

GRADUATE SCHOOL COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS

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100,000 HOURS

The average American spends 100,000 hours working during his or her lifetime.

As Christ followers, God calls us to live our lives and do the best of our abilities. Often, this gets divided into a Sunday versus Monday mentality or a sacred versus secular vocational calling. However, God has created each of us uniquely. And during my time here in the MBA program, I realized the divide between sacred and secular does not exist. Rather, it is a continuum of supportive balance. We are all called to full-time ministry in each setting we find ourselves.

James Michener beautifully represents this concept when he says,

"The master in the art of living makes little distinction between work and play, labor and leisure, mind and body, information and recreation. This master hardly knows which is which. They simply pursue vision and excellence, leaving others to decide whether it is work or play. To the master he is always doing both."

In this quote, we see there is no sacred or secular. There is not either/or. It is both/and. Anything God is in, there's no other choice than to be holy.

You and I sitting in this room will live this out in potentially 100,000 different ways. Some will be accountants; others will lead organizations. Be yourself and who God has created you to be!

For me, seeing who God created me to be was realizing, through my time at Bethel, that business is okay. In fact, Jesus was in business. His profession was carpentry and he spoke wisely about integrating business and faith. It was natural to who he was.

Speaking of natural, when I think of managerial accounting, I naturally connect it with pirates. Specifically, the U.S. response to the Barbary Pirates of 1794. Normal, right?! For me that was normal. Through my time in the MBA, I was able to naturally press into my joy for business and who God created me to be and for that to naturally flow from me. Thus, connecting accounting and pirates!

In Matthew 5:14, Jesus tells us we are "the light of the world." Being a light to the world means being ourselves and embracing our calling where we are. It means integrating your vocation + faith... naturally...like it's flowing freely from you.

One man who spent his 100,000 hours well was my grandfather William Carlson of Mankato, Minnesota, the founder of Carlson Craft. He is my hero who took time to form my faith, leadership, stewardship, and entrepreneurialism. He often told me there have been multiple ways invented to create money, but no one has figured out how to manufacture time.

This is my story. Each of you have a story with people who have loved and invested in you. Some of them are in this room; many of these are our professors, family and friends who have invested some of their 100,000 hours in us. Thankfully, as we celebrate our accomplishments today, it's not the end of our journey but rather a springboard into the remainder of our 100,000 hours being a light to the world in any and every vocation, in any and every city.

Let's use our 100,000 hours living our calling.