

# *Business as Mission*

Abbreviated Version

Lausanne Occasional Paper (LOP) No.59

Edited by Mats Tunehag, Wayne McGee, and Josie Plummer  
Series Editor for the 2004 Forum Occasional Papers (commencing with LOP 30): David Claydon

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**NOTE:** All unattributed quotes represent comments written by individual members of the Business as Mission Issue Group during the course of work on this document.

## FOREWORD

We believe we are experiencing a move of God among His people. As we have engaged in **business as mission** over the last ten years, we have increasingly experienced God at work in a **new way, all over the world**, both in the **market place** and in the **Church**. This dynamic movement within the Body of Christ is based on God's love for the world and His call to His Church. It is a new wave of activity that is closely linked with the work of the Holy Spirit throughout history. It is a relevant strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. God is raising up a new work force of men and women from around the world. These men and women are on a mission for God's glory in and through business. Christian leaders in business, church, missions and beyond have all concurred that God is at work and business as mission is dynamically meeting the various needs of a world in desperate need of the whole Gospel! Just listen to what a few have to say:

### *True to God's Calling*

Rene Padilla is a prominent Argentinean theologian, missiologist & author who enthusiastically endorses business as mission, and says that it is "closely related to Jesus' call to His disciples—to be the salt of the earth".

### *God at Work Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow*

Both business and church leaders recognise the historical dimension of business as mission as is evident in the following quotes:

"New leadership is needed in the 21st century, as we look at effective and holistic mission strategies. Business has historically been a key frontier in extending the Kingdom." Stuart McGreevy, Chairman, TBN Transformational Business Network

"In the earliest history of the Christian mission the saving news of Christ was often carried to new places by those who were seeking to do business." Harry Goodhew, Retired Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Australia

### *A Relevant Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Business as mission is not simply a fundraising tactic or a visa platform, but a relevant strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> century – especially in the 10/40 Window:

"The use of business in global outreach is a strategy of choice for the context of the 21st century mission" Ted Yamamori, International Director of the Lausanne movement, LCWE.

"Economic-based mission will bring a major change to the face of Christian missions, and it is more than just a new strategy—there is a promise connected to it: He who lends to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will reward him for what he has done. (Proverbs 19:17)" Jürg Opprecht, Founder & President BPN Business and Professional Network

"Business-as-mission is a relevant strategy to meet the challenges in the 10/40-window and beyond." Luis Bush, USA/Argentina, founder of the AD2000 Movement

### *The Body of Christ at Work*

"Businessmen and women are being called to embrace a new responsibility under God to transform the societies of the world at large through creative acts of love." J. Gunnar Olson, Chairman and Founder of ICCC, International Christian Chamber of Commerce

It is with great joy and expectation that we submit this report to the Church world-wide.

**Mats Tunehag, Wayne McGee, Josie Plummer**

## Reading Material for Discussion 1

# INTRODUCTION

### *A World in Need*

The world holds fresh opportunities and challenges for the global Church. In regions where Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism are dominant and where 90% of the world's unreached peoples live, you also find 80% of the world's poorest populations. Unemployment in these countries ranges from 30% to 80% and it is even higher among Christian minorities. Furthermore many Christians and others in Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin American are living in poverty because of lack of jobs and unjust economic systems.

Over the next 20 years, more than 2 billion people will enter societies where there are few churches and very few jobs.

What should be the response of the Church and particularly Christian business people to such challenges?

*What the poor want is not aid, but jobs – real jobs, not subsidised ones. This is the dignity and self-reliance they deserve.*

### *Business as Mission – a Renewed Call*

There is a wave of thousands of Christian business people from all continents who are experiencing a dynamic move of God as part of a renewed call to His kingdom work. God is on the move in Latin America, Asia, Europe, North America, Africa and the Pacific regions, calling His global church to rediscover His heart and intention for business.

God established the institution and practice of business as a means of fulfilling His **creation mandate** to steward and care for all of creation. He is releasing the power of business to aid in the task of fulfilling the **great commission** making disciples of all nations. God longs to be glorified through our business activities.

Business people are being challenged to look anew at their business activities as an expression of their calling and service to God. They are being affirmed in their vocation as business people and used as instruments for extending God's kingdom. God has led a growing number of business people to think strategically about how they can integrate their skills and experience in business with the task of world mission. God is calling many more business people, from all nations to go to all nations, in this new paradigm of mission.

*“God has gifted some with the resources of mind and spirit to be businessmen and women. Business as mission seeks to support and encourage those who are gifted by God in this way. It aims to stimulate interest in, and commitment to, doing business as unto the Lord. Its desire is to assist business people to see the opportunities that exist, to use their skills and talents to bless those in the poorest and most needy parts of the world, and to provide in those contexts credible opportunities to demonstrate and proclaim Christ.”*

Harry Goodhew, Retired Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Australia

One term being used for this new mission movement is **‘business as mission’**. Business in and of itself is the ministry and instrument of mission. It is about releasing the entrepreneurs and business professionals within the church in order to transform the world through their business activities.

The implication of ‘the whole church taking the whole gospel to the whole world’ includes affirming and mobilising the business people in the body of Christ. It means releasing them to use their gifting in business to lift the oppression of the poor through business, to transform their own communities and nations through business, and to carry the good news to the ‘ends of the earth’ through business.

### ***Breaking New Ground***

Kingdom focused business has been called a strategy of choice for the 21<sup>st</sup> century mission. In many countries where the name of Christ is least often heard or understood, Christians are better welcomed as business people, not “missionaries”. Business is about relationships in the context of everyday life and provides numerous ways to bless individuals, communities and nations.

This blessing is already a growing reality in places like Asia and can be illustrated by these two examples:

*1) A Christian in Central Asia tried to witness to his people, a Muslim community with very few believers. But he was seen as a “professional Christian”, not real to them and probably paid by Westerners to proselytise. He experienced open hostility and alienation. Later he started a small cattle business. His lifestyle became understandable and natural to them. Even though they knew he was still a follower of Isa/Jesus, he was now acceptable. He was one of them, perceived as dealing with real life issues and meeting real needs. He has since been invited to sit on the council of elders for his community.*

*2) An IT-company exists in India among a major unreached people with the intention to make Christ known among these people. Through the many natural opportunities that business provides, the founder can share his faith in word and deed. The company’s strategic plan reads: “Our purpose is to serve:*

- 1. Our **Customers** with creative, innovative, reliable, top-quality solutions;*
- 2. Our **Employees** with meaningful and challenging work, stability, good salaries, development and a pleasant work-environment;*
- 3. Our other **Stakeholders** by providing attractive returns on their investments;*
- 4. The **Country** by creating knowledge and wealth and contributing to local concerns;*
- 5. **Society** by showing that success and high moral standards can co-exist; and*
- 6. Ultimately **God** by being faithful and good stewards.”*

After centuries of Christian work among unemployed Muslims and among poor Buddhists and Hindus, we have seen only limited progress. The Church should recognise the need for renewed thinking and application of being and doing church and missions; as more of the same thing will not result in a better harvest.

Breaking new ground in the task of global evangelisation requires new methods and strategies. There is a growing need to provide models for mission that are financially sustainable and will strengthen local churches and national missionary movements. Business as mission is one response. It is crucial that Christian business people are equipped and supported to take up their key role in transforming their own nation and beyond.

At a meeting of Christian leaders from Eastern European countries, leader after leader from different denominations echoed, “Do not send us money, it only creates division, send us business people who can create jobs for us, that we can build ourselves up. A leader from Croatia went so far to say, “Sending us missionaries is good, but we’d prefer that you send us

*godly businessmen, who can teach us and help us to start businesses and create jobs in a Christ-like way.”<sup>†</sup>*

A Christian businesswoman from Central Asia said: “*There are many seminars and teachings on how to start a business. There are business schools with local and foreign teachers. But there are few resources to get practical help in starting a real business not just hearing about how to start a business.*”

Our desire is to acknowledge the ways that business can and does glorify God. Business can be used for good and to help grow His kingdom. There are unique and wonderful opportunities that God is calling us to through business, businesses that help restore human dignity and hope as well as provide a context for sharing the gospel of the kingdom. We dream of seeing the Church, as the whole Body of Christ, taking the whole Gospel to the whole world. Our prayer is that God’s kingdom would come in all spheres of society within every nation. Our goal is to see people and communities transformed by the power of the gospel. Business as mission is about affirming, mobilising, equipping and deploying business people to this end.

*The business of ‘business as mission’ is to reveal Christ through business. When this is done effectively, the outcome is transformational.*

To the greater Glory of God!

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<sup>†</sup> Extract from an unpublished newsletter by Patrick Lai

## **WHAT IS BUSINESS AS MISSION?** **Clarifying Terms**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly clarify a few key terms and expressions. The descriptions used here are simply to aid us to communicate clearly and consistently. It is not our aim to create a ‘business as mission orthodoxy’ or terminology, or to exclude groups or initiatives that prefer other terms and definitions. Other expressions commonly used in the movement include ‘transformational business’, ‘great commission companies’ and ‘kingdom business’. The authors recognise that in some contexts ‘business as mission’ is not the most helpful or preferred term. The expression ‘business as mission’ itself can be considered a fairly broad term that encompasses various areas where business and missions connect.

Our terms here are further limited both culturally and linguistically, since this paper was prepared in English. We expect alternative expressions to be developed which communicate meaningfully in other languages, and other religious, political and cultural settings. The parameters outlined in this document should be considered as a ‘dotted line’ that allows for future change and for anomalies that might force us to reconsider and revise according to the situation and its specific needs.

### **Business as Mission is based on the principle of...HOLISTIC MISSION**

Holistic mission attempts to bring all aspects of life and godliness into an organic biblical whole. This includes God’s concerns for such business related issues as economic development, employment and unemployment, economic justice and the use and distribution of natural and creative resources among the human family. These are aspects of God’s redemptive work through Jesus Christ and the Church.

Evangelism and social concerns are often still addressed as though they were separate and unrelated from each other. This assumes a divide between what we consider ‘sacred’ or ‘spiritual’ and what we consider ‘secular’ or ‘physical’. The biblical worldview rather is one that promotes an integrated and seamless holistic view of life. Ministry should not be compartmentalised or fragmented into the ‘spiritual’ and the ‘physical’. Business as mission is an expression of this truly holistic paradigm.

*Business is a mission, a calling, a ministry in its own right. Human activity reflects our divine origin, having been created to be creative, to create good things by good processes, for us to enjoy – with others.*

### **Business as Mission has a Kingdom of God perspective...KINGDOM BUSINESS**

Kingdom businesses start from the theological premise that all Christians have a calling to love and serve God with all of their heart, soul, strength and mind, as well as to love and serve their neighbours. God calls people to work for His kingdom in business just as certainly as He calls people to work in other kinds of ministry or mission ventures.

