

## **ENDTIME ISSUES NEWSLETTER No. 210**

### **"A BIBLICAL VIEW OF WORK"**

**Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,**

**Retired Professor of Theology and Church History,**

**Andrews University**

### **EDITORIAL COMMENTS**

**Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.**

My editorial comments will briefly mention the following topics:

- 1) Accidental Loss of your Messages**
- 2) Introduction to this Essay on "A Biblical view of Work."**
- 3) NEW SERVICE: You Can Download the PDF Version of all my Books**
- 4) Update on *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?***
- 5) Australian Distributor of my books**
- 6) Complete Package of 14 Albums with a total of 41 DVD disks, with all the live lectures of myself, Prof. Jon Paulien and Prof. Graeme Bradford, for only \$150.00, instead of \$1650.00. See details at the end of the newsletter.**
- 7) An Incredible Offer on New 3000 Lumens HITACHI projectors for only \$1000.00. Only a few projectors available. See details at the end of the newsletter.**

### **ACCIDENTAL LOSS OF YOUR MESSAGES**

You may be wondering what has triggered me to email this new newsletter on "A Biblical View of Work," in rapid succession to the previous one on "My Pilgrimage from Secular to Sacred Music" by Cristina Piccardi. The reason is the accidental loss of all the 1700 messages

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that were stored in my mail box. Some of the message were old, but about 200 of them were recent. If you did not receive a reply to your recent message, please email it to me again. Most likely it is one of the many messages that I lost.

This is the first time in 10 years that my EUDORA mailing program went berserk, causing the text of all the messages to become garbled. To remedy the problem I decided to email this newsletter in rapid succession to the previous one, in order to inform you about what has happened and to kindly ask you to re-send me your messages. I will do my best to reply before we leave for London, England, on Tuesday September 2. Thank you for your understanding.

## INTRODUCTION TO THE ESSAY OF THIS NEWSLETTER

The essay of this newsletter was initially written several years ago as chapter 1 of a manuscript to be published under the title of ***The Christian Lifestyle***. The emphasis of much of the preaching today is on the *profession*, rather than on the *practice* of the Christian faith. The result is that many see nothing wrong in professing to be Christians on the one hand, while on the other hand living contrary to some fundamental moral norms of the Christian faith.

The intent of the study was to help believers understand what it means to follow Jesus in the various aspects of our daily life. Unfortunately, the pressing demands on my time caused me to shelf this project. Thus, I welcome the opportunity in this and the following newsletter to share some thoughts on the ***Biblical View of Work and Leisure***, especially since the manuscript was never published. I feel that this is a relevant topic since our life is largely made up of work and leisure.

## UPDATE ON ***POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?***

The third printing of ***Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?*** will be out this weeks. This will make it possible to process the large orders from American churches and overseas institutions. None of my previous 17 books have been reprinted three times in three months.

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A major reason for the overwhelming demand for *Popular Beliefs*, is the urgent need felt by many Adventists for a compelling witnessing book they can give with confidence to people inquiring about our faith. Many Adventists have emailed me messages of appreciation, saying that they have waited for years for a book like *Popular Beliefs* that shows why the most popular Catholic and Protestant popular beliefs are unbiblical, while the less-popular Adventist beliefs are biblically correct.

### A Note of Thanks

At this time I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the pastors and lay-members who have actively promoted and distributed *Popular Beliefs* to their church members. Without your promotional efforts, the distribution of this timely book would have been limited.

### Two Copies for the Price of One

To make it possible for all our pastors and local church leaders to become acquainted with this timely book, **we are offering until September 15, 2008, two copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* for the price of one.** This means that for \$30.00 you can order two copies, one for yourself and to give to your pastor or a local church leader.

After reading *Popular Beliefs* many pastors have ordered the book by the case of 30 copies for only \$6.60 per copy. Many churches have ordered 100 copies at the special offer of \$5.00 per copy, to give to non-SDA attending the Mark Findley's Satellite program *Discoveries 2008* or other evangelistic meeting in the Fall.

Thank you for introducing your pastor and local church officers to this timely book. The details for ordering the book are given at the end of the newsletter or by clicking at this link: [http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26\\_35](http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26_35) or call us at (269) 471-2915.

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## NEW SERVICE: YOU CAN DOWNLOAD THE PDF VERSION OF ALL MY BOOKS

At the request of readers of this newsletter who need immediate access to my books, often for a personal research project, we have decided to make it possible to download all the 20 books offered online in a PDF version.

The advantage is speed and saving. You can immediately download a PDF version of any of my books for only \$10.00, instead of waiting for days or weeks to receive a printed copy which costs \$40.00 to airmail overseas.

To download a PDF copy of my books simply click this link: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=37&osCsid=a5769f896270d26a770e18e1354ce7f1> If you have a problem, we can take your order by phone. Call us at (269) 471-2915.

## AUSTRALIAN DISTRIBUTOR OF MY BOOKS

For a long time I have been praying that the Lord would help me to find Adventists with marketing skills interested to distribute my books in major English-speaking countries. If you are interested to offer this service in your country, please contact me by email <[sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com](mailto:sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com)> or by phone (269)-4712915.

On my part, I am willing to offer to any distributor my books at 75% discount and ship them by sea-freight which is very economical. For \$500.00 I can ship by sea-freight one cubic meter of books, which is over 1000 books. Feel free to contact me if you are interested to distribute my 20 books and recordings in your country.

The release of the new book ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?*** has inspired some Adventists to become distributors of my 20 volumes in their countries.

At this time I am pleased to announce to our Australian believers that you can now order both my **ENGLISH and SPANISH** books at a considerable saving through an Australian distributor. He will

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also distribute our recordings. This is the name and address of the distributor:

Ivan Jakovac  
Albury Storage  
107 North Street Albury NSW 2640

**Phone** 02 6021 8088

**Mobile** 0406 854 500

**email:** <ivan@alburystorage.com.au>

**web site:** <<http://www.alburystorage.com/>>

If you live in Australia, feel free to contact Ivan Jakovac by phone or email. You will save time and money. For example, the cost of airmailing to Australia ***Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?*** is \$40.00, that is, \$30.00 for the book and \$10.00 for the airmail. You can order the same book from Ivan Jakovac for about half of the price. The reason is that the books will be sent to Jakovac by sea-freight, which costs a fraction of the airmail.

The first shipment should reach Jakovac in about a month. So please allow some time for your order to be processed. In the future your orders be processed immediately.

For a description and picture of each book, click at this link:  
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**THE COMPLETE PACKAGE 14 ALBUMS WITH A TOTAL OF 41 DVD/CD DISKS FOR ONLY \$150.00, INSTEAD OF \$1650.00**

For the first time we offer the complete Package of 14 Albums with a total of 41 DVD/CD disks, for only \$150.00, instead of \$1650.00. The package contains 41 professionally recorded live, video lectures by Prof. Bacchiocchi, Prof. Jon Paulien, Prof. Roy Gane, Prof. Graeme

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Bradford, and sacred concerts by Soprano Cristina Piccardi. See details at the end of the newsletter.

**NEW HITACHI PROJECTORS 3000 LUMENS FOR ONLY \$1000.00.** Only a few projectors available. See details at the end of the newsletter to order one.

## "A BIBLICAL VIEW OF WORK"

**Samuele Bacchiocchi, Ph. D.,  
Retired Professor of Theology and Church History,  
Andrews University**

Our Adventist theology focuses primarily on the *rest* of the seventh day, largely ignoring the importance of the work of the sixth day. Yet, the Fourth Commandment enjoins us, not only to rest on the seventh day, but also to work during the six days.

This means that working six days is an important component of Sabbathkeeping. We can break the Sabbath commandment on a Tuesday or Wednesday, by failing to do our work, spending the time in idleness.

This and the following newsletters explore the biblical view of work and leisure. In a sense both areas are related because our work and leisure, are outward manifestation of our inward commitment to Christ.

## **Deification of Work**

Christians entertain contradictory attitudes toward work and leisure. Some make a religion out of work. In his book *The Christian Use of Time*, Niels-Erik Andreasen, President of Andrews University, notes that for some "Work has become a religion; its faith is ambition, its rewards are wealth, its liturgy is the gentle tapping of machines, its high priest is management, and its god is progress. We are committed to this religion, it has cast a strange spell over us, and we have become desperately dependent upon it."<sup>1</sup>

The concern for production and profit on the one hand, and the conviction that all have the right to a job, no matter of what kind, on the other hand, has led some to view work as a high virtue, the very object of living. The merits of a deceased person are often extolled by such comments: "He was

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such a good, hard-working Christian man. His whole life has been only work.” The workaholics turn their work into their religion, making it the chief value for which to live. For them leisure is unproductive, unfulfilling, a waste of precious time.

### **Deification of Leisure**

If some are tempted to deify work, many more are inclined to make leisure their chief aspiration. The growing availability of free time, the increased personal income coupled with the dehumanizing effects of mechanical, boring jobs, are some of the factors that have changed the attitude of many toward work. For these persons work is not an end in itself but a means to an end, a means necessary to pay for the thrills of leisure time. Their dislike for work is expressed by such quips as: “Thank God it’s Friday.” “Work fascinates me. I can sit and watch it for hours.” “Hard work may not kill you, but why take a chance.”

Work and leisure are problem areas for many Christians today. Some feel guilty because they overwork, thus robbing time from their family life and devotional activities. Others feel guilty because they overleisure, indulging in idleness in order to kill the void of leisure time.

### **The Silence of the Church**

The Christian church is responsible for helping Christians to understand how their faith relates to their work and leisure. After all these are matters of universal concern that occupy most of people’s time. Yet these are areas that are largely neglected in Christian teaching, writing and preaching today. If you visit a library or a religious bookstore you will find very few titles, if any, about how the Christian faith relates to work and leisure. When did you last hear (or preach) a sermon on work or leisure?

