



## **The Spirit of God in the Workplace**

**By Pete Hammond**

Why God's Holy Spirit is present at and concerned about your workplace.

Do you think of God's Holy Spirit as present or even concerned about your workplace? Is God interested in your Monday through Friday responsibilities? Do you view your job skills as gifts from God? Would God's Spirit empower carpenters, stone masons and weavers? Doesn't the Holy Spirit just specialize in working with pastors and missionaries on their religious activities?

To our surprise and delight, we see the "Spirit of God" on a construction site in Exodus 35:31-36:1. God's Spirit is actively involved in a building project here. We are reminded of the Bible's first "construction project" -- the creation -- when the "Spirit of God" was working on the face of the earth (Genesis 1:2). Here, years later, God's Spirit is equipping people to do the work of constructing and decorating the tabernacle as they are directed to apply their skills in metal work, jewelry-making, carpentry, engraving and weaving (Exodus 35:32-35).

Spirit-driven workers bring Godly traits to their workplace. What are the characteristics of God's workers on this project?

They are men and women (Exodus 35:20, 21, 25) who have "willing hearts" (Exodus 35:5, 21, 22, 26). Motivation was not a constant battle that management had to wage.

They are "skilled or gifted by God" to do their various crafts (Exodus 35: 10, 25, 34, 36:1, 2). Excellence was at the heart of each worker's skill.

They are generous with their skills and possessions in getting the project done (Exodus 35:5, 22, 29; 36:3-7). Workers were not sluggards or minimalists. They were hard workers and gave to the cause loyally. Workers who are guided by God's Spirit bring qualities to their tasks and responsibilities: cooperative attitudes, excellence in their abilities, and dedication of their resources.

Much later, when Moses was directed to appoint a successor to lead Israel, God directed him to Joshua, "a man in whom is the Spirit" (Numbers 27:18, Deut. 34:9). Centuries later, Paul exhorted his followers to demonstrate God's Spirit within them at work:

"But let each one examine his own work...but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life."  
(Galatians 6:4-8)

"If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat...but as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good." (2 Thess 3:10-12)

"Be ready for every good work...being careful to maintain good works." (Titus 3:1, 6-8)

Some will protest that the mention of the Spirit of God in Exodus is unique because the building project here is special -- it is the Tabernacle or dwelling place of God -- a religious building. They argue that God's Spirit cannot be related to our public or secular work and jobs. However, it must be noted that in the New Testament we are God's

temple or dwelling place (1 Cor 3:9, 16)! To reinforce the point of God's Spirit enabling us in our work, this very same text in 1 Corinthians goes on to say:

"...each one's work will become clear: because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward." (1 Cor 3: 13,14)

We are God's original building project being made in the image and likeness of God, whose first revealed activity was work -- the six days of creation (Genesis 1:1-31). Here we first meet God -- who goes to work every day! Hence, it is logical that the Spirit of God desires to continue empowering and equipping us in that same manner of being workers with our creator. Our world began with the good work, and our final judgment shall include God's evaluation of our work (Rev. 22:12).

Heaven will not be an eternal day off, celestial choirs, or a never-ending pleasure weekend. We shall work in Heaven -- but without any sweat, toil or pain (Rev. 22:3-5). That was what was originally intended for our work (Genesis 1:26-31). In Heaven we shall live up to God's original expectations as we:

"...build houses and inhabit them; plant vineyards and eat their fruit... And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isaiah 65:21,22)

There will be no absentee landlords or migrant workers in heaven. All workers shall enjoy the labors of their hands. How can you bring the fruits of God's Spirit to your workplace (Gal. 5:16-26) in your character, relationships, skills, and productivity? God's Spirit is available to help you treat your work life as a kingdom vocation or calling.

Pete Hammond is a PCUSA elder, a veteran staff member of InterVarsity who directs the Marketplace (r) division at [ivmdl.org](http://ivmdl.org), and is the creative developer, team leader and chief contributor to the Word In Life(tm) Study Bible. Used for non-profit teaching purposes only.