



# GG2W Getting God to work

## Getting God to Work

This was the title for a one-day conference attended by over five hundred Christians from a range of professions held on Saturday 20 March 2004 in the MacRobert Theatre of Stirling University. The conference was organised by CARE for Scotland and the Evangelical Alliance Scotland, and was aided by financial support from the Billy Graham organisation. The aim was to build on a previous visit from Mark Greene a year earlier and encourage people to come together to hear ideas about making the workplace a centre of Christian outreach.

Apart from the main talks, including one by Professor Neil Hood, there was an afternoon group session where professionals working in different services were helped to think about putting ideas into practice in their own work situation.

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## Engaging and challenging

The main speaker was Mark Greene of the London Institute of Contemporary Christianity who led the first and last sessions of the day. Those who have heard him will be aware of his engaging and challenging style, sometimes startling, almost daring. From a learning point of view he used a wide range of techniques to keep the audience involved:

- Asking questions – what is your greatest temptation at work?
- Facilitating interaction between delegates – we used a pre-printed 90 second interview sheet to ask questions of one another.
- Posing riddles.

- Using humour – something we are not always used to in church.
- Expressing himself through his body language and movement.

Mark drew our attention to the early chapters of Genesis and drew upon key passages in Colossians 3 and Ephesians 4. He talked about why our work matters to God and considered the strategic value of work. But perhaps most important was his talk about work as ‘The Great Mission Field’ because, after all, that was the crux of the conference!

## Fruit of the Spirit

Throughout the talk, Mark challenged our thinking. He said that because our identity does not change at work, we ought to concentrate on showing the fruit of the Spirit – we must, at all times, present the best image we can of Christian practice and caring.

It can often be the small things that are noticed by others: a friendly smile, a willingness to listen to another's concerns, remembering names, writing a letter after a bereavement. But we must demonstrate the faith we profess in our actions every hour of every day. And we must be consistent. Ministry is not just for the minister, it is every Christian's responsibility. It is love in action. We must – to use Mark's subheadings – point people to Jesus in the workplace in ways that are credible, transparent, connected, cross-cultural and cross-generational.

The whole conference was a great success and may yet help Christians of all ages to remember their faith isn't just for Sundays...

■ Bernard Bowers and Ken Fotheringham

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Mark Greene used to work in advertising and is prepared to admit it – he spent ten years with Ogilvy & Mather in London and New York. He is currently the Director of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity, having served at London Bible College as their vice-principal and lecturer in communications.

He is the author of *Thank God it's Monday*, of the video *A Vision for Workplace Ministry*, the group video resource *Christian Life and Work* and the pastoral guide *How to Support the Workers without Going Insane*. He has degrees in Hebrew from Cambridge, Theology from LBC and Communications and Media from Edinburgh.

Mark is married to Katriina, a Finn, and they have three exuberant children – Matti, Tomas and Anna-Marie – and an even more exuberant dog called Spark.

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