All of this suggests that the Church has become virtually silent on the subjects of work and leisure. These subjects have become, as W. R. Forrester puts it in his book *Christian Vocation*, “the lost provinces of religion.”<sup>22</sup> This is surprising, given the strong emphasis that the Reformers placed on work and given the comprehensive view of life, work and leisure the Puritans brought to America.

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The result is that millions of Christians go to work each day unaided, disillusioned and unchallenged by a Biblical sense of calling to their profession. This leaves them confused about how their faith relates to their job. Some even believe that religion and work do not mix. At best they see religion as an antidote or compensation for their boring and unfulfilling job.

The same is true of leisure. Some will shorten their lunch hour to half an hour so that they can leave work earlier and have more leisure time to pursue their pleasures with food, alcohol, drugs, movies, music, TV shows, and programs. Unfortunately they are fleeing from the drudgery of work into the meaninglessness of leisure.

“In truth, for millions of Americans—hardworking Americans,” writes Gordon Dahl, “leisure has come to mean little more than an ever more furious orgy of consumption. Whatever energies are left after working are spent in pursuing pleasure with the help of an endless array of goods and services. This is ‘virtuous materialism’ par excellence. It offers men the choice of either working themselves to death or consuming themselves to death—or both.”<sup>3</sup>

### **Objective of this Newsletter**

The good news of the Christian faith is that work and leisure do not need to be boring, consuming, and unfulfilling experiences. On the contrary they can provide joy, satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment. The secret is to be found in recovering the Biblical view of work and leisure as God’s gifts for our well-being. Our work and leisure have meaning and purpose. They are important in God’s sight and as Christians we have more reasons than anyone else to find fulfillment and satisfaction in our work and leisure.

This newsletter examines the Biblical view of work, while the next newsletter focuses on the biblical view of leisure. We will contrast these with the secular views of these. The newsletter is divided into two parts. The first deals with the secular view of work and the second with the biblical view of work.

## **Part I SECULAR VIEWS OF WORK**

To classify the secular views of work is not easy because each worker has his or her own view of their jobs. A common denominator of the secular views of work is the absence of God in their system. Work is seen as a



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purely secular pursuit that exists for its own sake. What happens on the job is totally irrelevant to God. The dominant focus of life is to pursue a successful career. Some Christians justify their secular career by making their work place a platform for evangelism. They view their work as secular but they are grateful that God can use it as a witnessing opportunity to share the Gospel with the unsaved.

The underlying assumptions of the secular views of work are expressed in a variety of ways. We will consider five of them, though there are many more. Surprisingly, as we shall see, many Christians have accepted some of these secular views and live by them.

### **The Primary Purpose of Work is to Earn a Living**

This sounds as a reasonable statement that any responsible wage earner can make. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why God has given us work so that we can provide for ourselves and our families. However, if this were the only reason for working, then work would become a self-directed activity to reach only the immediate objective of providing financial means to meet the necessities of life.

On the positive side we can say that this view motivates billions of workers to perform even burdensome and boring jobs, because it gives them the hope of survival and even of prosperity. Some indeed have prospered through this secular view, and their stories appears in magazine articles on the “Lifestyle of the Rich and Famous.” They serve as the inspiring heroes for countless others who have not made it.

**Evaluation.** This positive side is more than outweighed by its negative aspects. Above all this secular view lacks the Biblical perspective of work, which as will shall see, enables Christians to see work not only as a means of subsistence, but as a divine provision to use their God-given talents to serve the Lord and mankind.

Viewing work primarily as a means to make a living can tempt people to engage in questionable business practices and opulent lifestyle. Sometimes people justify their fraudulent deals because their intent is to provide for their family. “Providing” sometimes may mean buying expensive cars, a prestigious home, stylish clothes or taking the family to expensive overseas vacations.

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Unfortunately many Christians have adopted this secular view of work without realizing it. They go to church on Saturday or Sunday to affirm their Christian faith, but when Monday comes they switch gears and act as everybody else. Presumably they assume that God is not interested in their work. Consequently they do not consider how they can serve God in and through their work. These people need to realize that their work is important to God and their attitude toward their occupation largely determines their attitude toward God. I will expand on this concept later on in this chapter, hoping that this material will challenge some to reexamine their posture toward their work.

### **The Ultimate Purpose of Work is to Achieve Self-fulfillment**

We live today in a self-centered society where, as Daniel Yankelovich notes, “the struggle for self-fulfillment in today’s world is the leading edge of a genuine cultural revolution.”<sup>4</sup> He goes on describing Abby, a woman who typifies today’s quest for self-fulfillment: “In talking about herself she refers to her ‘emotional needs,’ her ‘sexual needs,’ her ‘material needs,’ her ‘need to be challenged intellectually,’ her ‘need to assert herself.’ When she discusses her ‘unfulfilled potential’ and her ‘need to keep growing,’ she seems to take these metaphors literally—almost as if she believes the process of filling her unmet needs is like filling a set of wine glasses at a dinner party: the more needs filled, the greater the self-fulfillment.”<sup>5</sup>

To achieve the elusive goal of self-fulfillment some will endure incredible hardships. Motivational speakers offer inspiring formulas (a humanistic gospel) to help people find fulfillment by getting what they want. Their formula is rather simple. If you believe that you have what it takes, then go for “it.” If you want “it” badly enough and are willing to work hard enough, you will get “it.” Success and fulfillment depend on the intensity of your desire and efforts to achieve that elusive “it.”

In their book *Your Work Matters to God*, Doug Sherman and William Hendricks explain what it takes to go for “it.” They write: “‘It’ requires determination (‘There are many starters, but few finishers’); discipline (‘Creativity is two percent inspiration and ninety-eight percent perspiration’); the right goals (‘If you aim at nothing, you’ll hit it every time’); savvy (‘Success in life comes not from holding a good hand, but in playing a poor hand well’); perseverance (‘Tough times never last; tough people do’); vision (‘Some men

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dream dreams and ask, Why?; I dream dreams and ask, Why not?'); self-confidence ('Believe in God, and you're halfway there; believe in yourself, and you're three-quarters there')."<sup>6</sup>

**Evaluation.** The fundamental fallacy of this secular view is the assumption that human beings possess adequate inner mental, physical and emotional resources to achieve self-fulfillment in every area. This is an unrealistic expectation which fails to recognize the severe limitations of human life and work as means for self-fulfillment.

Self-fulfillment sound great when one is climbing up the executive ladder and the financial scale. But how does self-fulfillment based on career attainments relate to the loss of employment and financial security? Such setback can be like a psychological earthquake that destroys the self-identity and can lead to such tragedies as suicide. By seeking to save themselves through work, some loose themselves instead.

### **Success in Work Means Success in Life**

Many people measure their success in life in terms of their success at work. A man might be an alcoholic, his wife may have walked out on him, his kids might have trouble with the law, his dependent workers might hate him for his arrogance, yet if he successful in his business, many will admire him as a successful man. Some will even yearn for his endorsement, his association, his fame or his recognition.

A successful career has become for many the most important aim of life. The extent to which they succeed in their career is the extent to which they measure their success in life. A major reason is that a successful career enables people to display the badges of their personal success: an expensive watch, a costly suit, an exclusive club, an exotic car, or a prestigious home in an aristocratic neighborhood. These status symbols, however, do not prove that a person is successful, but they are effective in making others believe that he or she are successful people. And for many this is all what ultimately counts, not what they actually are, but what other think they are. Like in a beauty contest, image counts more than substance.

**Evaluation.** When we value people on the basis of their career success and its rewards, our judgment is *quantitative* rather than *qualitative*, that is to say,

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it is based on how much a person *has* achieved or accumulated rather than on what a person *is*. What gives meaning to life, however, is not abundance of goods but abiding goals, is not a prestigious career but profound beliefs, is not a massive wealth but a mastering faith.

To measure success in life by the success achieved in the workplace has severe limitations. First, persons preoccupied to achieve success through work, never get beyond themselves. They never consider life and others objectively. Their achievements become the measure of all things. Second, to base personal self-worth and success on career success, means to base one's life on a very shaky foundation. An economic recession that causes the loss of a job can also damage if not destroy one's sense of self-worth and identity.

### **Secular Work is Less Worthy than Religious Vocations**

In my itinerant ministry often I have been approached by sincere Christians who wanted to know if they should give up their secular careers and train for the ministry. Somehow they feel that working as a mechanic, or a salesperson, or a printer, or a builder, is less worthy in the sight of God than working as a pastor or as a missionary.

This mentality is not new. During the Middle Ages many gifted, highly trained and capable administrators like Ambrose, left their well-paid government jobs to become priests or monks. The reason was their belief that the sacred work of the church is a higher calling than the secular work of the world. Even today there are Christians who give up a successful career to enter the ministry because they believe that working for "souls" is more important in the sight of God than working for the needs of the "body" in a secular profession.

This view is based on the mistaken assumption that God is far more interested in the *soul* of people than in their *bodies*. Thus *soul-activities* that cultivate the inner person such as preaching, praying, studying the Bible, teaching the Bible, pastoral counseling, conducting a crusade or seminars for spiritual growth, are more important in the sight of God than *secular activities* that provide for the needs of the body such as farming, trucking, building, banking, cooking, sewing, or cleaning.

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**Evaluation.** This is an extremely unbiblical view of human nature. It assumes that a person is made up of two independent components, a *soul* and a *body*, the former being spiritual, eternal and of great value, the latter being physical, temporal and of no value. But the Scripture teaches us that God created man as a *soul-body unity*: “Then the Lord formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul” (Gen 2:7).

