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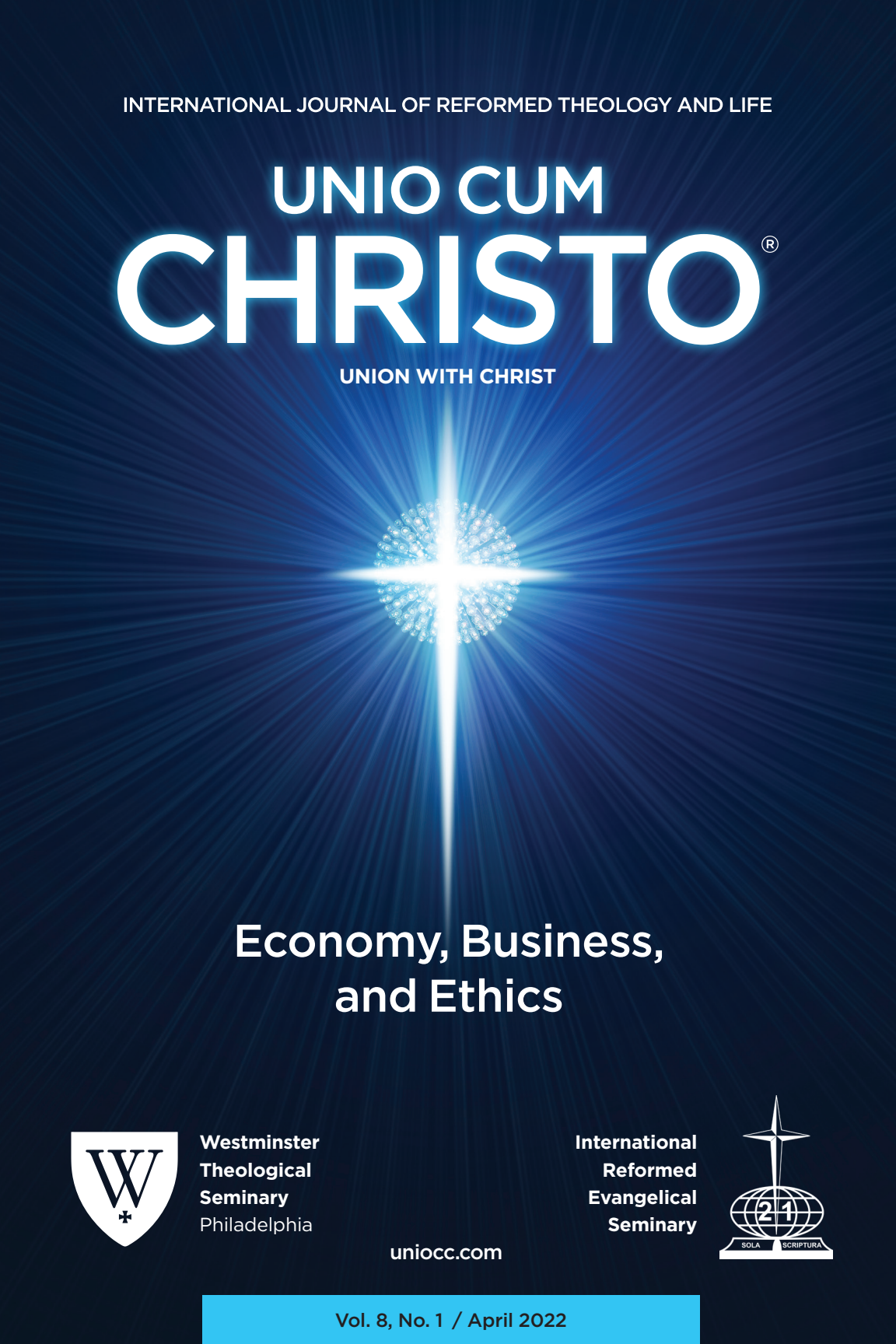

Economy, Business, and Ethics

Westminster Theological Seminary
Philadelphia

International Reformed Evangelical Seminary

uniocc.com

Vol. 8, No. 1 / April 2022

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF REFORMED THEOLOGY AND LIFE

