

**In and Out**  
**#3: In the Workplace, But Not of It**  
**May 12-14, 2007**

<sup>3:15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. <sup>16</sup>Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. <sup>17</sup>And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. <sup>18</sup>Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. <sup>19</sup>Husbands, love your wives and do not be harsh with them. <sup>20</sup>Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged. <sup>22</sup>Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. <sup>23</sup>Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, <sup>24</sup>since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. <sup>25</sup>Those who do wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favoritism. <sup>4:1</sup>Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

*Colossians 3:15-4:1 TNIV*

Introduction: Perhaps the most pressing issue facing believers who live in our culture is how to live “in the world, but not of it.” This may be especially true for a church like Columbia in a place like Washington. In the last two weeks, we have begun to explore how to reflect Biblically and theologically on our actions as we relate to “the world.” Let’s think together about an environment in which Metro-Washington Christians find it particularly difficult to live “in the world, but not of it:” the workplace.

I. The Washington Workplace

- A. Demographers tell us that those who live in our region are particularly consumed with their careers.
- B. Many workplace “cultures” in our region are especially demanding, so we struggle to find “balance.”

II. The Biblical Workplace

- A. Whatever we do as followers of Jesus Christ MUST be done in the name of the Lord Jesus with thanks to God the Father. (vv.3:15-17)
- B. To understand Colossians, we must understand the radical Biblical pictures of “marriage” and “slavery.”
- C. The Biblical order of relational priority is quite clear:
  - 1. God the Father in Jesus Christ (vv.3:15-17, 4:1),
  - 2. Husbands and Wives (vv.18-19),
  - 3. Parents and Children (vv.20-21),
  - 4. Workplace Supervisors (vv.22-24),
  - 5. Workplace Employees (v.4:1).



III. The Biblical Worker

- A. We are called to commit wholeheartedly to vocational callings while maintaining priorities. (v.23)
- B. Even in the workplace, it is Christ we are to serve and his reward we are to seek. (v.24) (1 Peter 2:12)
- C. Ethical business practices are non-negotiable! (v.25)

Conclusion: The marketplace may be one of the most difficult places to live “in the world, but not of it,” but few places are more significant to the course of our lives. We must learn to draw Biblical lines between ourselves and the workplace in order to be devoted disciples of Jesus Christ.