

Integrating Faith with Work

A Ministry Transformational Model

Elly K. Kansiiime

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FOREWORD

The Integration of Faith in Work has been regarded as a ministry transformational model because today work has lost its place and meaning especially among Christian communities. Work no longer brings joy to those who engage in it. It has been so much associated with monetary benefits, that any work activity which is not worth paying is disregarded and degraded. Many people of our time have shifted focus from the purpose for which work was created to more personal benefits such as monetary gains. There is little consideration to what positive impact it may create and leave for the people that will come after us. It is a very serious matter when it comes to Christians who know that God created and mandated us to work as His stewards in His estate and yet we do not give it its due respect. Today's Christian work ethic has not met with the expectation of the Biblical teaching when we look around and see what is happening among us as Christian workers. There is a lot of neglect and irresponsible management of what has been entrusted to us by God.

Elly's concern that has led to the writing of this book is intended to call upon Christian workers both in private and public sectors, to look back and see where the work ethic was lost and revive it. He points out clearly how much Christians need to understand the Biblical teaching about work in their daily life. Although they have engaged work most of their life time, they have been influenced by unbiblical principles such as corruption, idleness, and crime of all sorts. Over the years Christians have lost the work ethic and values and this has resulted into meaningless and unproductive work.

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Most of the Christians work in the ordinary work places which do not recognize the biblical teaching, and as a result they end up influenced to behave likewise. Elly is saying that Christians have the abilities to change the work place ethic because when they were liberated from the captivity of sin, the work that was corrupted at the fall was also liberated. Work should no longer be seen as accursed but as bringing joy to those engaged in it. Christians should not look at work from the physical benefits only, but rather broadly from the physical to the Spiritual, mental, social, political and even economic. The thinking in terms of “secular and sacred” should not arise because all good work they do serves God. It does not matter where one is placed to work, as a Christian one needs to integrate the biblical teaching and ones faith with work.

Elly’s argument especially for Christians is very challenging in that however much Christian Africans are, there is a lot of poverty, corruption and crime. To him, this should not be so because with a large Christian population, most African countries should have been influenced by Christian beliefs and biblical teaching, and change their poor work ethic and refrain from negative attitudes towards work and shun poverty and corruption. Work should not become an end to the means, but rather the means to the end. Its purpose is not for generating money or personal financial gain, but a service to God, to the community and to self. Money is reward but not a primary goal of work.

I do highly recommend this book to students of theology in universities, colleges/seminaries, and to the ministers of the gospel who want to transform the social, economic and spiritual lives of their parishioners. The readers of this book will be helped to look closely and responsibly at their stewardship roles in the face of scarce employment, poverty and corruption that are threatening their faith.

Professor Christopher Byaruhanga
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INTRODUCTION

Integrating faith with work among the Christians of the Anglican Church of the Province of Uganda comes as a response to the sluggish attitude and sloppy work among Christians especially during the 21st century when work has become so important in terms of domestic consumption and national growth. This work is intended to point out the values of work and how these values were lost, especially among the Christians, and how they can be recovered through biblical teaching. Some people have regarded work as if it was “anything” done for personal benefits. To them, when and how it is done is not a question related to the sense of the Divine or higher ordering. A situation of that kind should not be experienced among Christians. Christians have a different origin as well as destination. They have different values in life and to them the “why” and “how” matter. John Polkinghorne asserts that, “The ability of understanding to outrun explanations is intimately connected with the religious concept of faith.”¹ The process of integrating faith and work is like the saying that, “The vast African church today still prays that the uniting work of the spirit may re-energize African Christian unity...and remould them into a new

¹ John Polkinghorne, *Science Christian Belief: Theological Reflections of a Bottom-Down Thinker*. (SPCK, 1994), 37.

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whole.”² What I find important in this statement are the two ideas of re-energizing and remoulding them into a new whole. Christians need ideas and values that can unite them to improve the traditional work ethic. The ideas of re-energizing and remoulding are very important when focusing on changing attitudes and improving the work ethic that can change community focus.

The understanding of biblical teaching and the integration of faith and work are aimed at re-energizing the spirit of work, reviving and renewing the Christian work ethic. Also, as people who want to realize full humanity, Christians have to remould into a new whole. The interesting and most notable point on this subject is that work is the engine of human livelihood, as Volf states, “Work is one of the things in our daily life.”³ In this regard it may mean that if work has lost value, human life has lost value as well. The concern therefore is to look at how these values can be recovered. It should be noted that at the time of creation, work was considered very good and was delegated to human beings by God as an earthly responsibility to serve and worship him (Gen.1:28, 2:15).

For that reason, it is true to say that all people survive on the work of their hands because that is God’s design for human survival and as the means by which they serve him (Ps.128:2, Prov.13:4b) Work must be viewed from a divine point of view however, the general trend addressed here reveals that Christians have not found fulfilment in work as God had intended. The fall of humankind degraded the work value and lowered its quality. Christians, who have accessed biblical teaching and have been redeemed through Jesus Christ from the fall, are expected to redeem their work from the corruption acquired at the fall. Although work appears in many forms, this book will focus on the physical type

² Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind*, (Downers Grove. IL: InterVarsity Press, 2007), 51.

³ Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit; Toward a Theology of Work* (Oxford: Oxford University Press,1991), 8.

of work in professional and non-professional realms. The integration of faith and work will focus on both intrinsic and extrinsic values within the Christian work life.

The Christians, besides reading and believing in the scriptures, have also been exposed to the East African Revival of 1936,⁴ a spiritual movement that discouraged redundancy, laziness, and corruption among Christians. However the level of Christian participation in ordinary as well as specialized work has not been influenced by their faith based on the biblical teaching and the missionary work ethic. People like Mackay one of the first English missionaries to Uganda were critical of what he observed among Christian work behaviours. Fasha explains, “Mr. Mackay was willing to work with his hands. [It] was not the least wonderful thing about him. It required a long time for him to teach that a Christian ought not to be an idle man.”⁵ Few church leaders encouraged hard work through a personal life that was spiritually acceptable among Christians, such as we saw in the lives of the Late Archbishop St. Janan Luwumu (1974-1977) and retired Archbishop Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyooyo (1994-2004) of the Anglican Province of the Church of Uganda. Very few Christians followed their examples. People do not enjoy their work or give it its due value. “The entrance of sin changed work from joy to toil...work has thus become a burden instead of a blessing, and, although not bad in itself, it has lost its value. It has become an occasion for sin; idolatry results when it becomes an end in itself” as explained in *New Bible Dictionary* 2nd ed., S.V, “J.D, Douglas. Sin has corrupted the joy that people would have experienced at work. Ever since, work has become the focus to achieve personal goals rather than a service to God.

⁴ The East African Revival was a spiritual re-awakening among Christians in East Africa, Uganda in particular as early as 1936. Those who received the spiritual renewal, advocated for hard work.

⁵ Sophia Lyon Fahs, *Uganda's White Man of Work* (New York: Young People's Missionary Movement, 1907), 96.

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The Christians as people redeemed from the power of sin, should also be in position to redeem their work from the influence of sin. “God redeemed you so you could do his ‘holy work.’ You are not saved by service, but you are saved for service.”⁶ This statement by Warren portrays the biblical understanding and the Christian attitude to work. Unfortunately most of their work has been marred with displeasure, disappointments, and corruption. The Bible’s teachings have not transformed their work ethic and attitudes.

It is unfortunate to note is that in some institutions like families and schools, work has been differently used as punishment for wrong doing. At schools, bad mannered students are not only punished by caning, but are given manual work as punishment. At home, parents do the same. Children grow up believing that work is the punishment for wrong doers, which results in their hating it. They fail to see that work results in benefits to the one doing it. According to Haselbarth, “...work is a blessing of creation, not a punishment of sin as many ill-informed Christians think.”⁷ As a result of the wrong attitudes, the value that comes from regarding work as part of human joy has been turned into pain and resentment. Many have the impression that work is a means to deter wrong doing because of this pattern of behaviour in which they were raised. This attitude has created a strong foundation to disregard all the joy that accompanies work and a failure to see its value.

There is a strong belief that some of the clergy have withdrawn from practical work calling it secular and worldly. The withdrawal of clergy from practical work has resulted in less attention given to the issue of work both in teaching and practice. The term “*Secularization*,” has been defined as; “... an indication of declining participation in religious

⁶ Rick Warren, *The Purpose Driven Life* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 228.

⁷ Hans Haselbarth, *Christian Ethics in the African Context* (Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1989), 131.

institutions and the declining influence of religion”⁸ From Wesley’s point of view it is clear to say that Christians’ work and service to God have declined because they have a different perspective and do not given it its due respect. People have perceived work as ordinary and worldly through which their personal ends are fulfilled. This could be true of Christians because they know that what they call secular does not belong to God. It is the very attitude about secular versus sacred that has been determined by attitudes that must be corrected.

The implication is that sin corrupted the joy that people would have experienced at work. Ever since the fall of man, work has become the focus of achieving personal goals. Wesley asserts that sin continues as a powerful force in the life of believers but calls for greater trust in the transforming work of the Holy Spirit.⁹

The Christian’s response therefore should portray an understanding of biblical teaching about work however much it has been marred with displeasure, disappointments and corruption; indicators that they still live as ordinary as non-believers. Their faith and Bible teaching has not transformed their work ethic and attitudes. Christians and their leaders are all responsible for the teaching, preaching, and living the gospel according to the cultural mandate (Genesis 1 and 2), and the Great Commission (Matt.28:19-20). They are all responsible to teach the faith they have received to their families and communities where they live. Based on the fall, it becomes important to all Christians to learn that they have a responsibility to obey the command of the Great Commission. The degree of their involvement and understanding of the Scriptures reflects their calling and participation in God’s creative work. Since work was a mandate from God, and fulfilled in Jesus Christ, every

⁸ Wesley Carr, *New Dictionary of Pastoral Studies*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), p. 326

⁹ Daniel L. Migliore, *Faith Seeking Understanding* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2004), 241.

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Christian's response to work should have as an objective and positive influence to the rest of the world.

In this book therefore, I intended to improve the understanding of the biblical teaching about work and faith so that the understanding of the Christians and their leaders demonstrates how work can transform them as individuals and eventually transform their ministry. It is also intended to improve the work attitudes and family life, as well as individual work values. Work will be useful in improving the church ministry and national economic base. The teaching and application of biblical work ethics are intended to remove the focus from remunerated work, reduce idleness, laziness, and corruption. The image portrayed by Christians in public offices should exemplify biblical ideals. God-given resources should be utilized optimally to realise total benefits based on biblical work mandate.

The problem addressed in this book focuses on how the socio-economic well-being of Uganda's Christian population can be transformed and become an influence to others based on the biblical teaching and understanding of their work attitudes. I will therefore discuss biblical relationship between work and faith because I want Christians to understand the relationship between work and faith in order that they may change their work attitudes.

The context of work among Christians has been questioned because of its failure to demonstrate biblical teaching and moral ethic in the communities they live. This book is intended to bring in the limelight gaps that have caused a poor work ethic among Christians and how these gaps can be corrected. It is also intended to create an understanding of work values in order to change people's attitudes and poor work ethic. There should be an integration of the Christian faith and work based on biblical teaching so that work achieves a higher regard. Concern about how well Christians can benefit from the integration of faith and work must be addressed. Therefore, "A Christian

approach to development entails a passionate involvement with the objects of development; turning them into subjects of their own lives...More harm than good can result from handling development work impersonally.”¹⁰ The point made above is that the approach advocated for in this study justifies the need to address the gaps caused by the poor Christian work ethic.

The intended goal is that the biblical teaching about work and faith should be understood by both the church leaders and Christians so that there can be renewal of their work ethic and attitudes. The concepts about the integration of work and faith should change the Christian family life as well as individual work values. Work should become useful in improving the ministry of the church.

Leaders should be made to understand that they are called for a purpose and therefore, should seek to understand their roles as instruments of transformation just as Jesus was. Often times there has been dissatisfaction and accusations against church leadership as people who are poorly equipped and lack authority to effectively impact the ministry, based on the saying that;

*Ordained ministers...are sometimes accused of not being sensitive to the problems of the people they are serving, for lack of appropriate formation. Non-ordained ministers, who actually live among the people and work with them, often are ill equipped to carry out their duties and are largely handicapped by the fact that they are not invested with the authority needed for their ministry.*¹¹

¹⁰ Deryke Belshaw, Robert Calderisi and Chris Sugden. *Faith in Development: Partnership between the World Bank and the Churches of Africa* (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 2001), 210.

¹¹ AMECEA. *How Local is the Local Church? Small Christian Communities and Church in Eastern Africa*. (Kampala: AMECEA Gaba Publications, 1993), 139.

In this case the integration of work and faith should contribute to ministry transformation among church leaders, equip Christians for the development of the church and families. Equally important to mention is that it should contribute to the sharing of values, experiences, and expectations, all of which emanate from an incarnation leadership perspective. You will understand that leadership becomes more reflective and meaningful from a servant hood perspective. Jesus taught that to become a leader, one must first become a servant. Stevens' emphasizes the same idea of Servant Leadership as the character of a leader.¹²

The integration of work and faith is very important in the life of the church if she has to prove that she has been entrusted with a universal ministry in the Great Commission; (Matt.28:20). Teaching should be at the heart of her ministry so that people can understand what the bible teaches. As a teaching institution, it will need a curriculum if Christians and the church leadership are to learn and become renewed. The curriculum should be formulated to address "Christian Work Ethics Renewal" in the sense that the church needs to renew her calling in the area of work, a mandate that was handed over to mankind at creation. The curriculum should be established for the purpose guiding and transforming church leadership and the Christians. The curriculum should specifically target the church leadership who act as change agents and should be able to pass on biblical truth about work and faith to their congregations. One of the responsibilities of church leadership must be to show satisfaction of her biblical understanding and performance in the world of work. Christians who are willing to incorporate the new work concepts will also need to consider the context of what God has done in people's lives, and thereby convey Jesus' Gospel holistically among their Christian communities. Christian Work

¹² R. Paul Stevens, *Doing God's Business*. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company ,2006), 52.

Ethic Renewal should also help leaders to examine the church from a global perspective rather than from a national, denominational, or local perspective.

Since leadership is transformational, leaders must learn that they can bring peace to relationships between people, people and their God, and with the rest of creation through renewed work ethic. It is also my contention that emphasis on biblical teaching should help to bring joy to communities as they engage in their daily work because it would give them a new understanding that it is part of their faith and worship to God. Leaders who incorporate the biblical work ethic in their ministries should gain confidence to speak for God and for the people. Leaders should be like “The voice of one crying in the wilderness” (Matt.3:3b) the wilderness of displeasure, corruption, idleness, laziness, crime, and shoddy work. In this case the leader should work as a prophet, with a surrendered life to speak the true message and defend the ministry of Christ.

THE HISTORY OF WORK AND FAITH

The terms *work*, *business*, *labour*, *employment*, and *job*, will be used interchangeably to mean the same thing in this book. Faith will refer to people's spirituality or religious beliefs and practices. Work matters are discussed more than faith matters because in the end we should be able to develop a ministry transformational model demonstrating Christian faith within the context of human work. Work is a common experience in everyday human life as compared to one's daily Christian faith. Christians should be helped to move toward an everyday faith based work life.

The problem of integrating work and faith among Christians is not a new challenge. It has only been recently that the issue of work has attracted a number of theological scholars and Institutions in order to bring out an understanding as to how work can have meaning and bring joy both to individuals and the public. In this case, we will consider different views addressing the biblical, theological and traditional importance of work and its effects on human life. We will also need to look at work from the African traditional, the Western, the biblical and the Christian traditional perspectives in order to move to where we would want to be.

2.1 The African Traditional Perspective of Work

Many scholars have noted that Africans did not have a distinctive divide between the activities of their daily life. All activities of their lives were rooted in their religious beliefs therefore; reviewing work among Africans cannot be isolated from the rest of human life. There isn't much of African traditional literature that focuses on the area of work only. However, we can focus on what other scholars have observed and said in order to paint a picture of concepts and attitudes about work and faith from the African traditional perspective.