*Body* and *soul*, *flesh* and *spirit* are used in the Bible to describe different activities within the same person and not the different components of human beings. When Paul summons us to present our “bodies as a living sacrifice” to God (Rom 12:1), he obviously mean that we are to consecrate our total being to God. There is no superiority of the soul over the body. As Sherman and Hendricks put it, “Whatever contributes to the soul contributes to the person, and whatever contributes to the body contributes to the person. Whatever contributes to a person contributes to a person as a whole.”<sup>7</sup>

This means that the work of those involved in body-oriented occupations such as medical personnel, hairdressers, dressmakers is not spiritually inferior because it concerns itself with the body. “If God were only interested in soul-work, then He needn’t have created a physical universe. He needn’t have placed Adam and Eve in a garden ‘to cultivate and keep it.’ He needn’t have sent Christ in a human body. And He needn’t bother to resurrect the body after death.”<sup>8</sup> The truth is that God is interested in both our body and soul, in our physical and spiritual needs. Thus any kind of daily work that is performed for the love of God and people, fulfills God’s plan for mankind.

### A False Dichotomy

The dichotomy between “secular work” and “sacred work” is based on the assumption that some jobs are more holy than others. Such a dichotomy is foreign to the Bible. Christ has done away with such a dichotomy by working most of His life as a carpenter. His example teaches us God’s work is as broad as His creation. Any work that provides for the needs of God’s creation is in a sense a “sacred” work because it is used by God to accomplish His overall purpose for mankind. God’s concern is not simply that we engage in holy activities but primarily that we become a holy people. As Christ-followers we approach our work as a God-honoring task, because God is our ultimate Boss to whom we are accountable. As a holy people we can exercise a sanctifying influence on whatever work we are called to perform.

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When we reject the dichotomy between secular and sacred work and accept the Biblical view that we can serve God in any profession, we can avoid the sense of *guilt* some experience when they cannot serve the Lord in the higher calling of church-related occupations. If they did not qualify to be ministers or a missionaries, they feel guilty spending their time repairing cars, for example, when they could have worked for the Lord mending hearts. It is hard for such Christians to pour energy and emotion into a work which they view as insignificant in God's sight. They see no reason to honor God in a job that is of little value to Him. Such an unbiblical misconception debilitates the Christian worker and silences his witness at the very time and place where our culture needs to hear God's voice.

### **The Primary Function of Secular Jobs is to Provide Opportunities for Evangelism**

While some Christians pursue their secular occupations with a sense of guilt because they cannot serve the Lord in the higher calling of the ministry, a greater number of Christians work at their secular jobs primarily as a strategy to share their faith with their colleagues. For them their secular job is not an enemy but an ally to be used to fulfill the Great Commission of evangelizing the world. Work serves primarily as a platform for Christians to proclaim their faith.

Those who adopt this view redefine their job description. They are no longer teachers, builders, doctors, bankers, but evangelists in the field of education, construction, medicine and finances. For them "the work of God in the world is primarily evangelistic. The only reason God meets physical and emotional needs of people is merely to sustain them so that they can either hear the gospel (for non-Christians) or share the gospel (for Christians)."<sup>9</sup>

This popular view must be praised for emphasizing the importance of witnessing for Christ in the workplace. After all it is in the work place that most Christians have the main contact with unbelievers. There is no question that evangelism should be a priority for Christians who take seriously the Gospel Commission to "make disciples of all nations" (Matt 28:19).

**Evaluation.** But the Gospel commission involves not only leading people to Christ and baptizing them in His name, but also "making disciples" of them, that is, teaching people how to be a disciple of Christ at the home, in the church, in the work place, and in society at large.

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In His ministry Christ did not withdraw from the secular occupations but identified Himself with them both by working as a carpenter for 30 years and by praising the “good and faithful servant” who had been productive in his work (Matt 25:23; cf. Luke 19:17). Much of the ministry of Christ was spent not within the sacred precincts of the Temple, but among the people working in the shops, the market place, or in the fields. It was out of the secular occupations of the people that Christ drew His parables depicting faithful stewards, obedient servants, shrewd businessmen. People were attracted to Christ not because of the uniqueness of his teaching but because of His transparent lifestyle. He lived what he taught.

Our witness in the workplace will be more effective if we can show to our coworkers how our Christian faith and values affect our job performance, our productivity, our punctuality, our workmanship, our relationship to others. We shoot ourselves in the foot when we try to witness apart from a consistent Christlike conduct.

## **Conclusion**

To a lesser or greater degree all the five views of work we have just considered tend to separate secular work from God. For the secular worker God is irrelevant at work. Similarly for many Christians secular work is either beneath God’s dignity and concern or primarily a platform to be used to preach the Gospel to unbelievers. In spite of their popularity, these views are unbiblical. They fail to appreciate that work in the Bible has intrinsic value. It is a God-given means to accomplish several important ends. It is to the Biblical understanding of work that we wish to turn our attention now.

## **Part 2 THE BIBLICAL VIEW OF WORK**

### **Work Finds its Origin and Dignity in God Himself, the First Worker**

In the Bible work begins as a divine example and not as a divine command. The first worker mentioned in the Bible is God Himself. The entire drama of human history began as a result of the work of God. “In the first two chapters of Genesis,” writes John Stott, “God reveals Himself to us as a worker. Day by day, stage by stage, his creative work unfolded. And when He created mankind male and female to His own image, He made them workers too.”<sup>10</sup>

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The seven days structure of human time was established at creation by God's working on six days and resting on the seventh day. The experience of work and rest are human, yet the Scripture applies them first to God. "On the seventh day God finished his *work* which he had done" (Gen 2:2). Moreover during the creation week God rested from his creative work at the end of each day, thus setting up a rhythm of work and rest for us to follow.

### **A Divine Dimension to Human Work**

Is it not astonishing that the almighty God, who in a moment could have spoken this world into existence, chose to accomplish this creation by working six days and then resting on the seventh day? Why did God use the very time cycle established for His creatures? Simply because He wanted to give a divine dimension to our human work and rest. One of the greatest satisfactions that comes to human beings is that of imitating a great master. It is amazing to what extent some people will go in imitating their "idol" in their hairdo, clothing, gestures, or even in their choice of a perfume scent.

This lesson was brought home to me several years ago when I built a wall-to-wall bookshelf in my study. Gianluca, my seven-year-old son, offered to help me but ended up helping himself to the pieces of wood that I sawed off. What did he do with them? He nailed them together and then asked me with a sense of pride, "Dad, how do you like my shelf?" It looked anything but a shelf, yet he was proud of it. Why? Because he was doing on a small scale what dad was doing on a larger scale. Similarly, when we work during the six days and rest on the Sabbath day, we are doing on a small scale what God has done and is doing on an infinitely larger scale. This divine perspective provides the necessary spiritual resources to perform even menial tasks not grudgingly but joyfully. It gives validity, dignity and meaning both to our weekdays work and to our Sabbath rest.

### **God like a Human Worker**

God's work of creation is described in human terms. He became a cosmic gardener when He planted a garden in Eden (Gen 2:8), a sculptor when He formed man from the dust of the earth (Gen 2:7), a surgeon when He made Eve from the rib of Adam (Gen 2:21-22). Psalm 19:1 tells us that "the firmament proclaims his handiwork." Psalm 8:3 pictures the heavens as "the work



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of thy fingers.” Again and again God is portrayed as a Master Craftsman. God’s work did not stop with the completion of the creation of this world, but has continued throughout history. His “wonderful works to the son of men” (Ps 107:8) include His active provision for the broad range of needs of all His creatures: “From thy lofty abode thou waterest the mountains; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy work. Thou dost cause the grass to grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate, that he may bring forth food from the earth” (Ps 104:13-14).

This picture of God as a Worker stands in stark contrast to the image of Greek gods who lived in leisure, free from work. According to the Greek poet Hesiod, “At the beginning the generation of men lived on earth far removed from evils of difficult toil. . . . Men of the Golden Age used to live like gods . . . free from cares, from labor and grief.”<sup>11</sup> Leisure and play were reserved for the gods and aristocratic people, while work was performed by slaves. Work and leisure in most ancient cultures were two mutually exclusive social functions performed by two distinct groups.

### **Christ Dignified Human Work**

This view is foreign to both the Old and New Testaments. The latter tells us that the divine Son of God came into this world in human flesh and worked as a carpenter until the age of thirty. During His public ministry He associated with workers and often spoke of His work. “We must work the works of him who has sent me” (John 9:4). “My father is working still and I am working” (John 5:17).

Christ hallowed the concept of vocation by incorporating the activities of manual work into God’s purpose for His life. “It is inconceivable,” writes Carl F. Henry, “that he would consider his daily task a chore and not a challenge; that he should be content with shoddy and disreputable work instead of showing himself a master craftsman. He whose creative Word hewed all things out of nothing, whose redemptive work shaped a means of escape for sin-doomed man, and who in the judgment to come will ‘lay the axe to the tree,’ took the measure of material things in Nazareth just as he would in time take the measure of sinful man and make all things new.”<sup>12</sup>

By spending most of His life in a carpenter workshop, Christ teaches us that we can be His disciples and glorify God at a factory bench or on the assembly

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line. The head, the heart and the hands of Jesus have dignified and hallowed work for ever. The workshop is a legitimate area where during the week we can serve God and fellow-beings.

### **God Created Mankind in His Own Image as Coworkers**

The creation account tells us that God made mankind in his own image (Gen 1:26-27). The resemblance between God and His human creatures is to be found in many areas. One obvious similarity is that they are both workers. At creation God assigned a distinctive task to mankind on this planet: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves upon the earth” (Gen 1:28). Mankind is to achieve dominion by inhabiting the earth, by controlling and nurturing the physical environment, and by maintaining the physical and animal worlds in their proper relationship with God. The creation story implicitly shows that human work is part of God’s plan for mankind.

What is implicit in the creation story becomes explicit in the Fourth Commandment where God enjoins to mankind to work six days and rest on the seventh day in accordance with the pattern He himself established at creation: “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work . . . for in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and hallowed it” (Ex 20:8-11).

