



TREASURE TALKS

The Clergy-Laity Dichotomy

THE NEW TESTAMENT SPEAKS OF ALL CHRISTIANS AS MINISTERS IN THE SENSE THAT ALL SHOULD MINISTER, AN ACTION VERB, RATHER THAN A NOUN.

- The New Testament envisions all Christians as those who minister in their own sphere of ministry and gifting. To put it another way, according to the New Testament, there is no clergy/laity distinction. **Instead, all Christians are kleros (clergy) and all Christians are laos (laity).**
- The word “laity” is derived from the New Testament Greek word laos. It simply means “the people.” Laos includes all Christians—including elders. The word appears three times in 1 Peter 2:9–10, where Peter refers to “the people [laos] of God.” Never in the New Testament does it refer to only a portion of the assembly.
- The term “clergy” finds its roots in the Greek word kleros. It means “a lot or an inheritance.” The word is used in 1 Peter 5:3, where Peter instructs the elders against being “lords over God’s heritage [kleros]” (kjv).
- Significantly, kleros is never used to refer only to church “leaders.” Like laos, it refers to God’s people—for they are His heritage. According to the New Testament, then, ALL Christians are “clergy” (kleros) and ALL are “laity” (laos), the Lord’s people.

YOUR LIVING (WORK AND JOB) IN THE MARKETPLACES OF THE WORLD IS SACRED TO GOD!

- **SECULAR** - attitudes, activities, or things that have no religious or spiritual basis.
- **SACRED** - connected with God or dedicated to a religious purpose.
- Because the Kingdom of God is among us (Luke 17:21), **the sacred has absorbed the secular.** God’s purpose for us brings a heavenly vision to all of our vocations and weekly tasks. **For us as Christians, everything we do is ministry** (Colossians 3:17).
- Here’s how Charles Spurgeon put it in his sermon, “**All For Jesus**” ...

“To a man who lives unto God nothing is secular, everything is sacred. He puts on his workday garment and it is a vestment to him. He sits down to his meal and it is a sacrament. He goes forth to his labor, and therein exercises the office of the priesthood. His breath is incense and his life a sacrifice. He sleeps on the bosom of God, and lives and moves in the divine presence.”

“To draw a hard and fast line and say, “This is sacred and this is secular,” is, to my mind, diametrically opposed to the teaching of Christ and the spirit of the gospel. Paul has said, “I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself” [Romans 14:14]. Peter also saw a sheet let down from heaven in which were all manner of beasts and four-footed creatures, which he was bidden to kill and eat, and when he refused because they were unclean, he was rebuked by a voice from heaven, saying, “What God hath cleansed that call not thou common” [Acts 10:15; 11:9].”

“The Lord hath cleansed your houses, he has cleansed your bed chambers, your tables, your shops, he has made the bells upon your horses holiness to the Lord, he has made the common pots and pans of your kitchens to be as the bowls before the altar, if you know what you are and live according to your high calling. You housemaids, you cooks, you nurses, you ploughmen, you housewives, you traders, you sailors, your labor is holy if you serve the Lord Christ in it, by living unto him as you ought to live. The sacred has absorbed the secular.”

DICHOTOMY - a division or contrast between two things that are or are represented as being opposed or entirely different.

The **clergy-laity dichotomy** is a direct carry-over from pre-Reformation Roman Catholicism and a throwback to the Old Testament priesthood.

It is one of the principal obstacles to the church effectively being God’s agent of the kingdom today because it creates a false idea that only ‘holy men,’ namely, ordained ministers, are really qualified and responsible for leadership and significant ministry.

Howard Snyder

The sacred-secular antithesis has no foundation in the New Testament. Without doubt, a more perfect understanding of Christian truth will deliver us from it...We must offer all our acts to God and believe that He accepts them...All he does is good and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For such a man, living itself will be a priestly ministrations.

A. W. Tozer

You won't be able to say, 'Here it is!' or 'It's over there!' For the Kingdom of God is already among you."

Luke 17:21 (New Living Translation)

And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him (Jesus).

Colossians 3:17 (New International)



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• GOD'S DREAM FOR YOU IN THE MARKETPLACES OF THE WORLD

- God has called and positioned those that follow him in all areas of culture and society: business, government, medicine, public and private education, entertainment and the arts, transportation, agriculture, social services, etc.
- God has called each of us to be busy—aggressively expanding God's Kingdom into the marketplace (engage in business until I come back - Luke 13:10), which is the heart of our cities. The marketplace is where the action of the Kingdom is!
- Just as the New Testament believers before us, we are going to turn the world upside down (Acts 17:6). **The win for this teaching is to inspire and propel you into this move of God — to find your place in marketplace ministry.**
- If I boldly declare to you that Jesus reigns (Matthew 28:18) and He wants to rule through your life (Romans 5:17), then you should sense and feel the divine calling and empowerment of the Holy Spirit. Jesus is with us in this world (Matthew 28:20). We should step forward into the marketplaces of the world knowing that God has called us and is pleased with us.
- God is good and gives us wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:30) and prosperity in all we do (Psalm 35:27). I decree to you (Matthew 21:22) that the promises and words of God (2 Corinthians 1:20) are true for you. May you discover discover a God who is at work in you (Philippians 2:13) and on your behalf. **The time is now for you to be released into the Kingdom. It is time to discover who you are.**
- The very concept of taking a city must be a marketplace function. We go into the world (Matthew 28:19). Marketplace ministers have their reach outside the church, beyond the four walls of the building. This is how the Kingdom of God expands. Marketplace ministers bear fruit in the world and return with that fruit to the local church.
- It is estimated that only two percent of the body of Christ is called to full-time ministry in the local church. **That means that ninety-eight percent of the body of Christ is in full-time ministry in the marketplaces of the world!**
- God is calling you to be the Abrahams and Isaacs (businessmen), Joshuas and Calebs (military personnel), Josephs and Davids (government officials), and Nathans and Daniels (Prophets in government) of this present age. The Apostle Paul asked the question, "How will they go unless they are sent?" (Rom. 10:15). So go, expand the Kingdom of God into your "area of influence" in the world.
- *We do not boast beyond limit in the labors of others. But our hope is that as your faith increases, our area of influence among you may be greatly enlarged, so that we may preach the gospel in lands beyond you, without boasting of work already done in another's area of influence. (2 Corinthians 10:15-16 ESV)*

Imagine a small business owner who perceived of him/herself as a minister called of God to care for and lead his/her employees. Imagine gifts of the Spirit operating in the marketplace to reach the lost one minute and to make financial decisions the next.

Imagine the wall between "secular" and "spiritual" crumbling. Think about being employed by God in a workplace vocation that causes you to seek Him the same way that a pastor seeks God in preparing the message for Sunday.

Harold R. Eberle

Also, seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper.

Jeremiah 29:7 (New International)

For the LORD grants wisdom! From his mouth come knowledge and understanding.

Proverbs 2:6 (New Living Translation)

Let those who favor my righteous cause and have pleasure in my uprightness shout for joy and be glad and say continually, Let the Lord be magnified, Who takes pleasure in the prosperity of His servant.

Psalms 35:27 (Amplified Bible)

For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ. And so through him the "Amen" is spoken by us to the glory of God.

2 Corinthians 1:20 (New International)