In this paper, we will often use the term ‘kingdom business’ rather than ‘business as mission-business’. We recognise the importance of extending God’s kingdom through business in any context. However, we want to highlight the biblical mandate to serve the poor and oppressed, in particular in those areas where the gospel has yet to be received. This will lead us to a focus on cross-cultural activity and should draw our attention to areas of endemic poverty and/or unevangelised communities. We acknowledge that this does not automatically suppose

the crossing of international borders and will be necessary within culturally 'near' communities as well.

A function of business as mission is to act as a catalyst, to inspire and encourage people to get into business and to stay in business, especially in the developing world.

### **Business as Mission is different from but related to...WORKPLACE MINISTRIES**

Workplace Ministries are primarily focused on taking the gospel to people where they work, preferably through the witness of co-workers and professional colleagues. These ministries encourage the integration of biblical principles into every aspect of business practice, to the glory of God. Business as mission naturally includes these elements of workplace ministry.

When a workplace ministry is initiated in a business owned by believers to intentionally advance the kingdom of God, there will be substantial overlap. Workplace ministry can choose to limit its focus solely "within" the business context itself. Business as mission is focused both "within" and "through" the business. It seeks to harness the power and resource of business for intentional mission impact in the community or nation at large. Workplace ministry may occur in any setting. However, business as mission is intentional about the "to all peoples" mandate, and seeks out areas with the greatest spiritual and physical needs.

### **Business as Mission is different from but related to...TENTMAKING**

"Tentmaking" refers principally to the practice of Christian professionals, who support themselves financially by working as employees or by engaging in business. In this way they are able to conduct their ministries without depending upon donors and without burdening the people they serve. Tentmaking infers the integration of work and witness, with an emphasis on encouraging evangelism by lay Christians rather than clergy and ministry professionals.

Where tentmakers are part of business ventures that facilitate their mission goals, there is substantial overlap with business as mission. However, although a tentmaker might be a part of a business, the business itself might not be an integral part of the ministry as it is with business as mission. Business as mission sees business both as the medium and the message. Business as mission most often involves 'job-making' as an integral part of its mission. Tentmaking may involve this, but is more often simply about 'job-taking' – taking up employment somewhere in order to facilitate ministry.

### **Business as Mission is different from...BUSINESS FOR MISSIONS**

Profits from business can be donated to support missions and ministries. This is different from business as mission. One might call this business for missions, using business ventures to fund other kinds of ministry. We recognise that profit from a business can be used to support "missions" and that this is good and valid. Likewise employees can use some of their salary to give to charitable causes. While this should be encouraged, none of us would like to be operated on by a surgeon whose only ambition is to make money to give to the church! Instead we expect he has the right skills and drive to operate with excellence, doing his job with full professional integrity. Likewise a business as mission-business must produce more than goods and services in order to generate new wealth. It seeks to fulfil God's kingdom purposes and values through every aspect of its operations. A 'business for mission' concept can limit business and business people to a role of funding the 'real ministry'. While funding is an important function, business as mission is about for-profit businesses that have a kingdom focus.

### **Business as Mission does not condone...NON-BUSINESSES AND NON-MISSIONS**

Two approaches to business that do not come within the scope of 'business as mission' by any definition are: (1) Fake businesses that are not actually functioning businesses, but exist

solely to provide visas for missionaries to enter countries otherwise closed to them. (2) Businesses that purport to have Christian motivations but which operate only for private economic advantage and not for the kingdom of God. Neither do we mean businesses run by Christians with no clear and defined kingdom strategy in place.

### **Business as Mission pursues...PROFIT**

Business must be financially sustainable, producing goods or services that people are willing to pay for. Sustainability implies that the activity is profitable. Profits are an essential element of all businesses, in all cultures. Without profit the business cannot survive and fulfil its purpose. Accordingly, business as mission - businesses are *real* business that genuinely exist to generate wealth and profits. Business as mission does not view profits as inherently evil, bad or unbiblical. Quite the contrary, profits are good, desired and beneficial to God and His purposes, as long as they are not oppressive, or derived from gouging customers or selling products and service that do no honour Christ and His gospel.

Temporary subsidies may be utilised to establish a business as mission initiative. Permanent subsidies or financial support without expectation of ultimate profitability are closer to charitable or donor-based ministries than business as mission based ministries.

*The business of business is business. And the business of business as mission is business with a kingdom of God purpose and perspective.*

### **Business as Mission comes in all...SHAPES AND SIZES**

The methodologies, as well as the business and ministry strategies used, will be creatively diverse, just as God created us in infinite variety. Does the size of the business matter? Yes and No! Christian micro-enterprise programmes exist that help provide necessary income for families and individuals resulting in community development, churches being planted and discipleship taking place. In short, Christian micro-enterprise development has been well accepted and is highly effective for the kingdom. A significant body of work already exists dedicated to it. It has a legitimate place in the broader definition and practice of business as mission.

However, our focus will be on larger scale business, where there has been a comparative lack of attention. If we are to tackle the enormity of the challenge before us we need to think and act bigger, beyond micro to small, medium and large size businesses.

### **Business as Mission is not about...JOBS AND MONEY – PER SE**

The Russian Mafia also creates jobs and gives people a chance to earn money. Creating jobs and earning money is not an end in itself. Work and business are ordained by God. Work is a human and divine activity providing a means to support our families and to contribute to the positive development of our communities and countries. However, business as mission is not a christianised job creation scheme. The goal is not simply about making people materially better off. Business as mission is actively praying and incarnating Jesus' prayer: "May your kingdom come, may your will be done" even in the marketplace.

**The real bottom line of business as mission is "ad maiorem Dei gloriam", for the greater glory of God.**

## **THE WORD AND THE MISSION** **Biblical Foundations for Business as Mission**

### **God's Purpose for Business in the Work of Creation**

#### **The Purpose and Nature of God**

We cannot understand our purpose and mission in life unless we understand what God's purpose and mission is. God acts for His glory. He created the cosmos that reflects His glory and goodness (Ps 8, 19). Although this creation has been marred by sin and its consequences (Gen 3), God continues a redemptive relationship with creation through ongoing creativity and the sustaining of all things. God the Father, has made men and women in His image (Gen 1.27). He embraces His children in loving-kindness, and is concerned with our holistic redemption. God the King, is in a kingdom relationship with all humanity as individuals and as nations (peoples). God's purpose is to receive glory from among every people (nation/ethnic group) by holistically redeeming those who know, love and worship him (Ps 64, 1 Tim 1.15-17).

Business as mission keeps four things in mind: a) God is at the centre b) The scope is global, c) Peoples (nations, ethnic groups) and people (individuals) are the focus d) His glory is the outcome.

God is Spirit. Yet God's creative acts are perceived most clearly in physical form. We experience this dramatically in the diversity of the vast stellar expanse to the intimate uniqueness of our own molecular weave of a DNA. God's nature is inherently creative. He has created all things, physical and spiritual. Thus we read in Scripture that He created heaven and earth, sun and moon, water and trees, animals and human beings. His nature reveals an inherent evaluation, innovation and delight in the creation.

God enjoys His creation. His initial satisfaction is indicated by His repeated appraisal of it as "good." He walked daily in the garden and met with His people as a sign of His pleasure in His creation. His love for His creation is evident in that He continues to creatively sustain all things.

#### **Human Co-creativity and Work**

Theology is inter-related to anthropology. Understanding who God is leads us to a deeper understanding of who we are.

God is continually active in creation, working to bring goodness, enjoying the fruit of His labour and sharing it with others. Created in God's image, humanity is also capable of creating, unashamedly enjoying, and sharing the fruit of our labours with others. As God delighted in that which He created, so He is concerned for its maintenance and fruitfulness. Man is to co-labour with God in this work as seen in the first blessings and commandments given to Adam and Eve: "be fruitful", "multiply", "fill the earth" and "subdue it" (Gen 1.28).

There is an implicit invitation to enjoy the creation as well as a responsibility for creation's care and well being. We are to care for God's creation as beneficent overseers. We have the responsibility to respect and care for each other and the natural ongoing processes of the creation we are stewards of.

God gives us the capacity we need to fulfil the task. Adam and Eve were to be involved in the added value processes that create wealth! Work enables the translation of raw resources into

food, goods and services. Work creates wealth (a surplus) and this in turn creates more work (employment).

Work is an act of worship. Remember the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis Chapter 4. Abel's offering came out of the fruit of his labour. In contrast, Cain's offering was the result of the natural agricultural process. In other words Cain's offering was a fruit of the earth and not a fruit of his own labour. The concept in Hebrew culture was that Cain was not fully "involved" in what he was offering to God. Cain's offering lacked any redemptive action, which would have been the result of his own work.

Work is something that is simultaneously both deeply divine and deeply human. It is a tangible act that reveals a human-divine partnership in creation. Work, is not to be understood as a curse or consequence of the fall. Rather it was a blessing and commandment given to Adam and Eve before the fall. Work is a human activity that flows from God's delegated mandate of stewardship over creation. God gives us the creative capacity, wisdom and tools (gifts/talents) to do it. God took pleasure in the physical aspect of His creation. We too can delight in creating useful and excellent products and services.

### **Business and the Cultural Mandate of Stewardship**

Economic activity is rooted in the creation story. Business and enterprise form the institution that creates and sustains wealth for a just society. In the same way, government is designed to create and sustain an organised society and family is designed to create and sustain well-adjusted individuals. This is God's ordained order.

The Bible has much to say about ethical and fair dealing in work and business. It has instructional texts on what is pleasing to God in relationship to business relationships, employment, trading, using money, lending and so on. In business these can be practically applied in areas such as quality control, fair wages, good working conditions, reasonable return on investments, corporate social responsibility, et cetera.

The biblical idea of stewardship not only encompasses the care of creation, but the responsibility of personal stewardship of both talents and wealth as well. Business provides an opportunity for those talented in enterprise (entrepreneurs) and others (employees) to use their particular gifts in service to others as unto to the Lord. In its capacity to provide employment, business sustains not only those who establish enterprises, but also those who are employed or benefit from the goods and/or services provided. Business enables needs to be met and to bless others as a consequence. Business conducted in accord with biblical principles of stewardship offers numerous opportunities to glorify God. For a Christian, business is a vocation, to be conducted in the spirit of the kingdom of God.