Work was traditionally conducted corporately and in a lifelong partnership between family members and the creator. According to Haselbarth, "Communal labour in African villages has long since expressed that spirit of partnership."¹³ This viewpoint is supported by Miller's observation that, "When you work with love you bind yourself to yourself and to one another, and to God."¹⁴ To that effect, work is not based on individual interests. Ssebugwawo says that in traditional African society, "Individualistic tendencies were discouraged. Communal activities greatly fostered and promoted community solidarity and loyalty."¹⁵ This has been true, until of recent, when African communities started to disintegrate and members to live individualistic and selfish live. The influence and impact of the Western world has greatly played the central role in system breakdown.

African Traditional Religion (ATR) looks at Africans from one common perspective and Gehman looks at life as a religious and collective responsibility to which he says, "ATR persists and shapes the

¹³ Haselbarth, 133.

¹⁴ Dan Miller, *To the Work you Love*. (Surrey: CWV, 2006), 37.

¹⁵ George William Ssebugwawo is Senior Secondary School teacher. He prepared an Advanced level Pamphlet: *The Millennium Christian Religious Education*, for student preparing to go to University, and in one of his topics, he addressed the Christian perspective of community life in the area of "Work," (Kampala: 2002), 35.

attitudes and actions of a large number of people.”¹⁶ According to Mbiti religious matters enshrined African life, and he says, “Religion permeates into all the departments of human life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it,”¹⁷ and “African Traditional Religion permeates the social life of the traditional African; it is the total traditional world view with all the values and beliefs”¹⁸ Byaruhanga make a similar echo that, “Human beings are essentially social because they are created by the social and economic structures in which they live. Individuals therefore belong to groups and this communal dimension is not accidental or superficial but basic.”¹⁹ The above arguments are strongly supporting the community unity brought about by work. However Bediako found fault with the Western missionaries saying: “The Western missionaries, on the whole, took a negative view of African society and its values - religious and cultural...”²⁰ Therefore the negative attitudes demonstrated by missionaries killed the African communal life and work values in many ways.

We should understand that the religious and cultural attitudes covering the life experiences of the Africans, was always related with their work life. The values and beliefs, and the religious perspectives of the African way of life were not separated from the rest of their life. So, Mbiti, Gehman and Byaruhanga focus on African life as a whole and complete entity, in that religious experience. As part of human life, work constitutes the biggest part. *To live means to work, and to work means to live*. “Live to work and work to live”. All types of work were embedded in the religious beliefs and practices, and work in the traditional African

¹⁶ Richard J. Gehman, *African Traditional Religion*, (Kampala: East African Educational Publishers Ltd., 2002), 19.

¹⁷ John Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, (Kampala: East African Educational Publishers, 2002), 1.

¹⁸ Gehman, 18.

¹⁹ Christopher Byaruhanga *Christian Theology* (Kampala: Wava Books Limited, 2005), 37.

²⁰ Kwame Bediako, *Christianity in Africa: The renewal of non-Western Religion* .(Mary Knol NYI: Obis Books, 1997), 78.

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life was inseparable from the entire normal life. Work was lived as a religious aspect and did not need to be emphasized or enforced. In this respect, Mbiti's observations points out that all that people do and live up to, revolve around religious beliefs and practices. Work is the major activity of a person's life; and religion being an everyday aspect, work takes a religious perspective.

According to the African concept of work, time was used to program and evaluate the work and activities of an African life. Mbiti asserts that "The basic concepts of time underlie and influence the life and attitudes of African people in the villages and to a great extent those who work and live in the cities as well. Among other things, the economic life of the people is deeply bound to their concept of time..."²¹ In a subtle way, Mbiti explains how African time is a time of work, and work involved in a day, month, and year was based on time.²² He points out how work overshadowed all other human activities in Africa. All time was working time. One would not be bothered to be woken up to go and do community work. After all there was no activity that did not involve working of some kind. In this case there was no separate time for work and religion. Each was part of the other. Time was a concept of creation and it regulated or directed the work of creation. Time and work are both divinely ordered, and must therefore take a religious perspective.

Gehman's belief about how ATR has shaped attitudes and actions can be summed up by Mbiti's philosophy that religion permeates into all aspects of human life. Human life is lived on attitudes and actions. Based on such philosophy, Christians should eventually change their attitudes towards their work and faith. The negative implication is that the African cultural concept of life has been challenged by issues like urbanization and other modern forces.²³ It seems that the attitude of

²¹ Mbiti, 20.

²² Ibid., 20-21.

²³ George Kinoti and Peter Kimuyu, *Vision for a Bright Africa*, (Kampala: IFES, 1997), 26.

white collar jobs, “which has been there since the days of colonialism has proved to be destructive to the development of our countries”²⁴ Haselbarth proves this feeling saying, “Schools have hired too many away from the farms and from manual work by instilling in them hopes that cannot be fulfilled.”²⁵ Morale has also suffered and died away, especially for those who have left schools and got no employment. Most of them have been separated from their spiritual commitments and da Vinci says, “Where the spirit does not work with the hand there is no art.”²⁶ According to Ssebugwawo’s view, what has killed good attitudes towards work is because, “Many people especially, the youths have a bias in favour of white collar jobs [office jobs]. This attitude has increased or led to appalling levels of unemployment.”²⁷ He continues to say that, “Work was not sold in Africa. People worked for the good of community. Salaries and wages were unheard of in the African setting.”²⁸ The implication then is that with the advent of salary and wages, the work focus changed from the good of the community to individual interests. To many people, it no longer matters what value work brings to their communities.

The change in focus has spoiled the well-intended work which had meaning among the African communities. When Haselbarth argues that urbanization and other modern forces are involved in changing work attitudes, Kinoti and Kimuyu seem to be of the same thinking that, “...many of them (attitudes) are breaking down due to urbanization and other forces.”²⁹ Their observation helps to focus on the old traditional Africa, where work was not affected by external forces and people never thought of work in terms of employment but as a religious obligation forming most part of life. In fact, “A major problem (*today*) is the

²⁴ Haselbarth, 132.

²⁵ Haselbarth., 135.

²⁶ Miller, 65.

²⁷ Ssebugwawo, 31.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 35.

²⁹ Kinoti and Kimuyu, 26.

difference of value attached to work.”³⁰ Karl Barth did not write from an African perspective, but made a point that is not different from the African point of view regarding the virtues of work. He explains the criterion of worth that, “It must contribute to the advancement and adornment of human existence.”³¹ The trend of work therefore indicates that from an African point of view, it has degenerated. In his observation, Ssebugwawo has pointed out a number of issues that have influenced work perspectives which I think need us to think seriously about what we mean by “work”

*The communal work in African society has today changed. Whereas in African Traditional Society everyone was a worker, today work has taken on a more specialized perspective demanding technical performers-because the work is specialized. This has resulted in people claiming to have no work to do, since work has taken on a monetary benefit rather than cultural traditional fulfilment.*³²

This implies that monetary expectation has created a misunderstanding of what work really is and sets the parameters or restrictions on who should do what. If work has got to have any meaning and value, it must be detached from monetary benefits and we begin looking at every piece of good work as valuable and meaningful. At the end of the day we know that a well done work will have many benefits other than money.

2.2 The Western Perspective of Work

The term *Western* here is used to refer to any country of the Western world that contributed to the negative or positive world view of work

³⁰ Haselbarth, 135.

³¹ Stevens, *Doing God's Business*, 9.

³² Ssebugwawo, 35.

and which might have had direct or indirect influence on many cultures of the world. John D. Beckett says, “In Western culture, the lens through which people view the world has been coloured by nearly three thousand years of Greek thought.”³³ According to Lee Hardy in his book, *The Fabric of This World*, Stevens says of him as showing the negative impact of the Greek world that: “The Greek world had no concept of vocation. Work itself was a curse... The influence of the Greek world that surrounded and enfolded the early church is well known.”³⁴ Michael Novak envisions the above when he says; “The new science politics that led to the America founding, drank deeply of the wisdom of the Greeks...”³⁵ All these seem to be suggesting something similar to the concepts Greeks had about work with which the Americans have been influenced, not until as recently as four centuries ago. Marshall in his article; *Work in Contemporary Society*, argues that some of the Western concepts of work, were deemed as a means of increasing wealth in order to achieve leisure, and says: “Consequently, work was usually considered in terms of its consequences for the production and distribution of commodities, and all too rarely as an activity in its own right.”³⁶ This is the eye with which we have continued to see work.

Accordingly, thinking about work and its values came as late as the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries long after the Greek Hellenism of the fourth down to the second centuries B.C (336-165 B.C). This does not mean that work did not exist, but that work values and work ethics became issues of concern during those centuries. We need to take note that the work ethic discussed here takes us as far back as the English Reformation which was influenced by the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was this reformation that gave birth to the “work

³³ John D. Beckett, *Loving Monday; Succeeding in Business without Selling Your Soul*, (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2006), 65.

³⁴ Stevens, *Doing God's Business*, 42.

³⁵ Michael Novak, *Business as a Calling*. (New York: The Free Press, 1996), 116.

³⁶ Artiknson, et. al. 900.

ethic” that came as a result of the “Puritans”, a significant group of the English Protestants in the 16th and 17th Centuries. In their message, they stressed the perfection of God’s law.³⁷ “They had the privilege and responsibility of reflecting God’s glory in their own lives.”³⁸

Speaking of the Western should not appear ambiguous and confusing because both the English and the Protestant reformations have had lasting effects across many Christian continents of the world, and even later on through the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries both in Europe and United States of America, when machines replaced manual work which resulted in often grim employment and living conditions for the poor and the working class. Stevens confirms this scenario by showing the value that was later attached to work saying, “The concept of a “theology of work” is a fairly recent development, coming into the Western world after the Second World War, largely as a result of Roman Catholic theologians.”³⁹ This does not suggest that prior to that period work concepts did not exist, but we need to know that the Greek philosophy contributed to the negative attitudes to work, influencing the world with the concept of “dualism.”

*The idea of higher and lower planes of ideas and activities... Plato sought to identify unchanging universal truths, placing them in the higher of two distinct realms. The upper level he called “form” consisting of eternal ideas. The lower level he called “matter.” This lower realm was temporal and physical... Plato placed work and occupations... in the lower realm.*⁴⁰

While examining Plato’s idea, we see Beckett on his part saying that “The result of such a view is that the activity of work is removed from

³⁷ Ibid, 713

³⁸ Ibid, 712

³⁹ R. Paul Stevens, *Work Matters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2011), 7.

⁴⁰ Beckett, 67.

the sacred realm and placed squarely in the secular, making it ‘impossible’ to serve God by being a man or woman in business.”⁴¹ So when work started to occupy the lower realm, it lost its former meaning. It was considered secondary in value. Interest was no longer focussed on the higher realm. The Greeks loved a luxurious life without toiling, which seems to fit Stevens’ statement that: “Work itself was a curse and the citizens of Thebes were even forbidden to work”⁴² Dockery on his part observed that, “The pagan world knows little of the Christian ethics.”⁴³ The Greek Hellenism was a pagan culture, and Dockery’s statement qualifies what happened of the Western perspective of work of the fourth century B.C. However, the picture changes when one looks at the English and the Americans, especially as reflected in the Protestant and the English Reformations, and the Industrial Revolution.

The Western work perspective is reviewed from the influence the early missionaries and colonial administrators of English background and the Americans who had penetrated the media, the world of science and technology, the educational and the religious systems, and many other areas of everyday life. Steven explains, “Today the tools are not only the wood plane and the beer barrel but the computer, the spreadsheet, the staff meeting, and the board room.”⁴⁴ This attitude imported from the Western world of work has influenced Africa’s work environment, and preferred over and against the known ordinary work, creating an excuse of no employment. Stevens claims that the current situation in the Western world is not hard to read because calling is reserved for the work of those who are going into “full time ministry.” In his book, *Work Matters*, Stevens says, “For much of the world today, work is undertaken merely to serve with no sense that people are

⁴¹ Beckett, 68.

⁴² Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 43.

⁴³ David Dockery and Gregory Alan Thornbury eds. *Shaping a Christian World View* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2002), 180.

⁴⁴ Stevens, 15.

fulfilling a higher calling, or doing work that is fitting for their gifts and talents.”⁴⁵ This statement does not exclude the West and instead implies that many people may fail to regard all other types of work as a calling. As a result, work may be done without regard to the values it may entail.

2.3 The Biblical and Theological Perspective

From a biblical point of view, it is clear that Christian spirituality cannot be separated from God’s creative work. The Bible reveals how God engaged in many different kinds of work. The purpose of studying the biblical relationship between faith and work aims at translating the biblical teaching into the daily human work life. In fact, “The focus of such study is the recovery of a biblical attitude to work brought by the reformation in the sixteenth century.”⁴⁶ It is this type of biblical teaching that can change the Christian attitude and work ethic. According to Stevens’ understanding,

*When we open the Bible we find God at work, separating... We also find God filling - making the world... The Bible ends with God at work... Renewing everything, including material things... God is working in incredible ways: shaping, modelling, speaking communicating, showing outcomes, destroying, embellishing, making things beautiful, fixing and mending, restoring, designing, keeping things running... That is God at work.*⁴⁷

With a similar understanding of God and work, Keeley is of the view that,

The biblical doctrine of Creation presents God as an active working deity, who made human beings as workers in his image.

⁴⁵ Stevens, *Work Matters*, 31.

⁴⁶ Robib Keeley, *Eerdmans’ Handbook to Christian Belief*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1982), 297.

⁴⁷ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 5.

*This teaching runs right through the Old Testament and culminates in Jesus; a working man before he became an itinerant preacher. Paul, the greatest missionary in the New Testament after Jesus, combined his apostolic work with his tent making...Work, then, is an integral part of God's design for humanity...*⁴⁸

Paul Stevens, with a similar thinking, says that when we engage in work, “We become fully human by relating to God, building both the human community and the faith community.”⁴⁹ To prove this fact, he adds that, “... God whom we know is not distant in heaven but immanent and present, not only in sacred places and sacred times but in the warp and woof of everyday life.”⁵⁰ In other words our everyday life is a life very close to a working God. Christians who engage the Bible have the opportunity to see themselves in the mirror of God the Father who works in order to show what his children should do. To this, Steven says, “Work was given in God’s original design at the beginning so that human beings could function as co-workers and co-creators with God.”⁵¹ It becomes our everyday duty in God’s Kingdom.

In Exodus when God gave the commandments, He says; “You have six days each week for your ordinary work.” (Ex.20:9) The commandment statement above is closely related to Genesis where God created within six days.⁵² The Bible begins in Genesis with the creative activity of God putting in place the earth and the heavens where God’s work is the beginning of life. In fact candidly work is a living act of God that was passed on to human beings. Stevens expounded this idea when he said: “The Bible is the story of stories telling us of God’s loving

⁴⁸ Keeley, 298.

⁴⁹ Paul Stevens, 9.

⁵⁰ Stevens, 128.

⁵¹ Stevens, *Work Matters*, 7.

⁵² In Genesis 1:31, the writer shows how God rested at the end of the sixth day of creation, and had a day of rest on the seventh day.

determination to renew everything, including people. As such it is rich in stories of the lives and work of individuals whom God intended to be a demonstration seed plot on earth, a working model of the kingdom of God.”⁵³

Work is part of the heavenly culture because it comes from God and belongs to God. Since work is heavenly, then St. Paul’s belief that, “The fire will show if a person’s work has any value” (1Cor.3:3b), can be justifiable. All man’s work will be measured against God’s work. There will be accountability, in terms of quality work and accomplishment. Biblically speaking, work surpasses all other human activities of engagement. It is heavenly, but covers all the earthly departments of human life. In his book; *Work Matters*, Stevens quotes Witherington as saying, “Some have called it a Kingdom perspective on Work.”⁵⁴ Meaning that work carries the Kingdom values. It covers the spiritual, the social, the political, the economic, and even the psychological where the mental capacities are involved and stretched to find meaning in life through work. We can call it “The Kingdom Economy”. Russ Barta in his teachings says that:

*Our earthly task is to marry and beget, to establish civilization and cultures, to create cities and industries, to search relentlessly for justice in institutions, to pursue the mysteries of life scientifically and philosophically, to fashion the best in the arts, to mediate harmony among people... That is Kingdom work.*⁵⁵

In the Old Testament God gives the first people the responsibility of working in the Garden of Eden, which he established himself. Although after the fall work presented many challenges, yet it remained the source of happiness because it was supposed to be an occupation and provide food (Gen.2:15-16) besides being redemptive. God also provided

⁵³ Stevens, *Work Matters*, 7.

⁵⁴ Stevens, *Work Matters*, 9.

