

# ***How Then Should We Work? Rediscovering the Biblical Doctrine of Work***

**by Hugh Welchel**

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**Reviewed by David W. Gill**

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Hugh Welchel is Executive Director of the Institute for Faith, Work, and Economics, a “biblical advocacy think tank” in the Washington DC area. He has more than twenty-five years of experience in the business arena and a master’s degree in theology from Reformed Theological Seminary. Welchel describes how for the first twenty years of his business career he saw his work simply as an instrumental necessity to make money to pay bills and contribute to church and charity – and maybe as a character builder. Then, simply out of personal interest in the Christian faith, he took a couple courses at Reformed Theological Seminary in Orlando and discovered Francis Schaeffer, Abraham Kuyper, Luther, Calvin, Chuck Colson and the Reformed view of work. “Discovering the biblical doctrine of work transformed my life . . . it was the very thing through which I could be the salt and light Jesus called me to be . . . part of a larger grand story of God . . . My work as a businessman . . . had real value and purpose in God’s Kingdom” (p. xxiii).

This is a great little book (125 pages!). First of all, Hugh Welchel’s personal awakening and growth and his passion and excitement breathe through every page. I found it a page turner and I’ve read fifty books on this topic! Second, Welchel has acquired a better grasp of (1) the biblical theology of work and (2) the history of Christian thinking about work than most seminary theology and church history professors I have known or read. You heard me right. Welchel has read all the right stuff and built a deep, well-informed Christian perspective on work.

I found Welchel’s biblical theology structured around Creation-Fall-Redemption-Consummation/Restoration, the Cultural Mandate, and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God to be spot on. I especially loved his exploration and explanation of Common Grace as the basis for our “co-belligerence” and participation in the fallen structures and among the broken people of our world. Welchel sends us out with confident faith, tenacious loyalty to Christ, but a humble, teachable attitude among our co-workers. His discussions on success, calling, and cultural renewal are excellent.

I can’t speak for Welchel’s views of economics and politics (and I get nervous about “advocacy” groups setting up in the capitals of “Babylon, Egypt, or Rome”) but I look forward to hearing his ideas and insights.

What I have no doubt about at all is that I would love his advocacy in “Jerusalem” (the church) for this powerful message on work. Give this man an A.