*"The biblical worldview provides a framework for work being sacred, for labour having dignity. This concept of work is that it is a vocation—one's calling. ... This biblical concept understands that God is at work in the world building His Kingdom, and that, among other things, He calls us to participate in the building of His Kingdom through our work."*

Darrow L. Miller - Developing a Biblical Theology of Vocation, 2002

### **The Fall and it's Negative Consequences for Business**

After sin came into the world, good things were distorted and disrupted (Gen 3). The fall also affected work and creativity. Work continues to be a divine command to us, but we must now contend with considerable challenges and problems posed by sinful people doing business in a fallen world. As with everything else in the world, the whole process of creativity and work has been affected by sin.

Work and business offer many opportunities for sin. Exploitation of the poor, greed, dishonesty, and idolatry are just a few examples. But this does not mean that Christians should not engage in business. It is equally true that there are also many opportunities to glorify God.

Productive work and co-creation with God confer dignity and purpose to the individual. Lack of work or work that degrades the individual has a dehumanising effect. The loss of ability to support oneself and to contribute to others (family, community, etc.) represents a loss of dignity and is far from God's original design.

After the fall a focus on community was shattered by selfishness and greed. This resulted in an attitude that says; "This is mine, I made it for me and me alone". The fall has led to numerous systems whereby people are exploited or enslaved economically while a few have been unjustly made rich.

But God prepared for a restoration of creation, including work and creativity, through Jesus Christ. Our mandate continues, to be stewards of creation and of our personal talents and the wealth our talents generate. We are called to play a role in God's restoration process by helping to restore the inherent dignity and value of work. We are to be ambassadors of God's kingdom in the market place, to be salt and light in and through business. As salt and light we are to bless peoples from every culture, through God-honouring business enterprise and the reformation of unjust economic systems.

Before we consider more deeply the redemptive potential of business as mission, we will briefly explore some examples of business within the history and mission of Israel as well as look at the relevance of business in relation to the message of the New Testament.

### **Business and the History and Mission of Israel**

#### **Joseph the Business Administrator**

One of the clearest examples of God's purpose for business can be seen in the life of Joseph (Gen 47-50). Joseph had experienced the negative side of life having been sold into slavery and later placed in prison in Egypt. Nevertheless God freed him and placed him at the head of Pharaoh's agro-business with authority through government. His management skills are apparent. He knew that seven years of bountiful harvests would be followed by seven years of scarcity. Joseph ordered that a large percentage of the bountiful harvests be set aside for the lean years. Here we see one of God's major purposes for business highlighted: God wants the resources of creation to be harnessed (through business skills) so that all of humanity would have its needs met.

#### **Israel Models Economic Principles for the Nations**

Four hundred years later the Israelites were still in Egypt, although now as slaves. God saw the horrific conditions of His people and heard their cries (Ex 1-3). He saw that they were not receiving the just reward or fruit of their labours. As He freed His people and led them towards the Promised Land, He established the social and economic (business) conditions necessary for a godly society. God knew that some might want to change the godly vocation of work into an idolatrous pursuit of money and possessions. Therefore, for the wellbeing of His people, the Lord established statutes related to property, work and business (Ex 21-23, Lev 25). For example, the Israelites were to keep the Sabbath as a special day and to abstain from business pursuits in order to enjoy the rest and restoration that God desired. They were to leave part of their fields un-harvested so that the orphans, widows and foreigners among them might have access to God's goodness by gleaning from the excess of an abundant harvest. They were not to charge undue interest from the poor of their country. In short, they were to honour God in the midst of their labour and fruitfulness, obeying the limits and

ordinances He established. In so doing they would continue to be blessed by Him as a testament to the nations (Deut 26-28).

*God's promises to Israel as they left slavery in Egypt were not isolated to blessings of an unseen nature. He promised He would bless them in every area of life including their crops, livestock and business.... What the Bible emphasises for the poor is opportunity versus aid. Aid is reserved for those who have absolutely no way of providing for themselves and will die without assistance. Israel is certainly in this kind of circumstance in the wilderness. And God provides for the Israelites, however...the day they had the feasibility to provide for themselves the manna was withdrawn... God does not want to create a dependent people but a people who drew on the gifts, talents and resources He had given to see them provide for themselves.*

Landa Cope – Old Testament Template [www.ottemplate.org](http://www.ottemplate.org)

### **The Dynamic of Jubilee**

Especially significant to this discussion is the Biblical legislation regarding Jubilee (Lev 25, Deut 15). In the natural course of life, some people would become richer and some poorer. The poverty of some would lead them to borrow money and acquire devastating debts. Others would even be forced to sell themselves into slavery. God had a radical solution for this poverty. At the end of seven years all debts would be forgiven and the slaves should be set free. Deuteronomy 15 explains in detail how godly values should be practised concerning labour and economics, and how this would offer relief for the poor. God promised Israel that 'there will be no poor among you' (15.4) if Israel would publicly and private put into practice God's principles of Jubilee. God prescribes what must be done 'If there is a poor man with you' (15.7-10). This demonstrates that poverty can not be abolished by a sudden intervention of God alone, but by right practice and obedience by God's people to God's commands.

More powerful legislation would be enacted every fiftieth year. Some people might become so poor that they would have to sell off their property in order to feed their families. To remedy this extreme poverty, God declared that every fifty years there would be a Jubilee. The land would be returned to the original families and their descendants. Thus each family where given the means to start their own family businesses over again through the reallocation of property. All would have a fresh start. Redemption was to be demonstrated tangibly in the social and economic spheres of life.

### **The Prophets and a Call to do Business God's Way**

God's Spirit spoke through the prophet Amos to correct abuses in businesses of his day. Workers had become so undervalued that poor people were sold for a pair of shoes (Am 2.6). Amos raised his prophetic voice to condemn this abominable practice. We also see the damaging effects of structural sin or indirect sin through unjust systems. Amos directed part of his message to some of the married women of Israel who he denounced as cows of Bashan (Am 4.1). The women demanded that their husbands provide them with more and more luxuries. The husbands carried out their wives' wishes. In God's sight, both husbands and wives were guilty of exploitation and oppression of poor workers. God's concern with economic justice and business practice is emphasised by the way He addresses them through His prophets, including, for example, Jeremiah (Jer 5.24-29, 6.12-13, 22.13-17), Ezekial (Eze 18, 22.12-13,), Micah (Mic 2, 6.10-15) and Habakkuk (Hab 2.6-9).

### **The Hebrew Vision of Shalom**

The overarching biblical idea of shalom is that of wholeness and peace in our relationship with God, with self, with each other and with creation. Shalom is God's intention for His creation and is encompassed in our creation mandate to tend the earth and to one another. It embodied the Hebrew aspiration and vision of peace, wholeness and well-being (1 Kings

4.25, Ps 85.10-13). Throughout the Old Testament, God's promise of favour and restoration always included both material and immaterial blessing. Having enough to eat and a secure shelter is to be understood as a direct sign of God's goodness and affirmation (Deut 8, Eze 34.25-31, Is 49, 60-61).

Justice and righteousness are closely linked to shalom. The primary application of the word justice (or righteousness) in the bible refers to corporate or social holiness and the relief of oppression. This embraces the whole of creation and is not merely limited to personal responsibility and ethics.

### **The Gospel – Good News for Rich and Poor** **The Kingdom of God and the Great Commission**

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus taught believers to pray "Thy kingdom come" and "For Thine is the kingdom" (Mt 6.10,13). This prayer compels us to acknowledge that the kingdom of God is both present as well as future. From the beginning of Jesus ministry He preached that the kingdom of God had come ("The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand." Mk 1.15). He also demonstrated that the gospel of the kingdom of God is "good news to the poor."

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."*

Luke 4.18-19, NIV.

The gospel of eternal salvation through Jesus Christ is good news for everyone, rich and poor alike. Without the final work of the cross and spiritual new birth in Jesus we have no hope (Jn 3.16-17, Rom 6.4-11, 1 Cor 15.12-19). The gospel of God's grace and mercy is very good news for the "poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5.3). But the gospel of the kingdom is intended to be especially good news for the materially and financially poor of this present world. This is because individuals, families, businesses and societies that live by biblical principles of work, stewardship, faithfulness and justice will alleviate most causes of human suffering and poverty.

Jesus proclaimed and brought in His person the rule of God. The promised deliverance had come. Representatives from all nations are invited to come within His realm and under His authority and grace.

The mandate that the King gave to His followers was to "make disciples of all nations," (Mt 28.18-20). We are to have a transforming impact in the world. How are we to do this? By taking the Gospel, the good news about the Glorious King and His kingdom, to the nations ("baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" 28.19) and teaching them to obey everything He had commanded (28.20). We should understand this "Great Commission" as an incredible responsibility to utterly revolutionise all aspects of life and society. The nations are to reflect His kingdom principles and His glory. But this transformation will only be realised when the nations have been discipled, as a result of His people living out His "Great Commandment" to 'love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind' and to 'love your neighbour as yourself' (Mt 22.36-39, NIV).

### **The Holistic Gospel in Church History**

Only when we understand the enormity of the Great Commission and the Great Commandment together, will we fully appreciate how much we needed to hear Him say, "I am with you in this always!" (Matt 28.20).

In Luke 4, Jesus clearly defined His mission as evangelism, social holiness and justice. This

is Jesus' holistic mission to a broken world. It is a mix of spiritual, political, social as well as economic objectives. This is a gospel that would have been more readily grasped by Jesus' Hebrew audience and the early Church with their built-in understanding of shalom, than by sections of the church today which has been influenced by other worldviews.

The apostle Paul says that we are saved by grace, not by our own effort. (Eph 2:8-10) Then he follows up saying that we have been created for good deeds which God had already prepared for us to do. The word translated "deeds" is *ergon* in Greek which means: work, craft, business, art, good work, etc. It is the root of the word *ergate* which means; worker, employee and entrepreneur. There has never been a separation between the grace of God and practical, tangible real actions experienced in the physical realm here on the earth.

Work ethics and social sensitivity were both contributors to early Church growth, providing respect for the Christian community within the greater society at large (Acts 4:32-35). But it was not long before the Church was influenced by Greek philosophy (Gnosticism and Plato), political structures (Constantinian religious nationalism), and a social class system. This negatively influenced the Christian concept of work and wealth in the wider context of society and the gospel.

These and other unbiblical perspectives inherited from outside the biblical worldview have resulted in: 1. Dichotomising life into separate compartments which accommodates a dualistic view putting a divide between the sacred and the secular. This exalts the "spiritual" at the expense of the "physical", the clergy at the expense of the laity. 2. Spiritualising our faith when we should not. We often spiritualise Jesus' and the Old Testament's teaching about wealth, the poor, peace making. 3. Individualising our faith at the expense of thinking corporately and collectively. We emphasise personal holiness and individual transformation rather than social holiness and societal transformation.