⁵⁵ Stevens, *Work Matters.*, 9.

subsistence work that went along with a “rest.” When God liberated the Israelites from Egyptian captivity, he set them a different “rule” with a different focus in order to be an example to other nations. He said: “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God...” (Ex.20:8-10) implying that work has fulfilling meaning when it involves “rest.” According to the Sabbath commandment, work in human life covers a seventh of the week, the equivalent of 86 percent of the working days.⁵⁶ This implies that God has value for work. From this view point work is heavenly, handed over from God. The Israelites were instructed and were supposed to respond to the rule established within the Sinai covenant; a relational covenant. The Fourth commandment not only instructed humankind to take a Sabbath, but to take it after work. So basically rest does not precede work. “Six days you shall labour...but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God.....” (Ex.20:8). There are many people who have decided to take rest more than working and those who have taken rest the entire of their supposedly work life. It has created laziness, poverty and stealing from those who work. When you rest more than required, you cheat God, the community and yourself. Why? Because the food must come from one’s not sweat.

The Old Testament Scriptures also show a God who serves. He would humble himself to serve his people (Ex.3:8). Indeed he did it in the New Testament when he came down for the redemptive work through Jesus Christ. Both Testaments show God and his son Jesus Christ engaging in spiritual and physical work. Luke’s Gospel talks of Jesus saying, “For the son of man came to seek and to save the lost” (Lk.19:10). Once Jesus redeems the lost, all the lost work values and

⁵⁶ Taking in account that six days were commanded by God to be working days, the total time for work would amount to 85.6% of the whole week, and just 13.5% would account for the time of rest; the day of worship just as God indicates in Exodus 20:10; the Sabbath day is dedicated to the Lord God.

attitudes would be recovered, and humanity restored. The “shalom” experienced.

From the New Testament perspective, Jesus comes from heaven and is expected to engage in work that brings both physical and spiritual joy. The New Testament writer of the Gospel according to St. Luke tells of Jesus reading from the Book of prophet Isaiah, and declares it to have been fulfilled. (Lk.4:18-19) This biblical reference confirms that Jesus did spiritual and physical redemptive work. When he tells his disciples to learn from him in Matthew 11:29, it may be interpreted from this context that as a worker, disciples should work like him too. Because Jesus advocates for the Kingdom of Heaven, all that he does is heavenly ordered. He refers to himself as a servant who came to serve, implying that he is one who works and serves. So when Jesus tells his disciples that he has given them an example, he calls for “doing” as he does. (Jn.13:15-16)

In the Old Testament, the working God instituted a working community. Through Israel all the nations of the earth were to bless God with their work. In the New Testament, the coming of Jesus Christ as a suffering servant again fulfils the Old Testament promises God had made to his people. God came to relate with his people in a more visible picture, which John the Baptist and Jesus declared as the “Kingdom of God”, and where St. Paul calls Jesus the visible image of the invisible God (Colossians.1:15a). The purpose of the Kingdom of God was to redeem people’s work and faith here on earth. Paul is justified to say that Christ. “Is the image of the invisible God”, meaning that Jesus portrays God’s Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. In this respect, the King and the Kingdom are all consummated in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament work mandate that was corrupted by sin was to find its redemption in the coming of Jesus and had two major dimensions: The spiritual and the physical. Jesus’ work reinstated the lost spiritual relationship between man and God, and from the physical dimension,

his work restored the relationship between man and the rest of creation. Thereby work regains the original purpose and value in Jesus Christ. God lowered himself for the lowest type of work in an endeavour to save his people (Matt.20:28b). Work is intended for redemptive purposes in God's salvation plan so when people work; they are working on behalf of God's saving plan to fulfil the purpose of his redemption.

Work was also intended for economic benefits. The products of work are the joys of others in need. In business enterprises, many are employed and paid in order to keep their families and personal needs supplied. Since God works to provide for humankind, people must work to provide for others. Not that God provides for some and leaves others out, but that when people provide for others, they are directed by God to do so on his behalf (Matt.25:40).

Jesus used a number of parables to teach about work in the Kingdom of God. He used parables like the fishing net (Matt.13:47-50), the gardener and the fig tree (Lk.13:6-9), and the lost sheep (Lk.15:3-7). All of the above references depict different types of work and their importance in the human community.

The focus of the King both in the Old and New Testaments has an eschatological focus that gives the view that God is ever working until the New Heavens and the New Earth are created. The idea of New Heavens and New Earth is the basis for the Christians to offer their work as part of their faith to God and the rest of creation without ceasing.

2.4 The Traditional Christian Perspective

Christian beliefs act as change agents. They have positive influence in life. Keeley explains it well when he says, "Work is a fundamental activity for people in every culture. But the way it is understood and the attitudes taken towards it vary greatly...Christian beliefs have formed

attitudes to work and working habits in many societies, changing them significantly.”⁵⁷

Warren explains; “It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our meaning, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny.”⁵⁸ People can only discover themselves if they engage in what God has assigned to them. Christians have a different perspective of the life around them. They live differently, but purposely and positively.

In some cases when exploring the Christian perspective of work, work and business are used interchangeably according to some scholars’ preferences, and are related to calling and vocation. Looking at the Christian perspective of work, people really need to consider the Christian ethics involved. Work discipline controls the quality of life and that is to say “a history of engagement with philosophical ethics.”⁵⁹ When dealing with the Christian perspective, one of the questions that may arise is the question on the “moral ethics” surrounding Christian work because; “the pagan world knows little of the Christian work ethic,”⁶⁰. In view of this, Warren says, “Every human activity, except sin, can be done for God’s pleasure if you only do it with an attitude of praise.”⁶¹ On the contrary, Higginson says that: “Among the various types of work people do, the church has a particular difficulty knowing how to relate to the business sector, the world of commerce and industry. The church feels... business is contaminated by pursuit of profit or immersion in an unjust global system.”⁶² The truth underlying this saying has roots in the practices of business people around the globe. Not many of them can be trusted even when they are Christians. This kind of feeling portrays the failure of the church form applying an ethic that would liberate Christians from pagan sentiments.

⁵⁷ Keeley, 297.

⁵⁸ Warren, 18.

⁵⁹ Atkinson, 33.

⁶⁰ Dockery et al. David, 180.

⁶¹ Warren, 74.

⁶² Richard Higginson, *Questions of Business Life*. (Spring Harvest, 2002), 5.

Stevens explores Aristotle's ideas on business when he said, "Trade for Aristotle, was essentially suspicious if not downright perverted..."⁶³ The idea purportedly coming from the Hellenistic world ended up influencing the people of God as Aristotle claimed. Aristotle's assertion suggests that in the minds of many Christians, faith offers a kind of ethic as compared to others. Linthicum mentions two business friends in conversation and one of them saying: "I think I would like to work for some Christian ministry or church, and not have to cope with the use of power all the time."⁶⁴ Like Dockery, Anthony de Mello in his book: *One Minute Wisdom*, quoted by Stevens, he relates a situation in which a businessman wanted to leave business for ministry and was advised by an intelligent Cardinal telling him that: "As the fish perishes on dry land, so you perish when you get entangled in the world. The fish must return to the water, you must return to solitude. ... Must I give up my business and go into the monastery? 'No, no, hold on to your business and go into your heart."⁶⁵ In other words the Christian perspective of work is broad and not narrow as some people have mistaken it to be. Among some of the few cases portraying people's regard and what they think about Christian way of working and serving God, Higginson on his part asserts:

*The business world considers the Christian faith and the Christian church of little significance for its activity. The feeling is reciprocated..., the business and Christianity scarcely consider each other... Sometimes it takes the form of suspicion and hostility, so that there is a conscious relationship but it is one of alienation. Either way, marginalization prevails.*⁶⁶

⁶³ Stevens, *Doing God's Business*. 42.

⁶⁴ Robert Linthicum, *Transforming Power*. (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2003) 11.

⁶⁵ Stevens, *Doing God's Business*, 134. This is not the way to quote within a quote.

⁶⁶ Higginson, 8.

Surprisingly, the man in the pews is the man behind the counter in the shop or at the table managing business. He has been influenced by Christian ethics as much as he has been with business ethics. To make a unifying factor is the problem. Christianity and business are two different monsters that can swallow each other without mercy. That is why they are suspicious and hostile to each other.

Bakke looks at it differently arguing that: “Being called to work in a “secular” organization is no better or worse than being called to work in church, a Para-church organization...or an institution run by Christians. God may call us to work for Him in any of these settings, regardless of our occupation and particular talents.”⁶⁷ In other words business is not shut off from Christian practice as Higginson had observed. According to Haselbarth, “The reformers understood work as God’s calling...it has sometimes been called a vocation (which) can be attached to any secular profession, be it that of the engineer, farmer, secretary of state, brick-layer or sweeper. In God’s eyes all of them have the same dignity and blessing.”⁶⁸

Haselbarth’s assertion corresponds with what Martin Luther understood of work as: “All honourable work, paid or unpaid, is part of our calling. The typist, the pastor, the homemaker, or sales manager can all serve God and glorify God by diligently serving those around them. Work is important part of Christian vocation.”⁶⁹

Although the above may be the truth, Stevens has observed that the influence of the “Hellenistic world affected the people of God” and that “the book of *Ecclesiastes* - written between the Old and New Testaments - continues to put manual work low on the hierarchy.”⁷⁰ What is being pointed out here is that without Hellenistic devaluation of

⁶⁷ Dennis W. Bakke, *Joy at Work*, (Seattle, WA: PVG, 2005), 252.

⁶⁸ Haselbarth, 132.

⁶⁹ Richard C. Chewning, John W.Eby, and Shirley J. Roels, *Business through the Eyes of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1975), 171.

⁷⁰ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 42.

work, all work outside the circle of sin, is a calling with the same dignity.

Today, work has taken on a different meaning. Stevens says that “Calling has been secularized in the world and clericalized in the church.”⁷¹ Prior to this Stevens explained that “vocation is now identified with career, a path normally chosen for personal fulfilment rather than the public good.”⁷² Stevens seem to suggest that even when there are such options, people have not used them for the common good. Although there is a wide range of different callings and everyone has work to do, Stevens points out that unfortunately work has been degraded and disregarded. From a Christian perspective of being called and with the understanding that there is wide range of work activities in which to engage, every Christian should be involved in daily work life. In support of this assertion, Mackay one of the early English missionaries emphasized that, “... a Christian ought not to be an idle man.”⁷³ Ssebugwawo addresses a similar point of view from an African perspective by saying, “In African traditional society there was no single person who suffered from unemployment, and everyone was a worker.”⁷⁴

The Greeks, one of the European peoples, have been portrayed as a people who disregarded work as a vocation to the extent that their influence affected most of the Western world and Christian communities for many years. Stevens cites Hardy in his book, *The Fabric of This World*, how the Greek world had no concept of vocation. Manual work itself was put on the lower level of all the work hierarchy saying that, “The Greek ethic of work destined ordinary work for the person who worked in the world.”⁷⁵ In other words, people who do ordinary work do

⁷¹ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 20

⁷² *Ibid*, 20.

⁷³ Fahs, 96.

⁷⁴ Ssebugwawo, 36.

⁷⁵ Stevens, 42-43.

worldly work. Stevens says that Aristotle regarded work with suspicion and a perversion. This attitude of Aristotle explains why the early church fathers embraced the upper and lower approach to life.⁷⁶ Bakke argues that “If I see my work as a mission for God, my attitude and behaviour at work are likely to change in a markedly positive way.”⁷⁷

The Greek approach to work had an influence on the English, some of whom later came to Africa and impacted negatively on work values, especially on manual work. One of the supporting evidence surrounds the institutions of learning, which were purposely designed to prepare and provide for white collar jobs, which were not considered manual, of course, and which Wehmeier calls, “working in offices, rather than in a factory”⁷⁸ Work matters cannot be exhausted, especially when looking at the value of each type of work. However there is an interesting and important output of William Perkins’ essence of work reflecting the Puritans perspective as quoted by Stevens that:

*The meanness of the calling does not debase the goodness of the work... for God looks not at the excellence of the work but the heart of the worker. And the action of a shepherd shearing a sheep, performed... in his kind, is as good as work before God as is the action of a judge in giving sentence... or a minister preaching... Now if we compare work with work, there is a difference betwixt washing dishes and preaching the word of God; but as for pleasing God, there is no difference at all.*⁷⁹

Therefore all good work is God’s work. When Daniel L. Migliore was writing on the issue of work, he came up with similar notion when he said, “The vocation of a Christian is not to be confused with having a job by which one earns ones livelihood. Whatever one’s job or

⁷⁶ Ibid, 42.

⁷⁷ Bakke, 252.

⁷⁸ Wehmeier, 1537.

⁷⁹ Stevens, 49.

profession as a Christian, one is called to be a partner in God's mission in the world."⁸⁰ With all the different ideas surrounding human work, there is a lot to put right among the Christians, if work has got to assume its rightful position and value in serving God, humankind, and the rest of the creation.

In the event of studying the biblical relationship between faith and work, the above views are be helpful in addressing the poor work ethic, stressing the need for the renewal, and how people can begin to work based on both biblical and Christian teaching. If studying biblical relationship between faith and work can be done, people can transform the church ministry and individual life. Therefore considering the context of ministry is ideal enough to lay ground for Christian world of work.

⁸⁰ Migliore, 246.

CONTEXT OF WORK AS MINISTRY

3.1 Historical Background

The history of work in Africa cannot be regarded without looking at its essence. Africans were known for their religiosity. Mbiti says, “Africans are notoriously religious....Religion permeates into all departments of life so fully that it is not easy or possible always to isolate it.”⁸¹ Africans carried out work as part of their religion and all members of the society were expected to work to contribute to the society and the worship of their gods. Work contributed to family status among other families and was the measure of active participation in the community. One who did not work was not allowed family and community benefits, to the extent that one would not marry because work determined status and success.

Africans today, however, are said to regard work lightly. Kinoti and Kimuyu have suggested that the poor work ethic could have resulted from the abundance of natural resources of Africa. “These tend to lead to leisurely deposition to life.”⁸² In addition “for most Africans life is a monotonous all year around effort to eke at a subsistence existence. This seems to require minimal effort and there is no challenge to be creative,

⁸¹ Mbiti, 1.

⁸² Kinoti, and Kimuyu, 70.

innovative or inventive.”⁸³ In this way, Africans’ engagement in work is less demanding.

Uganda is one of the blessed countries of Africa commonly referred to as “The Pearl of Africa.” She enjoys the blessings of a good climate conducive to all types of work. There should be no doubt that Uganda is the food hub of supply to the African Continent. Surprisingly, it is one of those countries suffering from famine from time to time.⁸⁴ The 2002 Uganda Population Census put Christians of the Anglican Church of Uganda at 8.7 million of the total population of 23.84 million people (36.5 percent).⁸⁵ The Christian population at that time was 86 percent. In 2011, ten years later, the Christian population might have increased considerably and might even have greater responsibility to save the country from the shame of famine and corruption.

*Most African Christians are products of missionary theological traditions that came to us incorporating a variety of development activities, such as education, hospitals, and agriculture. Even though these traditions later were largely taken over by governments as our countries won their struggles for political and economic independence, the church often continues to be active in development work...*⁸⁶

Uganda happens to be a product of missionary theological traditions that received the Christian gospel teaching from the English missionaries, who had been influenced by the “work right” from the Victorian work ethic of hard work experienced in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and claimed to be rooted in Protestant

⁸³ Ibid., 70.

⁸⁴ Uganda Local Newspapers: New Vision, Monitor, and on Uganda Broadcasting Co-operation’s Television and Radio. The current situation in Uganda has been in the media more frequent portraying worrying situations in the whole country for the year 2011.

⁸⁵ Uganda Bureau of Statistics. *2002 Uganda National and Housing Census; Analytical Report* (Kampala: Uganda Bureau of Statistics, 2006), 14.

⁸⁶ Belshaw, Calderisi and Sugden, 208.