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ISSN 2380-5412 (print)
ISSN 2473-8476 (online)

Printed in the United States of America and Indonesia

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Economy, Business, and Ethics

Published jointly by

Westminster Theological Seminary
P.O. Box 27009
Philadelphia, PA 19118
United States of America

International Reformed Evangelical Seminary
Reformed Millennium Center Indonesia
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Jakarta Pusat, 10720, Indonesia

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Subscriptions

Annual subscription rates for 2022 are $40.00 for institutions, $30.00 for individuals, and $20.00 for students. Single issues may be purchased at $14.00 per copy. Inquiries concerning subscription and orders should be sent to info@uniocc.com.

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EDITORIAL

The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: Remembering a Tragedy (I)

PAUL WELLS

This year marks the 450th anniversary of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre, which took place in Paris on Thursday, August 24, 1572. What happened in Paris was repeated in the weeks following in towns throughout the kingdom.

It was a tragedy for French Protestantism and a human catastrophe that set the scene for later religious conflicts in Europe. It was the first major blow against the burgeoning Reformed faith in France, heralding the long oppression of the Bourbon monarchs, which lasted until the French Revolution.

The consequences were many and varied. Saint Bartholomew's Day changed the demographic and punctured the hopes of the Reformed in France: from a growing movement, they became an oppressed minority. There were also social and economic consequences not only for France but also for her neighbors.

The 1550s had been a golden age for Protestantism in France marked by spectacular growth.[1] At the start of the decade, there was a handful of Protestants; ten years later, there were over 1,200 congregations and as many

[1] Cf. Pierre Courthial, "The Golden Age of Calvinism in France: 1533–1633," trans. Jonathan Jack, in *John Calvin: His Influence in the Western World*, ed. W. Stanford Reid (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1982), 75–92.

as two million adherents. This time was also marked by Geneva-inspired preaching and Bible study influenced by John Calvin, Theodore Beza, Guillaume Farel, and Pierre Viret. The Psalter translated by Clément Marot and Beza had immense popularity; it was the "secret weapon of the Reformation. … The metrical psalm was the perfect vehicle for turning the Protestant message into a mass movement."[2]

The expansion peaked at the Colloquium at Poissy in 1561, where Beza presented the Reformed faith before the young Charles IX and Catherine of Medici, the regent, assembled Catholic ecclesiastics and nobles, and the representatives of the Reformed churches, including Admiral Gaspard de Coligny.[3]

Six months later, in March 1562, the massacre of Protestants at a worship service in a barn at Wassy near Paris by the Duke of Guise and his soldiers was the prelude to eight wars of religion.

Religion was, however, only one focus of these "wars," which were more an ongoing power struggle for the French throne in which the major noble families of the kingdom were involved. The conflict only ended with the Edict of Nantes (April 1598) signed by Henry IV, who had converted to Romanism four years after acceding to the throne in 1589.[4] It is ironic that Henry, the grandfather of the future Sun King, the scourge of the Huguenots, had once been the military leader of the Reformed.

In August 1572, Protestant nobility flocked to Paris for the wedding of Margaret of Valois (the sister of King Charles IX and youngest daughter of Catherine de Medici), and their young champion, Henry of Navarre, son of Jeanne d'Albret and Antoine de Bourbon Navarre.[5] It was hoped that this improbable union would unite a divided France, but it only set the scene for the massacre a week later.

The princes of Condé and Admiral Coligny were the leaders of the Reformed party. In spite of an attempt on his life the day after the wedding, which left him with a wounded hand, Coligny unwisely did not anticipate further trouble. Tragically, he was wrong, the victim of a plot for which Catherine of Medici and the young king must take ultimate responsibility.

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[2] Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided, 1490–1700* (New York: Penguin, 2004), 307–8.

[3] Henry M. Baird, *Theodore Beza: The Counsellor of the French Reformation, 1519–1605* (1899; repr., New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), chap. 10, gives an account of the proceedings at Poissy.

[4] It is doubtful that Henry ever said "Paris is worth a mass."