The Reformation of the 16<sup>th</sup> century recovered the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. This included labour as being a Christian calling to glorify God. The great revival movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries promoted holiness and Christian service in all areas of life, including business and the work place. The movement of God's spirit during these last decades has been towards a truer integration of evangelism, social concern, work and faith by evangelicals.

### **Application: The Redemptive Potential of Business as Mission**

Poverty is holistic in nature and consists of not only economic poverty but social, political and spiritual poverty as well. The solution to holistic poverty must be the holistic and transforming message of shalom. Business as mission is a response both to the mandate of stewardship over creation as well as the mandate of the great commission to all nations. It is a response to the immense spiritual and physical needs of the world and its application is displayed on many levels:

#### **Business Restores Dignity and Empowers**

Business restores dignity through creating employment, through righteous and equal treatment in relationships and through empowerment.

God intends that none of His creation be idle (unemployed) and unproductive. To not be able to work, to not be creative and to be unable to help and support oneself and one's family leads to a loss of dignity as a human being. Businesses that create employment are part of God's redemptive plan and process. However, employment should not be the sole target. We need to empower people through training, mentorship, personal development, and ownership, so that people can improve themselves, their communities and their societies. This will in turn lead to better jobs and the starting of their own businesses. This is in line with God's purpose and

our mission to restore human dignity, to create jobs, and to start and develop businesses. Christian entrepreneurs from every church, city and nation must be affirmed in this task.

God also expects fair treatment to be modelled in our businesses; He rejects underpayment, harsh treatment and poor working conditions. He rejects unfair wages to workers and exorbitant prices to consumers. God rejects any form of exploitation and unjust treatment of one social group by another and/or one individual by another.

Business can empower and set people free economically, socially and politically: Economic transformation is about people having relative abundance and participating in wealth generation. Social transformation is about having enough income to acquire goods and services through exchange. To have access and adequate means for food, housing, education, water, health, transportation etc. People who are both economically and socially strong in turn tend to be politically stronger. Work and business enables dignity, self-confidence, production, wealth generation and increase which are the keys to social transformation.

### **Business Provides the Context for Discipleship**

Business is about relationships with others: employers and employees, buyers and sellers, producers and consumers, suppliers and distributors. This creates a whole arena where those who know Christ can share their faith and witness to those who do not know Him. Christians in business become 'salt and light' to people in their working places since discipleship is demonstrating the ways of God through the course of every day relationships. God is glorified when Christian business people work as unto the Lord, fearing God, hating dishonest gain, corruption and nepotism; they love and respect others, demonstrate Christian values (showing integrity, stewardship, accountability etc.), and share the gospel in word and deed.

Business is a recognised institution in society that brings credibility to relationships with the community as a whole. Thus business brings opportunities to influence and disciple the wider society through the relationships it brings. The individual or company becomes 'salt and light' to the community (or nation) in the marketplace.

### **Business Promotes Environmental Stewardship**

Business can also intentionally promote better environmental stewardship. Business continually involves different relationships with nature. Business relates to stewardship through decisions regarding the types and locations of products fabricated and services rendered, of production methods, of types of resources used, and of the disposal of waste.

### **Business is Able to Reinforce Peace and Community**

Businesses contribute to society in three distinct ways: through their primary business activities; their community or social investment activities; and in their participation in public policy discourse. Engaging in any of these three can contribute to community stability and conflict prevention. A business might also promote peace and community by having workers from different backgrounds working together for a common purpose.

*The private business community in general is a potential resource that could be enlisted to reduce the incidence, severity, frequency, and effects of conflict. The idea of peace and community should permeate all business activity.*

### **Business Can Strengthen the Church**

Business strengthens the Church in general. The more people are engaged in productive work, the more the local church is strengthened to do its work. Increased revenue and organisational capacity enable the church to broaden its role and strengthen its relevance and impact both in the community and globally.

Believers living in poverty or in areas of endemic unemployment especially need businesses. Otherwise they are excluded from economic and social opportunities. They may become bereft of influence or the ability to be salt and light in their community. They become salt that has lost its saltiness, offering little or no good news in societies that are already cold or hostile to Christian faith.

### **Business Facilitates Going ‘To All Peoples’**

Christians are welcomed into even hostile or closed communities/countries when they bring the prospect of business and economic advantage. This must be done honestly and not just as an entry strategy to do “real spiritual ministry” or as a clandestine cover for unlawful evangelisation. By being salt and light and ambassadors of the blessings of Christ through business and its positive impact on society, Christian business people will ultimately lead people to seek God.

### **The Glory of God through Business as Mission**

In his theological reflections on business, Wayne Grudem<sup>1</sup> begins by explaining how business has been neglected as a way to glorify God:

*“When people hear the phrase “glorifying God,” it probably first implies worship - singing praise to God and giving thanks to him. Then it might suggest evangelism - glorifying God by telling others about him. It might even suggest giving - glorifying God by contributing money to evangelism, to building up the church and to the needs of the poor. Or it might suggest moral living - acting in a way that honors God. Finally, [it] might suggest a life of faith - depending on God in prayer and in our daily attitudes of heart. These five...are certainly appropriate ways to glorify God. But they are not my focus in this book. Instead of these things, I want to look at business in itself - not just the ways business can contribute to work the church is already doing.”*

Grudem then goes on to highlight how various aspects of business can glorify God, such as ownership, employment, profit, commercial transactions and the effect of business on world poverty.

Our conclusion is that business can glorify God in numerous ways, both directly (of itself), as particularly highlighted by Wayne Grudem, and indirectly, as highlighted in the section above. Our specific task here is to show how business is part of the *missio Dei* and therefore a full and valid expression of the mission of the Body of Christ to the ends of the earth.

In Jesus’ parable of the talents, the servants were commended for investing their financial “talents” and receiving back an honest return for their Master and His domain (Matthew 25.14-30). Today, Christians with business talents are called to invest their assets and abilities into the kingdom of God. By giving finances to missions and charities, of course; but more so by giving themselves, their experience, their know-how, their business acumen, etc. to establish the kingdom of God both locally in their own region and nation, but also to the remotest parts of the earth (Acts 1.8).

*Business as Mission is an act of co-creation in imitation of God and hence a response to the Creation Mandate. It is Good News in itself and hence an inseparable part of the Great Commission. Kingdom building is about wealth generation and spiritual transformation. As such business as mission should be viewed not only within the narrow church-mission-business perspective but also within the wider macro perspective of sustainable transformational development consisting of abundance, empowerment, character and service in which people break loose from the shackles of a world bound by abject poverty.*

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<sup>1</sup> Business for the Glory of God: The Bible’s Teaching on the Moral Goodness of Business, Wayne Grudem, Crossway 2003 p12

**THE WORLD AND THE MARKETPLACE**  
**The Present Context for Business as Mission**  
**Opportunities and Challenges**

**A Global Movement Gathering Momentum**

Business as mission does not represent a new paradigm in itself, but is part of a broader paradigm shift that recognises the holistic nature of *missio Dei*, and affirms all vocations. The evangelical church is learning how to more effectively declare the Gospel in its fullness.

We are recapturing the biblical vision of the Body of Christ, breaking through doctrinal errors and historical barriers that have resulted in the false dichotomies that have stifled the Church's full impact in society. These dichotomies of the sacred versus the secular and the role of the clergy at the exclusion of the laity are being dismantled. Luther and Calvin helped us understand that every believer's vocation is means of glorifying God. But it is only in more recent years that we have begun to understand the full potential and value of this doctrine as it relates to cross-cultural mission.

At the Lausanne Congress held in 1974, several emerging world church leaders sounded the cry for the evangelical church to engage in more than mere proclamation of the gospel. They called for a fully-orbed demonstration of the Gospel. Statements from Congresses in Lausanne in 1974 and Pattaya in 1980 reflect this clarion call. By this reckoning we are about one generation into the needed worldview shift. Many activities have gained full acceptance by the evangelical community including relief and development, workplace ministries, micro-finance efforts, business training, and so forth. But these have typically been carried out as non-profit activities.

Since the early 1990's there has been a growing 'business as mission' movement among the laity which is being expressed in various ways. There have been many international, regional and national business as mission gatherings. Articles and books are being published, websites have developed and academic institutions are including business as mission courses in their curricula.

However, for-profit businesses, *especially* those that are multinational in scope, are still treated with a high degree of ambivalence, scepticism and even hostility within the church at large. This explains why many feel that the business as mission movement is at the very beginning of a paradigm shift. It is more accurate to say that business as mission is at the tail end of a broader shift taking place within the church as a fuller understanding of holistic mission matures.

There is obvious potential for business people to play a more active role in taking the gospel cross-culturally. We cannot ignore the global reality and the need to release kingdom business strategies that have power to bring about deep and lasting spiritual, social and economic transformation. We are faced with both significant opportunities as well as challenges.

*"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor, He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."*

Luke 4.18-19, NIV

## **Opportunities for Business as Mission**

### **A World in Need**

About 50% of the world's population lives on less than US\$ 2 a day. That represents a staggering number of over 2.8 billion people. Of these, 1.2 billion live on US\$ 1 a day. Imagine a population twice the size of the USA, Canada, Mexico and Brazil combined, where each person exists on \$1 a day. In addition to poverty, there are the devastating effects of disease that plague the poorest nations. At the end of 2002, an estimated 42 million people around the world were living with HIV/AIDS. 30 million of these people live in Sub Saharan Africa. This is further aggravated by a disparity whereby the richest 20% of the world's population own approximately 80% of the world's wealth; whilst the poorest 20% own approximately 1%. There is a tragic correlation between poverty, disease and unemployment.

There is also a devastating link between lack of jobs and a variety of social ills. Human trafficking stands out as one of the most heinous. Trafficking is the term used for modern-day slavery and describes the act of the enslavement of a man, woman or child. Traffickers use force, fraud or coercion to hold their victims against their will. Women and children are often trafficked being forced into prostitution. A root cause of trafficking is unemployment. Christians in business can and must address this.

30 years ago, the South East Asian countries were economic nobodies. Their economies were based on low priced commodities. Japanese companies started setting up manufacturing plants and were welcomed with open arms by the Asian governments. Why? Because jobs and training were provided for the population and new technologies were shared that allowed these nations to compete at a global level.

Within a few years, enterprising Asians, trained by the Japanese, began starting their own plants. Today the largest chip manufacturers are in Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia and are all locally owned. While Japanese companies did not have a social transformational agenda when they invested in Asia, nevertheless it demonstrates powerfully how enterprise can alleviate poverty.

