

## Book Review – David Steinegger

# On the way to work: A Christian approach to thinking differently about success and fulfilment

By Chris Gillies

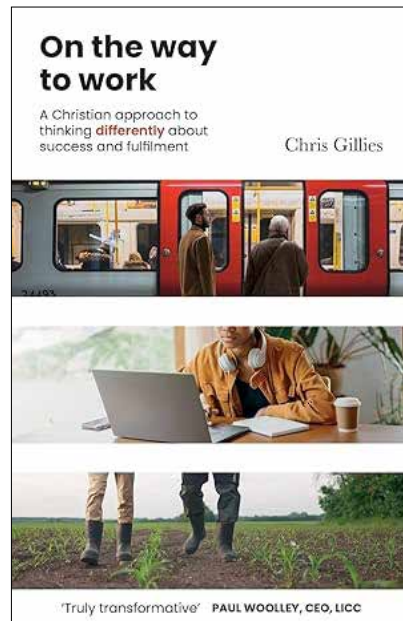
BRF Ministries, 2024, 290pp, £12.99 (from BRF Ministries), ISBN 978 1 80039 239 7

“On the way to work, do you look forward to your day? Does it give you a sense of purpose?” So begins the introduction to Chris Gillies’ book. *On the way to work* provides a refreshing perspective on the theology of work, gives examples of some of the great biblical role models, offers practical insights into working through many of the common issues we face, and is enriched with examples from Chris’ own experience.

The book is structured into three parts. The first part brings a theological perspective which starts in the Garden of Eden, continues through the redemption story and ends in the eternal city in Revelation. I appreciated how this section connects God’s great story for humankind with our stories and reminds us that our lives in our workplaces truly matter. The second part of the book highlights some of the great characters in the Old Testament and God’s anointing in their “workplaces”. It then moves on to the life of Christ and the characteristics of his redemptive approach. Part three, the largest section of the book, focuses on common issues we face in the workplace. This section starts with an insightful Christian worldview perspective, reminding us that there is no sacred-secular divide, and that God is profoundly interested in all of our lives.

In part three, Chris goes on to look at some real workplace issues, with biblical and practical insights to tackle them. For example, his chapter on “How do I know if I’m in the right job” gives a scriptural base to address this question, together with practical pointers. Here he encourages readers to loosen their grip on a calling to do a specific job,

and rather pursue their life’s mission. This will be helpful for many. I would add that at times God speaks very specifically into our career decision through scripture, the Holy Spirit’s guidance and the voice of others. He



tackles another real issue in the chapter “Balancing the big five” – describing the challenge of the big five calls on our time – our relationship with God, family, work, community, and rest and leisure. In reflecting on this, I was reminded that God has set eternity in our hearts (Eccl 3:11) and if we can live each day with this promise, and the challenge in mind, then we can come to a place of truly flourishing in our lives as Kingdom people – and this is much more precious than gold!


The 290 pages can at first feel a little overwhelming. But I devoured the book on two long haul flights, being stimulated by the three-cord strand of biblical theology, practical insight and great examples from Chris’ many years

of experience in the workplace. The summaries at the end of each chapter are helpful, as are each chapter’s questions for personal reflection.

It would have been helpful if the book had also explored the biblical basis and importance of having wise mentors or coaches: “Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety.” (Proverbs 11:14.) I have found wise Christian mentors to be a great blessing on my journey in many workplaces across multiple countries and cultures.

I would also like to have seen a template in the book summarising some of the more practical learning points which are interspersed throughout the book. Perhaps a workbook could follow!

Appropriately the book ends with a chapter on The prize for running well. We are called to be faithful with the gifts and abilities that God has given us. We are reminded that our work in the here and now foreshadows a new kind of redeemed work after Jesus returns. And here’s a great challenge that Chris presents: we have an opportunity to anticipate that future time by modelling it in the present and living it now for the glory of God and service to humanity!

We are called to be kingdom people in our workplaces – and in whatever we do, to work at it with all our hearts, as working for the Lord. Having a God-given sense of purpose in our days is essential if we are to live fulfilled lives. This book offers helpful pointers to living a purposeful life and is a great addition to the library of all who are seeking to be faithful, fruitful and fulfilled in their workplaces. 



**David Steinegger holds a number of non-executive positions, is a people builder, a church leader, and a trustee of several charities, including Wycliffe Bible Translators UK, which he chairs.**