[5] Beza had been Henry's tutor at Nérac and was sorely disappointed by his conversion to Catholicism, although he hoped the young David who had become a Saul would turn out to be a Samson.

John Witte sums up the tragedy with finesse:

> In the early morning of August 24, 1572, armed soldiers acting on royal orders, broke into the Paris bedroom of French Calvinist leader, Admiral Gaspard de Coligny, and stabbed him to death. The soldiers heaved his corpse from the window into the courtyard below where a mob was gathering. The mobsters slashed and mutilated the corpse further and then began dragging it, now bereft of head, hands, and genitals, through the streets of Paris. Church bells pealed from the monastery of St. Germain l'Auxerrois signalling the start to a pogrom. On cue, soldiers and a growing mob of Catholic supporters began to break into the homes and shops of Calvinists, slaughtering them and pillaging their goods with growing abandon. Waves of popular violence and savagery broke out in the following weeks not only in Paris but also in several other French cities and towns. Within two months, thousands of French Calvinists had been slaughtered—up to 100,000 according to contemporaries. Untold thousands more were exiled from France or coerced into re-communion with Rome.[6]

Among the dead that day were forty craftsmen, thirty-six nobles, fourteen lawyers, thirteen tradesmen, and five pastors. Another victim was the well-known philosopher Pierre de la Ramée (Ramus).

Survivors had three choices: pack up and flee abroad, take refuge in a Protestant stronghold like La Rochelle, Nîmes, or Montauban, or abjure. Many sadly did the last, either out of fear or in pretense. Five thousand renounced the Protestant faith in Paris within a month. In Rouen, the Huguenot population fell from sixteen thousand in 1565 to three thousand at the end of 1572. In Lyon, Amiens, and Caen, the Protestant population almost halved over the same period.

Rome considered Saint Bartholomew's Day to be a great victory over heresy. The pope had a special *Te Deum* sung at the Vatican and struck a commemorative medal. On the Genevan front, it was feared that the massacre was a prelude to a Europe-wide post-Tridentine pushback against Protestantism.

For the French Reformed, there were several existential consequences of Saint Bartholomew's Day. It expressed the fact that if one were not Catholic, one was a second-class citizen in France. The Protestant nobility were unwelcomed at court, and certain professions were closed to members of "the Pretended Reformed Religion." Mere tolerance was the best one could hope for, because royal authority took the existence of two religions in one

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[6] John Witte, "Rights, Resistance, and Revolution in the Western Tradition: Early Protestant Foundations," *Law and History Review* 26 (September 2008): 69. Cf. Barbara B. Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009).

kingdom to mean division.[7] The numerical loss made Protestants into a dispirited minority fighting for survival, limited to certain geographical areas, and with worship strictly controlled; trust in royal clemency was broken; Protestants became a suffering minority faced by an authoritarian church and an absolutist state.

From around 1560 onward, the Protestants had been called "Calvinist," a term apparently coined by a Jesuit; they now came to be known as "Huguenards," which mutated into "Huguenot." No one really knows where the word originated. Its origins are a cause for speculation.[8] The Huguenots themselves did not use it, since it was a slur.

An immediate reaction to the massacre was a flood of pamphlets for freedom of conscience and for the constitutional protection of rights within the legal framework of the state. In addition, several serious theological treatises by the tight-knit monarchomach group, the "Genevan triumvirate" made up of Beza, François Hotman, and Philippe du Plessis-Mornay, advanced biblical and theological arguments for resistance.[9]

The long-term consequences of the massacre are complex and reach further than the immediate shocking human tragedy.[10] They bear on the development of the Catholic south and the Protestant north of modern Europe.[11] Economically, France suffered the loss of some of the most vigorous elements in society, not only trades- and craftspeople but also those involved in scientific enterprises. Where France lost out, her neighbors benefited, not only England, Holland, and Germany but climes further afield. Where the Huguenots went, they took their know-how with them. This impoverishment weakened French society by diminishing diversity, which developed in England and Holland, and reinforcing an autocratic system of tight social control. Protestantism first rebelled against this and

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[7] Cf. Élisabeth Labrousse, *"Une foi, une loi, un roi ?": La Révocation de l'Édit de Nantes*, Histoire et société (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1985).