*I believe the only long-term solution to world poverty is business. That is because businesses produce goods, and businesses produce jobs. And businesses continue producing goods year after year, and continue providing jobs and paying wages year after year. Therefore if we are ever going to see long-term solutions to world poverty, I believe it will come through starting and maintaining productive, profitable business.*

Wayne Grudem – Business for the Glory of God, Crossway 2003

### **The Limitations of Aid and Development Strategies**

Traditionally development agencies have focussed on providing aid to poor countries as a means of tackling poverty. While aid and disaster relief remain important, governments and NGO's have recognised that aid alone is insufficient to alleviate the problem of endemic poverty. Development projects have an important role to play in education, caring for the vulnerable, skills training and community-based enterprise such as handicraft development and subsistence farming. But these are rarely self-sustaining projects. Many such projects run out of support after a while. One of the problems with aid is the need to keep asking donors for repeated support. In many cases donor fatigue eventually sets in. When funding is withdrawn, the "false market" that the local population depended upon is exposed when it disappears. This is tragic and can create more problems than were solved.

Investing in sustainable businesses creates employment and therefore true economic development for these countries. Real employment gives people dignity and a self-determination that can transform their community. This is in contrast to the dependency

culture that is often engendered by aid. To alleviate poverty people need a 'hand-up not a hand-out'. The poor want real jobs, not subsidised ones. This is the cry for dignity and self-reliance that they deserve.

*We should develop a kind of work and production – intellectual or physical – whose aim is “to become profitable” in order to serve human life.*

### **A Holistic Development Approach**

There is an increasing recognition of the need for and benefits of a sustainable holistic approach by mission agencies, development agencies and businesses. Christians can participate and should contribute in these arenas. We should set the trends and standards by further developing the concepts and practical applications of business as mission. We should aim at working with “all people of good will”.

Henry Ford once said: “A business that only makes money is a poor kind of business”. Most businesses exist solely to make a profit for their shareholders. That is what is referred to as the financial bottom line. Business as mission looks beyond a financial bottom line to a ‘multiple bottom line’; taking into account financial, social, spiritual and environmental returns.

*Economics is a fundamental sphere in the process of social development and without it human existence could not be feasible. From a scriptural perspective, human life should be orientated by specific values, the values of the kingdom of God. Therefore, any aspect of social life must be evaluated in the light of such criteria.*

### **Globalisation**

The world is changing. Our way of being and doing church and missions needs to change as well.

During the past 2000 years, many Christians have sought effective means and opportunities to glorify God among all peoples. During the past 200 years, areas such as health and education have opened doors to serve in various communities. The uniting of business with missions is nothing new. The Nestorians, the Moravians, William Carey, the Basel Mission, various Catholic and monastic orders, have all used business in various ways for the expansion of Christianity; albeit not without complications.

However, due to unprecedented changes resulting from rapid globalisation, business (as in the ‘business as mission’ concept) is primed to take centre stage in the evangelisation and discipleship of the peoples of the world. Just as the Pax Romana created a favourable environment for the rapid expansion of the early Church, so globalisation has done so today. We need to recognise that globalisation has two sides; it can be used for benevolent economic development, but it can also be used for exploitation.

Business is globalising. It extends from international financial transactions to the availability of real-time information and branded products, anywhere, anytime. We buy American products made in the Philippines. We call a local number and speak to a call centre across the world. Culture is also becoming globalised. You see Coca-Cola bill boards in the jungles of Africa and Latin-America. CNN brings fragmented news-bites to every corner of the world. In a distant corner of Siberia you can watch MTV while drinking Swedish vodka.

The church is also experiencing the effects of globalisation through multidimensional missions; the church from everywhere going to everywhere.

The increasingly easy transfer of, and access to, finance, technology and information offers the Church an unprecedented opportunity to disciple the nations through starting new businesses. With the collapse of communism, almost all governments are seeking business development and inward investment since they are in need of these resources for economic growth.

### **Business is Welcome**

There are many doors that are closed to “professional” Christians, traditional missionaries and Christian workers. But there is not a single country in the world that would not welcome business and investment. It meets real needs. It provides job opportunities as well as training. It helps countries to develop not only economically, but also in other ways through the development of a middle class, increased tax revenue, more skilled labour force and so forth. In traditional missions one talks about “closed countries” and “restricted access countries”, but there are no closed doors for real business people doing real business. Governments around the world welcome real business!

### **Business is Influential**

We must not underestimate the power of business. Its potential to have a major impact both on individuals and communities is huge. This potential can be positive or negative.

There is a wonderful web of relationships that comes with business and enterprise. This is a gift that should not be despised. Christians who enter business have the unique opportunity to positively touch and impact the lives of influential people who can leverage resources.

A key Christian leader in a major Muslim country said: “The modus operandi of professional Christians (e.g. missionaries) is not culturally natural and certainly not sustainable or reproducible. Business as mission is about being real and having natural relationships, participating in peoples’ lives through work and business, being salt and light.”

Especially in Muslim countries there is an ever growing suspicion of foreigners who seem to be “in country” without a legitimate purpose. This makes building even the most casual relationships strained because of an insufficient answer to the question, “What do you do?”

Business as mission can be the platform to foster a workplace environment where Christian principles and ethics can be introduced and demonstrated as the standard. In Uganda, a management consulting company, founded on biblical principals and truths, seeks to develop leadership and management skills in the arenas of both business and government. In the nine years the company has been in existence, it has established influence with business leaders, not only in Uganda, but in 12 other African countries.

When Jesus gave the Great Commission, He said “as you are in the process of going - disciple”. This grammatical construction implies that as you are in the process of your normal (business) life, you should naturally disciple the nations. It is true that a fully devoted businessperson has time constraints but then so do the people we are seeking to influence.

### **Business Releases Untapped Resources for Building the Church**

The task before us is quite challenging and includes the need to create jobs, new business start ups, access venture capital, business know-how, access to markets, and clear business ethics. Drawing on the same existing resources for traditional missions will not be enough. However, there are thousands of people in churches world-wide, with the right skill-sets, experiences and contacts that can make a significant difference cross-culturally through business as mission. Mobilising, deploying, equipping and supporting them effectively will release untapped resources for the mission of the Church.

All countries and cultures have entrepreneurial people. These business people (or potential ones) hold some of the most critical keys to practically demonstrate the kingdom of God. This is most essential in areas of the world where the name of Jesus is rarely heard, and if heard often misunderstood. Christians with a calling and gifting for business should be affirmed and encouraged.

Where there is no indigenous church, business as mission can be a powerful part of the strategic plan for church planting. Church planting and business planting can go together hand in hand.

Kingdom businesses provide the local church and new disciples with models that they can easily understand and replicate. A new believer can relate to and learn from someone who is working out their Christianity in daily work life just like them. To the local church, the principle of empowerment, sustainability and multiplication is modelled rather than dependency. In turn new Christian business people are affirmed, strengthened and released to serve God and His kingdom through business.

### **Challenges to Business as Mission**

#### **A Slow Paradigm Shift in Worldview Among Christians**

We are in the midst of a significant paradigm shift in the thinking of the evangelical Christian community. Paradigm shifts do NOT happen over night, it is a long process, usually taking a generation or more.

The issue of the sacred – secular dichotomy has surfaced again and again in our research and discussions. It is a major internal challenge that the Church and the business as mission movement must face.

*In order to begin to understand the hindrances that may deter the effectiveness of the business as mission model in Africa, one needs to appreciate the way Christianity was initially introduced to Africa. Early missionaries presented Christianity to Africans as a great dichotomy between the 'spiritual' and 'secular'.*

Every paradigm is developed and upheld by a certain terminology. This applies to the thinking behind the sacred – secular dichotomy. It is seen in phrases like “full time ministry” and “real ministry”. It is very easy to profess a belief in a new paradigm (such as a seamlessly integrated holistic worldview) but then continue to use old paradigm language or misapply new terms to an old paradigm.

The word ‘holistic’ may be used, but dichotomised thinking may be the underlying foundation. This results in pseudo-holism. In the bible, we see an integrated holism and not two parts (physical and spiritual) awkwardly tacked together. There is no hierarchy with spiritual things at the top, and physical things at the bottom. They are not separated realms with different values attached.

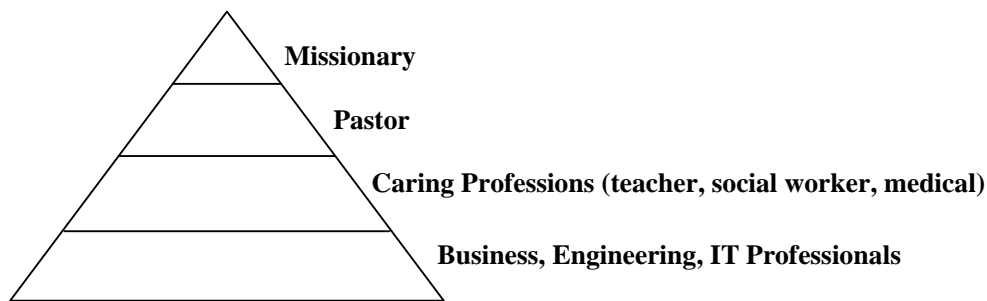
We do not want to simply add “business” to the social action agenda of the church. We can not simply regard business as a useful tool for meeting people’s physical needs. There is a deeper need for a paradigm shift where the sacred and secular become integrated as in the biblical worldview. Discipleship and transformation should address the whole person, seeking practical applications in the market place.

*There are already many Christian organisations that are working in the area of community development. In some cases, this has involved establishing programmes of micro finance, co-operative societies, etcetera. All these, without a doubt, contribute significantly to sustainable development in poor communities. However, in a few cases this has become an ‘end’ in itself. The danger is that a reluctance sometimes develops to fully share the Christian faith, and the social activity alone is considered a sufficient testimony of faith. The result can be a successful programme, business or organisation, but one which is not focused on making the gospel of Christ fully known.*

### **The Stigma of Business and the Passivity of the Laity**

In many parts of the global church the vocation of business has a real stigma. This is largely a result of the pervasive Christian worldview that elevates the ‘spiritual’ realm above the material realm.

In many church bodies, the Christian business community has been effectively minimised, or even marginalised, by what Dr. R. Paul Stevens has described as the unbiblical spiritual hierarchy of vocations<sup>2</sup>. The diagram below represents the pyramid that so many in the church are seeking to climb. Each step of the way supposedly gets you closer to becoming more spiritual. Subconsciously many believe that God is more pleased or satisfied with the service of those in the upper sections, those known as “professional” clergy. Unfortunately, for many, lawyers and politicians don’t seem to even make the chart!



