a sermon, "To lift up the hands in prayer gives God glory, but a man with a dung fork in his hand, a woman with a slop pail, give him glory too. He is so great that all things give him glory if you mean they should."<sup>11</sup> In a slightly different vein, Mother Teresa has been quoted as saying, "We do not do big things; we do only small things with great love."<sup>12</sup> This is the great recovery of the biblical theology of vocation wrought by Martin Luther and the Reformation. This is a discovery that can transform our lives and work today.

The great Dutch theologian, pastor, educator, and prime minister Abraham Kuyper spoke with passion to the church in the Western world to renew the vision of her call and to return to her first love. Written at the dawn of modern secular materialistic culture, Kuyper's clarion call is just as relevant to us today:

No sphere of human life is conceivable in which religion does not maintain its demands that God shall be praised, that God's ordinances shall be observed, and that every *labora* (work) shall be permeated with its *ora* (prayer/worship) in fervent and ceaseless prayer. Wherever man may stand, whatever he may do, to whatever he may apply his hand, in agriculture, in commerce, and in industry, or his mind, in the world of art, and science, he is in whatsoever it may be, constantly standing before the face of his God, he is employed in the service of his God, he has strictly to obey his God, and above all, he has to aim at the glory of his God."<sup>13</sup>

There are not two worlds to live in, nor two types of lives to live. All of life, including the hours of my work, is to be lived *coram Deo*, for the advancement of God's kingdom, for the glory of the Lord of heaven and earth.

Clearly, living *coram Deo* means that we are not to make a separation between the sacred and the secular. The secular dwells in the presence of the sacred. The secular is infused with the sacred. But as the Reformers understood, there is a realm of distinction that we are to make. This distinction is between living a *consecrated* and living an *unconsecrated* life. A consecrated life is the life lived *coram Deo*, in worship, *soli Deo gloria*. A consecrated life is one that glorifies God. It is one that models God's glory as a person lives under the lordship of Christ, who himself represented God's glory on earth. A consecrated life is a life dedicated to God in all its parts. It is sanctified! An unconsecrated life is one where a person functions as a Christian only in the religious

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<sup>11</sup> Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (Nashville, TN: Word Publishing, 1998), 200. <sup>12</sup> Kathryn Spink and Mother Teresa, *Life in the Spirit: Reflections, Meditations, Prayers, Mother Teresa of Calcutta* (New York: HarperCollins, 1983), 74. <sup>13</sup> Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1942), 52.

part of life or when it is convenient. One person may be a godly auto mechanic while another is an adulterous evangelist. One may be a godly farmer while another is a corrupt pastor.

## Living in ONE World

### Coram Deo: *before the face of God*

| Consecration  |            | VOCATION   | Deployment |                |
|---------------|------------|--|------------|----------------|
| Un-Sanctified | Sanctified | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accountant</li> <li>• Artist</li> <li>• Carpenter</li> <li>• Church Planter</li> <li>• Cook</li> <li>• Entrepreneur</li> <li>• Evangelist</li> <li>• Farmer</li> <li>• Film Maker</li> <li>• Homemaker</li> <li>• Missionary</li> <li>• Nurse</li> <li>• Pastor</li> <li>• Philosopher</li> <li>• Poet</li> <li>• Tree Trimmer</li> </ul> | Home       | Cross-cultural |

To be consecrated is to be “devoted or dedicated to the service and worship of God.”<sup>14</sup> We worship God in our work as we connect the whole of our lives to his divine purpose, a redemptive purpose expressed through- out Scripture as the kingdom of God. The biblical concept of work is that a person’s work is his or her unique contribution to God’s kingdom. As we explored in the previous chapter, our occupation is the place where we are deployed to occupy

ourselves “occupying territory” for Christ and his kingdom. This is the principal business of the Christian’s life.

In the midst of a fallen world, we are to seek to live moral lives. In the midst of injustice and corruption, we are to seek justice. In the midst of cultures that are often brutal and uncaring, we are to love mercy. In the midst of power and arrogance, we are to walk humbly with God. We are, in some small way, to be incarnations of Christ in this broken world. Our place of work is to be where we put flesh on our prayers, “Let your glory be over all the earth” (Ps. 57:5) and “Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matt. 6:10). Kingdom life and principles are to be brought to bear in the midst of our life and in the sphere of society where we work.

Leland Ryken captures the radical effects of this biblical view of work in *Redeeming the Time*:

Obviously, this view of work renders every task of intrinsic value and integrates every legitimate vocation or task with a Christian’s spiritual life. It makes every job consequential by claiming it as the arena for glorifying God, and it provides a way for workers to serve God not only within their work in the world *but by that work* [italics added].<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> 1828 *American Dictionary of the English Language*, s.v. “consecrated.”

<sup>15</sup> Ryken, *Redeeming the Time*, 104.

This is the call each of us needs to hear today: that it is possible to live an integrated life of value and purpose in which we serve God by our work in the world. It is possible to live a life of consecration rather than separation.

Missionary to India E. Stanley Jones has captured the kind of people we are called to be, the kind of people we long to be, in *The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person*. He writes that our occupation is framed within the wonder of the kingdom of God:

That kind of person sees God, not in a vision, but sees God working with him and in him and backing him. He sees God at work everywhere. The universe becomes alive with God—every bush aflame with him, every event full of destiny, life an exciting adventure with God. You see him at work in you, in events, in the universe. He talks with you, guides you. You work in the same *business*, in the same *occupation*—the Kingdom. And it is the most thrilling, exciting business and occupation in the world. All else is tame and inane—dull. Here you are working at the biggest job, on the biggest scale, at the most worthwhile task, at the greatest outcome—the kingdom of God on earth [italics added].<sup>16</sup>

When we understand that all Christians are to live all of life *coram Deo*, we understand that we are all in Christ's mission force. We are all missionaries!

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<sup>16</sup> E. Stanley Jones, *The Unshakable Kingdom and the Unchanging Person* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1972), 159.