

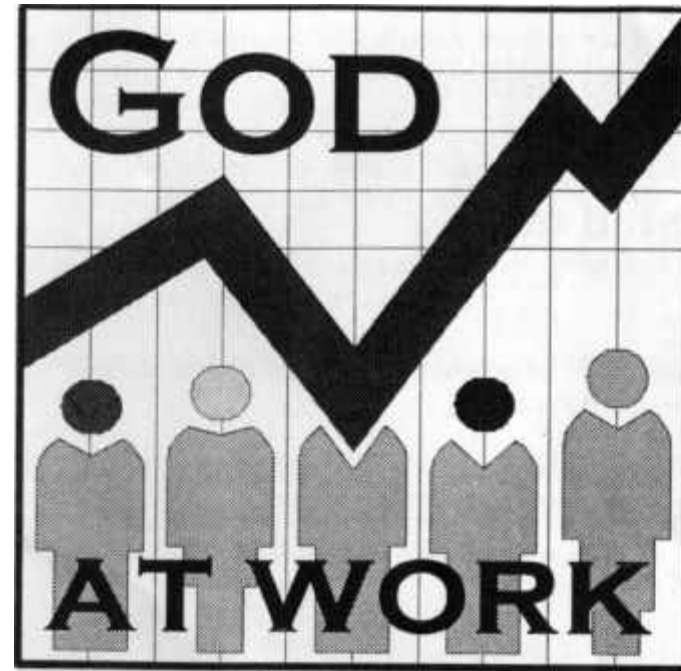
OTHER RESOURCES:

KAIROS: a residential weekend to enable a small group of people from a particular field of work or human activity e.g. health, education, industry, the arts to share their stories and reflect on their own working contexts and roles in the light of the Christian story.

THE WORD AND THE WORK: a challenging exploration of God's presence in the workplace - available as a Study Course.

Reading

"Unemployment and the Future of Work": CCBI Report 1997 - a summary is also available.



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FAITH ON MONDAY

***Does being a Christian
make a difference at work?***

FAITH ON MONDAY:

SESSION 1

Please tell me ...

AIM:

To share with each other what jobs we do now at work or what jobs we used to do.

To begin to articulate some of the questions we may be asking in trying to relate our faith to our work.

OBJECTIVE:

By the end of this session, we will each have a better understanding of the work others do and of the issues faced in integrating our faith with our work.

GROUP WORK:

1. You are encouraged, in pairs, to share answers to the following questions to put the sessions in context

- What is my job?
- What do I actually do?
- How many hours/days do I work?
- How many people do I work with?
- What do I like least about my job?
- What do I enjoy most about my job?

2. In groups of three or four consider what questions you are asking at the moment about the relationship between your faith and your work?

How and when am I able to share my faith at work? Am I able even to talk about it? Why should I?

How do I handle questions about my faith at work? Do I find it difficult and if so, why?

How do I support and receive support from other Christians at work?

How can I encourage and care about others at work?

Where is God in all of this? Does He come to work with me, help me at work? Is He really interested in what I do at work? Is He there already?



BEFORE NEXT TIME:

If the opportunity arises, talk over this evening's discussion with someone at work - start making connections!

Reflect on what you have discussed this evening. Are there any Bible passages/stories that come to mind? Are any of the following relevant?:

Gen. 3:17-19; Lev. 19:9-16; Ex 20:8-11 and 23:10-13;
Matt 20:1-16; Matt 25:14-30; Luke 12:13-21; Romans 8:14-25.
How do they link in with your own experience?

Read through the five Work Stories in this booklet for next week. Bring your Bible.

FAITH ON MONDAY:

SESSION 2

Other people's stories

AIM:

To discuss two of the Work Stories and our own experience.

OBJECTIVE:

To note how we feel about the Work Stories, e.g. angry? powerless?

To list the questions and issues that come out.

To make connections with Bible passages/stories/themes.



GROUP WORK:

Read the two Work Stories you have decided to consider, both out loud and quietly and put yourself in that situation. If it is helpful, role play them.

Let each person give their own reaction without interruption.

Share how you feel when everyone has spoken who wishes to speak. Discuss the points that have come up. Can you think of any Bible passages, hymns, prayers that might be appropriate and give guidance?

Has the discussion altered your perception of the issues? Given you a new idea? Taught you anything? Deepened or challenged your faith?

What do you want to pray about in relation to the Work Stories?

How do they link with any experiences you have had? Where is/was God in these?

BEFORE NEXT TIME:

Identify stories from your own working experiences and write one up which you would be prepared to discuss next time.

FAITH ON MONDAY:

SESSION 3

Sharing my story

AIM:

To have the confidence to lead a discussion using our "faith and work" story and to draw out resources from the Bible, tradition and experience to take back into the working environment.

OBJECTIVE:

To choose two, or at most three, stories from those written up by members of the group.

To listen to the story and discuss.

To spend time at the end reflecting on "what next?"

GROUP WORK:

1. Choose each story and listen to it in silence. At the end, ask questions of a factual nature to ensure the story is understood.
2. Divide into smaller groups and discuss story. If it is your story that is being discussed, you may prefer not to join a group but discuss it with the leader alone.
3. Go back to the questions in Session 1 under Group Work 2 and consider these in the light of the story just related.

