



What do Christians do between Sundays?

TN10 Training Notes series: Structures

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In the past few years there has been a welcome surge of interest in the true meaning of 'worship' as the offering of our whole lives in God's service. Within this has come new thinking about the place of daily work itself, and the opportunities for Christians to be living witnesses by what they do in the work-place, not just what they say there.

But most churches still fail to value their members for what they get up to between Monday and Friday (or whatever) each week. The impression given by some is that work is solely a means for earning money (to finance the church!) or an opportunity for evangelism.

There are a number of excellent books and papers now available within this subject area, but as a provocative way-in to a leadership discussion on the issue, or as a means of testing whether any changes might be made to present attitudes and practices, here is a set of ten double-questions. The first five look at work itself, the second five focus more on witness in the work-place.

Each question comes in two different forms:

- **M** questions are for Ministers/leaders.
- **E** questions are for everyone else.

But it is best if they are then discussed by both groups together!

The term 'work-place' should be seen to include all types of daily work (not just paid employment), including the home for those who 'work' there and those who cannot find work. It should also cover schools and colleges.

Q1-5: Work itself

M1 How well do you understand your members' work-places?

You should consider this question across the complete range of your members' occupations: managerial and operational, the special pressures of classroom or health-care, commuters and home-workers, high responsibility and monotonous assembly line, and of course home-carers, home-makers, and the unemployed.

E1 How much interest do your church leaders take in the daily work you do?

Consider the kind of questions they ask you about it, their interest in your life off the church premises, and their understanding of any special needs you have.

M2 What teaching do you give your members on work itself as Christian ministry?

Check your sermons to see when last you preached on God's view of work, or look at your home/cell group material to see when you last tackled a work-place theme (not just for evangelism).

E2 When was the last sermon you heard on your work-place activity being your worship?

If nothing comes to mind, you might ask for a series.

M3 How would you react if key church members told you that they felt that, instead of giving time to church committees or activities, they wanted to devote themselves to serving God in their work-place or local community?

E3 What value does your church place on your work-place activity compared with 'church' activities?

You might consider the likely reaction if you missed the home group or PCC/deacons' meeting because you were going to the pub with colleagues at work so that you could be Christ among them.

M4 In what order would you rank the following in value to the Church?

A full-time missionary worker, a farmer, a teenager at school/college, a Minister, an unemployed person, a senior manager, an office junior, a full-time youth worker, a manual worker, a father who stays at home to bring up children, someone active in local politics or community life? Be honest!

E4 What value to the Church (or your church) do you instinctively see yourself compared with those on the list above that you are not?

M5 When is your church being church?

E5 When is your church being church?

Think about it!

Q6-10: Witness in the work-place

M6 **How do you encourage your members to see their work-place as a mission field?**

Or is proper outreach only the kind that is based at your church?

E6 **If your church has outreach on the agenda, is your work-place seen as one of your primary responsibilities?**

It is after all the place where most people will have more warm contacts than anywhere else.

M7 **How (and how often) do you help your church members to challenge the non-Christian world-views and management practices that many of them meet daily?**

One problem is that full-time Ministers rarely encounter the moral or ethical decisions that many of their congregation have to make each day.

E7 **How (and how often) are you helped by your church to make the ethical and moral work-place decisions that confront you as a Christian?**

Perhaps biblical principles to encourage and equip you are expounded and applied regularly; but then again, perhaps not.

M8 **What training do you provide for your members in how to be a witness for Christ in their work-place?**

They may need help with what to say, but the most powerful witness of all may not include words.

E8 **When was the last time your church gave you practical help to enable you to be a more effective witness at work?**

But perhaps the sermons at 10 am. on Sunday have little relevance to 10 am. on Monday. Sadly, if so, this would not be unusual.

M9 **In what ways does your church see 'full-time Christian workers' in a different light from those who seek to witness in their work-place?**

Many churches will distribute their prayer letters, feature them in services, and treat them as VIPs; and then ignore some of the most obvious front-line workers in their congregation.

E9 **In what ways do you see such people in a different light from yourself?**

Perhaps you have been given the clear impression that your daily work is of little concern to God, and what matters is when you next come back to church. Roll on next Sunday when you can pick up your Christian faith once again!

M10 How much of your church's praying is for its members in their work-place?

E10 How much prayer support do you receive from your church for you in your work-place?

Can you share your deepest work concerns in your church and find support and encouragement?

In the work-place most Christians spend many hours each week next to those of no or confused faith, with relationships already built. Few other outreach initiatives have this starting point. It should not take too much imagination to use these ten double-questions as a means to forming some clear suggestions for what your church might do in future.

These notes are available at www.john-truscott.co.uk/resources/training/tn10.pdf. They cover one aspect of a possible event to encourage churches to be Monday-to-Saturday-friendly. For indexes of all items available on the site, visit the [resources page](#).

Contact John if you would like to enquire about the possibility of his running an event for you on a similar theme.

Cartoons are by Micki Hounslow for filing categories of Leadership, Management, Structures, Planning, Communication, Administration. File TN10 under Structures.

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