Generally we think of the Sabbath commandment as an injunction to rest on the seventh day. The commandment, however, is equally clear in enjoining us to work during the six days: “Six days you shall labor, and do all your work.” It is the doing of all our work in six days that makes possible the rest experience of the seventh day.

Both work and rest are grounded in the pattern of work and rest established by God during the creation. Since God worked six days and rested on the seventh day, we are invited to follow His example by doing likewise. Thus both work and rest are a creation ordinance grounded in God’s example and provision for our well-being.

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## Human Work Began in Paradise

Some mistakenly believe that human work is the result of the Fall. But this is not true. In the Scripture work is part of God's original provision in Paradise: "The Lord took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and to keep it" (Gen 2:15). The Reformers made much of this verse because it clearly shows that work is part of God's original purpose for human life. The goal of human life is not endless leisure like in Greek philosophy, but partnership with God in creative activities.

God planted a beautiful garden and then handed it over to man to cultivate. This is the first cooperative partnership we find in the Bible. God did not need Adam and Eve to cultivate the garden, but He chose them because He wanted them to participate in His plans. This means that work is a function of God's grace, a gift to us. Solomon teaches that man is to "find enjoyment in his toil—this is the gift of God" (Ecc 5:19). What an amazing thought that work is God's gift to us. Having created us, God honors us by making us coworkers with Him.

## Human Work a Partnership with God

God's work continues in human history. Since God is sovereign, we work in partnership with Him, carrying on His delegated work. This concept of cooperation is well-expressed in Psalm 127:1: "Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain." We note that work here is not belittled. The question is not whether building a house is a worthwhile occupation, but whether in building it the carpenter's energies are properly related to God's purpose. What is declared "vain" is human labor apart from God's assistance. When work is done in dependence and cooperation with God, it has dignity, value and meaning.

At the end of Psalm 90 we find a good example of the blending of human and divine work: "Let thy work be manifest to thy servant, and thy glorious power to their children. Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou the work of our hands upon us" (Ps 90:16-17). "Human work is potentially small or great, depending on whether the worker invites God into his or her life as a sovereign partner."<sup>13</sup>

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A good example of divine-human cooperation in work, is the rebuilding of the wall of Jerusalem as recounted in the book of Nehemiah. When enemies tried to divert Nehemiah from building the wall, his response shows the importance he attached to his work: “I am doing a great work and I cannot come down” (Neh 6:3). When the wall was finished, the enemies were afraid because, Nehemiah wrote: “they perceived that this work had been accomplished with the help of our God” (Neh 6:16).

Luther emphasized this concept of human-divine cooperation in work. He believed that God works through our work to bless us when we perform our vocation in faith and obedience to His commandments. He wrote: “He uses our labor as a sort of mask, under the cover of which he blesses us and grants us what is His, so that there is room for faith.”<sup>14</sup>

In our time John Stott, the renown English preacher and theologian, expresses the same view: “This concept of divine-human collaboration applies to all honorable work. God has so ordered life on earth as to depend on us. . . . So whatever our work, we need to see it as being—either directly or indirectly—cooperation with work in leading human beings into maturity. It is this that glorifies Him.”<sup>15</sup>

In conclusion, our Biblical understanding of work is rooted in the doctrine of creation. Here we find that God, the first Worker, created mankind in His own image as coworkers and commanded human beings to work as part of his provision for their lives. When we perform our work faithfully God works through our work to bless us.

### **The Fall Made Work More Difficult but not Unworthy**

Work, as we have seen, was part of God’s perfect provision for Adam and Eve in their state of innocence. It was to give meaning and purpose to their life. Work still plays an important role in human life after the Fall, even though it has become more difficult as a result of the curse. “Curse is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth to you; and you shall eat of the plants of the field. In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground” (Gen 3:17-19).

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Note that God cursed the ground but not work itself. This is a subtle but important distinction. The curse did not impose work as a punishment, but made work more difficult because it must be accomplished in a hostile environment. As W. R. Forrester puts it, “Man was meant to be a gardener, but by reason of his sin he became a farmer.”<sup>16</sup> When God sent Adam and Eve out of the garden, He did not give them a new occupation, but He sent them back to work at their original occupation, farming. Thus work remained a fundamental aspect of human life.

### **Hostile Environment**

The Fall has made work more difficult, because often it has to be performed in a hostile environment, whether it be fighting against the weeds in the fields, the roaring noise of jets in airports, the monotony of the assembly line, the freezing cold or burning sun at the building site, the foul smell at chemical plants, or the disinterested students in the classroom. The result of the Fall is that work is not always pleasant and rewarding. Many tasks we perform are wearisome and unpleasant.

Some may argue that this is not always true especially for those privileged to work in places “ergonomically designed” for comfort and convenience. But we must remember that this is not the norm. Most people make their living through strenuous work in fields, factories, building sites, transportation. Furthermore, even those who work in more comfortable surroundings have to deal with the pressure of deadlines, demanding bosses, jealous workers willing to destroy the reputation of their colleague in order to climb the executive ladder. In other words, one can hardly find a job in this fallen world where at some point one does not encounter the effects of the Fall in the selfish attitudes and unscrupulous behavior of some people.

### **The Christian Response**

What should be our Christian response to the “evils” found in work or in the workplace? Two common responses are: flight or fight. Some Christians withdraw from the evils of secular work by setting up Christian institutions: Christian schools, Christian hospitals, Christian restaurants, Christian garages, Christian beauty salons, Christian retirement centers, Christian fitness centers, Christian theme parks.

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Other Christians chose to fight to eliminate the evils present in certain occupations as well as in the workplace. The method they use range from demonstrations, boycott, to promotion of legislation designed to eradicate the evils of the workplace. Both approaches are inadequate because they react to the wrong enemy. “Work is not our enemy. Sin is our enemy. And only Christ is adequate to deal with sin. His strategy for dealing with sin, however, is never to remove us from the jungle [of the workplace], but instead to make us adequate to live in the jungle.”<sup>17</sup>

Without question the workplace is hostile to Christian values, but God uses it to test and build our faith. Christ’s prayer for us to His father is: “I do not pray that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil one” (John 17:15). Christ’s prayer offers us assurance of protection from all evils, including those of the workplace. Through His enabling grace we can prevail over the tragic consequences of sin in our work. Let us consider how this can happen.

### **Christ’s Redemption Makes Us New Workers**

Through His perfect life and atoning death Christ won a decisive victory over sin and Satan (Col 2:15). His victory has ensured the final outcome, God’s ultimate triumph over evil. However, the conflict with sin still rages on. The effects of sin are still felt in this world, including the workplace. Paul tells us that the whole creation “was subjected to futility . . . [and] has been groaning in travail together until now.” (Rom 8:20, 22).

In practical terms this means that the work environment is still uncooperative, work is still difficult and stressful, some people in the workplace are critical of the Christian lifestyle, in short, it is not always easy to be a Christian at work.

### **New Workers**

In the light of this situation, What difference can Christ make to our work right now? In what way does Christ’s redemption helps us overcome the effects of sin on our work? The answer is to be found in Christ’s strategy is to change us as workers, rather than our work. “Therefore, if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come” (2 Cor 5:17).

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The change described in this passage is radical. Christ intends to make us not better people, but new people like Himself. “In regard to work, this means that He sets about changing our character, our motives, our attitudes, and our values.”<sup>18</sup> When Christ restores us to a right relationship with Him, He becomes our new Boss. When this happens our attitude toward our work changes: *Our work becomes Christ’s work, inasmuch as He is our ultimate Boss.*

### Work to Serve Christ

Paul emphasizes this truth in his admonition to both slaves and masters. “Slaves, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not with eye service, as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, *fearing the Lord*. Whatever your task, work heartily, as *serving the Lord* and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you *are serving the Lord Christ*. . . . Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that *you also have a Master in heaven*” (Col 3:22-25; 4:1; emphasis supplied. cf. Eph 6:5-9).

To appreciate the importance of this passage we must remember that slaves were the lowest members of the Roman society. Yet *three times* in this passage Paul tells the slaves that they were working for the Lord, not merely for their Roman masters. Now if slaves were to view their humble work as an opportunity to serve Christ, then we who are free should certainly be able to serve Christ through our work. In fact Paul extends the same principle to masters by reminding them that they too have a Master in heaven to whom they are accountable. Thus all, whether slaves and masters, must serve Christ through their respective work.

**Practical Implications.** The belief that through our work we serve not only human bosses and customers but also Jesus Christ, who is our ultimate Boss, can have profound implications for our motives and work-style. It challenges us to ask ourselves when we go to work in the morning, How can I best serve the Lord in and through my work today? How is my work today part of God’s work in the world? How will my work meet the needs of others? Am I faithful in providing the needs of my family? Answering questions like these every day can inspire us to look at our work in a broader perspective, as an opportunity to serve God, others and ourselves.

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The belief that through our work we serve our Lord affects also the way we do our work, that is, our attitudes, methods, integrity, relationships on the job, the quality of our work, our hiring and firing, our attitude toward the policy of the company and much more. The way we do our work says a lot about how seriously we are living our Christian faith. Speaking to slaves Paul says that by working respectfully and faithfully we “adorn the doctrine of God our Savior” (Titus 2:10). This means, the way we do our work paints a beautiful picture of Christ’s character to our coworkers.

When we view our job as an opportunity to serve the Lord, then we can trust Him for its results. Sometimes our job may be boring or even unpleasant. In spite of our best efforts, sometimes we feel disappointed with the results of our work. But when we realize that we are working for the Lord, we can experience a sense of dignity and purpose in our job. We can trust the Lord to accomplish something good through our work.