4. Where is God in all of this? Does being a Christian at work affect my reaction to this story and its possible outcome? Are there any faith resources which shed light on the story?
5. Discuss the story in the full group and ask the author to share how s/he now feels about the situation.
6. Repeat the process for story two (and three).

..... AND FINALLY:

1. How much have I learnt from the course and from the experiences and suggestions of others in my group?
2. How am I now better equipped and more confident to share and apply my Christian faith at work?
3. How can I share what I have learnt in these 3 sessions with others at church and/or work? What will be my first step? How can I start?
4. What do I want to do next? Do I want to explore the issues of Faith and Work further?

There are other resources available . . .

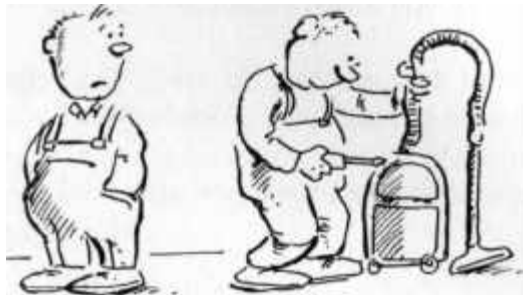


WORK STORY 1

To blow or not to blow?

You are Jim, and you have worked for 15 years as a skilled turner in an engineering company employing 20 people. The boss tells you that the company is still doing well, but you have noticed that the amount of work is steadily getting less as the months go past. However, most people (including you) are still working 1 hour overtime each day and 5 hours on Saturday (the traditional pattern for the last few years).

The boss seems to be losing some of his enthusiasm for the business, and on Saturday mornings for the last 3 months he and the foreman have hardly bothered to come in. Everyone (apart from them) knows that about 5 of the men have started to do work of their own on a Saturday - repairs for their own lawn-mowers, vacuum cleaners, washing machines, etc. The habit seems to be growing amongst some of the others, although you don't want to take part in it. Last week 2 of the men even began to bring in metalwork jobs for which they are charging their own customers.



You are friends with some of the other employees, and don't want to 'blow the whistle' on any of them. Yet you are also a Christian. What should you do?

WORK STORY 2

To preach or not to preach?

You are moved to a branch of your organisation where several of the employees know you to be a Christian. However, in his private welcome to you on your first morning your line manager tells you that, whilst he is sympathetic to your views, he does not wish to see or hear of you telling other members of staff about your faith, unless they approach you.



How are you to react to this? is any reaction needed or necessary at this stage?

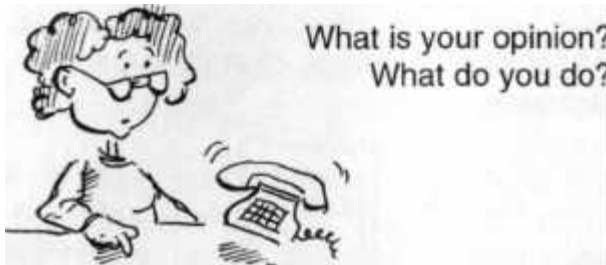
WORK STORY 3

To pray or not to pray?

Everyone knows you are a Christian where you work. One day you are sitting in your office and the phone rings and a person from another organisation, who does not know you are a Christian, asks your opinion about the Christian minister saying a prayer at the beginning of a community meeting he attends.

You are in a difficult position because, through your work, you have encouraged these meetings to take place as part of the public consultation your organisation wants. The meeting is held in the minister's church hall, but it is not a church meeting. The person ringing you feels the opening prayer is inappropriate and

could be difficult for some of the people there who may be of other faiths or none. The person asks your opinion about the opening prayer and thinks you should raise it with the minister.



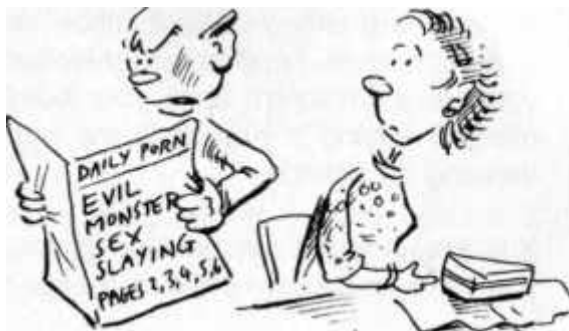
WORK STORY 4

"They should be locked up and the key thrown away!"

It is lunch time in the staff room and everyone is talking about the horrible murder of a young girl that took place the previous day. Everyone is getting more and more heated about the kind of punishment that should be given out if anyone is convicted of the crime - "Bring back the death penalty", "Prison is a doddle for anyone who can do that".

Suddenly, because you are quiet, someone turns to you and says, "I expect you'd be soft and let them off, wouldn't you?"

What do you say?



WORK STORY 5

"I don't know what to do ..."

A young colleague you've been working with for some time, who knows you are a Christian, asks to see you. She then tearfully tells you she is having difficulty coping at the moment.

Her younger brother is away at university and is into the 'drugs scene' there. Moreover her mother, who now lives alone, is not only extremely anxious about this but feels angry and powerless to do anything about it. Your colleague fears a rift may develop in their previously close family. She does not ask you for advice but tells you she doesn't know which way to turn.



What, if anything, would you say to her?