

MAGAZINE

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‘WE WANT TO SEE JESUS’

BIOLA'S NEW PROVOST, DR. MATTHEW J. HALL, SHARES HIS VISION
FOR CHRISTIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONFUSED TIMES

Ed Stetzer Appointed
as Dean of Talbot
School of Theology

Professor Awarded
Christianity Today's
Book of the Year

Matt Redman Joins
Biola as 'Songwriter
in Residence'



THE LAST WORD

Leaning Into Work as Ministry

Imagine with me for a minute: What if we lived in a world where all commerce stopped? There would be no electricity, gas stations, mass transportation, cell service, grocery stores, food distribution, hospitals, schools, movie theaters or amusement parks. There would be no food on the shelves, gas pumps would go dry, streets would not be patrolled and fires would burn themselves out. Civilized life as we know it quickly melts away.

Or what if all Christians left their jobs in the marketplace to work for the local church? What if their values, skills, ideas and influence were no longer in the workplace? Very likely, corporate misconduct, oppression and injustice would increase. Courts and laws would become increasingly more unjust. Ethical dilemmas would not have a Christian's perspective.

You may be thinking this sounds apocalyptic, unrealistic or far-fetched. If we are honest, isn't this the natural conclusion of a world we designed from our own reasoning — a world which says that only what happens in, through and for the local church is sacred, and what happens in the marketplace is secular?

At Biola, we strongly believe that work was designed to provide value for human flourishing and to better society. Work is part of one's calling and service to Christ. Work

when done in the hands of a believer can be ministry. Therefore, Biola recently launched a new, free, online six-session learning experience, The Work Exchange (www.theworkexchange.org) — a collaboration between Talbot School of Theology and Convene Corp. — to help participants increase their purpose, power and peace at work.

In Genesis 1:27–28, before the entrance of sin into the world, God gave Adam and Eve work to do in the garden. Their work was to be fruitful. They were to oversee, develop and manage all of creation. Mankind has since enhanced creation and the quality of life for many people. Medical advances, technology, housing, clean water and space exploration are a few ways that our creative abilities have improved life for society.

Psalms 24:1 tells us, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world and all who live in it" (NIV). God is the owner of the world, and we are his managers to do good works, as in Ephesians 2:10, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (NIV).

We often think of the works and ministries of the local church, such as teaching Sunday school, directing traffic or greeting people. We also might think of good works in the community, such as helping at a food bank, volunteering in a nursing home or

tutoring underprivileged children. And we would be correct.

What if our understanding of good works was incomplete? The word "works" here in Ephesians 2:10 in the Greek is *ergon*, which means business, employment and anything done by hand.

Let's look at that Scripture again: "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to (run a good business), to (develop beautiful art), to (draft safe and innovative architectural plans), which God prepared in advance for us to do." Work has intrinsic value and is part of our calling and service to Christ.

Work done with a willing heart, to serve others and for the glory of God, is part of our service to Christ. Your work matters to God and to others.

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