The same principle applies to those who find their work fulfilling and satisfying. Being conscious of the fact that they are working for the Lord will challenge them to find their personal worth and meaning not in the product of their work, but in the assurance that after they have done their best God will do the rest. Sometimes God gives incredible success in our work. In such case we reveal our Christian faith by giving credit to God for the success. At other times we may experience failures or adversities in our career. In such cases we reveal our Christian faith by trusting in God to see us through the hard times.

We cannot control the future of our lives or careers. We can only commit ourself to do all in our power to honor God in our life and work, leaving the results with Him. To live Christian life with this perspective means to live and work free from fear, stress and uncertainty, enjoying the peace that comes from knowing that God is in control.

### **We Can Serve and Glorify God in All Common Occupations**

When we believe that we serve God through our work, then all legitimate ordinary occupations have value in the sight of God. On this subject there has been considerable disagreement through the centuries. *Religious vocations* have been viewed as more important in the sight of God than *secular occupations*. The understanding has been that the clergy has been called



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by God to fulfill *sacred vocations*, while the laity has been obliged by mere necessity to perform *secular occupations*.

### Reformers' Rejection of Sacred-Secular Dichotomy

The Reformers and the Puritans rightly rejected this sacred-secular dichotomy, declaring the sanctity of all legitimate work, no matter how common. Whereas the Catholic tradition had maintained a distinction between the *spiritual life* (*vita contemplativa*) of the clergy and the *secular life* (*vita activa*) of the laity, the Reformation abolished this distinction, bringing the spiritual world into everyday life. This means that no part of life is exempted from the Christian faith. We serve God not only within the sacred confinements of religious vocations, but also in all secular occupations. From this perspective, as Luther puts it, "the entire world would be full of service to God, not only the churches but also the home, the kitchen, the cellar, the workshop, the field of the townsfolk and farmers."<sup>19</sup>

The Reformers' view that we can serve and glorify God in all common occupations of life, is amply supported by the Scripture. Paul states this principle in the form of a command in 1 Corinthians 10:31: "So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." All physical and earthly activities, including eating and drinking can glorify God. "Bible religion," writes Ellen White, "is to be brought into all that we do and say. Human and divine agencies are to combine in temporal as well as spiritual achievements. They are to be united in all human pursuits, in mechanical and agricultural labors, in mercantile and scientific enterprises."<sup>20</sup>

The Protestant rejection of the sacred-secular dichotomy is well exemplified in the life of Paul. He was called to be an apostle (1 Cor 1:1; 2 Tim 1:11), yet he refused to earn a living by becoming a professional preacher. He earned his livelihood as a tentmaker (1 Cor 9:3-18; 2 Thess 3:7-9). For Paul his occupation as a tentmaker was not a hindrance to his pastoral vocation. To put it differently, he did not have to renounce a secular occupation to answer God's call to be an apostle. Alan Richardson notes, "It is assumed throughout the New Testament that daily work, so far from being an hindrance to Christian living, is a necessary ingredient of it."

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## Dignity of Common Work

The dignity of common work is taken for granted in the Bible. “As we read the Bible,” writes Leland Ryken, “we find a veritable gallery of people engaged in the ordinary work of life. Many Bible characters are known to us by their occupation. There are soldiers, chariot drivers, garment makers, farmers, merchants, and judges.”<sup>21</sup>

Saul was a farmer (1 Sam 11:5) and David was a shepherd (Ps 78:70-72) when they were called to serve as kings. Looking after sheep or after a nation has the same validity in the sight of God. The dignity of common work is shown in the life of Christ Himself who worked most of His adult life as a carpenter. The Puritan Hugh Latimer wrote: “Our Savior Christ before he began his preaching was a carpenter and got his living with great labor. Therefore let no man disdain . . . to follow him in a . . . common calling and occupation. For as he blessed our nature with taking upon him the shape of man, so in his doing he blessed all occupations and arts.”<sup>22</sup>

Christ’s respect for the common occupations is also revealed in his discourses and parables where he shows familiarity with sowing, harvesting, breadmaking, fishing, trading, and caring for a vineyard. By His teachings and example Jesus upheld the dignity of work as taught in the rest of the Bible.

In view of the witness of the Scripture the Reformers were right in rejecting the Catholic tradition of differentiating between the *sacred vocations* of the religious life and the *secular occupations* of the ordinary life. This rejection has had an enormous impact in the social and political life of Protestant countries. It has contributed to bring the Christian faith and values to every part of the civil and political life.

## Importance of the Rejection of Sacred-Secular Dichotomy

The importance of this rejection was brought home to me when I first came to the United States of America. Having grown up in Italy, a Catholic country where the distinction between *sacred vocations* and *secular occupations* is still widely accepted, I was surprised when I came to America to note the concern for morality in politics. Americans expect their political leaders to live by the basic Christian moral values. President Clinton’s alleged sexual affairs have been and still are a tormenting issue in the mind of many. Some

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believe that his unpopularity is largely due to his alleged affairs which has tarnished his credibility.

In my native Italy, this would not be an issue because we take for granted that politicians have extra-marital affairs. Most Italians would raise their eyebrows only if they learned that the Pope had a sexual affair, because after all he has accepted the call to live a holy religious life. Politicians, however, like the rest of the people are called to live a secular life where corruption is the order of the day.

I do not mean to imply that there is no corruption in Protestant countries. Sin is pervasive everywhere. What I mean to suggest is that in Protestant countries like America, there seems to be a greater concern than in Catholic countries for the respect of Christian moral values in civil and public life. In my view the reason is to be found in the Protestant rejection of the sacred-secular dichotomy and in its commitment to bring the spiritual world into everyday life.

### **Practical Implications**

The rejection of the sacred-secular dichotomy in the workplace, has immense practical implications. First, it can relieve the anxiety of those Christians who feel that their job is not contributing to the establishment of God's Kingdom. Of course, there are jobs like the manufacturing of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, military weapons, pornographic or violent material, about which Christians should feel guilty. But, as Leland Ryken puts it, "Any job that serves humanity and in which one can glorify God is a Kingdom job."<sup>23</sup>

Second, the Biblical view of the dignity of all legitimate occupations obliterates the social distinctions based on higher or lower paying jobs. Christian churches and institutions are not exempted from the temptation of giving special recognition to successful professional people who have become wealthy. Sometimes they are called to serve in the boards of Christian colleges, hospitals and churches not because of their superior competence but because of their greater wealth and social status. The Scripture condemns this partiality (James 2:1-7) because in God's sight the work of a successful businessman is as important as the work of a successful mechanic or housewife.

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## All Legitimate Work Can Be Regarded as a Calling from God

The rejection of the sacred-secular dichotomy of work, opens the door also for considering common occupations as a vocation or calling. The Bible speaks of several callings. First, there is the calling to salvation. Peter says that Christians are “called out of darkness into his marvellous light” (1 Pet 2:9). Paul wrote to Timothy about “the eternal life to which you were called when you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses (1 Tim 6:11; cf. 1 Cor 1:9; 2 Thess 2:13-14).

The call to salvation entails also a calling to holiness, that is, “to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world” (Titus 2:12). Paul frequently reminds Christians of their calling “to be saints” (1 Cor 1:2; cf. 2 Cor 2:1; Eph 1:10). He exhorts the Ephesians “to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all lowliness and meekness, with patience, forbearing one another in love” (Eph 4:1-2).

There is also the calling to specific religious offices or functions. Prophets were called to communicate God’s messages to the people. In vision Isaiah heard the voice of God calling “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” He responded, “Here I am, Send me.” (Is 6:8). In the New Testament we read of Christ calling His disciples to follow him and become His apostles. Similarly Paul repeatedly affirms his call to be an apostle (1 Cor 1:11; 2 Tim 1:11). In Ephesians 4:11 we read that God has endowed with spiritual gifts some to be “apostles, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers” (cf. 1 Cor 12:28). Such references indicate that God calls some people to perform specific ministries within the church. These are church-related occupations.

### Are Ordinary Occupations Also a Calling?

What about secular occupations ? Can they also be regarded as a calling from God? The Reformers believed that the concept of *vocation* (from Latin—*vocare* -to call) extended beyond church-related activities to include all legitimate occupations. The Bible supports this view, even though the terminology is not always explicit.

God’s call of Moses to lead the nation of Israel (Ex 3-4) in many ways was a call to both religious and political leadership. Samuel reminded King Saul at Gilgal that “The Lord anointed you king over Israel” (1 Sam 15:17).

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National leadership is seen as a calling from God. The same is true of the craftsmen who built the tabernacle. We are explicitly told that they were called by God to do their work: “The Lord said to Moses, ‘See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri . . . and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, in cutting stones for setting, and in carving wood, for work in every craft. And behold, I have appointed with him Oholiah . . . and I have given to all able men ability, that they may make all that I commanded you’” (Ex 31:1-6).

Later on when Moses relates the message to the Israelites, he speaks of the craftsmen’s work as a calling: “See, the Lord has called by name Bezalel . . . and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability, with intelligence, and with all craftsmanship . . . And he has inspired him to teach, both him and Oholiah . . . He has filled them with ability to do every sort of work done by a craftsman or by a designer or by an embroiderer . . .” (Ex 35:30-35). In these passages the concept of calling is applied to a wide range of occupations.

The same concept is found in the New Testament. When people asked John the Baptist how they should implement his summon to “bear fruits that befit repentance,” he admonished them to be honest in their vocation: “Tax collectors also came to be baptized, and said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than is appointed you.’ Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Rob no one by violence or by false accusation, and be content with your wages’” (Luke 3:12-14).

The point here is that John the Baptist did not ask them to change their occupations, but to be honest in the performance of their jobs. Paul offers a similar exhortation in 1 Corinthians 7:17, 20: “Let every one lead the life which the Lord has assigned to him, and in which God has called him. . . . Every one should remain in the state in which he was called.”