*Many today hold the traditional mission paradigm as sacred because it is the ultimate demonstration of devotion! I mean really, if you are a “missionary” in a remote part of the world you must have made the ultimate sacrifice and your entire life is given to the spiritual pursuit of God and the proclamation of the Gospel. However, when I read about many pioneer missionaries, most believed in a holistic approach and made incredible strides to bring about economic development to the communities where they served. At some point the shift was made and those who were sent to the field only had the background of a Bible school education instead of any other kind of work skills. That instilled into the life of the new convert that the most ‘spiritual’ people were not found in the business world, but rather were full time professional Christians.*

A closely related problem to this ingrained church culture is the underlying assumption that the clergy are the ones that minister and the laity are relatively passive. Pastors may find it difficult to affirm and release (or even relate to!) leaders in other spheres of life.

This false hierarchy can be reinforced by different cultural factors around the globe. For instance, in some cultures hard work is frequently seen as a punishment from God as a result

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<sup>2</sup> R. Paul Stevens, 1999 – The Other Six Days: Vocations, Work and Ministry in Biblical Perspectives

of the fall. Therefore the underlying theological framework does little to challenge this misconception and there is little effort made to address the value of work, productivity or sustainability.

Making a profit or taking an income from business activity is also regarded with widespread suspicion in the mission community and in many churches. Money is seen as a necessary evil and one should not try to make more of it than necessary. As a result, business is often regarded as corrupt and evil at worst and at best, a necessary but distasteful activity (made more acceptable if you are known by the clergy to tithe regularly or to contribute substantially to the building campaign).

*In India the perception towards business is often negative in the Christian community. So when a business person becomes a Christian, often the person quits their job to be considered 'more spiritual'.*

How then will business people be affirmed in their vocation to integrate their faith with their daily working life? How will they believe that their gifts and experience have potential to make a powerful impact on their communities, nations and to the ends of the earth? This is particularly crucial in nations where Christian entrepreneurs and business people are most needed because of rampant unemployment and the existence of corrupt and unjust cultural systems and institutions in need of reform.

*In Latin America, there is an issue when talking about ascribing the same value for all vocations. I still see a sort of discrimination against those with skill/training in business and management taking leadership within Christian ministries and the Church. For instance, the seminaries are reluctant to accept those with MBAs to take leadership posts in administration. We still see theologians doing that. It reminds me of the time the pastors wouldn't accept a Christian psychologist to serve in Christian counselling. Praise the Lord, those years are gone, and now we need to accept that those skilled in business and management should lead and use their gifts in ministries of every kind.*

### **Tensions in Coupling Business and Mission**

There are inherent tensions when you couple together business goals and 'mission' goals. Some of these we will explore in later chapters. However, it is worth mentioning that historic examples exist where enterprise has been closely associated with the advancement of the gospel but has resulted in confusion and exploitation. These are reasons why some express mistrust and reservation.

We need to have a healthy critique of past and present practices, without discarding the fact that business has potential power for good. We need to recognise the dangers and pitfalls and examine how to avoid them.

### **Protectionism**

We mustn't be naïve regarding the drawbacks of globalisation and the flip side of unrestricted capitalism. Trade barriers set up by the US, EU and Japan (to name but a few) represent major hindrances for fair and free trade. The West professes free trade but practises a form of protectionism. Examples of this can be seen in the form of the farm subsidies of the EU and Canada, as well as steel tariffs of the USA. A level playing field in the area of international trade is a mirage. Business as mission does not operate in a vacuum and there is a need for Christians in law and politics, as well as business, to address these issues.

### **Lack of Affirmation and Equipping**

It is doubtful if a reform of international trading laws on its own will automatically stimulate fair and free trade. Unless local people are effectively trained, encouraged and supported to

get into business, they will be unable to benefit from the immense potential that domestic and foreign trade has to offer. One of the biggest needs is to impart the business as mission vision with practical support and training.

In some regions there may be a lack of involvement in business by Christians, or at best hesitant involvement, due to the stigma attached to business already described. However, there are often other reasons why people fail to be involved. These include: the lack of good models, lack of a business driven mind within the culture, inadequate awareness of sound business principles, lack of professional proposals for the development of viable projects, lack of access to adequate capital and investment, lack of good networks and support, and so on.

One of the reasons for these factors is the immaturity of the business as mission movement. There is a felt need for developing support networks, disseminating good models, learning and moving on from past failures, making good business training available, developing funding, accountability and mentoring mechanisms, and in general enabling the entrepreneurs in each nation.

### **Spiritual Opposition**

Business people should not automatically blame their failure on Satan if they have neglected to apply sound business practice or failed to factor in the normal vagaries of business life. One hindrance to starting sustainable kingdom businesses has been the over-spiritualisation of business operations so that good business principles are too often ignored.

However, we should not ignore that any disciple walking in his or her true calling walks into battle on a spiritual plane. The full armour of God and a spiritual alertness ‘with all prayer and petition’ (Eph 6.18) are basic requirements for the kingdom businessperson.

*From personal experience and from the experience of about ten other business as mission - business owners I work with on a regular basis, we know that the spiritual warfare is serious. We know that the redemption of souls and resources at the same time is something the enemy will not allow to happen without trying to deal a few serious blows.*

### **Difficult Conditions for Business**

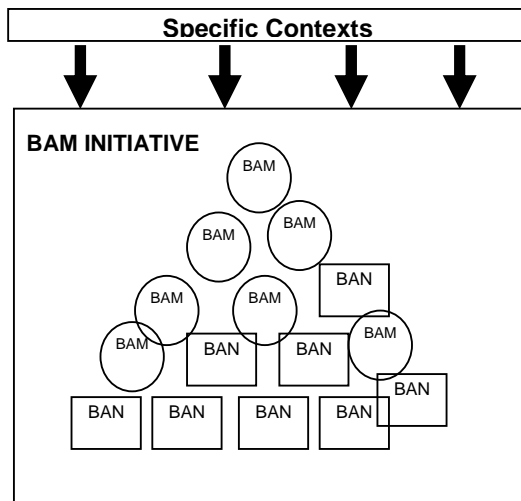
Many countries that are in the greatest need of transformation also represent hostile environments for business. Corruption, intimidation and economic or political instability make it challenging for any business to survive.

Most business investors would normally not invest in some of the places that Jesus has called us to venture. That is why it is even more important that we provide those called to start businesses in these difficult places with the support that they need. We need to look at creative solutions to the fact that low returns on investment are inherent in these difficult places. To create a better business environment in these challenging locations, it is crucial that we work with those called to transform legal, political, educational spheres and with those relief and development entities that form the vanguard.

It takes time to lay a solid business as mission foundation, but its importance must not be neglected. There is a tremendous opportunity to reach into hostile or “closed countries” and to minister to those most in need through business as mission. It requires more than simply sending skilled, equipped and devoted businessmen and women to these places. It requires more than simply affirming national entrepreneurs that God will use to transform their communities. It will require on-going partnering, support and encouragement until there is a sustainable and profitable business venture. Even then, our ‘kingdom goal’ is not simply that these new businesses grow, become profitable and reproduce; but that they have a lasting impact on the social, spiritual, material and environmental aspects of their society.

## THE ESSENTIALS OF GOOD BUSINESS AS MISSION 10 Guiding Principles

Having identified business as mission (BAM) as an integral and vital part of the overall mission of the Church, it is important to identify those things that set business as mission apart from “business as normal” (BAN). As the illustration below demonstrates, there are some complementary areas of overlap between the two. For example, a good business as mission business will, by definition, have many of the characteristics of any well-run business. A kingdom business must be profitable and sustainable just as any other business. Integrity, fairness and excellent customer service are characteristics of any good business, not just a business as mission venture. As such, those characteristics will not by themselves necessarily point people to Christ. A kingdom business begins with the foundation of any good business, but takes its stewardship responsibilities even further.



### BUILDING BLOCKS OF A BUSINESS AS MISSION INITIATIVE / COMPANY

1. BAN = 'Business as Normal' i.e. foundational business principles which apply to all business initiatives.
2. BAM = 'Business as Mission' i.e. essential distinctives of a BAM initiative.

Specific contexts will dictate how the business is built in practice.

This chapter will highlight the overarching principles that distinguish business as mission from business as normal. It is important to note that the *application* of a principle will vary from context to context. For example, for spiritual guidance and accountability some companies have found it useful to have formal contractual relationships with churches or mission agencies. While this approach has merit, it is merely one of many ways to seek prayer support (Principle #8) and to maintain spiritual accountability (Principle #3). Thus we are intentionally avoiding the term “best practices”. The actual practices can vary according to the specific social, cultural, religious or economic context, but the “guiding principle” is the same.

In addition, the *depth* to which each principle is applied and its *focus* will vary from business to business. For example, one business might emphasize the need to create jobs in areas of endemic unemployment (related to Principle #3 & #4), whereas another might place more emphasis on coupling the business with a church planting strategy (also Principle #3 & #4).

What follows is a list of principles that should underpin a business as mission business. This is divided into two sections. First we list the basic foundational principles that must exist in

any good business. Following that are the principles that distinguish a good business as mission business.

### **Foundational Business Principles**

#### **1. Strives to be profitable and sustainable in the long term.**

Profit is an indication that resources are being used wisely. It indicates that the product or service being produced and sold does so at a price that covers the cost of the resources, including the cost of capital. For most businesses, profits are fleeting, and never a sure thing. It is common for businesses to experience periods of low profit, and even negative profit. Thus it is important to take a long-term view of profitability. Occasional windfalls are often what will sustain a company through periods of financial losses. For that reason a well-managed business will use extreme care when considering whether and when to distribute profits. Profit, and its retention, is not necessarily an indication of greed.

#### **2. Strives for excellence, operates with integrity and has a system of accountability.**

While it is possible for a disreputable business to make money by cutting corners, this is not a viable long-term business strategy. People eventually wise up, bad reputation spreads, and the company eventually goes out of business. Long term viability and success requires an unflinching commitment to excellence, and a reputation for hard work, honesty and fairness. This is a basic law of economics, and holds true regardless of whether the company is owned by a Christian. There are standard business practices and benchmarks of excellence that no business, including a kingdom business, can afford to neglect. Furthermore, companies that are committed to doing business with excellence are transparent, and encourage criticism, feedback and accountability from employees and the local community.