Christianity but some of the missionaries emphasized the liberation of the spirit and neglected the body. This approach has affected the way Christians participate in the world of work. Kinoti and Kimuyu have again observed that “The Christian culture in Africa appears to embrace only salvation and the miraculous to the neglect of everything else.”⁸⁷

Between 1936 and 1939, East Africa experienced a great wave of spiritual revival which swept across Uganda leaving a strong impact in the Anglican Church of Uganda to the present day. The focus of the revival was spiritual and all other departments of human life were non-issues. Most of the people caught up by the revival “fire” and becoming involved in the preaching of the gospel were ordinary people without any theological training to help them interpret the Scriptures. Their life became withdrawn from here on earth to be then living in heaven.⁸⁸ They stopped being active in “ordinary” work and did not even advocate for it. They claimed that “theirs” was in heaven. Many of them had problems of relating Scripture to real life situations. Life outside the spiritual realm was regarded worldly or secular just as Stevens explains that, “Most people think that so-called secular work has only extrinsic value, while ministry and people-helping professions have intrinsic value.”⁸⁹

Those who preached the Gospel were seen differently from someone engaged in ordinary work and it has continued to this day. Preaching the Gospel was all that mattered. Bakke disagrees with this kind of thinking when he says, “Work should be an act of worship to God. God is pleased when people steward their talents and energy to achieve these ends.”⁹⁰ We need to think in that direction, because work that is

⁸⁷ Kinoti and Kimuyu, 70.

⁸⁸ In the Anglican Christian Revival movement chorus they would sing; “The world behind me the cross before me...” as one of the many references where Christians showed their earthly withdrawal. It affected their physical participation in work.

⁸⁹ Stevens, *Doing God's Business*, 9.

⁹⁰ Bakke, 248.

conducted in faith becomes a service of love; “half-hearted efforts and sloppy work do not honour God.”⁹¹ Spiritual revival should redeem both the soul and the body. Since the days of East African Revival, ordinary work has been misunderstood and has been given less attention among Christians, their leaders and families, affecting neighbouring communities.

Work in many ways has got a number of world view descriptions that will give it cultural identities. For example, African continent reshaped its cultural identity due to colonialism. Uganda, one of the countries of Africa, did not survive this experience. Some of the traditional religious beliefs changed to the newly introduced English culture, that was clothed in a “religious coat.” which is confirmed in the saying that, “The western missionaries who founded many of (the) churches in the 19th century had generally negative attitude towards African culture and thought-forms; thus, African converts to Christianity were expected to give up their own cultural ways and put on Western culture.”⁹²

Education encouraged people to seek white collar jobs, which unfortunately did not even exist and very few people obtained them. Ugandans, like all other Africans, should believe that religion is inseparable from their ordinary work life, just as Mbiti says that religion permeates into all departments of an African life;⁹³ therefore Ugandans should see work as a source of life. Work means generating resources for personal and community benefits. Work is an obligation that qualifies one as a useful member of the community. Individual and community life are grounded in work; however, most educated Ugandans have turned to white collar jobs. Even Christians, who are thought to be well grounded in biblical teaching, have adopted secular

⁹¹ Bakke, 249.

⁹² Sebastian Bakare, *The Drumbeat of Life*. Geneva: WCC Publications, 1997, 15

⁹³ Mbiti, 1.

views. Secularism has defined people's way of life as "the idea that science is the source of truth, while religion is merely subjective opinion, something we tolerate for those weak enough to need that kind of comfort."⁹⁴ One cannot imagine that most Christians have moved that direction. When Hornby defines *secular* as something "not connected with spiritual or religious matters,"... and *secularism* as "the belief that religion should not be involved in the organization of society." (*Oxford Learners' Dictionary*, S.V., "A.S. Hornby"). It is clear that there is a divide between faith and work, which has affected the thinking of many, including Christians. The African worldview about work has therefore been partly interfered with, by Western education world view. Based on the current African Christian worldview influenced by Western world view about work, there is a need to teach and understand the biblical worldview of work that seeks to serve God holistically. Campbell and McGrath point out the relevance of the Christian worldview and how it cannot be equated with all other worldviews to mean the same and one thing.

The strategic value of the idea of a Christian world - view is that it implicitly repudiates the notion that Christianity can be relegated to an academic discipline (theology), or to a private realm of morality or spirituality, and that it is therefore out of place in public arena of the University or the market place of social and political ideas. In a word, it asserts that the gospel makes a claim to "public truth..., and has direct cultural relevance."⁹⁵

If truly all other world views were satisfying the quest for relevance, there would have been no need for a "Christian world view", or a

⁹⁴ Charles W. Colson and Nancy Pearcey, *How Now Shall we Live* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc. 1999).

⁹⁵W.C. Campbell Campbell-Jack, Gavin J. McGrath and C. Stephen Evans, *New Dictionary of Christian Apologetics* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 259.

“Theology of Work” and “The integration of Faith and Work”. The biblical perspective of the Christian world view about work makes it so far the best to treat the moral and spiritual aspects that surround human work life.

3.2 The Christian Work Ethic

If Christian core values are well thought out and effectively communicated, they may have a long lasting impact on people’s work values. The purpose and concern of this topic is to point out the various perceptions and interpretations of work and how they influence the Christians, and how Christians can focus on the biblical teaching that have strong base for their faith in order to change their negative attitudes that have been responsible for the poor work ethics. One of the testimonies of Brooks is that certain values were taught in the church like giving charity of which he says, “We were all taught to tithe here...even those who do not attend church regularly...”⁹⁶ The issue here really is not the tithing, but the idea of teaching. The Christian ethics were taught, and for the case of charity work it was also among the taught values.

While the church continues to affirm everyday work, there are still those among her members who hold the view that work is less human, degrading, and cursed. This view is most likely the one held by the Christians in Uganda where work has caused negative feelings among working and non-working people. People who have been influenced by secularist attitudes as well as the white collar job mentality do not have any regard for ordinary manual work. It is also unfortunate reading from history, to learn that the early church fathers were influenced by the Greek world of work of the fourth century BC. Stevens points out this failure saying, “So profoundly did the Hellenistic world affect the

⁹⁶ Arthur C. Brooks, *Who Really Cares*, (New York: Basic Books, 2006), 32.

people of God that the book of Ecclesiastes - written between the Old and New Testaments - continues to put manual work low on the hierarchy.... Most of the early church fathers embraced this “upper and lower” approach to life (work).”⁹⁷ This later became an influencing force in addition to dichotomizing work by the educated based on paid and non-paid work. According to Haselbarth, “Schools have hired too many away from the farms and from manual work by instilling in them hopes that cannot be fulfilled.”⁹⁸ The implication was that those who anticipated that having an education would mean better pay resigned from manual work only to be disappointed with the negative results. Here in Uganda, institutions of learning are too many and employ more people than any other public service sector, yet they are the most poorly remunerated. They are suffering from poverty. Of course there are many reasons underlying the cause of poverty. Firstly, they do not have time to do manual work at home because they spend a lot of time in the classroom. Secondly, they are paid little and therefore cannot invest. Thirdly, they have also been influenced by the white collar job syndrome to which Wehmeier claims that institutions of learning prepared people to: “Work in office rather than a factory.”⁹⁹ Wehmeier’s observation on the other hand is characteristic of church leaders, who behave as if all other work was not for them, other than in the pulpit.

Institutions admit and accommodate large numbers of young men and women, who later graduate and return to the society where work is lived. Because of the extended time invested in studying, these young people have not been prepared for ordinary manual work when they return to their communities. In essence, they are handicapped because they have not experienced ordinary manual work. As seen earlier, institutions of higher education instil in them empty hopes of obtaining employment. In their minds, work becomes something for which pay is

⁹⁷ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 42-43.

⁹⁸ Haselbarth, 135.

⁹⁹ Wehmeier, 1537.

the only consideration. Haselbarth observes that this scenario about the expectation of white collar jobs is something that “has been [in Africa] since the days of colonialism and has proved to be destructive to the development of our countries.”¹⁰⁰ In this case the Church’s ministry has been adversely affected by this attitude.

Although the statistics are hard to establish, the Anglican Church of Uganda has established many institutions of learning. In order to assess the effects of work attitudes among the youth, it would require an extensive study into the background to determine how to improve work ethics and values especially among youths. The concern certainly goes beyond the youth, because when those same individuals become adults, they become the focus of the church ministry development. Lack of focus on the attitudes and mindsets of the youth would be a disservice to the future church, and their work values would affect the national and church growth. These youth will eventually become the future church leaders. The current church leaders’ responsibilities are to teach and make disciples, and even be on the front line in the project of renewing work ethics.

Another focal point is the laity, that has been engaged in business of different types, and whose work can be integrated with their religious life to support the ministry financially. Although business is a calling, it is also a gift. St. Paul says, “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service...” (1Cor.12:4). Christians can use the gift of business for God’s service by empowering ministry financially.

Both the clergy and the laity have lost the traditional, cultural, and community spirit. Kinoti and Kimuyu have explained that this traditional spirit has been “breaking down due to urbanization and other forces.”¹⁰¹ Kinoti and Kimuyu’s observation has affected the Christians

¹⁰⁰ Haselbarth, 132.

¹⁰¹ Kinoti and Kimuyu, 26.

of Uganda as well. Most of their attitudes toward manual and ordinary work are negative. Work has not been treated as a divine mandate yet in essence, work was initiated by God himself, and according to the Bible, God was committed to work creating the heavens and the earth, then sustaining everything he created.¹⁰² One of the challenging issues is that some Christians have been moving from one Christian community to another seeking for spiritual satisfaction, and yet they have not obtained a theology that builds up their attitudes and work ethic. Much as these Christians are subjected to the teaching of the church or the religious institution, they are also subjected to their cultural beliefs that positively or negatively affect their working behaviours. People should therefore be concerned about poverty, crime, corruption and unemployment. The point advanced here is that Christians have a very big stake in changing people's work values or work ethic. The Great Commission portrays Jesus sending his disciples to go to the whole world. Part of the assignment given was to make disciples and teach (Matt.28:19-20). Making disciples and teaching are important part of the Christian ministry values, because that is what the Lord Jesus Christ commanded. Again Jesus invites his disciples saying; "Come...and learn of me." (Matt.11:29) To Christians, Jesus is instructing his disciples to work as he worked, but even when it is thus commanded, Beckett has discovered that "As with so many distortions from the biblical norm, we've come to associate work with drudgery and futility, not dignity and fulfilment."¹⁰³

From a number of examples given, the Christians work attitude started to regard work from a sacred - secular point of view. Work that was regarded sacred was that one which has intrinsic values. However Stevens tells his readers that "In the Bible, work that is the 'Lord's work' and has intrinsic value is not determined by its religious character..."¹⁰⁴ Another contributing factor that influences the Christian

¹⁰² Beckett, 161.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 160-161.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 9.

work ethic is the Western world view of secular and sacred. In fact this Western world view has had a great impact on work and workplaces. This attitude has undermined the Great Commission and the whole Church Institution. Wesley Carr says, “Being secular is an indication of declining participation in religious institutions and the declining influence of religion,”¹⁰⁵ which has caused a dividing line as if there is work for man and work for God. Man has no work, for he created none. Warren claims; “It is only in God that we discover our origin, our identity, our meaning, our purpose, our significance, and our destiny.”¹⁰⁶ Christians may lose focus of their ministry, meaning and purpose, if their concentration is on the difference and self-satisfaction.

Looking at the Christian world view of work, people need to consider the Christian ethics involved, because it is the one that engages the quality of life, “a history of engagement with philosophical ethics.”¹⁰⁷ Some Christian writers have preferred to use the terms *work* and *business* interchangeably when referring to calling and vocation, which have different meanings. When dealing with the Christian work ethics, one of the questions that arise more often than not is the question of the “Moral Ethic” surrounding the Christian work, whether it is ordained or ordinary. Questions like: How? Why? Where? When? For and to whom? Are always in the foreground. These questions surround the Christian work behaviour, which must be clarified in order to determine the real essence of work in the Christian environment. One of the observations made by Peter Kasenene while dealing with the issue of religion and ethics is that, “It is commonly held that religion and morality are inseparable, morality being part of religion. Some people

¹⁰⁵ Carr, et al. 326.

¹⁰⁶ Warren, 18.

¹⁰⁷ Atkinson, 33.

even go as far as saying that religion and morality is one and the same thing; as religion is expected to be one's way of life."¹⁰⁸

The Christian work view should have a biblical view and must be Christ centred. Dockery explains that "The pagan world knows little of the Christian work ethic"¹⁰⁹ therefore it is the responsibility of the Christians to portray biblical and Christ-centred work behaviour. One of the challenges Christians face is the negative attitude to work. Interestingly Mackay one of the early English missionaries to Uganda, was in one way disappointed by the way early Christians behaved towards work, and he encouraged them by teaching that "...a Christian ought not to be an idle man (human being)"¹¹⁰ On the contrary, Higginson observed that: "Among the various types of work people do, the church has a particular difficulty knowing how to relate to the business sector, the world of commerce and industry. The church feels... business is contaminated by pursuit of profit or immersion in an unjust global system."¹¹¹ This in some ways shows how the church is idle with a stagnant mind. She has not used both her human and land resources which stretch out wasted. In other words, the church has not engaged in the world of business to exploit God given talents and gifts. The Great Commission was meant to send out believers into the world to go and teach as one of the assignments Jesus had commanded them. For example Jesus taught about the talents (Matt.25:14-30). This goes to the world of business. A Christian supposed to engage work and make profits in the right way, but not to be slothful. But unfortunately the church has not done much to influence the work and work place, and as result, work has become a burden instead of a blessing to many and has lost its value. It has become an occasion for sin like the dishonest

¹⁰⁸ Peter Kasenene, *Religious Ethics in Africa* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers Ltd, 1998), 17

¹⁰⁹ Dockery and Thornbury, 180.

¹¹⁰ Lyon Fahsa, 96.

¹¹¹ Higginson, 5.

steward (Luke.16:1ff). The attitude that work is burdensome portrays the failure of the Church to teach an ethic that would set Christians apart from pagans in their attitudes to work.

The current concern is the way the Church can engage business or so called secular work, because as Higginson earlier said, among the various types of work people do, the church has difficulty knowing how to relate to business sector, the world of commerce and industry. If the Church is to act as an agent of transformation, work attitudes must be integrated with spiritual or faith attitudes. The role of the Church is to engage the negative attitudes people attach to all work other than the full-time ministry work, and transform them into meaningful and profitable attitudes. Bakke assumes that “Being called to work in a ‘secular’ organization is no better or worse than being called to work in church, a Para-church organization...or an institution run by Christians. God may call us to work for Him in any of these settings, regardless of our occupation and particular talents”¹¹² In other words business is not shut off from Christian practice as Higginson had pointed out earlier. Business is a calling. Christians should be of the view like that of Haselbarth who said that “God’s calling...has sometimes been called a vocation [which] can be attached to any secular profession, be it that of the engineer, farmer, secretary of state, brick-layer or sweeper. In God’s eyes all of them have the same dignity and blessing.”¹¹³ The person, who sits in the pews on Sunday listening to the Spiritual message, is the engineer, the milk vender, the shopkeeper, and the accountant or car washer from Monday to Saturday. This person does not cease to be Christian because of the Monday to Sunday engagement. The God of Sunday is the same God of all other days.

From the above view, Martin Luther understood work as: “All honourable work, paid or unpaid, is part of our calling. The typist, the

¹¹² Bakke, 252.

¹¹³ Hasel Barth, 132.

pastor, the homemaker, or sales manager can all serve God and glorify God by diligently serving those around them. Work is important part of Christian vocation.”¹¹⁴ There is a great contribution to the Church’s ministry with regard to how work can be influenced from within, because the people who do all these types of work are the very people who come to church. One of the challenges has been how often the church addresses work or business issues to her congregation. The people sitting before the pulpit all have issues with their work and work places, which are both moral and spiritual. Where is the place of the Church in these people’s lives? The person inside the church on a Sunday morning is the same person on any other days of the week engaged in the ordinary work life. The African who became a Christian should not have lost focus of the traditional understanding of work. Rather acceptance of Christ should have added value to work by integrating the Christian faith with the African values of ordinary work.

Work matters cannot be exhausted, especially when considering the value of each type of work. There is an interesting and important output of Perkins’ essence of work reflecting the Puritans perspective as quoted by Stevens that:

*The meanness of the calling does not debase the goodness of the work... for God looks not at the excellence of the work but the heart of the worker. And the action of a shepherd shearing a sheep, performed... in his kind, is as good as work before God as is the action of a judge in giving sentence... or a minister preaching... Now if we compare work with work, there is a difference betwixt washing dishes and preaching the word of God; but as for pleasing God, there is no difference at all.*¹¹⁵

In such cases, all good work is God’s work. Migliore writing on the issue of work came up with similar notion saying, “The vocation of a

¹¹⁴ Chewning, Eby, and Roels, 171.