Some interpret the state in which Christians are to remain as the Christian life rather than as their occupation. But why should Paul command new Christians to remain Christians? This is to be taken for granted. Obviously Paul refer to the external occupation and not to the internal spiritual life. The

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context indicates that the “state” in which one was to remain, refers to one’s station or status in life as married or unmarried (vv. 25-29), circumcised or uncircumcised (vv. 25-29), bond or free (vv. 21-23), buyer or seller (vv. 30-31).

### Implications of Viewing Work as a Calling

To view work as a calling has profound practical implications. First, it means to see our work as part of our relationship with God and as an opportunity to serve Him. Luther emphasizes this point when he writes: “If you ask an insignificant maidservant why she scours a dish or milks the cow she can say: I know that the thing I do pleases God, *for I have God’s word and commandment . . . God does not look at the insignificance of the acts but at the heart that serves Him* in such little things [italics supplied].”<sup>24</sup>

This point is illustrated by the well-known parable of three masons at work on a cathedral. A visitor asked to each of them the same question, “What are you doing?” The first replied: “I am chipping stones.” The second said: “I am earning bread for the family.” The third said: “I am building a cathedral.” The answer of the third mason exemplifies the practical implication of viewing work as a divine calling. The work may be menial, yet it is an opportunity to do something great for God.

Second, to view work as a calling means that no matter what is our occupation, we all enjoy equal worth before God, because we all have an equal opportunity to serve Him. We do not need to feel inferior if our work is not prestigious. The Biblical concept of vocation is a great equalizer, it gives to every person equal value and opportunities before God. Ellen White writes: “Not more surely is the place prepared for us in heavenly mansions than is the special place designated on earth where we are to work for God.”<sup>25</sup>

Third, to view work as a calling can motivate us to be content and patient in our work. Leland Ryken rightly comments: “Tasks such as preparing surfaces for painting or typing letters all day or washing dishes do not carry their own reward. But if God calls to such a work, we suddenly have a reason to accept them with a degree of contentment.”<sup>25</sup>

Lastly, to view work as a calling means to work diligently, faithfully, and wholeheartedly, because we are stewards of the skills and opportunities that

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God provides us to serve Him (Matt 25:14-30). Once we recognize that God has called us and equipped us to do a certain task, we want to put forth our best efforts to honor Him through our performance. Ellen White reminds us that “faithful work is more acceptable to God than the most zealous and thought-to-be holiest worship.”<sup>27</sup>

Summing up, the Biblical view of work as calling brings good news, especially to those involved in non-religious occupations. It opens the way for Christians not only to be diligent *in their work* but also to glorify God *through their work*.

### **Aptitude, Service and Providence Can help in Discovering One’s Calling**

To accept the Biblical view of work as calling is one thing, but to determine which work is God calling us to do is another thing. One of the greatest challenges is to discover which is the job God has equipped us best to do, a job we can love doing and a job somebody else will pay us to do. The Bible does not give us explicit directives on how we can discover our vocation. Yet from its overall teachings on work we can develop at least three general principles.

#### **Examine Your Abilities**

The first principle is to understand *our unique design*, that is, our weaknesses and strengths. We need to know what unique assets we possess that will make a difference in God’s kingdom. God has equipped each one of us with some unique resources such as a personality, abilities, interests, all of which can be used vocationally. As early as Genesis 4 we find different vocational orientations. “Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground” (Gen 4:2). This means that best job for us is the one in which there is a good match between the abilities and interests God has given us and the requirements of the job. If God has equipped you with a large muscular frame and an interest to work outdoor with your hands, it would be wrong for you to look for a profession that requires to think abstractly within an indoor environment.

Some people find their vocational bent fairly easily and early in life. For most of us, career direction is not self-evident. Thus to discover the vocation for which we are best suited it may require taking aptitude tests and career counseling. We must look at these assessment tools as means that can help

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us discern our God-given design. These tools were unnecessary in the past when the choices of a career were few. Today, however, with the myriad occupations available in our complex society, it is important to know how God has wired us before we start looking for a job. Sometimes the advice of trustworthy friends can help us discover where our talents lie. The important thing is to find the vocation that will enable us to maximize the use of our abilities and talents.

### **Consider the Job that Offers You the Best Opportunities for Service**

A second principle in choosing a vocation is to consider the career that will offer the *best opportunities to serve God and people*. Many people base their career choice on what they can get from the job, rather than on what they can give through the job. They look for the best-paying jobs or the ones that provide the greatest benefits to themselves. There is nothing wrong with a good paying and comfortable job. When properly used money can be a great blessing. Constant financial anxiety can be detrimental to our marital relationship, our family life and even our spiritual life.

Yet our main Christian criteria for choosing a career is the opportunities it provides to serve the needs of people. “No doubt we can have a Christian witness and meet people’s needs in a wide range of vocations, but some jobs provide more opportunity for service than others do. Christian should make career choices as citizens of God’s kingdom first of all.”<sup>28</sup> There is a great sense of joy and satisfaction in knowing that God has placed us in a job which offers us great opportunities to meet the needs of many people.

### **Follow God’s Providential Leading**

A third principle to choose a vocation is *to follow God’s providential leading* in our lives. As we look back into our lives we often sense that God has led us in a providential way through different experiences and circumstances. Perhaps He has closed some doors and opened other doors which have given us the chance to try a different job with greater opportunities for service and self-fulfillment. Thus it is important to rely not merely on the criteria of aptitude and service but also on the leading of the Lord. We need to pray for God to lead us into a vocation of His own choosing.



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In proposing to pray for God's guidance in discovering a vocation, I am not suggesting that God will clearly reveal one way or another what our career choice should be. I am suspicious of people telling me that he or she "felt called by the Lord" to enter a certain profession. In most cases God does not relieve us from our responsibility of assessing our resources and of choosing the occupation where we can make the best use of them. Inner feelings are valid and normal, but we must resist the temptation of investing them with divine authority, because their source and meaning are often uncertain.

In conclusion, choosing a career is not like shopping for a car or house. It requires both personal effort and divine guidance. In spite of our best efforts sometimes we choose the wrong career. Average American will change, not just jobs, but careers more than once in their life. This is due to a host of factors such as economic recession, mergers, and technological advancements. The main thing in seeking for the right career is to deepen our understanding of our abilities and how we can maximize their use in serving others. Then we ask God to open or close doors that will eventually lead you to the occupation that will provide the greatest opportunity for service.

### **Next Newsletter: The Biblical View of Leisure**

Our study of the Christian view of work would be incomplete without a consideration of the Christian view of leisure. Thus, the next newsletter examines the biblical view of leisure. We shall see that leisure is a divine creation and not a human invention. It was established by God Himself when He rested at the completion of creation, not to renew His strength, but to have leisure time to enjoy the beauty of His creation and the fellowship of His creatures. God's creation rest served as a model for His commandment not only to work, but also to rest. Thus both work and rest are a divine calling and design for us. Rest from work at the end of each day and more fully on the Sabbath day provides us with leisure time for God, ourselves and others. This fascinating and relevant subject will be examined in the next newsletter.

### **ENDNOTES**

1. Niels-Erik Andreasen, *The Christian Use of Time* (Nashville, 1978), p. 34.
2. W. R. Forrester, *Christian Vocation* (New York, 1953), p. 169.

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3. Gordon J. Dahl, "Time and Leisure Today," *The Christian Century* (February 10, 1971), p. 187.
  4. Daniel Yankelovich, *New Rules* (Toronto, 1982), p. xix.
  5. *Ibid.*, pp. 50-51.
  6. Doug Sherman and William Hendricks, *Your Work Matters to God* (Colorado Springs, 1988), p. 27
  7. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
  8. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
  9. *Ibid.*, p. 66.
  10. John R. W. Stott, "Reclaiming the Biblical Doctrine of Work," *Christianity Today* (May 4, 1979), p. 36.
  11. Hesiod, *Works and Days*, as quoted by W. R. Forrester, *Christian Vocation* (New York, 1953), p. 121.
  12. Carl F. H. Henry, *Aspects of Christian Social Ethics* (Grand Rapids, 1964), p. 52.
  13. Leland Ryken, *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective* (Portland, 1987), p. 127.
  14. Luther, exposition on Deuteronomy 8:17-18, as excerpted in *What Luther Says*, ed. Ewald M. Plass (St. Louis, 1959), p. 1495.
  15. John R. W. Stott (note 10), p. 37.
  16. W. R. Forrester (note 2), p. 130.
  17. Doug Sherman and William Hendricks (note 6), p. 107.
  18. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
  19. Luther, sermon on Matthew 6:24-34, as excerpted in Plass (note 14), p. 560
  20. Ellen G. White, *Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students Regarding Christian Education* (Boise, Idaho, 1943), p. 277.
  21. Leland Ryken, *Work and Leisure in Christian Perspective* (Portland, 1987), p. 133.
  22. Hugh Latimer, as quoted in H. M. Robertson, *Aspects of the Rise of Economic Individualism* (New York, 1959), p. 10.

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23. Leland Ryken (note 21), p. 136.
  24. Luther, exposition of 1 Peter 2:18-20, in Plass (note 14), pp.. 1500-1501.
  25. Ellen G. White, *Messages to Young People* (Nashville, 1974), p. 219.
  26. Leland Ryken (note 21), p. 146.
  27. Ellen G. White, *Testimonies for the Church* (Boise, 1994), p. 24.
  28. Leland Ryken (note 21), p. 149.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS OF SERVICES AND PRODUCTS**

### **UPCOMING SEMINARS FOR AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER**

As a service to our subscribers, I am listing the seminars scheduled for the month of August and September 2008. We wish to extend a warm welcome to those of you who live close to the location of our seminars. Our new seminars with Words and Songs will touch your heart and expand your mind.