[8] Geoffrey Treasure, *The Huguenots* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013), chap. 12, 410, n. 2. Huguenot may combine the Flemish *huisgenooten* (house fellows) with the German *Eidgenosen* (confederates bound by oath), a word used to describe the "Confederate" faction in Geneva who wanted independence from the Catholic Duke of Savoy and alliance with the Swiss Confederacy. Cf. Janet Glenn Gray, *The French Huguenots: Anatomy of Courage* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1981), 51–54.

[9] We will speak about Reformed resistance theory in the next editorial. "Monarchomach" comes from the Greek *monarchos* (μόναρχος—"sole ruler") and *makhomai* (μάχομαι—"to fight"), meaning those who oppose abusive monarchs. The term seems to have been coined by the Scottish lawyer William Barclay as a term of abuse in *De regno et regali potestate adversus Buchananum, Brutum, Boucherium, et reliquos Monarchomachos, libri sex* (Paris, 1600).

[10] Cf. Louis Monnier, "Causes et conséquences de la Saint-Barthélemy," in *Actes du Colloque l'Amiral de Coligny et son temps, 1972* (Geneva: Droz, 1974), 651–705.

[11] Treasure, *The Huguenots*, chaps. 34, 35.

gave the chance of another way, but later in the Enlightenment, a more insidious opposition arose that would overturn not only the monarchy but also seek to abolish Christianity itself. Through the French Revolution, the revolutionary principle honored by Lenin, Stalin, and Trotsky entered into world history, with global consequences.

Finally, the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre had a profound effect on the destiny of Calvin's theology in France. The Reformed faith never regained the foothold in France that it had had in the 1560s. In the following century, the Reformed churches became a minority of little consequence and tended to become introverted, concentrating on maintaining the status quo. Conflicts over questions like Amyraldianism and congregationalism were further reasons for attrition.[12] In the seventeenth century, the enormous kingdom-building hegemony of Louis XIV squeezed the Huguenot minority even further. Enlightenment thinking did the rest in the following century, subjecting the Protestant minority to deism. When, following the Revolution, freedom was regained in the nineteenth century, the revival of Protestantism was undertaken apart from and often in ignorance of the heritage of Calvin's theology. All this explains why Calvinism is generally little known in France today, even in Protestant and evangelical circles.

The Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre was not itself responsible for these consequences. However, it made them possible through the blood-letting by which France lost the finest flower of her sons and daughters.

[12] The condition of the Reformed churches in seventeenth-century France are presented in Martin I. Klauber, ed., *The Theology of the French Reformed Churches: From Henri IV to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage Books, 2014).

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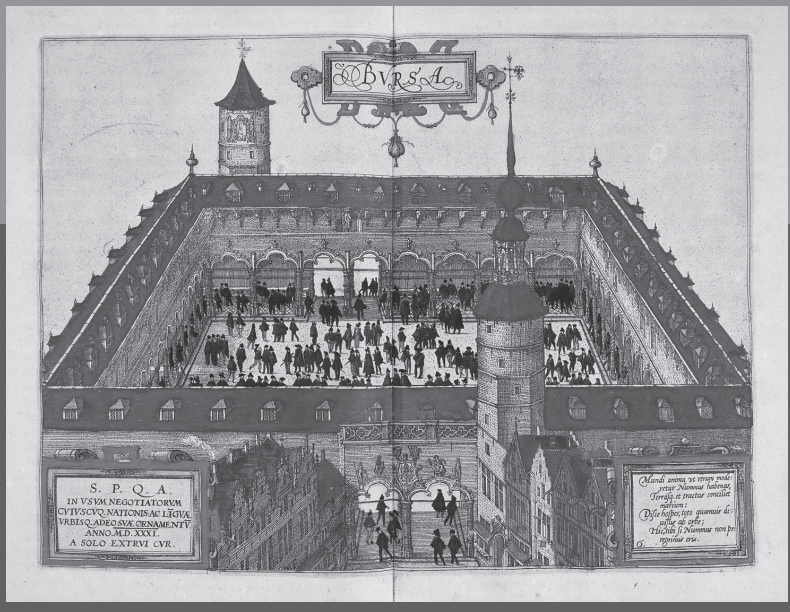