¹¹⁵ Stevens, 49. Fix reference.

Christian is not to be confused with having a job by which one earns ones livelihood. Whatever one's job or profession as a Christian, one is called to be a partner in God's mission in the world."¹¹⁶ The Church has the opportunity to call people to meaningful work by engaging every trade or business to honour its position in the Great Commission or the Cultural mandate.

In studying the biblical relationship between faith and work, it is helpful to cite examples of some of the biblical and early church characters who in spite of being engaged in full or part-time ministry involved themselves in ordinary work and never lost their spiritual focus. Some of the good examples are Abraham (Gen. 12-23) and St. Paul, whose testimonies prove that one can do ministry as well as ordinary manual work without compromise to either.¹¹⁷ There are those who engaged in business as their primary call but also were of great service to the ministry of Christ. People like Dorcas (Tabitha) made tremendous contribution to her community by doing good works and acts of charity (Acts.9:36).

There is no reason today in the world of plenty and opportunities of creativeness why the Christians cannot make jobs for themselves like Dorcas while remaining a blessing in their ministries with their work. The poor work ethic experienced among Christians is an insult to resources God has given, including the greatest resource of his son Jesus Christ, who brought heaven on earth to teach believers the works of God. The Christ-like works are those works that will have moral values and be labelled "Christian work ethics." The integration of faith and work will be the beginning of renewing our work ethical or moral values.

¹¹⁶ Migliore, 246.

¹¹⁷ In Acts 20:24-35, Paul shows how he preached the Gospel of Christ and at the same time worked with his hands. He provided for himself and others. He had time for ministry and time for his personal work. He is one of those early church leaders who exemplifies the moral ethic of a minister in the ordinary life. The origin of "tent making" begins from here.

3.3 The Role of Leadership in the Integration of Faith and Work.

We cannot talk about transforming work attitudes and ethic without having leadership at the fore front, because leadership is an art of organizing and managing people and their estates based on an everyday life. Pastors are leaders supposed to manage the estate of God where man in the main character. In the practical guide for church leaders, the assertion is that;

A pastor's chief role is to affirm God's love and extend God's blessing within a particular community. One way a pastor does this is by enabling or facilitating others in their ministry for Jesus Christ, or for service to the community and world. An enabler or facilitator uses his or her talents, resources, time and energies in helping and inspiring people to do their work more effectively¹¹⁸

This assertion indicates that a dynamic leader makes a dynamic community; and that the role of a leader is to transform a static community to a dynamic one. Dynamic leadership becomes transformational or 'incarnational' by bringing Jesus into the limelight of the whole life of humankind, which can be lived in their daily lives.

Leadership is the human tool of organizing and managing people and their affairs. Without sound leadership destruction crawls closer and closer until both the nation and its leadership perish. What makes leadership transformational is based on the life of the leader. A case in point is quoted here of one of the great leaders in the church of Uganda, the retired archbishop Livingstone Mpalayi Nkoyoyo (1996-2006).

¹¹⁸ Peter, Larom. George, Enyagu. Michael Hunter. *Pastor; A practical Guide for Church Leaders*. (Achimota, Ghana: Africa Christian Press, 1989), 101

Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo was elected archbishop of the Church of the Province of Uganda based on four reasons:

There was firstly, the issue of personal integrity...Secondly...consistent achievement of growth in all aspects of church life in all places he had worked...Thirdly, was his outstanding ability to retain healthy relationships with the people he worked...Finally, his special ability to develop all aspects of church life at the same time...He did not compromise the ministries that shadowed compassion to the poor and needy in practical terms.¹¹⁹

Before and after biblical times, a nation's development depended greatly on the innovativeness, creativity, military might, and wisdom of the leader. Great examples include people like Hammurabi, Nebuchadnezzar, Moses, David, and Solomon to mention but a few. The successes of their nations record their direct involvement and active protection of their people against any kind of aggression. Aggression can be physical, spiritual, or even mental. One of the major aggressive enemies of any people is the neglect of their responsibilities and the laxity of the leadership. In the end the people become poor and dependants to the extent that some of the leaders begin to sell off their services in order to survive. Some have observed a dilemma among some church leaders that implies that their laxity has become more of a disease than a casual phenomenon. Some church leaders who have decided not to engage in practical and manual work have become reliant on the "prosperity gospel." Jenkins points out that "The gospel of prosperity permits corrupt clergy to get away with virtually anything. Not only can they coerce the faithful to pay their obligations through a kind of Scriptural terrorism, but the belief system allows them to excuse

¹¹⁹ Hamlet Kabushenga Mbabazi, *Leadership Under Pressure; Authorised Biography of the Most Rev. Livingstone Mpalanyi Nkoyoyo* (Kampala: African Christian Research and Literature Institute (ACRELI), 2004, 108-9.

malpractice.”¹²⁰ Leadership that has easy means of survival will not bother engaging in tiresome or toiling work. To them, the Bible advocates seeking opportunities to become prosperous at the sweat of others. Some leaders have literally taken it for granted that those who serve in the church should benefit from the church’s proceeds as Paul advocated. (1Cor.9:13-18). Such kind of practice exists among many of the clergy of the Anglican Church of Uganda and has taken deeper roots in the Pentecostal churches. If this had not been the case, many of the Anglican clergy would have been on the frontline of development in business.

For any project to succeed, leadership must be at the forefront of implementation. Leadership is expected to always have a special calling from God for the purpose of leading their people. Moses, Abram, Joseph, Ezekiel, and many others were called. The reason behind this calling is that God may work through such people to minister to the rest. Their calling might even be painful like that one of Moses, Hosea or Paul, but when God calls you as a leader, you have to rely on him rather than on self.

The context of the ministry cannot overlook the fact that the leader has a role to play. There cannot be a fundamental people without a fundamental and focused leader. From the Christian standpoint, the role model of leadership is Jesus Christ. He completes both the physical and spiritual ministry here on earth. During his earthly life, Jesus called to himself those he wanted to be with him for the purpose of training them to become servant leaders. Christians, irrespective of their different roles, have been called to become ministers of God’s Word. God’s Word translates the verbal into actions; therefore leaders are not people who say words and wait for the people to respond, but they are people who speak *and* act like Jesus who has called them. One of the universal

¹²⁰ Philip Jenkins, *New Faces of Christianity*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 93.

examples is when an organization recruits people to work. The first step after recruitment is to offer training or orientation. The purpose is to give the recruits the mind or heart of the organization, so that when they are out in the field, others can see the organization in them rather than seeing their personalities.

Christian leadership is unique from other types of leadership because “The Christian leader is always and completely subjected to the Lord Jesus Christ who is the ultimate Leader and Head of the church. His leadership is neither vague nor theoretical but extremely practical.”¹²¹ This type of leadership is exceptional because it “brings you into a remarkable fellowship with God, with your colleagues in leadership and those you serve.”¹²² The degree of practicability is much more credible if the leader can fellowship with those below him or her. To gain approval, the leader must engage in work like the “Master” did.

Christian leadership restrains people from portraying their personalities apart from that of Jesus Christ. “Ministry involves more than merely serving people or institutions... It is serving God and God’s purpose. A servant [leader] is a person at the disposal of another... a person at the disposal of God...a person through whom God serves and ministers.”¹²³ In this context, leaders have a role to play in realigning work morals that Jesus showed and taught if Christians are going to be able to change their attitudes toward work. Prime says that leadership can primarily be exercised through the Scriptures. Those who lead in the church must accept the authority of the Scriptures and be thorough and wholehearted in their obedience to it. “Their vision and objectives- and the way in which they aim to achieve them- must be shaped and determined by his (Jesus’) Word.”¹²⁴

¹²¹ Derek Prime, *A Christian’s Guide to Leadership for the Whole Church*, (Webster, New York: Evangelical Press, 2005), 7.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 193.

¹²³ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 52.

¹²⁴ Prime, 8.

The Scriptures are very clear. God, who delegated humankind to the noble work of stewardship, gave them leadership roles that demanded work to be accomplished not on their own whim, but work as God wants and works. Leaders are called; therefore, they should seek to understand their roles as instruments of transformation. They should share values, experiences, and expectations that naturally emanate from an incarnation leadership model. Jesus taught that to become a leader, one must first become a servant (Matt.20:26). Leaders who incorporate Christian values will also consider the context of what God has done in the lives of peoples and use those values to convey Jesus' Gospel among their communities. The teaching of Christian work values to church leaders is strategic to the passing on of the message using the pulpit and family pastoral visitations. People can be influenced by the biblical teaching based on their commitment to the service of God. In the Bible, the leader is demonstrated by a shepherd of the sheep. The shepherd works hard to feed, protect, and care for the flock. The shepherd leads and the sheep follow. In this context, the leader goes ahead of the people to show them the way. Unfortunately "Too often the leadership aspect of our responsibilities has been played down, and with unhappy consequences."¹²⁵ The institution grows both in size (geographically) and investments, but unfortunately the leader remains the same. The concentration of the church ministry tends more to the spiritual than the physical because "The church of Christ does not progress beyond the spiritual progress of the leader."¹²⁶ Even then, their spirituality is not active in practice. The spiritual concentration sometimes may deny the leader an opportunity to enjoy the ministry and later work hard towards the church's physical growth. As such, circumstances weigh heavily on the leaders to the extent that their impact in the ministry may never be felt. To be a good leader, one must start with self-actualization in

¹²⁵ Prime, 177.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

developmental matters both of the spirit and the body. The church institution cannot progress and flourish spiritually without supporting her leaders. The leader is the means by which the ordinary people can support the ministry with the ordinary work, but only if the leader is teaching the flock accordingly. A church leader cannot pastor and teach without emulating examples from the Bible, which basically form the Christian work values. The Scriptures are therefore critical in helping leaders respect the Word of God for the sake of their ministry. Calvin says, "It is contrary to God's will for men to neglect scripture and seek fresh revelation."¹²⁷ There is no way a leader can renew or transform the work ethic of his/her flock without authority of the Scriptures. God made himself known through the revelation of his Word. Leaders are put in place by God for this revelation and later to interpret the message to his people. In order to have the capacity to achieve this call, goals become important factors. "With definite goals you release your own power, and things start happening."¹²⁸ In this respect, renewing the Christian work ethic must become the goal of the leader if the ministry is to be transformed.

Church leadership needs a work ethic renewal before they can do it among the Christians. Moses was made strong before he could encourage the people he was leading. Nehemiah and Ezra displayed their leadership roles the right way. Therefore Christian work ethic renewal would focus on the renewal of the leadership as a necessary tool before the Christians can realise their potentials to serve God with their work. God holds leaders responsible for irresponsible work or services from his people. To save oneself from the blame, one must work and serve God with one's work.

¹²⁷ John Calvin, *Biblical Christianity*, (England: Grace Publications Trust, 2005), 23.

¹²⁸ Miller, 56.

3.4 The Socio-Economic Issues in Regard to Ministry

The socio-economic issues like poverty, disease, ignorance, corruption, urban migrations, and many others have been factors affecting ministry. Sometimes poverty is a result of the social systems just as Myers argues that; “They are poor because they are oppressed by social systems that keep them poor for the benefit of the non-poor.”¹²⁹ “They”, refers to the community or people; therefore “Articulating what poverty is and what causes it helps us determine the source of much of our understanding of what transformational development is and how it should be practiced.”¹³⁰ Where people are poor and sick, there is no development expected. The little they get is spent on treatment. Even the Gospel of Christ has no firm ground to yield fruit. The ministry to some Christians becomes an end to the means rather than the means to the end.

When people talk of the poor and of poverty, there is a need to know who these people are. The mere focus on a description of poverty in the abstract may not remain permanent. So the reference to the poor is just to explain the current situation, which has hampered individual development and success, as well as public institutions like family, religious and civil institutions. There are so many definitions of *the poor* and *poverty* by many NGOs, but these definitions may not satisfy the Christian perspective of poverty and the poor. The way NGOs view the poor is not the way the Church views the poor. The poor constitute a large part of the Church in the developing world, and as such they have direct impact on the ministry. Worth mentioning is the gap existing among the poor that must be filled if ministry is to be meaningful. “Sometimes people may not be so poor that they go hungry or thirsty,

¹²⁹ Bryant Myers, *Walking with the Poor*. (MaryKnoll, New York: Obis Books, 1999), 61.

¹³⁰ Myers, 12.

and yet they are relatively poor when compared with others.”¹³¹ Accordingly we can study and examine poverty from that perspective.

There are many cases of poverty that the church should consider attempting to overcome, which are viewed as failures in work and work places. Fortunately, the Church considers the poor as “insiders,” unlike the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) who see them as people in need of physical support only. From a ministry point of view, “Our point of departure for a Christian understanding of poverty is to remember that the poor are people with names, people to whom God has given gifts, and people with whom and among whom God has been working before we know they are there.”¹³² This aims at reminding us that the so called “poor” are people among whom God works like all other people groups, and that he has given them different potentials and gifts which they can put to use to alleviate their poor conditions; therefore involvement of all ministry stakeholders is essential if all members can contribute and benefit. Unless the poor are involved, the success of the ministry is futile because, “Increasingly it is the positive participation of the poor in development process which is seen to reduce poverty.”¹³³ There is a need for adjustment in and improvement of work behaviours. As a Ministry Transformational Model, the only way to prove the integration worth its biblical teaching is to show how much the poor have been positively impacted in the development of their gifts and community participation through this teaching. The church owns the poor and walks with them. They are the major focus of ministry programs.

In the developing world, sometimes poverty is created. Many people have a tendency of banking on loans, donations, and charitable contributions from Christian families and communities abroad. There are many cases in point that can testify. For example the World Food

¹³¹ Atkinson, 677.

¹³² Myers, 58.

¹³³ Andrew Shepherd, *Sustainable Rural Development*, (New York: Palgrave, 1998), 90.

Program (WFP) has created a spirit of laziness and assumptions that in case there is food shortage; the governments would step in to rectify the situation. Some people feel there is no need to plan for disasters or other shortcomings because there are those who consistently step in to care for them. Although people can be helped in situations that are very challenging, it is not reliable and true in every case. Attitudes of that kind have created relaxed working mood among some Christians. People sit on their verandas early morning even when they know that they need food and have very little to sustain them. There is a story that has been told about families living near the lake shores of Victoria. They own reasonable chunks of farm land good for food production. To their advantage, God has blessed their area with plenty of Jack Fruit trees. These are in season almost all year around. One of the amazing and surprising things is that these people do not engage in any kind of work to cultivate or develop their land. It is said that all meals throughout the day are supplied by and with the Jack Fruits. The example given above confirms what Kinoti and Kimuyu have observed saying:

The second characteristic of African economies is a poor work ethic. This is probably due to the congenial tropical climate and an abundance of natural resources in much of Africa. These tend to lead to leisurely disposition to life...This seems to require minimal effort and there is no challenge to be creative, innovative or inventive.¹³⁴

Sometimes this experience is hard for some us to believe, but it is true when you find people sleeping on empty stomachs because they have nothing to eat and yet they have land. Besides this example, many of us are witnesses of what happens in the towns and cities. Many people spend a lot of time drinking at night hours every day of the week. The following mornings they are expected to go working either in public

¹³⁴ Kinoti and Kimuyu, 70.

or private offices. The questions are: How does one who spends hours of rest drinking, get the energy to work the following morning? How much money does one earn to drink every night and continue maintaining family needs? To think broadly and wisely, such behaviour undermines work outputs in terms of quantity and quality at the work places. Quality individual and family life is completely subjected to the minimum. The option to make ends meet would in such circumstances turn to alternative means to earn income.

3.4.1 Corruption

Corruption is a “virus” that denies work to be fruitful and beneficial to the people and their institutions. Where corruption thrives, lives are endangered and denied the joy of their livelihood. Only some people harvest other peoples’ labour while the rest go empty handed. People who do not engage in a healthy work ethic are always vulnerable to corruption. It is sometimes unfortunate whenever people talk of corruption, the immediate interpretation drives them towards financial abuse. Stevens defines corruption as the use of “public power for private gain, or when we receive something for doing nothing, or do something that should not be done, or when we bend the law.”¹³⁵ Corruption is broad and covers many areas of human activities. Corruption is sometimes understood as “Dishonest or illegal behaviour, especially of people in authority.”¹³⁶ This understanding, however, seems shallow in the sense that it limits corruption to people in authority and exonerates people of ordinary work. Since all good work is God’s work, the moment work is influenced by corruption, the work ethic is lost. Christians need to recover that ethic by going back to the biblical teaching and renew their work ethics. Stevens notes that in Central and Eastern Europe, corruption “perpetuates unemployment, and robs the

¹³⁵ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 146.