#### **AUGUST 8-9: VALLEY FELLOWSHIP SDA CHURCH**

Location: 275 East Grove Street, Rialto, California 92376-5177

For directions and information call Pastor Robert Edwards at (951) 640-8567

#### **SEPTEMBER 5-6: LONDON: WEMBLEY NORTH SDA CHURCH**

Location: 217 East Lane North, Wembley, Middlesex HA0 3NG

For directions and information call Pastor Michael Anim at 01923 661 212

#### **SEPTEMBER 10: LONDON: STANBOROUGH PARK SDA CHURCH**

Location: 609 St. Albans Road, Garston, Watford, Herts WD25 9JL.

For directions and information call Pastor Ian Sleeman at 01923 606130

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**SEPTEMBER 12-13: LONDON: CORNERSTONE/FULHAM SDA CHURCHES**

Location: 259 Little Road, Fulham, London SW6 7LL

For directions and information call Pastor Clive De Silva at 0208 384 1710

**SEPTEMBER 24: ORLANDO: FOREST LAKE SDA CHURCH**

Location: 515 Harley Lester Lane, Apopka, Florida 32703

For direction and information call the church office at (407) 869-0680

**SEPTEMBER 26-27: DAYTONA BEACH SDA CHURCH**

Location: 401 North Williamson Boulevard, Dayton Beach, FL 32114

For information and directions call Pastor Bill Barrett at (386) 255-5144.

***POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?*****An Update on the Amazing Impact of this Best-selling Book!**

When *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* came off the press on April 25, 2008, I never anticipated that the book would be so popular and influential. The first printing of 10,000 copies was sold out in less than a month and the second printing is sold out. We keep a few hundred copies to process small order while waiting for the third printing to process large orders, especially from overseas.

I believe that a major reason for the overwhelming demand for *Popular Beliefs*, is the urgent need felt by many Adventists for a compelling witnessing book they can give with confidence to people inquiring about our faith. Many Adventists have emailed me messages saying that they have waited for years for a book like *Popular Beliefs* that shows why the most popular Catholic and Protestant popular beliefs are unbiblical, while the less-popular Adventist beliefs are biblically correct.

**The Influence of *Popular Beliefs: Are the Biblical?***

Though *Popular Beliefs* came out less than three months ago, I have received already a significant number of positive responses from church leaders, editors, and scholars of different denominations. An Evangelical Pastor called me on the Fourth of July to inform me that my book *The Sabbath Under*

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*Crossfire* helped his congregation to accept the Sabbath. Now he was eager to order a case of *Popular Beliefs* because he feels that the book will help his congregation to accept other vital Bible truths.

An editor of an Evangelical magazine ordered a case of 30 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are They Biblical?* After reading it, he sent in for another 30 copies and encouraged their book store manager to place an order for 100 copies which we have already sent.

### ***Popular Beliefs* Expresses my Gratitude to God for His Healing**

When I read these encouraging messages, I can only say: Thank you God for extending me life and giving me wisdom and grace to research and write *Popular Beliefs*. When I was diagnosed with terminal liver cancer on February 2007, one of my deep regrets was the inability to complete this important project during the remaining few months I was expected to live. I promised to the Lord that if He would extend my life, I would put forth my best efforts to complete *Popular Beliefs*, to express my gratitude to Him for His providential healing.

The Lord has answered my prayer by prolonging my life. Grateful to God for a new lease on life, I fulfilled my promise by devoting every spare moment of this past year to complete *Popular Beliefs*, designed to call many truth-seekers to “come out of her my people” (Rev 18:4)

When *Popular Beliefs* came off the press on April 25, I was overwhelmed by a deep sense of gratitude to God for restoring my health and for enabling me to complete this important research project. I felt that an appropriate way to express my gratitude to God, was to plan for a dedication service for the book. In a special way the service was a re-dedication of my life to His service. About 30 fellow believers, including three medical doctors and a few teachers, attended the dedication service at our home.

### **My Legacy to our Adventist Church**

In many ways *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* represents for me my legacy to our Seventh-day Adventist Church. This may be my last and hopefully my most important contribution to the mission of our Adventist church.

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All my previous 17 books are making a contribution by helping truth-seekers to understand and accept fundamental Bible teachings held by our church. But the impact of *Popular Beliefs* is already proving to be greater than any of my previous books, because it examines, not one, but 10 popular beliefs, which are biblically wrong.

### **A Most Effective Witnessing Publication**

*Popular Beliefs* is a much needed witnessing book that you can give with confidence to friends who want to know why their popular beliefs are unbiblical and the Adventist beliefs are biblical correct. Each of the 10 popular beliefs is traced historically and examined biblically. The ultimate goal is to lead people to appreciate the validity and value of our Adventist beliefs.

### **My Sincere Hope**

I have written this book with the earnest desire to help Christians of all persuasions to re-examine their popular beliefs in the light of the normative authority of the Bible. At a time when most Christians still hold to popular beliefs that derive from human traditions rather than from biblical revelation, it is imperative to recover those biblical truths that God has revealed for our eternal salvation.

It is my fervent hope that this book, fruit of many months of dedicated research, will help Christians of all persuasions to “come out” of the Babylonian confusion of popular but unbiblical beliefs, and accept God’s glorious plan for our present life and our future destiny.

### **NEW SPECIAL OFFER ON *POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?***

**To facilitate a massive circulation of *Popular Beliefs*, I have decided to continue to offer the book at the following substantially discounted prices:**

**2 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* for the price of one, namely \$30.00 for two copies.** Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$10.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

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**10 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* at \$10.00 per copy,** postage paid, instead of the regular price of \$30.00 (\$100.00 for 10 copies). Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$50.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

**30 copies (one case) of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* at \$6.65 per copy** (\$200.00 for 30 copies). Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$100.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

**100 copies of *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* at \$5.00 per copy,** postage paid. (\$500.00 for 100 copies). Mailing expenses are included for the USA. Add \$300.00 for AIRMAIL postage to any overseas destination.

**NOTE: We can ship by sea-freight up to 1000 copies of *Popular Beliefs* (up to a cubic meter) to any foreign destinations for only \$500.00. This reduces the cost of mailing to only €50 per book. Fee free to contact me for further details.**

### **HOW TO ORDER *POPULAR BELIEFS: ARE THEY BIBLICAL?***

You can order *Popular Beliefs: Are they Biblical?* in four different ways:

**(1) ONLINE:** By clicking here: [http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26\\_35](http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/index.php?cPath=26_35)

**(2) PHONE:** By calling us at (269) 471-2915 to give us your credit card number and postal address.

**(3) EMAIL:** By emailing your order to <[sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com](mailto:sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com)>. Be sure to provide your postal address, credit card number, and expiration date.

**(4) REGULAR MAIL:** By mailing a check to BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES, 4990 Appian Way, Berrien Springs, Michigan 49103, USA. We guarantee to process your order as soon as we receive it.

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**FIRST TIME INCREDIBLE OFFER!!!**

**THE COMPLETE PACKAGE OF 14 DVD/CD ALBUMS FOR ONLY \$150.00, INSTEAD OF THE REGULAR ONLINE PRICE OF \$1650.00.**

This offer may sound too good to be true. At this time we are offering together as a package all the **14 DVD/CD albums which contains 41 live, video lectures for only \$150.00, instead of \$1650.00.**

**This package contains 41 professionally recorded live, video lectures with all the lectures of Prof. Bacchiocchi, Prof. Jon Paulien, Prof. Roy Gane, Prof. Graeme Bradford, and Soprano Cristina Piccardi.**

Until now these recordings were sold separately, costing considerably more. But to make it possible for many to benefit from all these timely messages, we offer them together as a package **for only \$150.00, instead of the regular price of \$1400.00.**

You can view the picture of all the 14 ALBUMS and read a detailed description of them, just by clicking at this link:<http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/albumoffer.htm>

**The Package Includes the Following 14 Albums:**

**1) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI AND CRISTINA PICCARDI'S DVD Album with *Sabbath Seminar with Words and Songs*** recorded at the Loma Linda SDA church. The album contains three DVD disks with 6 hours of lectures and sacred songs.

**2) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S newly recorded DVD ALBUM called *ABUNDANT LIFE SEMINAR*.** The album contains 2 video powerpoint lectures: *The Christian and Alcoholic Beverages* and *How to Build a Happy and Lasting Marriage*. These two lectures summarize the highlights of Bacchiocchi's two books *Wine in the Bible* and *The Marriage Covenant*. Two separate files with 225 powerpoint slides are included.

**3) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM containing 10 video powerpoint lectures on the *SABBATH/ADVENT SEMINAR*.** Some of the lectures show the documents Prof. Bacchiocchi found in Vatican libraries



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on the role of the papacy in changing the Sabbath to Sunday. This album contains the popular powerpoint SABBATH/ADVENT seminars Prof. Bacchiocchi presents in many countries.

**3) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM on *CRACKING THE DA VINCI CODE*.** The album contains a two hours video lecture, professionally taped with a virtual studio as a background. A separate file with 200 powerpoint slides is included. The two video lectures reveal the prophetic significance of Dan Brown's neo-pagan false worship promoted through his book and film. The two hours video lectures will help you appreciate the role that *The Da Vinci Code* plays in the prophetic endtime battle between true and false worship.

**4) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM on *THE MARK AND NUMBER OF THE BEAST*.** The album contains two hours professionally recorded video lecture and a separate powerpoint file with the 200 slides used for the lecture. The project was commissioned by Prof. Jon Paulien and Prof. Ranko Stefanovich, who are the foremost authorities on the book of Revelation. With the help of 200 beautiful slides the video lecture shows the origin and historical use of 666. You will see stunning pictures of papal tiaras, including disputed one with the pope's title *Vicarius Filii Dei*.

**5) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S CD ALBUM with all his *BOOKS AND POWERPOINT LECTURES*.** The album consists of two disks. The first disk has all his 20 books and over 200 articles. The second disk has the 2000 slides and script of 25 of Prof. Bacchiocchi's popular PowerPoint presentations.