### **Business as Mission Distinctives**

#### **3. Has a kingdom motivation, purpose and plan that is shared and embraced by the senior management and owners.**

Good business practice alone will not by itself point people to Jesus. For that to happen the company must be more intentional. This begins with a plan, preferably a written one, which reflects the kingdom motivation and purpose of the business. By “kingdom motivation and purpose” we mean a desire to have a positive and lasting impact in the local community as well as the local church. The owners and managers are mindful of the fact that, while the business itself may not last indefinitely, the impact can be a lasting one. Furthermore, the spiritual priorities of the company are regularly communicated to employees and customers in a culturally sensitive way.

**Example:** The founder of a company established in Turkey left the multinational world to focus on developing a “Great Commission Company”. He wanted to do world-class business while facilitating church planting work in the 10-40 Window. He deliberately focused on Turkey as one of the “largest unreached nations on earth” and intentionally moved to a small city in a region of Turkey with 1.5 million people and no church. His business and community involvement have given him the opportunity to speak the good news to his employees and others in the community that might never have otherwise heard the gospel.

**Example:** The initial goal of Evangelistic Commerce was to generate funds for mission agencies. It was soon realised that much more could be done to spread the gospel. Now with over 60 employees, the company holds daily prayers attended by Christians, Hindus and Muslims and has bi-weekly Bible studies. The company is able to emphasise personal care for employees and actively demonstrate the love of Jesus through the leadership of Christian

managers. Beyond being salt and light within the company, management has helped form two churches and a Christian elementary school.

#### **4. Aims at holistic transformation of individuals and communities.**

In line with its kingdom motivation, the business will leverage every opportunity to bring spiritual, social, economic or environmental benefits to the community at large. The company is a relevant force within the community, and respected by the local leaders. It seeks to be, if at all possible, at peace with all stakeholders, and conducts itself in a socially responsible, culturally appropriate way. The company sets a high moral standard for itself, and is not content merely adhering to the minimum requirements of the law. It also avoids producing products or services that are harmful, or are perceived as harmful or sinful in some cultures.

**Example:** A company in Asia has found that through its business activities the majority of employees in the business have accepted Christ and many local people have been influenced by the gospel. New companies have been started in remote places and resulted in new churches be established as well. In addition, many employees are actively investing time to influence their communities. The government has given the business awards for their activities and as a consequence, those in the business have had a chance to model right living before officials and become a positive influence in their region.

**Example:** A successful Costa Rican healthcare enterprise Clínica Bíblica has partnered with other ministries with similar objectives. It works in strategic partnership with Roblealto Children's Ministry whose mission is to minister to the spiritual and physical needs of Costa Rican children from difficult situations. This mission is closely aligned with its own healing ministry through business. Clínica Bíblica uses its medical expertise to meet the medical needs of Roblealto children, and benefits by ministering to children they would not otherwise meet.

#### **5. Seeks the holistic welfare of employees**

The company sets a high standard in the way it treats its employees. An ongoing effort is made to make the work and working conditions as safe and pleasant as possible. Employees are treated with dignity, and are given opportunities for personal and professional growth. The value of the family is upheld.

**Example:** Being able to work at home provides weavers in the "D company" with the flexibility to attend to other responsibilities such as family, field work, and other jobs. Women, often excluded from many aspects of business life, can freely and equally participate in making rugs.

**Example:** After experiencing periods of neglecting both God and family because of business pressures, TRP Limited instituted a plan and accountability structures for rest and renewal. Current practices include one day per week to pray and plan for business, church and family needs.

#### **6. Seeks to maximise the kingdom impact of its financial and non-financial resources.**

The managers and owners recognise that God is ultimately the owner of the company. As such, they focus on how to maximise the kingdom impact of the company. For some companies, they donate money to other ministries. Other companies may have less financial freedom, but will contribute to the advancement of God's kingdom in other ways, such as through employee development programs, the management of its supply chain, and so forth. A word of caution is appropriate here. Some people feel strongly that corporations should tithe from their profits. We prefer a less legalistic approach for two reasons. First, as pointed out in Principle #1, it is sometimes more appropriate to retain profits. Second, some people will be tempted to think that tithing fulfils their business as mission obligation and they will

not aggressively seek other ways to use their company for Christ. Generosity is good, but more importantly, the managers and owners should take a holistic view of business as mission, and how to integrate a business *and* mission strategy.

**Example:** The D weaving company started as a job creation project, targeting the economic, spiritual and personal welfare of the villages in which it works. More than a decade after its founding, this commitment had outgrown the initial project and produced an additional commitment to founding schools. Today D company supports more than ten schools, which have impacted over 600 families in 100 villages. It has also helped finance the construction of several churches in the surrounding villages.

**Example:** Clínica Bíblica uses its surplus income to support its many dependent community ministries. The network to which it belongs uses its combined income to subsidise the medical care of all needy patients. They divide income into three: one third towards building and maintenance costs, one third towards medical equipment and one third to fund other medical or social action ministries.

### **7. Models Christ-like, servant leadership, and develops it in others.**

Managers of business as mission businesses lead by example, and reflect Christ by serving others. Furthermore, they mentor and disciple others through word and deed. Questions about faith and its relevance are encouraged, and handled in a contextually appropriate way. Decisions are checked against the question of “What would Jesus do in this situation?” Managers meet regularly for prayer, and employees are encouraged to do the same. Employees, customers, and other stakeholders are prayed for by name on a regular basis. In some cases, a spiritual mentor (such as a local pastor) is retained by the company for the purpose of emotional and spiritual care of employees.

**Example:** The founder of a company in Asia shares: “Our employees learn from us that service to our customers is the foundation of our business. In fact, being willing to serve is an eternal value. Business is God’s training ground to teach us to serve.”

**Example:** In the BA company in South East Asia they have been learning about living the Gospel. John relates: “The Lord was showing me the power of discipling people in the workplace. Where do Christians spend most time? Where will character flaws show up? Is this in church on Sunday or in the weekday workplace? Therefore, where should people be disciplined? In many church meetings the Word is only spoken. In the workplace it must be lived and Christian discipleship modelled in response to real challenges.”

### **8. Intentionally implements ethical Christ-honouring practice that does not conflict with the gospel.**

Kingdom businesses operate on the moral and ethical principles of the Bible. These can be followed by all business people to their benefit. Kingdom businesses are enterprises whose purpose is to produce goods and to perform services that accomplish God’s will on earth as revealed and proclaimed in the Bible. They intentionally apply Christ’s teaching to their business life and practice. They ensure accountability systems that address areas of ethics and Christ-likeness. They carefully evaluate their goods and services to ensure they do not conflict with the message of the gospel.

**Example:** Adhering to Christ-honouring business ethics has limited some financially profitable business opportunities for TRP Limited in Central Asia. Fluctuating bureaucratic and economic conditions and instances of corruption have added to the challenges of doing profitable business in an ethical manner. The founder has support from a Christian mentor and a network of like-minded business people in Central Asia. He also understands that an abundant prayer life and deep knowledge of God and His word are *NOT* optional if one wants to do effective spiritual work in the business world.

**9. Is pro-active in intercession and seeks the prayer support of others.**

Managers and owners seek prayer support from others, and maintain open lines of communication with those prayer supporters. Satan will do everything possible to sabotage the kingdom goals of the company, so specific attention must be given to spiritual warfare. Pro-active intercession for the business is integral to the leadership of the company.

**Example:** In the beginning of the business, the founder of a company in Asia was not prepared for the degree of spiritual warfare he encountered. He didn't intentionally focus on prayer, either by himself or with the few believers he knew. As time went on he determined that 'prayer is work' and through prayer as well as organising others to join him, he began to see results. He has found that systematically having someone praying for each employee each day was the best investment that he could have ever made.

**10. Seeks to harness the power of networking with like-minded organisations.**

As the proverb states: two are better than one and a three-strand cord is not easily broken (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Companies that are networked can be a powerful force. Often multiple organisations (for-profit or non-profit) can accomplish more for the kingdom by working together than by working separately. Good kingdom businesses seek out those relationships and are open to serving other organisations that have similar goals.

**Example:** The founder of TRP Limited has been involved in setting up a loose network of about 200 people within a Central Asian country, and another 50 outside of the country, who are interested in pursuing kingdom business in that country. A web site is being set up to facilitate networking and to encourage believers doing business in that nation.

**Example:** From 1991 to 1993, AMI averaged sales of over \$10 million per year and currently have equity in nine operations in East Asia. From this position of strength AMI has established strategic alliances with more than 15 non-profit agencies to do education, development and church-planting work among local East Asian and Muslim communities. In each company the Great Commission (GC) strategy co-ordinator, networks with local church leaders and creates strategies related to evangelism, discipleship and church planting. Expatriates are spiritually accountable to a church or mission agency, and have contracts that describe and specify their job descriptions and working terms.

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Our aim here has been to offer a set of guiding principles for those who wish to put business as mission into practice. This is not a definitive list and will no doubt be refined through collective experience; however, these points offer a starting point. The principles were drawn out from the Issue Group's own knowledge and experience of best practices. Case studies submitted especially for this paper as well as others existing literature were also used. Case studies that most fully reflected the principles were then chosen as examples. Some of these can be found in full in Chapter 5 and Appendix C. For further reading on existing business as mission ventures as well as other examples of best practice, please see the Resource Directory in Appendix F. In particular the books: On Kingdom Business, by Yamamori & Eldred, Great Commission Companies, by Rundle & Steffen, and Transform the World by Swarr & Nordstrom are especially helpful and instructive in this regard.

## **STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS** **Specific Steps for Action**

### **General Observations**

We recognise that the Holy Spirit is awakening and restoring the business community to use its skills and resources for building the kingdom of God. In alignment with the strong emphasis of Lausanne Forum 2004, we recognise mission as holistic transformation. Transformational, kingdom focused business is therefore part of our mission. In order to realise the potential of this movement and following God's leading; it is our imperative to take strategic action.

First we identify some general areas around which we should give prayerful consideration for the development and implementation of strategy. This will be followed by some specific recommendations and a call to action directed to key parts of the Body of Christ.

### **Imparting Vision and Mobilisation**

The concept of business as a kingdom building resource and its strategic nature is still fairly new and sometimes even foreign to many. As outlined more fully in Chapter 6, there is a critical need to impart vision for transforming business and for the development of numerous mobilisation tools and programmes.

### **Significant Release of Capital**

Adequate capital will be required to implement successful business as mission initiatives, especially on a larger scale. In order to enable the generation, release and appropriate use of significant wealth to meet the needs of the business as mission movement and the communities that are to be targeted, a "framework of leverage" is needed. This would involve bringing together of venture capital, merchant banking and other relevant business skills. Those who have experience and competencies in these domains need to intentionally and creatively engage with business as mission. It is imagined that this will include using the skills, resources, networks, etc. of trans-national corporations and government agencies as well.