¹³⁶ Wehmeier, 296.

vulnerable in ...societies of needed social and public services.”¹³⁷ The role of the ministry becomes one of using church leadership to influence congregations who comprise their work ethic with the very corrupt. Instead, wide areas can be influenced when the biblical teaching about work flows through people’s faith and into the community. Earlier the issue of poverty has been talked about. One of the driving forces that keep poverty alive is corruption. The two are cousins in a sense, but corruption is older and more powerful because it will try to penetrate even the innocent minds and young brains. This idea is supported by the saying that, “Corruption is perhaps the most serious single problem facing Africa. It permeates African society like a malignant cancer that has invaded all the vital organs of the body, with grave economic, social and political consequences.”¹³⁸ Indeed it has really attacked vital nerves of the society. Leaders and the rest of the population, Christians and non-Christians, the youths and the elders, men and women, the educated and the non-educated, all colours of the world, all alike have been affected and as a result the benefits of their works are soiled with corruption. Due to the spirit of corruption, useful and beneficial work cannot be done because people may spend most of their time waiting to grab a handout. There are few people doing good and profitable work, and very many waiting to exploit the generosity of others. Real producers are too few and real consumers are too many. The time has come for Christians to redeem their work by ridding themselves of corruption.

Christians must be concerned about the African economic crisis, with all the attendant poverty, squalor and unemployment. We need to participate in the search for effective solutions to the crisis...Christians should also work hard and honestly

¹³⁷ Stevens, *Doing God’s Business*, 98.

¹³⁸ Kinoti and Kimuyu, 22.

*...Christians in management and other leadership positions must set an example in effectiveness, transparency and integrity.*¹³⁹

Already many scholars have dealt with the poor work ethic and provided ways to overcome it, but the solutions appear to focus on those with paid jobs. We must delve deeper in order to find solutions to overcome corruption that may even exist among people of ordinary work or even in their own homes. There are some of the serious issues that should not be disregarded as affecting our work ethic.

3.4.2 Drug use and Abuse

On the scene of work, it must be noted that many influencing behaviours have been involved in abusing the essence and profitability of work. Drug use and abuse is one of those strong elements that have weakened people's participations and productivity. Drugs may include cocaine, tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, mairungi (a local herb known of its potency of keeping people awake for longer hours), and many other drugs that have infiltrated Uganda from the outside world. Drugs have been mostly used by people with a belief that they can destroy loneliness created by joblessness, give them extra strength to work or give them courage to attempt the impossible. According to Clark and Rakestraw;

*Young black men in the United States with low esteem, few positive role models, and little hope for making it out of the ghettos join a gang for a sense of belonging, identity, power, and protection. ... Using drugs is a way to dull the pain, and the young men accept selling drugs as the only road to success in a community...*¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹ Kinoti and Kimuyu, 60.

¹⁴⁰ David K. Clark and Robert V. Rakestraw, *Readings in Christian Ethics, Vol.2; Issues and Application* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 281.

This observation is not far from being true with drug addicts or abusers here in Uganda. Many young Christian youth are victims of strong drug addictions. The pain felt by the parents penetrates the church ministry where they belong. Their pain is the church's pain. The remedy is to renew these peoples' faith and instil in them hope. Teaching Christian morals should traverse the walls of the church to the inside of families where parents should take a pragmatic move. Christian morals are an everyday practice.

3.4.3 Family Breakdown

Work matters can as well be affected by family breakdown. There are various and complicated issues combined to affect families, which in turn affect work behaviours. A family living in serious disputes cannot be productive. It is a well-known fact that the breakdown of the family results in a poor work ethic. The spirit of working together for family development is lost when the family unit is lost, by one parent deserting family responsibilities and the family itself. In Genesis 1:26, the responsibility of stewardship was handed over to both man and woman, but when problems arose, the garden "shalom" ceased and the result was painful work.

3.4.4 The Biblical Male-Female Bonding as the Core of Working Together

Often serious disagreements or misbehaviour may negatively affect relationships, which will in turn destroy the working systems of the family. Sometimes men tend to become over-domineering, causing other members to lose interest in work that benefits the family or the community. Family members may also resent the behaviour of another family member and, as a consequence, avoid their responsibilities. For example, a father who spends a lot of time and money on alcohol or

engaged in sexual immorality, results in a social crisis that disorganises family life. “Crisis in families occurs in a society undergoing rapid economic and social changes.”¹⁴¹ As long as someone misuses the income that should have maintained the family, there will always be crisis. They cannot generate more as long as there is someone who spends without working. That person’s contribution in productive work is minimal or non-existent, but still wants to benefit from the labours of others. Trust, love, and respect are destroyed because the central command system is ineffective since there is laxity, and production is reduced. People begin to do what they want and as a result work is abused. A man or his wife, are central in the history of work. They are the focal persons in a home. Once they lose the work ethic, the rest come to a standstill. They are like a dead person. A similar situation happened in Israel after the death of Samson. “In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did what was right in his own eye” (Judg.21:25). Such behaviour is unacceptable, because the Bible is very clear that the Israelites suffered from that attitude of doing wrong in God’s sight, and did what was right in their sight.

Family leadership is essential in keeping a healthy work discipline. People cannot be allowed to do what they want, because all people are mandated to do according to God’s will. “Your will be done on earth...” (Matt.6:10) is a very strong statement that Jesus taught his disciples as part of prayer. It shows how important it is to obey God’s will as much as hallowing his name. Men and women are both responsible for keeping the work ethic alive in their homes. Children grow up observing the family values, and as a result they either grow respecting work and its values or not. A family that has experienced a relational breakdown has no time to teach or demonstrate to the children what they are supposed to grow knowing as the real ethical issues in human life.

¹⁴¹ The Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, *Transformation; An International Dialogue in Mission and Ethics*, (Oxford: Paternoster Periodicals, 2002), 65.

Another factor that can destroy work values from broken families are fights. A fight may not only cause a permanent physical disability, but can also cause permanent psychological wounds. Men are the ones who more often than not engage their wives in serious fights. In the aftermath of a physical fight, fatal scars become the source of suffering, resentment, degradation, and even feelings of inferiority around the other. A physically disabled body and a psychologically sick mind cannot work efficiently or encourage someone to engage in productive work. Here in Africa women are valued for their output in terms of the work they do. When they become victims of family violence, their productivity becomes minimal or non-existent, yet they are the production engine behind the family's well-being. As a result, the family breaks down and all work done before is destroyed. There is no longer a future for the family members, especially the children.

3.4.5 Crime

Crime is another serious issue that covers a wide range of wrong doings that contribute to and affect the working life of the family and society. These may range from stealing, murder, prostitution, human trafficking, human sacrifice, robbery, drugs, and many others. In Uganda, the most common crimes are stealing public funds, human sacrifice, prostitution, and drug abuse. These deliberately affect the way people work, and the result is poverty, exploitation and corruption. There is depression, and people who are depressed “lack energy and initiative...incapable of imagining anything at all which can break through...they just lack energy and cannot get on with life.”¹⁴² Depression itself is disastrous, because in some societies or families, the behaviours can be passed on to the next generation. Advocacy through teaching becomes an important role of the Church in such situations in

¹⁴² Anne Bayley, *One New Humanity*. (London: SPCK, 1996), 92.

order to rid the next generation of abject poverty and exploitation. “The church has an obligation”, Nyerere argues, “to fight for a society which will enable every man and woman to live with dignity and well-being, and work for the eradication of exploitation and for the sharing of wealth.”¹⁴³ Some people are seriously exploited and denied the benefits from the labours of their toil creating dissatisfaction and frustration. Because some people do not get what they toil for, they involve themselves in crime as a way to avenge for their denied rights, which affects the active work players and their immediate families. The collective responsibility of Christians and clergy is to take the initiative to intervene. When some members of a family engage in any of the criminal activities, there is likelihood that the victims will adopt similar behaviours. Some end up in prisons and other remain on the run from the law. Their families and family responsibilities are abandoned.

Women, whose husbands are victims of crime, sometimes desert their families too, because of shame. Others run away from the danger of revenge from the affected persons. The whole issue distorts the intended well-being of the family. Directly or indirectly, work is affected. Crime sometimes labels or marks the person’s work as: “the thief,” “the prostitute,” “the alcoholic,” etc. Crime becomes a source of income and the family’s well-being as well and the original meaning of work is destroyed. Steve Abbarow and Gloriosa Rajendran’s article, “*Setting Boundaries for Families in Distress*,” define the “loss of face,” as the “loss of self-respect in one’s sight or in the sight of the community.”¹⁴⁴ If they are or have been working in a public enterprise, the criminal will avoid shame and become deserters and go to places where they cannot easily be identified or where crime is not hunted down. This kind of life cannot encourage a good work ethic.

¹⁴³ John Parratt *A Reader in African Christian Theology* (London: SPCK, 1997), 109.

¹⁴⁴ Oxford Centre for Mission Studies, 62.

3.4.6 Illness

In developing countries, sickness plays a very big negative impact in human life. There are many associated factors to illness for family life including work, income, socialization, and even the religious life. Christians are even more affected by illness because the assumption that working in income generating projects undermines their spirituality, results in a lack of vigour. When sickness strikes, the family income is dramatically reduced. Most families sell almost all the food produced and live on the little the market rejects or cannot take because of poor quality; otherwise they would have sold all their harvest. The little money generated still remains in the domain of subsistence because it will remain at the market where the seller engages in buying a few domestic needs and takes the rest to clinics for treatment. The healthy spend a lot of time looking after the sick, so little or no work is done. It becomes a vicious cycle. Work is non-existent much as there is no strength to do it. Sick people are weak to perform. Developing countries experience many cases of untreated sicknesses that weaken people's strength denying them active engagement in work. Life remains a challenge as long as there is no stable income to meet family demands. Even with little food to keep the families, people are poorly fed and weak to work meaningfully.

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL BASIS OF WORK

4.1 Biblical and Theological Perspectives of Work

It is to be noted with great concern that “All Christian theology is based, to one degree or another, on the Bible as the Word of God, and the central place of the Scriptures in theology is readily acknowledged by most African theologians.”¹⁴⁵ The study of the biblical relationship between work and faith makes the real understanding of work in human life as God’s Word reflected in action. Parratt in trying to answer the question as to why Christians do not explore many other areas of life says:

*It is to be regretted therefore that biblical studies remain somewhat neglected field in Africa today. An urgent task facing seminaries and universities is that of producing competent biblical scholars...This is essential if African theology itself is to develop on a more than superficial level.*¹⁴⁶

Parratt’s observation may be very true with African people as well as theologians, because teachers of the Bible and theology have not penetrated the church by explaining the truth to the believers. This

¹⁴⁵ Parratt, 144.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid.

shortcoming keeps many of the Christians ordinary believers, which is most likely an inherited problem addressed earlier as a missionary matter. Parratt continues to say: “One hindrance to the development of biblical studies has been the historical fact that those missions which planted Christianity in Africa often had a somewhat fundamentalist view of the Bible, and that this attitude has largely persisted in the majority of African Christians.”¹⁴⁷

It was emphasized by Kinoti and Kimuyu earlier how missionaries had concentrated on the spiritual at the expense of the physical, so Kinoti and Kimuyu’s emphasis shows how today the biblical and theological approaches to work are very important. The endeavour to explore the biblical and theological basis will provide the understanding of human work life.

To Christians, the Bible is the only book that can shape and transform human character. The Bible constantly keeps telling and reminding us of our responsibilities to God and his creation, and one way to fulfil this duty is to work as God worked. To satisfy the biblical and theological basis regarding the importance of work, people need to discuss questions like,

1. Why should people work and work well all the time?
2. Why did God intend human beings to work?
3. What went wrong?
4. How was work supposed to be rewarded?

Such questions may keep coming in the minds of many people while they are trying to focus on the need for morally and ethically well done work. All these questions are important when reflecting on the essence of work. The following section will attempt to answer these questions, both biblically and theologically as it relates to the importance of work.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

4.1.2 Why Should People Work and Work Well all the Time?

People should work because the Creator was a worker and when he created man, he commissioned him to work saying: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it” (Gen.1:28). To be “fruitful” and to “subdue” are both elements that involve working or engaging in acts that demand physical involvement. The subduing element was established within an environment conducive for work. Work is relational. “God’s personal attitudes to men...require works as well as words for their revelation.” as was expressed by D. Guthrie in the *New Bible Commentary* 3rd ed. and supported by Parrat saying; “Man is a representative of God in the world, and stands and acts in God’s stead.”¹⁴⁸ Implying that work belongs to God and humankind has been honoured to do God’s work. However caution must be taken to work well, because whatever God created was good.

Human beings must be aware of this fact and guard against poor workmanship. Work that is done well attracts such appreciation that reveals God’s approval, like that one presented by Abel. When God was in the act of creation, he appreciated his own work and approved each day’s work. “And God saw that it was good” (Gen.1:11, 12, 19, 21, 25, and 31). The good refers to God’s work, and he did not see it only for a day but for all the six days of his creation. The good in the created work of God demonstrates the need for working well and all the time, and answers the question: Why should people work, and work well all the time? The implication is that before one retires or takes a rest, one must first be satisfied and in position to appreciate the work done. If this work is corrupted, even if the worker is happy, God will not appreciate and reward it. The model of God’s work is the standard for human work, and human work must follow that model set at creation. Biblical teaching about work is important to set up a transformational ministry model.

¹⁴⁸ Parratt, 87.

God is never pleased with shoddy work, because, as a master worker, he expects perfect work from his people. “Half-hearted efforts and sloppy work do not honour God.”¹⁴⁹ Work done very well is a continuous assignment expected of human beings. Christians must learn how to focus on the biblical work perspective and be helped to revise the way they answer the “why” and “how” they work.

4.1.3 Why Did God Intend Human Beings to Work?

First of all it must be re-echoed that in the African way of life work is not a standalone matter. Work is lived and constitutes a big percentage of everyday life. To this effect “It has often rightly been said that the African has a sense of the wholeness of life.”¹⁵⁰ If other areas of life are enjoyed, there is no way how ordinary work can be different since all are parcelled together to constitute human life.

It is very clear then that work was to bring joy between God and human beings, and between human beings themselves. The suffering from work was not part of the creation order but a result of disobedience and failure to acknowledge the supremacy of the Creator. Suffering was caused by hiding from God’s presence, and refusing to admit responsibility of the failure. Up to today, it has remained the source of human trouble. When people fail to admit their faults, they also fail to become successful; with themselves, friends, and God. Even sometimes they hide behind “curtains” thinking that their failures cannot be discovered. Because of moral decay, many people do not honour their work. Most of the corruption taking place in private and public work is a result of hiding and the unwillingness to take responsibility when things go wrong at our work places. Stevens suggested some steps that can be taken to experience joy instead of suffering, and he called these “Nine-Life- Giving Resources for Workplace Spirituality” in his book, *Taking*

¹⁴⁹ Bakke, 248.

¹⁵⁰ Parratt, 85.

Your Soul to Work. In one of his chapters entitled, “Self-Control: Resolving the Work-Life Dilemma,” He says, “...the Holy Spirit nourishes and governs the inner person- giving us control over our actions and appetites. We find satisfaction not from excesses or the drive to have it all. Self-control helps us find satisfaction in God, accepting whatever He gives us.”¹⁵¹

People, who do not know the why, and the how human beings should work, end up corrupting the whole purpose simply because they want to take control of what does not belong to them. When they cannot do it the right way, they apply the “easy” way to earn a living, but in fact it ends up “sapping” their souls. The essence of work is abused and suffering follows. Some people leave their places of work and hide in businesses that are not beneficial to their institutions. They cannot admit their faults, but later they face shame and curses upon themselves. A case in point is Gehazi, Elisha’s servant, who left his place of work and run after free benefits. People have their places of work where they are expected to be, but when greed for plenty comes it becomes an opening to seek after their own. Gehazi brought shame upon himself and a curse that brought him suffering for the rest of his life (2Kings 5:20-27). Surely, suffering is not an original part of work; it only comes in as a result of human failure. Work was there at the beginning, but when human beings sinned, the comfort of eating freely and in simplicity was withdrawn. As part of punishment, toil was attached to work before human beings could enjoy the fruits of their hands. “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife...cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life...” (Gen.3:17-19). Sometimes I tend to think that human failure was predetermined by God. This thinking is based on Genesis 2:9, which says, “And out of the ground the Lord God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the

¹⁵¹R. Paul Stevens and Alvin Ung, *Taking Your Soul to Work: Overcoming the Nine Deadly Sins of the Workplace* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing House, 2009), 57.

sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of *good and evil*" (Gen.2:17).