**6) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S DVD ALBUM on *THE PASSION OF CHRIST*.** The album contains the 2 hours live interview conducted by 3ABN on Prof. Bacchiocchi's book *The Passion of Christ in Scripture and History*. The live video interview show that that this movie is a strict Catholic film that in a subtle and deceptive way promotes fundamental Catholic heresies.

**7) PROF. BACCHIOCCHI'S MP3 AUDIO ALBUM which contains 2 disks with 22 AUDIO LECTURES** on on Marriage, Music, Temperance, Dress, Sabbath, Second Advent, State of the Dead, and others. You can

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enjoy these lectures while driving, working, or relaxing. Ideal for listening in your car while driving.

**8) PROF. JON PAULIEN'S newly released DVD ALBUM video seminar on *Simply Revelation*.** The four live video lectures focus on the essential messages of Revelation and their relevance for today. This mini *Revelation Seminar* will offer you and your congregation fresh insights into the Book of Revelation. Currently, Prof. Paulien is preparing a new *Revelation Seminar* at the request of the General Conference

**9) PROF. JON PAULIEN'S CD ALBUM with a dozen of his books,** and all his articles. You will find in this collection a priceless resource to enrich your understanding and experience of biblical truths. Prof. Paulien examines fundamental biblical beliefs in a profound and yet popular way. He is a recognized expert on the book of Revelation. Several of his books will help you to unlock the secrets of Revelation.

**10) PROF. GRAEME BRADFORD'S DVD ALBUM with a two hours video lecture on Ellen White.** He shares the highlights of his book *More than a Prophet*. The album contains also Prof. Bradford's the publications and articles. A searchable data base enables you to access Prof. Graeme Bradford's published and unpublished writings, including his the latest book *More than a Prophet*.

**11) CRISTINA PICCARDI'S CD ALBUM *REJOICE IN THE LORD*.** The album consists of 11 sacred songs recorded with Marcelo Caceres, Professor of piano at Andrews University. The CD Album includes Gospel songs like How Great Thou Art, He Shall Feed His Flock, Softly and Tenderly, The Holy City, etc. You can play this audio recording in your car CD player, or on any CD or DVD players you have in your home.

**12) CRISTINA PICCARDI'S DVD ALBUM *SING UNTO THE LORD*.** This DVD Album contains 12 sacred familiar songs that were recorded during a live sacred concert presented at Andrews University Pioneer Memorial Church. This is a video recording that you can enjoy in your living room and play in your church.

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**13) CRISTINA PICCARDI'S DVD ALBUM *BY HIS GRACE*.** This DVD album consists of 16 sacred songs recorded in Loma Linda with four high-definition cameras. The songs cover the major themes of God's creative and redemptive love. Her marvellous singing will touch your heart and inspire you to devote your life more fully to the Savior.

**14) PROF. ROY GANE'S NEW DVD *ALTAR CALL: SACRIFICE, SANCTUARY, AND SALVATION*.** The DVD contains four live video lectures on the relevance of the message of the sanctuary for today. You will learn how to get in touch with Jesus in the Heavenly Sanctuary where He is working to bring to completion His redemptive mission. Prof. Gane is rightly recognized an Adventist authority on the sanctuary which he currently teaches at Andrews University Theological Seminary.

#### **FOUR DIFFERENT WAYS TO ORDER THE 14 ALBUMS PACKAGE**

**You can order the complete package of 14 DVD/CD Albums, which contain 41 live video lectures and powerful soprano singing, for only \$150.00, instead of the regular online price of \$1650.00, in four different ways:**

**(1) ONLINE:** By clicking here: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/albumoffer.htm>

**(2) PHONE:** By calling us at (269) 471-2915 to give us your credit card number and postal address.

**(3) EMAIL:** By emailing your order to <[sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com](mailto:sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com)>. Be sure to provide your postal address, credit card number, and expiration date. For security reasons, you can email your credit card number in two separate messages. In the first message you email me the first 8 digits and in the second message the last 8 digits, plus the expiration date. Be sure to include your postal address.

**(4) REGULAR MAIL:** By mailing a check for \$150.00 to BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES, 4990 Appian Way, Berrien Springs, Michigan 4990, USA. We guarantee to process your order immediately.

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## HOW TO CONTACT THE CENTER FOR CANCER CARE IN GOSHEN, INDIANA THAT TREATED MY CANCER

Two days following my 69th birthday, I learned that I had advanced-stage colon cancer requiring immediate surgery. Later I was told that the cancer had spread to the liver, infesting 90% of the organ and making its prognosis bleak. Several oncologists that I consulted, confirmed that I had Stage 4 terminal liver cancer, with only a few months to live. All what they could do was to prolong my life with chemotherapy for a few months or a year at best. No Cancer Center, including Loma Linda Cancer Center, had a clinical trial program for liver cancer. The impression I received is that nothing could be done to heal my cancer: I was doomed to die in a few months, at most a year.

Driven by my faith in God and optimistic attitude, I sought another opinion at the Center for Cancer Care in Goshen, Indiana, which is located only one hour away from Andrews University, where I live. Following a two-hour consultation with Dr. Seza Gulec (see the picture at my website by clicking <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/goshen>), a pioneer in the field of nuclear oncology, I learned that my cancer was terminal but treatable with a combined strategy of chemotherapy and microsphere embolization - a treatment unavailable at most cancer centers. Within one month, the innovative treatment reduced the presence of liver cancer by almost 80% and decreased total tumor volume from 2435cc to 680cc. Within two months, two more treatments reduced my cancer by 95%.

Today I feel like a new man with a new lease on life. I feel like an old car with a decent looking body and a brand new motor. I have more energy than I have had earlier in my life. I can only thank God for His providential leading to the right place and for using the latest research to restore my health.

Click here to see the pictures of the various stages of my cancer: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/goshen>

The Goshen Center for Cancer Care is one of the few treatment facilities in the world to offer this breakthrough technology primarily due to the commitment of Dr. Gulec. A world-renowned physician, Dr. Gulec has

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dedicated years to research and develop the combination therapy, which greatly increases survival rates in those with advanced types of cancer. He has also authored landmark publications in lymphatic mapping, sentinel node biopsy, radioguided surgery and radionuclide therapy. Dr. Gulec currently leads the endocrine surgery, hepatic oncology, molecular imaging and positron emission tomography programs at the Goshen Center for Cancer Care. To learn more about Dr. Seza Gulec click: <http://www.cancermidwest.com/main.asp?id=217>

Truly I can say that I believe that the Lord providentially placed me in contact with Dr. Gulec, who has done for me what appeared to be impossible. The Lord has used Dr. Gulec to give me a new lease on life. He is so proud of my recovery that he uses me as a show case at international nuclear oncological conferences. Now I feel like a new man energized to serve the Lord in a greater way in the sunset years of my life. Somehow I feel that I have more energy now than I had at 25 years of age.

**You can contact the CENTER FOR CANCER CARE in Goshen, Indiana in the following ways:**

**1) PHONE: (888) 491-4673**

**2) EMAIL: [sgulec@goshenhealth.com](mailto:sgulec@goshenhealth.com)**

**3) WEBSITES: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/goshen> or <http://www.cancermidwest.com/>**

## **INCREDIBLE NEW OFFERS ON HITACHI PROJECTORS**

HITACHI has released the new **CP-X401 3000** lumens projector, which has an impressive high resolution, low fan noise, and a wealth of connectivity options. The most impressive feature of this projector is the incredible price of **only \$1000.00** to help especially our churches and schools in developing countries. I HAVE RECEIVED ONLY A LIMITED SUPPLY AT THIS PRICE. The price includes a carrying case, a remote, DVD and VIDEO cables, and a three years replacement warranty.

To receive detail information about this projector as well as on other models offered to us by HITACHI at a substantially discounted price, feel free to call us at (269) 471-2915.

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**THE SMALLEST & MOST POWERFUL REMOTE PRESENTER**

If you are looking for an outstanding REMOTE for your PowerPoint presentations, you will be pleased to know HONEYWELL has come out with the smallest and most powerful remote in the market.

The size of the transmitter is smaller than a credit card. You can stick it inside the palm of your hand and nobody can see it. I tested the remote in an open environment, and the radio signal can go up to 400 feet of distance. IT IS INCREDIBLE! The transmitter has three buttons: forward, backward, and laser.

You can order online the new POWERPOINT PRESENTER simply by clicking here: [http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/product\\_info.php?cPath=27&products\\_id=67](http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/cart/catalog/product_info.php?cPath=27&products_id=67)

If you have a problem ordering online, simply call us at (269) 471-2915. We will take your order by phone. You can also email us your order at <[sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com](mailto:sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com)>, giving us your address, credit card number, and expiration date.

**DOES YOUR CHURCH OR SCHOOL NEED A SCREEN?**

If your church/school is looking for a screen, the **DA-LITE SCREEN COMPANY**, the largest manufacturer of screens in the world, has agreed to offer their line of screens to our Adventist churches and schools at about 30% discount.

The procedure is very simple. Visit the DA-LITE SCREEN COMPANY website at <http://www.da-lite.com>. You will see hundreds of models of screens with their respective prices. Once you find the screen that best suits your church, give us the model number by phone (269) 471-2915 or email your request <[sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com](mailto:sbacchiocchi@biblicalperspectives.com)> We will forward your order immediately to DA-LITE that will ship the screen directly to your address. You will receive the screen at about 30% discount.

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**BED & BREAKFAST FACILITIES IN LONDON, ENGLAND**

If your travel plans call for a stop in London, you will be pleased to learn about a most gracious Adventist couple that offer the best accommodation and breakfast I have ever enjoyed. It has become my home away from home when in London. See details at: <http://www.biblicalperspectives.com/Promotions/BED&BREAKFAST.htm> Their new home phone numbers are: 020 8429-3140 or 020 8819-5708