

# Pastor Testimony

## Church WorkLife Ministry

...A Texas Baptist Church

**Pastor:** Dr. Forrest Lowry, Houston Texas

**Background Data:** Bi-Vocational Pastor/Business Leader, White Oak Baptist Church, Houston TX (former Sr. Pastor of Spring Baptist Church (TX) for over 13 years – 5000 member church) (past member of Executive Committee of the Southern Baptist Convention for 8 years)



### Ministry Overview:

“People do what they do because they believe what they believe.” This is one of the foundational principles of a Christ-centered, Biblical counseling modality. It is especially true when it comes to churches and their involvement in workplace ministries.

As a pastor for over 30 years, I came to the realization three years ago that I had missed the opportunity to multiply my ministry and expand our church’s impact throughout the city. At the root of my oversight were some beliefs that I had developed through the years. I now realize these beliefs were based upon the subtle deceit of the enemy. Let me explain.

“Every believer is CALLED to minister.” Few would disagree with this Biblical concept. However, too often, pastors and staff members believe that we are “more called” than the average laymen. We have used misleading Christian terms like “full time Christian service.” Does this mean that the secretary in the office building is not involved in full time Christian service and ministry? Is the CEO only involved in Christian service when he is doing something related to our ministry at the church? How about the truck driver? Is he able to minister only when he returns from that cross-country trip to teach a Sunday school class? Christians are called to be on mission 24/7 - wherever they are and with whomever they find themselves.

“Church ministry is spiritual but the workplace is secular.” We have created the dichotomy of spiritual activities and secular activities without Biblical authority. Paul never indicated that his “tentmaking activities” were not ministry hours. He was “all things to all men to win some” whether he was in the synagogue or at work. His tentmaking created a revenue stream that enabled him to put food on the table. In addition, his tentmaking brought him into contact with people who needed Christ - and he ministered at work and at the synagogue. As a missionary to the Gentiles - he was on mission 24/7 and took advantage of every opportunity to minister to the needs of people. His tentmaking enhanced his ministry at the synagogue and opened doors of opportunity that would have otherwise remained closed.

“Every believer is gifted for service and should be equipped by the pastor for the work of the ministry.” The problem arises when we pastors equip the members of the congregation for the work of *our* ministry. Along with our staff members, we often create an atmosphere in our churches that does not promote visionary leadership among laymen and women. What would happen if we empowered them and encouraged them to “dream big dreams” for God? What would happen if we did not set any parameters for those dreams? In other words, what would happen if we encouraged visionary leaders to see their calling to the workplace as a mandate from God to minister “outside” our mission statement and church ministry plans? Don’t get me wrong - churches need to have ministry plans. But, if our ministry plan does not encourage laymen and women to live as “on mission” Christians 24/7 then we are missing an incredible opportunity. In our society, most husbands and wives are working outside the home. This means that they are spending as much as 60% of their time in the workplace.

Since they spend the *majority* of their time in the workplace where the *majority* of lost people are - it makes sense that they must be encouraged to see the workplace as a *major* ministry opportunity.

Just imagine - if pastors and staff members begin to *mobilize* the army - we can make a difference in our world. Instead of encouraging this dichotomy - let’s explore ways to impact this great mission field. God has raised up His Church at Work to assist pastors and staff members in preparing these workplace missionaries. We can send them into the workplace - not just as fishermen - but as fishers of men. We can commission them as ministers in the workplace - not just factory workers - but factory ministers. *As they are going*, they can fulfill the commission of Christ to make disciples. *And as they do*, we will see more people born into the Kingdom.

His Church at Work is uniquely prepared and ready to work with you and your church to empower and equip your members for their full time ministry assignments. The field (workplace) is white and ready for the harvest. Let’s pray and prepare and send the laborers into the harvest - since they are going there already - let’s encourage and equip them to use every opportunity to intentionally minister as missionaries to the workplace. When we do we will see returning - bringing their new converts with them. “He that goes forth

with weeping shall doubtless come again, bringing his sheaves with him.”

*Dr Forrest Lowry*



To learn more on how to effect change in this area for your church  
...visit [www.hischurchatwork.org](http://www.hischurchatwork.org)  
or call 404-935-5757