A VOLUME IN ADVANCES IN WORKPLACE SPIRITUALITY: THEORY, RESEARCH, AND APPLICATION

Faith & Work

Christian Perspectives, Research, and Insights Into the Movement

Edited by Timothy Ewest
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A Volume in Advances in Workplace Spirituality: Theory, Research and Application

Series Editor:
Louis W. (Jody) Fry, Texas A&M University Central Texas
**Advances in Workplace Spirituality: Theory, Research, and Application**

Louis W. (Jody) Fry, Series Editor

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to Christians who rise each day to join with the rest of humanity in the common rhythm of work. These individuals engage in work because it enables them to express and form their Christian identity, and thus work provides them a deep meaning and purpose for their lives. The action of these Christians is an uncontestable fact which is often overlooked by researchers, governments, and communities, but is predicated within these chapters.
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BOOK SERIES INTRODUCTION

Louis W. (Jody) Fry
Series Editor

A major change is taking place in the personal and professional lives of many organizational leaders and their employees as they aspire to integrate their spirituality and religion with their work. Many argue that the reason behind this change is that society is seeking spiritual solutions to better respond to tumultuous social, business, geopolitical changes. The result has been a remarkable explosion of scholarship that provides the opportunity for more specialized interest areas, including the role of spirituality and religion in shaping organizations: structures, decision making, management style, mission and strategy, organizational culture, human resource management, finance and accounting, marketing and sales—in short—all aspects of leading, managing, and organizing resources and people. As evidenced by the growing influence of the Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion and the success of the Management, Spirituality, and Religion Interest Group of the Academy of Management, a field with a broad focus on workplace spirituality is gathering momentum.

This book series, Advances in Workplace Spirituality: Theory, Research, and Application, focuses on the study of the relationship and relevance of spirituality and/or religion to organizational life. Its vision is to draw from a diverse range of scholarly areas to become a pivotal source for integrative theory, research, and application on workplace spirituality. The purpose of the series is to (1) provide scholars with a meaningful collection of books in key areas and create a forum for the field, (2) support a growing
trend toward paradigm integration and assimilation through the interdisciplinary nature of this series, and (3) draw from a wide variety of disciplines for integrative thinking on workplace spirituality with the broad goal of adding to the value of workplace spirituality theory, research, and its application. The series aims to serve as a meeting forum and help cross-fertilization in these communities. Our sole criterion is academic rigor and scientific merit.

The latest edited book of this series, *Faith and Work: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Insights Into the Movement*, is truly groundbreaking. Spirituality-based models have dominated management, spirituality, and religion theory, research, and practice. However, today there is an emerging consensus that new religion-based theories and models are needed, not only for organizations that employ workers from different spiritual and religious traditions, but also for public and private organizations whose cultures and employees embrace diverse religious beliefs and practices as central to their work. This is especially true for the Christian tradition since Christianity in all its forms and manifestations comprise almost a third of the world’s population.

This book helps fill this need by providing a language and framework for practitioners and scholars alike to think about ways that Christian thought might shape and inform organizational life. In doing so, Volume Editor Timothy Ewest draws on a talented and diverse group of interdisciplinary and international scholars to contribute fresh thinking about Christian perspectives, practices, and insights into the faith at work movement at the individual, organizational, and societal levels. Whether you are a believer or not, a Christian or not, or simply interested in big ideas, I trust you will find this book informative, thought provoking and, for some, a call to action.
FOREWORD

David W. Miller
Director, Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative,
President, the Avodah Institute

New York City is seldom the first city that comes to mind when writing about the Buckle of the Bible belt. Cities like Nashville or Abilene usually vie for that bragging right. Yet there I was, on Wall Street attending a secular corporate leadership event for senior executives in the financial services sector, talking about God.

Over cocktails, one executive squinted at my name tag which read, “David W. Miller, PhD, Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative.” Eschewing any attempt at courtesy, he asked me, “what on earth is a ‘Faith & Work Initiative’ and why are you attending this event?” I responded, “I’m in the God business.” I waited to see whether he would make a quick excuse about needing to refresh his drink and run in the opposite direction, or whether he might pause and say something like, “I waited to see whether he would make a quick excuse about needing to refresh his drink and run in the opposite direction, or whether he might pause and say something like, ‘tell me more.’” Whenever I am feeling mischievous and do this at corporate events, I never cease to be amazed that four out of five people are curious and want to know more.

The growing body of evidence and scholarly literature from a variety of disciplines seems to validate this vignette. People of all faith traditions and backgrounds, including atheists and agnostics, are increasingly curious about the phenomena of “integrating faith and work.” Somewhat ironically, even those active in a worship community express disappoint-
ment at how little guidance or encouragement they get from their clergy
person during the Sabbath sermon.

Professor Timothy Ewest, my friend, colleague, frequent collaborator,
and editor of this timely and important book has organized this text
along three different but related planes. As I observed in my 2007 book,
*God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement* (Oxford
University Press), people and organizations involved in the movement
tend operate on three levels. Many focus on the micro or individual level,
trying to draw on and integrate their faith teachings as part of their per-
sonal understanding of their day-to-day work activities and conduct. Oth-
ers focus on the mezzo or organizational level, focusing on how their faith
tradition and teachings might impact companywide decisions, products,
and services. And yet others focus on the macro or wider stakeholder
impact of their work on society. And of course, many seek to understand
how their faith should function on all three levels.

Ewest has drawn on a talented and diverse group of interdisciplinary
and international scholars to contribute fresh thinking about Christian
perspectives, research, and insights into the faith at work movement. The
book is structured to lead the reader through the individual, organiza-
tional, and societal aspects of faith at work. The contributing scholars
raise important content questions, including: finding meaning and
purpose in one’s work; caring for creation; embracing diversity while sus-
taining Christian values; responding to those who feel their faith is mar-
ginalized by society; and identifying the constructive role that Christian
faith might play in shaping and informing ideas and actions amidst these
contemporary questions.

As the title of this book declares, it is written out of a distinctly Chris-
tian worldview. And yet, there is no such thing as a single “Christian wor-
dview,” just as there is no such thing as a single Jewish or Muslim
worldview. Yet Ewest has gathered scholars from various Christian tradi-
tions, geographies, and accents. My personal hope is that this book might
be a template to prompt edited volumes from other religious traditions,
following suit with similar self-reflections and perspectives on faith and
work at the personal, organizational, and societal levels. I suspect we will
undoubtedly notice different accents within and between the traditions,
even as we will find a vast amount of resonances and shared teachings.

As for Christianity and its three major branches (Orthodox, Roman
Catholic, and Protestant), each have varying theological accents, doctrinal
foci, and practical teachings, even as they are all united under founda-
tional beliefs about Jesus Christ as the risen Messiah. Christianity as a
whole is very interested in what it means to be a human being, created an
image of God, and what it means for humanity to cultivate and tend the
garden, that is, to work. This book helps us explore these profoundly important questions.

In recent decades, the church and the theological Academy have largely ignored these two questions. Despite some notable exceptions over the past few years, most seminaries have abdicated constructive engagement with or equipping of laity involved in the workplace and the wider economic sphere. This book helps bridge that gap by providing a language and framework for practitioners and scholars alike to think afresh about ways that Christian thought might shape and inform their individual, organizational, and social engagement in the marketplace.

Whether you are in the God business or not, a Christian or not, or simply interested in big ideas, I trust you will find this book of existential and practical value.