The above seem to suggest that the tree of good and evil that God placed in the garden already had characteristics of suffering, if evil is the source of human suffering. It may then suggest that suffering was created within the tree and its fruits but could have remained under lock if Adam and Eve never touched the tree and ate its fruit. If one used an analogy of an electric current within a wiring system, at least it can shed light on what is explained in the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Unless it is switched on, it remains dormant; once the switch is turned on, the power becomes active. Human disobedience became the sole reason when suffering was unleashed, which later corrupted the well-intended work. In fact today all human work is surrounded with suffering, which was orchestrated by humans themselves. If we want to overcome suffering, "There are four major shared values: ...to act with integrity, to be fair, to have fun, and to be socially responsible."¹⁵² Work may bring suffering, and we hold God responsible but in truth, suffering in work is totally our fault due to our own lack of integrity, fairness, and social responsibility. Adam and Eve were surrounded by lack of social responsibility, integrity, and rationale.

Christians are still suffering due to the failure to admit when they are at fault in their work and at work places. People do not want to be responsible workers because to them work means suffering. Not many of them would want to associate with suffering. As a result laziness, financial misappropriation, illicit business, crime, and many other vices that appear to be "easy money," have become acceptable even among Christians.

What Went Wrong?

¹⁵² Bakke, 38.

Clearly human beings failed, but the answer may be as simple as saying that they elevated their status and made decisions without God's approval. The writer of the *Common Prayer Book* says, "We have offended against thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done; and we have done those things which we ought not to have done."¹⁵³ When people fail to do what they are supposed to do, and they do what they are not supposed to, problems arise. Real and meaningful work becomes distorted and neglected, and corruption takes the upper hand. Things go wrong, and to put them right people must come back to where they started to go wrong by admitting their faults. A Christian Work Ethics Renewal should be the focus to help Christians to revisit their working behaviour and put right what went wrong based on biblical teaching. What people see surrounding their work and workplaces today is because they are doing the wrong things in the right places and time.

4.1.4 How Was Work Supposed to be Rewarded?

The issue of benefits arises out of questions of business in relation to the work people do; however, the term *benefit* does not apply to all benefits other than in monetary terms or the equivalent. Some philosophers like Aristotle and theologians like Martin Luther and Calvin, all had something to say about making money in business. According to Aristotle as quoted by Stevens, "anybody who does business for pay is by nature not truly free person."¹⁵⁴ This philosophy was discouraging Christians from engaging in business. Aristotle was of the opinion that trade (business) was suspected of being down right perverted. All human work however, in one way or the other attracts benefits either in kind or monetary form. It is supposed to give satisfying

¹⁵³ *The Book of Common Prayer (1662)*, (Great Britain: Oxford University Press, 1969), 39.

¹⁵⁴ Stevens, *Doing God's Business*, 42.

benefits for maintaining domestic and institutional welfare. It also brings joy to the earner. God told Adam that “In toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life” (Gen.3:17b). Eating is already a benefit of toiling when working; a benefit of what people do. People should not look at work as having only financial benefits, because the other benefits attached to work are many. These benefits include shelter, clothing, security, etc., all of which result from working. Apart from acquiring benefits through corrupt means, there is no way people can have the above-mentioned provisions unless they work and work very well.

Where there is no paid work available, one can as well do charity work, which becomes a benefit for others and also for oneself. Cornelius is a good example of the benefits of charity work (Acts 9:4). Work has benefits of different types and there are rewards or benefits for those people who deserve them in the right way. People should not fail to work because of possibly not benefiting financially from that work. God hates lazy people and does not reward them. John Calvin advised on how to use the present life rightly. “Earth is not our final home. We should use the good things here...It is right to use God’s gifts when they are used for the right purpose, that is, for our good.”¹⁵⁵ The work people do will find its destination before God who instituted it. Work has an eschatological perspective because it will be rewarded; therefore people need to use their time here on earth to do their work very well as a gift from God for the benefits that last forever. These benefits include joy and peace, the “shalom” that the world cannot find by itself, but only with and in God.

The Old Testament presents God as an overall worker, who from the beginning is described working up to the end as the book of Revelation portrays him creating the new heavens and the new earth. God is represented in Genesis 1:1-24 as a divine worker from and through whom the universe was created. It is his divine work that has set the

¹⁵⁵ Calvin, 111.

whole of life in motion ever since the creation. Because God set work as part of life, human beings and work are inseparable. They are both God's work of creation. Human beings praise God for his mighty works because they are "divine," just as it is advocated for in Psalms 150:2 which say "Praise him for his mighty deeds."

God created work for different purposes to be done in different ways by different characters. There is subsistence work, redemptive work, skilled/professional work, occupational work, charity work, scientific work, social work, and spiritual work. All these types of work were instituted by God for the benefits of human beings here on earth, and they must be done according to their purpose.

4.1.5 Subsistence Work

Work should be understood as cutting across all departments of human life, and Jesus used a number of parables to teach about work in the Kingdom of God. He used parables like the shrewd manager (Lk.16:1ff), the gardener and the fig tree (Lk.13:6-9), and the lost sheep (Lk.15:3-7). All of these parables depicted different types of work and their significance in the Kingdom gospel. They contributed to the concept of subsistence and professional work. "Humans experience the fullness of life that God intended because we are being what God created us to be. In particular for our purposes...People are able to fulfil their callings of glorifying God by working and supporting themselves and their families with the fruit of that work."¹⁵⁶

Supporting themselves and their families on a daily basis can be referred to as subsistence to a large extent. God instituted "subsistence work" that was to provide just enough to sustain human life. It is through work that sustainability on daily basis was mandated to

¹⁵⁶ Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert, *When Helping hurts: How to Alleviate Poverty without Hurting the Poor...and Yourself* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2009), 57.

humankind. It required physical involvement. Genesis refers to this kind of work saying, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to till it and keep it...You may freely eat of every tree of the garden...” (Gen.2:15) Even after the fall, the concept of subsistence did not disappear. “...in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life...In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread...” (Gen.3:17, 19). There are two ideas introduced here; that eating goes with working and subsistence work is for the rest of human life; “... you shall eat bread till you return to the ground” (Gen.3:19). If God had not wanted human beings to work, he would have set everything ready without any need of instructing them to “tend and watch” (Gen.2:15). Here work becomes a bridge of relationship. By working human beings recognise the goodness of God and it brings joy and shalom. When people have eaten and filled their stomachs, it becomes easy for them to thank God for that provision. The hungry see themselves as unfortunate and do not find it easy to believe that they have a God who cares for them. Of course, since he is a God who has created human beings in his image and likeness, human beings have the capacity to emulate the Father and thank him even when they are not happy in life. The theology of the Garden of Eden work project is the very beginning of the joy at work between people and God, and between people themselves. Even if it was later interfered with by sin, it still remained a unifying factor between God and human beings. In Acts of the Apostles, St. Paul showed the joys of his subsistence work of which he was proud, saying: “You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, ‘it is more blessed to give than to receive’” (Acts.20:34-35). He continued to exhort Christians of Thessalonica to be committed to work saying: “For even when we were with you, we gave this command: If anyone will not work, let him not eat...some of you

are living in idleness...not doing any work...we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work in quietness and earn their own living” (2Thess.3:10b-13).

There are two lessons to learn from Paul. One is that Christians must live by their work and must be examples to others to challenge them to do meaningful work and not to be dependants. The second lesson from Paul is that people who do not take responsibility for working should not enjoy food. People should eat what comes out of their works. According to St. Paul’s teaching, Christians should eat food from the work of their hands just as God said to Adam; “By the sweat of your brow will you eat...” (Gen.3:19). The emphasis here is that subsistence work is instituted for the benefits of human survival. Although after the fall work presented many challenges, it still remained the source of happiness because it continued to provide food and remained the means of worshipping through thanksgiving and praises to God. Christians who work faithfully and find the joy of their work are usually seen coming before God’s altar to say “Thank you God” for the success realised. What is mentioned above can be witnessed in the way the people of Israel thanked and worshipped God with the fruit of their work. “...And behold, now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground, which thou, O Lord, hast given me.” (Deut.26:10)

If one does not work, what does one present to God as a thanksgiving? Failure to work denies us fellowship with God, his blessings and later happiness. As Jesus had told Satan that man cannot live by food alone, the word of God is what human beings live by if only they can do work that can bring them happiness and blessings. The opposite is true for those who do not work and have nothing to bring before their God, thus reducing their chances of getting blessings.

4.1.6 Redemptive Work

God's redemptive work is another dimension that helps Christians to know that they are supposed to be part of this redemption. Since they were redeemed, they should redeem others. God's redemption brought about certain concepts among the Israelites by beginning to see him from a human kingly position, where a king was supposed to redeem his subjects from their enemies. There are both physical and spiritual enemies that this concept brings about. Among the Israelites, God was portrayed as an overall controller, ruler, or king whose presence brought "shalom" in his assigned work. "We can be recipients of God's peace while we work. We can also be channels of God's peace in the workplace."¹⁵⁷ God was a working king. This shalom allowed people to interact, engage in business, worship and relate to one another. The kingship concept among the Israelites was a revelation of God as a supreme King above the kings of other nations as David says (Ps.72:11). The implication here is that the ruler / king is a channel of service to God, and service is not just lip service of hymns and praises but service of works.

Kingship was portrayed through Israel's redemptive work in history. God redeemed the Israelites against Pharaoh and other Canaanite kings. This liberation was a kind of work attributed to great kings of the earth, but to Israel their God was above all gods and kings. Within the redemptive work, God was a provider, protector, and sustainer besides other providential attributes. Biblically, the concept of God as a King is not separated from God as a worker – the God who comes down to share the suffering of his people to liberate them physically and spiritually. Spiritually, he came as a human being; the incarnate son Jesus Christ, to redeem humankind from the bondage of sin. Physically, he came to overcome the powers of oppression, corruption, and political

¹⁵⁷ Stevens and Ung, 78.

exploitation, similar to what surrounded the Israelites in Egypt when God decided to act; “I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and have heard their cry because of their task-masters... I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians...” (Ex.3:7-8). God’s people were reminded by the Egyptian redemption that they were once all slaves in Egypt therefore, “as part of their love for God, each Israelite under the blessing was to show special love for less fortunate kinfolk. The legal obligation involved is called *redemption*.”¹⁵⁸ Christians have a responsibility in redeeming others from the powers of oppression, segregation, racism, tribalism, and even poverty, i.e. the less fortunate. When people involve themselves and provide for the needs of those affected, they are doing redemptive work.

God works directly and through human beings to redeem those who are suffering. His direct participation is divine. What cannot be done by human beings is experienced in his divine redemptive work. In the Old Testament, God worked together with Noah to save a few righteous people. He involved his divine work as well as human work. Another example is found in Exodus when he delivered his people from slavery using Moses as the human liberator. Human beings can do redemptive work, especially when they involve themselves in the lives of others who are suffering and have no food, clothing, shelter, and other necessities of life. *The purpose of redemptive work is to provide Christians an understanding of the extent of their participation in work and how they can redeem their work attitudes for the service of God.* There is no way they can redeem others if they are not involved in meaningful work. Jesus commended those who helped others as having done it to him. “Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me!” (Matt.25:40) The redemptive work

¹⁵⁸ Steven Noll, *Understanding the Old Testament; Foundation Study Guide (Rev.)* (Kampala: New Vision Publications, 2009), 51.

perspective from the human standpoint must be that one that brings services to the physically needy.

In the New Testament perspective, Jesus comes from heaven and is expected to be the King of the Jews to bring them into his redemptive work. Because Jesus advocates for the Kingdom of Heaven, all that he does is heavenly ordered. His work of salvation is heavenly ordered. He refers to himself as a servant who came to serve, implying that he is one who serves through works. When Jesus tells his disciples that he has given them an example, he calls for “doing” as he does (Jn.13:15-15) In the Old Testament, the working God instituted a working community. Through Israelites all the nations of the earth were to bless God with their work. In the New Testament, the coming of Jesus Christ as the perfect King/Ruler fulfils the Old Testament promises God had made to his people. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion... Look your King comes to you...” (Zech.9:9). God came to relate with his people in a more visible form which John the Baptist and Jesus himself declared as the ‘kingdom of God.’ The purpose of the coming Kingdom of God/Heaven was to bring and introduce the work of salvation here on earth. If the Kingdom of God has come to redeem the kingdoms of the world, then work and faith in God are redeemed. Paul justifiably says, “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God” (Col.1:15a), meaning that Jesus portrays God’s Kingdom of Heaven. In this respect, the king and the kingdom are all consummated in Jesus Christ. The Old Testament work mandate that was corrupted by sin was to find its redemption in the coming of Jesus and has two major dimensions: The spiritual and the physical. Jesus’ work reinstated the lost spiritual relationship between man and God, and from the physical dimension his work restored relationships between man and the rest of creation. In Jesus Christ, God lowered himself to the lowest type of work in an endeavour to save his people (Matt.20:28b). It is therefore evident that work is also intended for redemptive purposes in God’s salvation plan.

So when people work, they are working on behalf of their King to fulfil the purpose of his redemption. The focus continues to higher levels of eschatological paradigms.

Work is not a standalone virtue. It goes with “rest” and “leisure.” There is to be rest from the toil of one’s labour, but with joy of the time spent working. When God liberated the Israelites from Egyptian captivity, he set them up with a different “rule” in order to be an example to other nations. He said, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour, and do all your work...” (Ex.20:8-10). Work in human life covers 85.7 percent of the total days of the week¹⁵⁹ implying that God has value for work and human life is work all through. From this view point, work is heavenly, with a heavenly pattern handed over from God, the Heavenly King.¹⁶⁰ Israelites were supposed to respond to the rule set by the supreme King, established within the Sinai covenant; a relational covenant. Work without rest defies God’s rule and violates natural human rights.

The Old Testament Scriptures show us a God who rules and serves and rests. He even had time for leisure as depicted in his appearance to Adam in the Garden of Eden. “And they heard the sound of God walking in the garden in the cool of the day.” (Gen.3:8) God’s walking in the garden was leisurely, and in away rest is an engagement in relating with friends. In order for work to be of any meaning or value, people need to learn from their Creator. Without a positive attitude towards work, rest and leisure may become a life style, and the outcome seriously affects the Christian life.

¹⁵⁹ Taking in account that six days were commanded by God to be working days, and that each day we work for 8 hours, the total time for work would amount to 85.7 percent of the whole week, and just 14.3 percent would account for the time of rest; the day of worship just as God indicates in Exodus 20:10 that the Sabbath day is dedicated to the Lord God.

¹⁶⁰ With reference to Genesis 2:15, the institution of Eden was by God, and he put in place the steward to manage and maintain it according to the divine design.

4.1.7 Skilled/Professional Work

Equally important are the workmanship skills that God gave human beings that make them professionals. Human beings live in an environment that involves discoveries, creativity or innovations influenced by science and technology. Before the modern world began to engage in work that utilizes tools and equipment, the ancient world already was active in making and shaping tools for use in their work. These tools made human beings technicians and engineers. Though, with rudimentary knowledge, people had implements made for their daily work. The making and shaping of tools shows how human beings had concern for improving their work output. Again it shows how people regarded work as an essential part of life. Human beings became innovative, industrious, and creative by use of tools. These tools become important to making life worth living and meaningful. Most of the manual and ordinary work depend on the use of tools and can be called “craftsmanship work.” Biblically speaking, God gives the wisdom of becoming a craftsperson. He gave Bezalel and Oholiab the art and wisdom of craftsmanship. “See, I have called by name Bezalel... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship” (Ex.31:1-3). All people in one way or the other, have been blessed with skills purposely to help them do work but there are many who neglect these gifts, denying themselves participation and service to God by not utilizing any of them in their work.

