

Launching a Work Life Ministry in Your Church

Adapted from an article by Doug Spada and David Scott

Today many Christians live compartmentalized lives, balancing commitments to church, home and work, often relegating God to the former. But, as Dallas Willard has written, *“There truly is no division between sacred and secular except what we have created. And that is why the division of the legitimate roles and functions of human life into the sacred and secular does incalculable damage to our individual lives and the cause of Christ.”* Indeed, there should be no distinction between our devotional life and our daily work life.

Steps to launch a *Work Life Ministry* in your church:

1. Lay a foundation of prayer

Any effort is in vain without the blessing of God’s Spirit. Start the ministry with a campaign of prayer and undergird its ongoing efforts with continued intercession. Direct individuals to focus prayer on this group. This is the harvest field that is ripe unto harvest. There is going to be tremendous warfare here because the harvest is here.

2. Appoint an active, passionate leader

Work Life Ministry needs a “champion,” a delegated, activist leader, whether a lay member or a person on staff. This is an absolute prerequisite for success here. Next to God’s blessing and the pastor’s support, identifying the right individual whom God has raised up is fundamental to the whole effort. A small team of 3 “Work Life Champions,” is ideal. (A chord of three strands is not easily broken.)

If you are interested in launching such a ministry, but you are not in your church’s leadership, begin praying and persuading the decision-makers that this ministry should be a priority. Share with them your vision and passion. Pass on to them the books, tapes, and articles that have opened your eyes to the paradigm of *Work Life* Ministry. Begin praying for them. Invite them to go with you to a *Work Life* related conference. Connect them with other churches, click here for a listing, **(insert hotlink here)** who are successfully implementing *Work Life* ministry strategies. God may very well use you to help them catch a whole new vision, and you may be the key to the transformation of your church in this area.

3. Add *Work Life* equipping to your church’s objective

A *Work Life* Ministry focus ought to be one of the central themes integrated into the mission of your church. A one-time programmatic emphasis will probably falter. *Work Life* equipping is not an event-driven campaign, but a long term initiative that, if done properly, yields abundant fruit.

4. Build a Strategic Framework

Carefully consider what it is that you want to do and what it will take to do it. What’s entailed in equipping your members? And how will you deliver that information? How will you go beyond imparting information and encouragement to generate real passion for living out faith at work? Without a structural framework in the church, sustainable action is difficult.

Faith and Work Life, and other ministries like ours, can provide a planning framework, a set of practical tools and strategies that many churches are finding helpful. We helps churches develop their own plan for an on going process of *Work Life* ministry, coming alongside church leaders and their *Work Life* “champions,” to help create and launch the ministry. That includes among other things creating a vision,

a team, events, outreach, prayer team, prayer communications, online tools, web site enhancements, small group DVD curriculum, a plan for long term success and the on going support of your ministry.

5. Promote the Work Life ministry

Without visibility, a Work Life Ministry will not engage and mobilize people in the church. It needs a name, a logo, and a communication infrastructure. It requires promotion in church, communications like bulletins, announcements, the church web site, newsletters, and emails. We suggest a month-long, pre-launch campaign, a church-wide emphasis to get the ministry onto the average member's radar screen. The ultimate goal is to integrate it into the entire culture of the church. Sermons cast the vision from up front and lay the groundwork of basic biblical precepts. Involvement tools and online resources help people get on board. Remember this may be your greatest most impacting ministry in reaching your city and community.

6. Plan ongoing equipping and mobilization

Once the framework and tools for the ministry are in place, don't get complacent. We can help you think through what you can do on an ongoing basis to help your members to continue to learn how to live their faith at work. Here are some practical ideas:

- Pastors could schedule periodic sermons related to workplace topics. Consider including member testimonies of how God is transforming their work-lives.
- Offer classes on God's view of work and on calling and vocation.
- To recognize and bless their calling in a formal way, empower believers in their vocations through a church commissioning service.
- Help your members organize Bible studies, prayer groups, and evangelistic outreaches at their places of work. Go to events that are workplace builders.

The Payoff

Launching and sustaining a Work life Ministry in your church requires a shift in a church's strategic thinking. It requires envisioning a whole new ministry landscape for the local church. Tall order, for sure, but the payoff is far taller. Consider this: the true scope of influence for any church is not attendance, but the sum total of the relationship networks of its members, most of whom work. If each person has a regular interaction with twenty (20) other people during a given week, then a church of 250 has a potential scope of influence of 5,000, and a church of 5,000 has a potential reach of 100,000! Work Life Ministry grows out of the vision to steward this wider ministry opportunity. Its task is to mentally and practically merge the ministry of the church with the daily ministry of its people.

Such a ministry has other payoffs as well. It will not only accelerate the growth of your church, it will enhance the spiritual maturity of your church members. Moreover, members' appreciation for their church will likely deepen as the church relevantly speaks to the daily challenges people face and it equips people for their calling. It keeps God in front of them, empowering them everyday. Surely the church that makes a priority of Work Life Ministry will have no problem filling its pews. Beyond that, though, it will be filling its pews with more authentic disciples – people equipped to take that 9:00 a.m. Sunday message and apply it at 9:00 a.m. Monday morning.

Contact us today and begin planning a Work Life Ministry in your church.