

The background of the slide is a grayscale image of a circuit board. It features a complex network of black lines representing traces and several solid black circles representing vias or components. The circuitry is arranged in a somewhat symmetrical, horizontal pattern. A solid black horizontal band runs across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the text.

What would Jesus patent? – God, technology and entrepreneurship

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About me

- MA in Zoology (Oxford), PhD in Biomaterials/ Biomimetics (Reading)
- 21 years in the Medical Device industry (Smith & Nephew) – R&D senior management
- 8 years with Cambridge product development consultancy firms – VP Bus Dev
- 1 year at The Faraday Institute – fundraising, strategy, finance
- Christian since 1982. On student team at St Andrew the Great Church, Cambridge

Definitions

Pure science

Research

Science

Physics

Discovery

Applied science

Development

Technology

Engineering

Invention

Caricatures

Academy

Truth-driven

Individualistic

Freedom

Serendipity

Slow

Poorly-paid

Job for life

Left wing

Industry

Money-driven

Corporate

Compliance

Goal-directed

Fast

Well-paid

Hire & fire

Right wing

Q: “How does your faith interact with your work as an Engineer?”

- I don't see much relevance, as the Bible doesn't have much to say about my subject (unlike those working in, say, evolution or cosmology)
- I share the Gospel with work colleagues when I can
- I try to please God and my employer by working hard and meeting my objectives
- I get well-paid and tithe my salary to my local church and Christian charities
- I'm too busy to give it much thought
- Other?

Attitudes to work in an applied science environment

Work to live

Meet my objectives

Drudgery

Transactional

Just a job

Share the Gospel

Live to work

Grow the business

Idolatry

Ownership

Main identity

Transform the world

Biblical references to work

*Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might.
(Ecc 9:10)*

*So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to
the glory of God. (1Cor10:31)*

*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for
good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we
should walk in them. (Eph2:10)*

*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working
for the Lord, not for human masters. (Col3:23)*

*Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what
is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not to live
unproductive lives. (Tit 3:14)*

Biblical references to work

Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might.
(Ecc 9:10) - HOW

So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1Cor10:31) - WHY

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph2:10) - WHAT

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters. (Col3:23) - HOW

Our people must learn to devote themselves to doing what is good, in order to provide for urgent needs and not to live unproductive lives. (Tit 3:14) - WHAT

Biblical references to technology

Cain	City
Tubal-Cain	Tools
Noah	Ark
Men	Tower of Babel
Abraham & Isaac	Wells
Bezalel	Various crafts
Aaron	Golden calf
Solomon	Temple
King Uzziah	War machines
Isaiah	Ploughshares & pruning hooks
Jesus	Oil lamps, houses, fishing nets, coins & carpenter

Key considerations

What do we choose to do?

How do we do it?

Why do we do it?

What do we choose to do? (1)

Just as “ought” does not follow from “is”, so too, “should be made” does not follow from “can be made”.

For the Christian, financial metrics (profit, shareholder value, etc.) should not be the only criteria.

Crucial question: “how does the end product of my work glorify God and demonstrate love to my neighbour?”

What do we choose to do? (2)

Few technologies or products are unequivocally or intrinsically 'bad'

But many should make you stop and think, e.g. products that can harm, pollute, corrupt, cause addiction, enslave...

- Weapons; tobacco; fast food; sex toys...
- Oil & gas; automotive; aerospace; agrochem...
- Genetic enhancement; pre-natal diagnostics...
- Artificial Intelligence

...all matters of conscience

How do we do it? (1)

Is your company culture conducive to human flourishing?

Does your employer value honesty, integrity, humility and mutual respect as well as commitment, drive, resourcefulness, passion, etc.?

Does your company consider carefully the products it makes, or is there an arrogance, hubris, over-reach and recklessness in its aims?

“I have the right to do anything” you say – but not everything is beneficial. “I have the right to do anything” – but I will not be mastered by anything. (1Cor6: 12)

How do we do it? (2)

Consider being counter-cultural?

- Servant leadership?
- Core values of humility and forgiveness?
- Limited pay ratios?
- Cooperate as well as compete?
- Accuracy rather than 'spin'?
- Patent or give open access?
- Cash exit or see it through?

Why do we do it? (1)

Utility: make money; make the world a better place; mission field; develop new skills...

Intrinsic value: glorify God through doing well that which He has designed you to be good at.

All callings are sacred!

“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever” (Westminster Shorter Catechism)

Why do we do it? (2)

*As kingfishers catch fire, dragonflies draw flame;
As tumbled over rim in roundy wells
Stones ring; like each tucked string tells, each hung bell's
Bow swung finds tongue to fling out broad its name;
Each mortal thing does one thing and the same:
Deals out that being indoors each one dwells;
Selves — goes itself; myself it speaks and spells,
Crying What I dó is me: for that I came.*

*I say móre: the just man justices;
Keeps grace: thát keeps all his goings graces;
Acts in God's eye what in God's eye he is —
Chríst — for Christ plays in ten thousand places,
Lovely in limbs, and lovely in eyes not his
To the Father through the features of men's faces.*

Gerard Manley Hopkins (1844-1889)

Why do we do it? (3)

God declared all He made to be good and continues to reveal Himself in His Creation – Gen 1; Ps 19; Rom 1:20

God made mankind in His image and to do our work is a way of fulfilling that image – Eph 2:10

Therefore...

Will all *our* work be ‘good’?

Will we reveal God in our ‘creations’? (technology, designs, products, etc.)

So, what *would* Jesus patent?

He already owns all His creation (Ps 24:1), has stamped it with His registered trademark (Rom 1:20) and has entrusted it to His vice-regents (Gen 1:27-28) ...

... to whom He has granted an exclusive (?), royalty-free licence (covenant) to use for the purposes of:

- Ruling and subduing
- Being fruitful and increasing in number
- Proclaiming the Gospel
- Caring for the downtrodden
- Stewarding resources carefully

... for a fixed term, but of unknown end-point (Mat 24:42)

Questions and discussion