

Mastering Monday: A Guide to Integrating Faith and Work

by John D. Beckett

InterVarsity Press, 2006. 206 pages

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John Beckett is long-time CEO and (now) Chairman of R. W. Beckett Corporation in Ohio, a leading manufacturer of residential and commercial heating systems. The company was founded by his father who invited John to work with him in his mid-twenties. That great mentoring and leadership experience was suddenly ended by the father's death at 67 from a heart attack. Just a few months later a big fire badly damaged the factory. The vicissitudes of the oil and gas energy markets intermittently caused shockwaves to the industry during Beckett's leadership. In short, Beckett's in-the-trenches business management experience has been a wonderful preparation for his books. Beckett is also cofounder of Advent Industries, a manufacturing company that provides job training for those who need some special help to get on board.

In 1998 Beckett published *Loving Monday: Succeeding in Business without Selling Your Soul* (InterVarsity Press). This was one of the first books in a giant wave of faith at work publications over the past two decades. *Loving Monday* introduced much of the same material as *Mastering Monday*: the personal business and career story, the awakening to a holistic, passionate, integrated biblical faith and discipleship in his late twenties, and some interesting reflections on biblical teaching on workplace issues.

Mastering Monday, published in 2006, recapitulates the same personal and business stories of *Loving Monday* and repeats some of the same biblical insights into work and leadership. The (new) Part Two is a very well done and insightful tour of the biblical canon from Genesis to Revelation, focused on lessons from key figures more than didactic teaching passages. So the workplace leadership stories of Noah, Bezalel, Boaz, David, Solomon, Daniel, Nehemiah, and, not least, Jesus, are very respectfully, creatively and faithfully probed for their lessons. Beckett closes this section with an extended reflection on the Judgment of Babylon in Revelation. Powerful lessons about serious stuff to avoid in our business lives.

Part Three of *Mastering Monday* is about "God's Workplace Agenda." Beckett gives chapters to the importance of five things: vision/mission/purpose, core values, respecting and caring for people, stewardship, and serving. He proposes that these five themes comprise the basics of biblical faith at work. Beckett, in my opinion is spot on. This is a bull's eye. I have rarely read a layman with a better grasp of the Bible and such an ease of moving from biblical text to business application. He is a man of God, a man of the Word. On his five basic themes, the biblical foundations are solid. But Beckett is also incredibly insightful about business, corporate culture, and leadership. I hate to say it but not every famous Christian business leader gets it like Beckett does. His grasp of the basic five themes --- and how they inter-relate and must be in alignment --- is exceptional.

Mastering Monday is well-written, well-organized, and well-illustrated. Leave *Loving Monday* in the library; it's been transcended by its own author. Then go out and buy multiple copies of *Mastering Monday* for all the business students and leaders you know (and get one for your pastor while you're at it). It really is top ten stuff.