### **Matchmaking Both People and Capital**

Both people and capital exist 'out there' in the Christian business community and beyond. Mobilising these resources is the first step. However, many viable business as mission opportunities have suffered as a result of not making the right connections. A major challenge is to proactively develop matchmaking processes. This will take people and resources. Facilitators are needed together with an adequate support and accountability structure.

In order to support and multiply the development of new and existing kingdom businesses, there is also a great need for mentors. Those with the relevant experience, networks, intellectual capital, and technology need to be intentionally seeking to develop business-to-business mentoring models.

### **Capacity Building**

Once we have begun effectively mobilising and matchmaking new resources in terms of people and capital, do we have the capacity to handle them and offer effective deployment and support services? At the sending end, do we have the capacity to accommodate and train people? In field, is there a receptivity to accept and integrate these strategies? We need to ensure that we have functional entities on both ends that can effectively handle people and

money, and make strategic decisions. We need effective cross-cultural communication and to build understanding, both between sending and in-field locations and between those from a business culture and those from a mission culture.

### **Capturing Intellectual Capital**

There is a need for good theology and research as well as relevant strategy, for reflection as well as action. We need to further develop the theology of work and business in conjunction with field-based strategies and practice. There are lessons to be learned from the history of missions and from business as mission initiatives that have had a transformational impact.

### **Case Studies**

A crucial facet of capturing intellectual capital is the gathering of case studies. Case studies need to be researched, documented and evaluated. Telling inspiring stories, sharing good practice and learning from experience will assist in all the other areas of strategic action.

There needs to be a commitment on the part of kingdom businesses themselves to consistently document sector-specific case studies of cutting-edge business initiatives and enterprise. This should be done through analysis and the application of thorough reviews generated by adequate evaluation mechanisms.

### **Macro Level Thinking**

We want to effect radical, holistic transformation of society's economic systems and structures. The reality of globalisation is increasingly having direct impact on people of all nations and cultures everywhere. As Christians we must intentionally seek to align business with kingdom of God purposes at a macro level.

We must focus strategic thinking on the equipping and enabling of kingdom businesses that can competitively operate in a global market. This should include taking into account emerging markets and global trends. By capitalising on emerging opportunities, there is the potential to put kingdom businesses in the best position to set the pace and industry standards, and as market leaders to command significant market share on a global level. For example, emerging issues include the movement of human and intellectual capital, technology transfer and outsourcing to emerging markets. Another important area requiring consideration is how to respond to the global implications related to changes in access to and the use of essential natural resources such as water and energy.

### **Building of Strategic Alliances**

In business it is important to always look for leverage points and alliances that can create synergy. There are churches, mission agencies and market place ministries involved in or exploring business as mission. Where there is a felt-need, it is important to explore the benefit of creating national, regional and international strategic alliances with others that share values and purpose.

We also need cross-discipline partnerships between business and areas such as politics, education, healthcare etc. There needs to be an emphasis on the development of strategic partnerships and alliances that can leverage political influence at local, national, regional and global levels. This could include, engaging government at both the local and national levels, as has been the case in areas of Central Asia.

### **Consultations, Events and Facilitators**

To be able to empower and support the business as mission movement, people are needed to serve as facilitators. There is a need for regional and national business as mission consultations, facilitators and equipping events. Funding is needed to further these.

*“Holy people must stop going into “church work” as their natural course of action and take up holy orders of farming, industry, law education, banking and journalism with the same zeal previously given to traditional evangelism, pastoral or missionary work.”*

Dallas Willard – The Spirit of the Disciplines

### **Specific Strategic Recommendations**

#### **To the Church World-Wide**

There is a need for the church to recognise that the Holy Spirit is restoring the role of business in the mobilisation of resources for mission and the extension of God’s kingdom. The following are strategic recommendations:

1. All churches and Christian organisations, on every continent, must closely examine beliefs and practices with regards to:
  - the sacred-secular dichotomised worldview
  - the clergy-laity concept and divide
2. To develop concepts of a Biblical holistic worldview, that positively restores the role of business into the church at large.
3. To catalyse and mobilise the business community through affirming, equipping and releasing business people for their kingdom building vocational role.
4. To endorse and promote the Lausanne Business as Mission Manifesto on the role of kingdom business and Christian business people.

***Practical tip:*** give a sermon (or two!) on business as mission, using the material provided in this report!

#### **To Christians in Business**

Business in itself is an activity that can glorify God. In addition it is a strategic means by which the Great Commission and Great Commandment can be fulfilled. Considering this, the following recommendations are given:

1. Receive the affirmation of the vocational calling of business. Strive to further understand the theological basis of how business practices and profits can be something good and gifted by God.
2. Discover God’s specific purpose for your business. Strive to identify kingdom returns as well as financial returns. Identifying the impacts of the business on the local economy and environment and how the business can work with the local church and the church at large.
3. Establish a clear accountability and support framework for the business in terms of the economic, social, environmental and spiritual impacts.
4. Identify potential mentors and leadership development relationships.

And if God has called and equipped you to do business, ask yourself:

1. Where shall I do business? Maybe you are called to an area of the world where the name of Jesus is rarely heard or in the most poor and needy communities or nations?
2. How can I do business in such a way that God is being glorified? How can the kingdom of God be demonstrated and manifested in and through my business? Do I have a kingdom of God plan for my business as well as a business plan? Should I invite someone to be the “kingdom auditor” of my business?
3. Can I assist by being a mentor to someone in my country or in other countries?
4. What other Christians in business can I link up with, others who also have a vision for business as mission?

***Practical Tip:*** Use the Resource Directory accompanying this report to find relevant books and websites to help you explore these issues.

### **To Workplace and Marketplace Ministries**

There are numerous workplace (or marketplace) organisations and ministries around the world. They have different purposes and agendas. We recommend that these groups:

1. Learn about business as mission and transformational business and prayerfully consider embracing and incorporating business as mission into their ministries.
2. Develop partnerships with others that are working on business as mission, whether churches, missions agencies or other workplace ministries
3. Sponsor and facilitate national and regional business as mission consultations and joint collaboration and learning.
4. Mobilise your constituencies to participate in business as mission initiatives.

*Practical tip: Include business as mission in the program in one of your meetings!*

### **To Mission Agencies and Executives**

Mission agencies are key partners and need to develop a framework for engaging with the work of kingdom businesses. It is recommended that they:

1. Develop a kingdom business perspective by utilising current and future programs of learning, applicable to both short and long term personnel.
2. Encourage and facilitate research and case studies for specific enterprises and their kingdom impact.
3. Create collaboration between mission agencies and businesses in order to further mutual objectives and release resources.
4. Develop wider and more creative recruitment campaigns for those with business skills, including the creation of opportunities for business people through the church.
5. Develop long term business as mission strategies within the organisation – this would include undertaking surveys and audits on business as mission activities.

*Practical tip: Write about business as mission in your newsletter, magazine, website, etc.*

### **To Christian Training Institutions**

The changing face of missions and the reducing number of people entering Christian training institutions needs to be addressed. The following recommendations are applied to Bible Colleges, Seminaries, Christian Universities and other centres of Christian learning:

1. Incorporate a kingdom business perspectives course into current and future programs of learning, for both short and long term programs.
2. In order to enrich recommendation number 1. encourage and facilitate current research and case studies on specific enterprises and their kingdom impact
3. Develop and run courses encompassing a biblically integrated holistic worldview. Develop and run courses on business as mission. These courses could also be offered and made available to MBA and Economics students in other academic institutions.
4. Create internship programs with kingdom focused companies and encourage collaboration of these companies in joint learning.
5. Encourage the creation of kingdom business alumni networks and kingdom focused business-angel and venture capital networks.

*Practical tip: Run a one-day seminar on business as mission, see Resource Directory for further tips.*

### **To the Christian Media**

The rise of new multimedia technology provides an opportunity for the expansion of kingdom business initiatives. In order to achieve this, the following actions are recommended:

1. Help facilitate the use of all media available to promote business as mission activities and materials such as case studies, articles, regular feature columns that promote transformational business awareness through examples.

2. Use of multimedia and on-line technology for kingdom business training, development and guidance
3. Encourage closer working relationships between business and the media in developing media strategies and policies, taking into account issues of sensitivity and risk.

## **THE BUSINESS AS MISSION MANIFESTO**

The Lausanne (LCWE<sup>3</sup>) 2004 Forum Business as Mission Issue Group worked for a year, addressing issues relating to God's purposes for work and business, the role of business people in church and missions, the needs of the world and the potential response of business. The group consisted of more than 70 people from all continents. Most came from a business background but there were also church and mission leaders, educators, theologians, lawyers and researchers. The collaboration process included 60 papers, 25 cases studies, several national and regional Business as Mission consultations and email-based discussions, culminating in a week of face to face dialogue and work. These are **some** of our observations.

### **Affirmations**

- We believe that **God** has created all men & women in His image with the ability to be creative, creating good things for themselves and for others - this includes business.
- We believe in following in the footsteps of **Jesus**, who constantly and consistently met the needs of the people he encountered, thus demonstrating the love of God and the rule of His kingdom.
- We believe that the **Holy Spirit** empowers all members of the **Body of Christ** to serve, to meet the real spiritual and physical needs of others, demonstrating the kingdom of God.
- We believe that God has called and equipped business people to make a **Kingdom** difference in and through their businesses.
- We believe that the **Gospel** has the power to transform individuals, communities and societies. Christians in business should therefore be a part of this holistic transformation through business.
- We recognise the fact that poverty and unemployment are often rampant in areas where the name of Jesus is rarely heard and understood.
- We recognise both the dire need for and the importance of business development. However it is more than just business per se. **Business as Mission** is about business with a Kingdom of God perspective, purpose and impact.
- We recognise that there is a need for job creation and for multiplication of businesses all over the world, aiming at the quadruple bottom line: spiritual, economical, social and environmental transformation.
- We recognise the fact that the church has a huge and largely untapped resource in the Christian business community to meet needs of the world – in and through business - and bring glory to God in the market place and beyond.

### **Recommendations**

**We call upon the Church world wide** to identify, affirm, pray for, commission and release business people and entrepreneurs to exercise their gifts and calling as business people in the world – among all peoples and to the ends of the earth.

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<sup>3</sup> Lausanne Committee for World Evangelisation

**We call upon business people globally** to receive this affirmation and to consider how their gifts and experience might be used to help meet the world's most pressing spiritual and physical needs through Business as Mission.

**Conclusion**

The real bottom line of Business as Mission is **AMDG - *ad maiorem Dei gloriam*** – for the greater glory of God.

**Business as Mission Issue Group**  
*October 2004*