

The Road Less Traveled – July 5, 2016

I had the pleasure of attending a ribbon-cutting for a new business last week. When I was the editor of a business publication in Chicago many years ago, I attended events like that regularly, but it had been a long time. I was invited by Shannon Byrd, who along with her husband Ed and children William and Sydney, are part of our church family. The new business is Jordan Taylor & Co., a purveyor of fine furniture and home accessories, which opened in the historic Carter Ivy building in downtown Weatherford.

Shannon, along with her friend Roanna Ballew, are co-managers responsible for the day-to-day operation of the store. I remember how excited Shannon was about the new venture when I met with the family back in February before they joined the church. Last week's ribbon-cutting and grand opening was the culmination of that exciting dream.

But that wasn't what really struck me about the event. It wasn't the beautiful merchandise, which Melissa and I oohed and aahed over. It was what happened prior. I had offered to come and do a blessing of the business, and we gathered to do that before the folks from the Weatherford Chamber arrived. The family and friends who were present each laid hands on some piece of merchandise, and we all prayed together, asking God to bless the space and all who entered the door. It was a wonderful and moving moment.

But what happened next really touched me. Dana Rector, who owns the company (which also has a store in Southlake), spoke about the business' possibilities. But she didn't speak about profits or margins or sales quotas, she talked about God. She said those who worked in the store would have a wonderful opportunity to share their faith with others. She talked about the customers who would come into the store, some of whom would be hurting. She talked about taking them into a sitting area in the back and listening to them – and praying with and for them. She talked about the store being an instrument of Christ.

It was a refreshing take on business, to say the least. It seems like most of the time our professional life and our faith life are seen as either-or, destined only to intersect in the choices each of us make as to how to conduct ourselves. We ask God to bless that which we do, but mostly so that we will do it successfully. Seldom do we really view the 9-5 work we do as something of God.

But that ribbon-cutting reminded me that it can be – and indeed as people of faith, we should insist that it is so. Our faith is not something that happens only at church or at church-related events. We talk a lot about a faith that is transforming – first to us, then to the world. And if that is to be the true nature of our faith, then we have to not only be prepared, but insistent, that God will be part of everything we do.

See you Sunday.