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The Impact of the Huguenot Diaspora on International Commerce

PETER A. LILLBACK

Abstract

The Huguenot legacy is an important strand of Reformation and early modern history that is relevant in the context of business ethics. A vital aspect of global business emanates from the impact of the Huguenot diaspora, which has left an abiding mark on international relations and commerce. This essay considers the main lines of Huguenot history, salient features of the Huguenot expulsion, and influences of their international resettlements on commerce and global leadership.

Keywords

Huguenots, international business, immigration, France, diaspora, global impact, Reformation

I. *Huguenot History*

The Huguenots began as the French followers of the Protestant Reformation.[1] Their identity was formed particularly through the theological leadership of John Calvin (1509–1564) and Theodore Beza (1519–1605). Their story is a vast tragedy shaped by the unyielding force of the French royalty adhering

[1] The following section relies on Peter A. Lillback, "Huguenots," in *The Encyclopedia of Christian Civilization, Volume II, E–L*, ed. by George Thomas Kurian (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell,

to the medieval vision of one France with one king and one religion. From antiquity, that religion had been the Roman Catholic Church.

A precursor of the French Reformation was the French version of the Bible developed by Guyard des Moulins circa 1294, which was published in Paris in 1487. Peter Waldo, the twelfth-century leader of the Waldensians, produced a Franco-Provençal translation of the Bible that ultimately brought the Waldensian forerunners of the Protestant faith together with the early French Protestants. The theological forerunners of the French Reformation were the humanist biblical scholars from "the little flock of Meaux" led by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples (Faber Stapulensis, ca. 1455–1536) and Guillaume Briçonnet (Bishop of Meaux, 1470–1534). While there is considerable discussion about the origins of Protestantism in France, Calvin was a foundational leader. Other forces for the reformation of the French church included Luther's writings and the Reformers of Strasbourg. While the French Reformers had great respect for Calvin and the Reformation from Geneva, they exercised a measure of independence.

The origin of the name Huguenot is obscure. It may have been derived from the German word *Eidgenossen* meaning "covenanter," or "confederate" since a key idea of the Reformed tradition and Calvin's theology was God's covenant of grace with his elect people.

Scholars estimate that by 1562, some two million French Huguenots were gathering in more than two thousand churches. This remarkable success of Calvin's Reformation in France—Calvin himself being an early exile from France—created cultural tensions that eventuated in the so-called wars of religion. The dramatic growth of the Huguenots resulted in severe tensions between the Reformers and the established Roman Catholic Church. Changes caused by the teachings of the Reformers impacted not only the church but also the state, the university, and popular culture. Because the church and the king were so intimately connected in the political tradition that passed to the Reformation from the Middle Ages,

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2011), 1158–60. For literature on the Huguenots, see Jean Paul Barbier-Mueller, *Warriors of the Word: A History of the French Wars of Religion, 1562–1598* (Geneva: International Museum of the Reformation, 2006); Philip Benedict, *Faith and Fortunes of France's Huguenots* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2001); Jon Butler, *The Huguenots in America: A Refugee People in New World Society* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983); Geoffrey Treasure, *The Huguenots* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013); and Raymond A. Mentzer and Bertrand Van Ruymbeke, eds., *A Companion to the Huguenots* (Boston: Brill, 2016). For Huguenots and the economy, see especially Warren Candler Scoville, *The Persecution of Huguenots and French Economic Development, 1680–1720* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960); Warren Candler Scoville, "The Huguenots and the Diffusion of Technology," *Journal of Political Economy* 60.4 (1952): 294–311, https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/pdf/10.1086/257238.

theological controversies inevitably created political tensions and leaders who defended their king's confession of faith by the sword or the pen and sometimes by both.

