

Topic: Marketplace Sunday, Ps Lorna Khoo

Text: Matthew 5:13-16

Date: 16 Oct 2016

“You are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless. “You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and then puts it under a basket. Instead, a lamp is placed on a stand, where it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your good deeds shine out for all to see, so that everyone will praise your heavenly Father.”

Introduction - What is the marketplace?

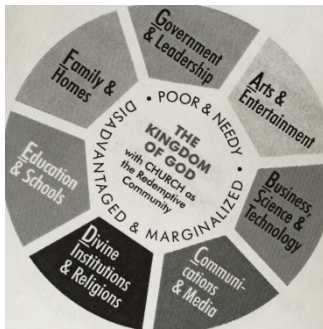
- The original word for ‘marketplace’ as used in the Bible is **Agora**: an assembly of people engaged with each other in a non-religious setting, for purposes of work of any kind.
- Our notion of a marketplace should not be restricted to typical work places (eg. the CBD) or a particular type of work (office/waged).

What is our purpose in the marketplace?

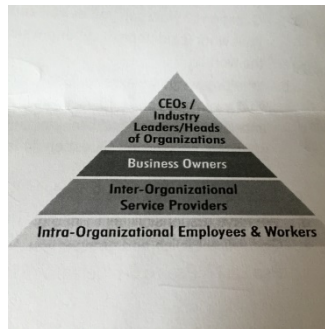
- To **proclaim** and **establish God’s kingdom** in every area of life on earth (Mark 1:15, Matt 4:23, 1 John 3:8)
- To **restore relationships** with God, self, others and creation (the 4 harmonies)
- To be **salt and light** (Matt 5:13-14)
 - ➔ Salt: Preserves food, adds flavour to it and also acts as a preservative. It is symbolic of kingdom values and culture
 - ➔ Light: Represent the light of Christ

Perspectives of the Marketplace

7 Pillars of Society



Levels of employees



Source: Ps Benny Ho

Conditions of workers in the Marketplace	Their Need/Our Task
Struggling Christian	Healing (patching up)
Surviving Christian	Encouragement
Stabilizing Christian	Resist worldly standards (not succumbing to workplace temptations)
Succeeding Christian	Advance Kingdom
Reached Significance Christian	Transform society

Role of the church in the marketplace

1. Provide (see Eph 4:12)

- ➔ Understanding of God and work
- ➔ Understanding of God’s values and ethics to face moral and ethical challenges and be equipped with witnessing skills
- ➔ Networking support: pursue excellence through increasing marketable skills (eg. mentorship within similar industry)

2. Support, Honour, Encourage

- ➔ Spiritual covering (accountability system)
- ➔ Physical (to serve as a resting place/ conducive place for quiet communion with God on weekdays)
- ➔ Emotional/Practical (for specific groups of people, eg. commuting spouses, people working in a common neighbourhood)

Understanding God and Work

- a. God intended work to be good (Gen 2:15). Christ's followers were found in a wide range of work – textile (Lydia), prisons (Philippian jailor), public works/civil service (Erastus), tentmaker (Paul) We are God's secret agents to the world and might be the only examples of Christ to the people around us
- b. God has called us to excel in whatever work we do, even if the work is not overtly "Christian" (Col 3:22-24). "The Christian shoemaker does his duty not by putting little crosses on shoes, but by making good shoes, because God is interested in good craftsmanship". We ought to bloom where we are planted (eg. Eric Liddell in *Chariots of fire*). Daniel (ref. Daniel 6:3-10) maintained a spirit of excellence and devotion to God despite his difficult boss and co-workers.
- c. Laziness is a sin (2 Thess 3:10-12, Prov 24).
- d. We work to fulfil our responsibilities, particularly those towards others (1 Tim 5:8). The world does not revolve around our needs only.
- e. Trust in God when his route is different from ours (ref Prov 16:3, Psa 90:17, Psa 75:6-7, Jer 29:11, Rom 8:28). God does what is the best for His kingdom.

Questions:

- 1. Are you struggling, surviving, stabilising or succeeding in your area of work (full-time homemaking or studying is also work)? Why?**

- 2. What courses can the discipleship and nurture (Pr Wendy) and the witness and evangelism (David Lim) conduct to equip you to the next level?**

- 3. What courses can our family life (Joseph Gan), prayer department (Parmjit Kaur) and pastoral care/cells (Pr Wendy) conduct to support you to reach the next level?**

- 4. What are the needs in your workplace? How can you be salt and light, bringing God's kingdom values in your workplace?**