



Al Erisman - Faith & Work in the 21st Century

Theology of Work Co-Chair and Former Boeing Technology Director, Al Erisman, is one of 3 panelists speaking on "Bridging the Sacred/Secular Divide" during Work as Globallocal Mission 2021. From his years of experience in education and business, Al shares his own journey towards discovering the meaning and purpose of work, as well as practical tips to connect faith and work in the 21st century.

Discussion Questions

1. Al shares how he first discovered an inherent enjoyment of work through shoveling driveways as a child. What are some moments in your life where you experienced the pleasure and satisfaction of work itself, beyond simply making money or gaining recognition, approval, or other external or internal rewards ?
2. Al shares that one way to connect our faith and work is recognizing how God uses to work to shape our character. He shares how Joseph's work transformed who he was with God, even as he was falsely accused and imprisoned (Genesis 39-40). Recall a season of your life when your job was difficult or work was just hard. How did God work in that season to shape you?
3. Al exhorts us that we are witnesses for Christ in our family, neighborhood, workplace, and wherever we travel (Acts 1:8:). He shares that Joseph is a witness before Pharaoh by telling him what God had done in his life (Genesis 41). Have you ever had an opportunity to verbally share about what God has done in your life with people at work, inside or outside of the office? What was that experience like? Al encourages us to see faith and work through our economics: to foster a generous spirit that seeks the interest of others at work (Philippians 2). This isn't just about working for money for your own needs, but also creating goods and services for others, employment for those in need, or creating opportunities for someone to grow or flourish as a whole person. What opportunities do you have at your current job, workplace, or industry--whether

A horizontal banner image showing a desk with a white mug, a coffee cup, and an open book. The text "Work as Globalocal Mission Resources" is overlaid in white.

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through your job or the products and services your organization creates--to practice generosity?

4. AI encourages us against using the term “work-life balance,” since work is an integral part of life itself (Romans 12:1-2). What is one way God might be challenging you to live a fuller life at work or calling you to bring your whole self to work?