In the New Testament, Jesus is portrayed as one who acquired the skills of woodwork and the use of clay from his parents. Most likely he had participated in tending vines and sheep, for he was well versed with pictures of vinedressers and shepherds. From his home, Jesus portrays a number of engagements in work. Both the Old and New Testaments have an eschatological focus that gives the view that God is ever working until the New Heavens and the New Earth are created. Jesus

also emphasized the same saying, “My Father is working still, and I am working” (Jn.5:17). Jesus’ example is the basis for the Christians to offer their work to their King without any reservation.

The Christians concept of the King/Ruler, Kingdom and the subjects, greatly contributes to the biblical and theological understanding of knowing that work belongs to God and that it is divinely ordered with specific ethic and values. When people work, it is for God’s glory.

The New Testament perspective is very much grounded in the work of Jesus Christ. Before he performed one of his divine works of salvation, he led a life of work starting right from his parents’ home. Something that people may learn from him is that their homes are the starting point of teaching their children how to work and how to be part of the working society. Also noteworthy is the fact that Jesus did not segregate work. He did not dichotomise work according to gender. Much as he worked with the father in his carpentry, he did the same with the mother in the kitchen and pottery house. The Bible makes it clear that he became the example of young children, which is where concern for the young men and women come in. One of the stanzas of a hymn sang during Christmas season known as “*Once in Royal David’s City*” says, “And through all his wondrous childhood He would honour and obey, love and watch the lowly mother, in whose gentle arms he laid. Christian children all must be mild, obedient, (and) good as He.”¹⁶¹ To emulate Jesus is an important stepping stone in our everyday work.

The way Jesus behaved and responded towards the work his parents did is an example of how people should work and even persuade their children to follow Jesus’ example. When Jesus started his ministry, he used many work images in his parables, which were to appeal to the lazy workers, the corrupt workers, the unthankful workers, the un trusted workers, and the unbelieving workers. Some of the parables communicated direct physical messages, while others communicated

¹⁶¹ *Hymns of Faith No. 156 stanza 3.* Nairobi: Uzima Press, 1956.

spiritual messages. It took time, however, for people to understand how to apply what he was teaching. Others never understood at all, which may explain why some people have been reading the Bible, but have never understood the underlying truth about work values.

When Jesus was about to begin his redemptive work, he first went to prepare himself. In his teaching he gave an example of a builder who should first sit down and prepare before beginning to build. Work should not be taken for granted but requires planning and preparation. Later Jesus' teaching centred on many pictures related to work and people's attitudes to work. The parables he used covered a wide range of different images of work; business, farming, animal rearing, leadership, and religious duties. In each of these parables Jesus showed directly or indirectly the good and bad side of a worker. Some of them become indicators of poor work ethics, resulting into poor productivity and neglect of responsibility.

Jesus also uses his teaching to show how work cannot be an individual matter but requires combined efforts in order to produce positive results. "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few..." (Matt.9:37). There is plenty of work to do; unfortunately people engaged in it are very few. There are many reasons to this problem. Some have dichotomised work, and the process has created good work and bad work, ordinary work and professional work, secular and sacred work. Because of these differences, some people have thought that they have nothing to do since they do not fall under any of the available categories or their choices of work. People have not seriously considered the scope of work and how to be involved, which may be another reason Christians are victims of criticism. Reading through the New Testament gives the understanding that when Jesus was teaching he touched every kind of work to show that work was for every human being regardless of professionalism or special skills, because workers were given skills. At least among the types of work Jesus talked about, no one can fail to

identify what to do in service to and for the creator. God created people with inbuilt skills that enable them to do work without even going for training. The Christian's obligation is to read the Bible and interpret it for work life. Blomberg claims that the parable of the labourers in the vineyard is a classic example of considerable economic imagery. He points out that this parable does not teach directly on financial management.¹⁶² I agree with his claim; however, to me this parable is more about the display of different gifts or talents, or even skills of specialization that workers were required to exercise at different hours in the same vineyard. It is a parable that explains how each person has a personal gift and responsibility to perform in the world we live, and contribution to the well-being of all.

Parables are a rich ground for Christian teaching and learning of work discipline. They are like bright beams of light illuminating the minds. A few examples can be used from the New Testament to highlight some work ethics from which Christian can learn.

4.1.8 Responsible Worker

The parable of the lost sheep provides a great example of a responsible worker (Luke 15:3-7). The shepherd was given one hundred sheep under his care. He was responsible for their well-being and return to the master with all one hundred. When he realised that one was missing, he acted like any responsible worker and went in the deep of the bush to recover the lost sheep. When he found it, he rejoiced and carried it home on his shoulders (Luke 15:5). At the end of the parable, the owner rejoiced for the recovery of the animal, but inside he was also rejoicing for having made a successful effort to recover what was lost. There are many people in the course of their work who do not mind the losses they cause to business. They do not even make efforts to recover

¹⁶² Craig L. Blomberg, *Neither Poverty nor Riches*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 124.

those losses. The way they work portrays them as more of hired workers than people who are called to serve God with their work. Jesus gave an example of a hired worker. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hireling and not a shepherd...sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees. He flees because he is a hireling and cares nothing for the sheep" (Jn.10:11-12). Interestingly, this verse provides the understanding that people who are hired shift their focus from the essence of work to the essence of payment and security of their lives. Many people while engaged in public office think only about their salaries, their retirement benefits and sometimes their health insurance. Because of being dissatisfied with their pay, they begin pilfering from public funds and using other public facilities to meet their needs. They do not mind what the public loses or even says because they are simply hired. The civil service today is under fire because so many of the public officials are working on a hired basis. Corruption is at the centre of debates in the parliaments. Unfortunately the suspects are not willing to admit to wrong doing because it would involve shame and possibly long term punishments. Many of them are Christians who confront their religious leaders for criticising their corrupt life. They become irresponsible workers because they are hired and the work is not theirs. They do not mind about the outcome. Such kind of behaviour gives an understanding of the difference between calling and employment.

The moment work becomes an employment, it loses its value. The parable gives a deeper understanding that people like Jesus cared for their work because they were called and assigned work by God. For others who are hired, their minds are concerned about what they will earn, and they disregard what the owner of the work will benefit. Again the above is a reminder that work is a calling rather than employment. Even if people have been hired to do the job for a payment, they are hired because God has given them the skills to do those different jobs

that God has provided. These skills are the ones that enable people to be called for the service they are qualified for. Even non-Christians cannot be exonerated from this kind of behaviour although there is a good number of Christians in most of the civil services who have become victims of poor working attitudes. They have a responsibility to show that this attitude can change for the better.

Another parable is about the evil farmers or the corrupt workers who were put in the farm to look after it, but when the owner sent for his share, his messengers were mistreated and killed (Matt. 21:33-40). There are workers who deny business owners the benefits of their enterprises to the extent that they try to or even kill them. Business is undermined by such unethical and degrading attitudes to work. Looking at subsistence work for example; many people have been influenced by the ideas of how to survive. "... especially... because millions of people in the world today are not enjoying fulfilling and talent-expressing work, but struggling through their chores merely to survive."¹⁶³ People who do not work or who are not productive, deny God the right to reap from his creation.

Besides the parables, Jesus involved himself in redemptive work. Although it was spiritually oriented, it involved physical suffering, the working of the outward redemption where he declared the removal of physical barriers which included racism which today has very much been replaced by tribalism and social barriers like poverty, barrenness, widowhood and orphan hood, slavery or like the Dalits in India. In his statement in Luke 4:18-19, Jesus clearly describes the work he came to do. Jesus was most likely killed for his involvement in the redemptive work from the Jewish point of view. Even if people may not save others from their sins, they can save them from oppressive forces. There are people like Martin Luther King (American), Nelson Mandela (South Africa), Jomo Kanyatta (Kenya), to mention but a few, who sacrificed

¹⁶³ Stevens, *Work Matters*, 38.

their lives for the liberation of their people. There are many others who in the struggle, died and were honoured for their sacrifice.

Christians have a role to play in redeeming people from oppressive systems. Before Jesus had committed himself to the cross, he had cautioned his disciples to be ready to suffer for his sake, which meant that as they did the works of Jesus, they would suffer as their master did. Indeed all of them suffered for the sake of the ministry. According to Jesus and his disciples' suffering, ministry work is not leisure work. Wherever a Christian is, there is ministry. He or she must be ready to suffer, meet opposition, and must sacrifice all without any reservation because Jesus exemplified this and emptied himself for the world. Work and working are not optional issues among followers of Jesus Christ. He had invited them to follow his examples (Mat.11:29).

In the Epistles, the disciples try to fulfil the above request. All of them became instrumental both in bringing spiritual and physical liberation to those who were being oppressed. There are some Christians who offered to do charity work like Dorcas. Converts like Cornelius are well known for the same. It is very evident that those who gave were enthusiastic workers and had something to give, and a heart for giving. "Those who have more should give to those who have less...feeling that the giver owed something to his or her community...because of religious obligation or belief...feeling compassion toward other people."¹⁶⁴ The belief on one side is true and yet on the other one it may not be true. The most governing drive in the giving to the needy or those with less is based on the true Christian faith that governs their values. There are people who have plenty, but cannot think about the poor. The Christian ideal would have been that those who work and get plenty should think about serving others in need as part of their service to God. In other words Christian work involves self-giving for the sake of other believers. These days Christians have been advised to go beyond their

¹⁶⁴ Brooks, *Who Really Cares*, 7.

“house” so that non-believers can see the good that there is in Christianity. Work output then becomes the smiles of many faces and the sleep for the sleepless, the shelter of the homeless. Christian work is God’s work. The Bible has all the evidence to prove that work is mandated to all human beings; it is not optional to do it or leave it when one wants. As long as people live, work will always form a great part of their culture. For those who neglect work, they are the very people who have caused hardships for themselves as well as for the societies they live in.

4.1.9 The Concept of God Influences the Concept of Work.

It is worth saying and noting that work was not made for human beings but for God. The statement “Let us make human beings in our own image to be like us...They will reign over...” (Gen.1:26), can be interpreted to mean that people are solely under the instructions of the creator. Whatever they are and do is mandated by God. The option is to do the assignment; “...and let them have dominion over...” (Gen.1:26b). The work they do is one of the created things that give God glory through human involvement. Just as God appointed the Israelites to become the mirror of the world, after their failure, God brought up a new Israel to continue his work here on earth through Jesus Christ his son, and these are Christians. They are supposed to reflect all the true image of God both in word and deed. The way to live here on earth was heavenly ordered and, as such, work is divinely ordered and directed. Jesus Christ is the head of the Christian family and makes Christianity a heavenly culture. It is quite fulfilling for Christians living a heavenly culture to do a heavenly work, which is all they are supposed to do. They are called to demonstrate heavenly discipline that Jesus taught. However, people have not been created with the same opportunities, gifts, or talents.

When God created human beings, he created a number of options that each one of them can choose from. There is no excuse for having nothing to do or how to do it. God came down himself as a man to show the world how to work. People who do not work deny themselves the opportunity to be fully human. While there is need for renewing work ethics, there are issues that are worth noting if work is to create meaning in people's lives. Since God is pleased with work, people's duty is to make it joyful by bridging the gaps.

CHRISTIAN WORK ETHICS RENEWAL

5.1.1 The Working Tool for Work Ethic Renewal

Christian work ethics renewal can revive the lost work ethic right from the time of the fall. Judging from our own quarters, we know that work has not been a subject of happiness to many. It is sometimes resented, done with no sense of beauty and quality, and with high expectations of monetary benefits. We do not see it our duty to work as a creation mandate. So the best way to improve the Christian work ethic and attitudes, the biblical teaching should be emphasized to initiate the understanding that work is part of our faith in God, based on a teaching tool that can academically follow a methodology in the teaching process among church institutions and influence church leaders.

5.1.2 The Curriculum

In the book; *Theological Education in Contemporary Africa*, the writers assert that, “There is no doubt that theological curriculum is the most important of all factors in the teaching of theology. It determines the content and to some extent, how the content should be taught. It

should therefore be given the attention it deserves by all stake holders in theological education in Africa.”¹⁶⁵

In light of the above assertion, a contemplated curriculum would cover the general trend of work behaviour among the Christians, and the content of biblical teaching that would be involved in order to make the integration of faith and work possible. Whereas teaching is essential, Christians cannot omit the vital hinge in the Christian life, which is “faith.” “Faith is the most essential ingredient in good teaching practice... Faith is the fundamental worth of our vocation, in the values that govern our relations with individual students and classes, and in the likelihood that, at least some of the results we desire will be achieved.”¹⁶⁶ The biblical teaching focuses on Christian faith and rooting of their work in that faith. That is why teaching based on observed work behaviour among the Christians should be related to biblical teaching as crucial at changing negative work attitudes, and poor work ethics. In the implementation of this curriculum, Bruce Barrow’s belief is supportive when he says; “As a Christian I believe there are two principal ways in which the faith teachers or any other Christian ministry can be evaluated: by the fruits in people’s lives and according to the truth of Scriptures.”¹⁶⁷

There are many different ways of teaching and doing theology for specific reasons. The preferable way is to combine some of those different ways to come up with a curriculum that can address the theology of work to include peoples’ beliefs and practices, workplace spirituality, and work matters (as addressed by Paul Stevens). The curriculum can principally include Bible teaching, African Christian

¹⁶⁵ Grant LeMarquand and Joseph D. Galgalo, eds. *Theological Education in Contemporary Africa* (Eldoret, Kenya: Zapf Chancery, 2004), 25.

¹⁶⁶ C. Roland Christensen, David A. Gravin and Ann Sweet, eds. *Education for Judgment: The Artistry of Discussion Leadership* (Boston, MA: Harvard School of Business, 1991), 116.

¹⁶⁷ Bruce Barron, *The Health and Wealth Gospel*, (Downers Grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 1987), 173.

theology, practical and pastoral studies, and philosophy and mission practices. This curriculum can be conducted as a non-credit or credit program, and can cover the most important selected areas that Christians and leaders *must* know and practice as part of their faith.

Christian Work Ethics Renewal can change Christians' negative attitudes towards work and also develop a work ethic that revives the lost work values. The tested belief is that Christians cannot live like ordinary people. St. Paul writes, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold the new has come." (2 Cor. 5:17) The intended goal for God's people is to change their old nature in the world of work not only spiritually but also physically. The works of the spirit have a great influence on the works of the flesh.

Through small groups of Christian workers, a pre-test experimentation should be conducted to evaluate the extent of the meaning of work, work life, and the workplace environment. Christian Work Ethics Renewal should aim at teaching the Biblical work values to influence people's working behaviour and focus on the intended goals for which God intended work, and required people to fulfil. This should help Christians to learn how to emulate Jesus as a worker, who came down to redeem humankind and their work. In the process of carrying out the curriculum for the integration, people's traditional world view about work should change, and they should begin working and behaving as Christians in the business world. At the pre-test stage, formation of groups is important to enable learning and reforms to take place. A post test stage should later be carried out to evaluate the process that was carried out in the pre-test stage, to assess the impact or outcome of the integration through Christian work ethics renewal. The curriculum should be carried out in two phases, where phase one will act as a pre-test experiment aiming at establishing the true experience of integrating work and faith among the Christians. The teaching of biblical work ethic

should be considered the back bone of the integration of work and faith that will determine a ministry transformational model

The following list of books can help in the teaching of this curriculum.

1. *Work Matters* by R. Paul Stevens.
2. *Doing God's business* by R. Paul Steven.
3. *Questions of Business life* by Higginson Richard.
4. *Joy at Work* by Bakke Dennis.
5. *The Work You Love*. Miller, Dan.
6. Life Application Study Bible- New Living Translation.

5.1.3 Post Test Phase

The post test phase is basically a field based experience in which Christians can evaluate their newly learned work values. Discussions on observed work behaviours among Christians should be considered in relation to observations made in the field. The purpose of this phase is to obtain a thorough understanding that the curriculum has achieved the intended goal and make conclusions whether “Christian Work Ethic Renewal based on the integration of faith and work” is a necessary program for the improvement of work ethics and changing the work attitudes of the Christians.

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Integrating Faith with Work

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The Author

Rev. Can. Dr. Elly Kansime is a senior lecturer at Uganda Christian University (Uganda), ordained in 1989, and a scholar of theology of work and Transformational Leadership from Bakke Graduate University, Seattle, USA. He teaches biblical studies but also specializes in practical theology. Before lecturing at the University, he was a full time serving priest in the Diocese of West Ankole in the Church of the Province of Uganda. He is one of the founding members of a registered non Governmental and nonprofit making organization known as “Christian Integrated Ministries Health Initiatives”, to which he is the Programs’ coordinator.