The first of the French wars of religion broke out in 1562, while Calvin was still alive. On March first of that year, troops led by Francis, Duke of Guise, attacked three hundred Huguenots worshiping in a barn outside the town wall of Vassy. With some sixty killed and a hundred more wounded, the opening salvo of the French wars of religion was fired.

Later in 1562, the Edict of Saint Germain granted limited religious liberty to French Calvinists. They were prohibited from religious practice in towns and at night and were prevented from carrying arms. The foremost military leader of the Huguenots was Admiral Gaspard de Coligny (1519–1572), who was a member of the Montmorency noble family.

Ten years later, beginning on Saint Bartholomew's Day, August 23, 1572, a surprise assault came upon the French Calvinists and killed tens of thousands of Huguenots across France. This two-month carnage emanating from Paris to more than ten cities launched the first Huguenot emigration to England, Germany, and the Netherlands.[2]

The life of Coligny, a heroic and loyal warrior for the crown, came to a tragic end when he was murdered during the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre in 1572. Scholars have debated who was most responsible for the Massacre, in which the horrific carnage totaled in the thousands. Some have pointed to Queen Mother Catherine de Medici (1519–1589) and others to the deeply anti-Huguenot Guise family.

The sinister character of the Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre is deepened by the context in which it occurred. Coligny and other Huguenot leaders were in Paris because they had been invited to celebrate the royal wedding of Henri of Navarre (1553–1610). Henri, a Protestant, was marrying Margaret of Valois, a Catholic and sister of Charles IX (d. 1574). The arranged marriage was viewed as a diplomatic step toward peace between Protestants and Catholics. But only four days after the wedding, the Massacre began. Henri was imprisoned for over three years and forced to convert to Catholicism. After his escape, he returned to his Protestant faith and the leadership of the Huguenots.

The Edict of Nantes in April 1598 ended years of civil war and granted a tenuous period of expanded but still limited civil liberties for Huguenots. The high point of the Huguenots' influence in France came under Henri's

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[2] Barbara B. Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009).

"irrevocable and perpetual" 1598 Edict of Nantes, which unfortunately lasted only until 1685. This decree by Henri, who had become King Henri IV (reigned 1589–1610), gave the Huguenots significant freedoms and protections. But Henri's experiment in religious liberty came at a personal cost. On the outskirts of Paris, he realized he could not unite France without Paris, but he could not conquer Paris as a Protestant since it desired a Catholic king. Henri solved this political problem by abjuring his Protestant faith again—this time freely—to become the Catholic King of France. His decision to convert to Catholicism has been captured by the undocumented statement, "Paris is well worth a Mass!" A little over a decade after the Edict, Henri died from the wound of a radical Roman Catholic assassin. Henri's Huguenot attendant reported that he recommitted himself to his original Huguenot faith on his deathbed.

There were eight wars of religion until a period of uneasy peace was established by the signing of the Edict of Nantes in 1598. To keep his Protestant brethren loyal after the abjuration of his Calvinist creed, Henri appointed his trusted friend, Reformed theologian, warrior, and Huguenot statesman Phillippe du Plessis-Mornay (1549–1623), to care for his Huguenot citizens. Under Mornay's leadership, the Edict of Nantes was signed. During this period, the Huguenots enjoyed control of two hundred cities, with government subsidies for their soldiers, freedom to worship, rights in government and the courts, and funding for the establishment of several important theological schools, such as those in Saumur, Montauban, and Montpellier, with state funding for the support of their pastors. Mornay's relationship with Henri ended in 1600, when he was disgraced by the king and went into retirement at Saumur.

However, the Roman Catholics slowly reclaimed the rights, property, and honors they had lost due to the Edict of Nantes during the gradual erosion of the Edict's provisions, which culminated in the eradication of Huguenot civil liberties by the Edict of Fontainbleau, popularly known as the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685. In the successive reigns of Henri IV's descendants, the Huguenots were consistently threatened and eventually directly assaulted.

One of the key events that assured the demise of the Huguenots was the ruthless siege of the Protestant stronghold of La Rochelle (1628) under the crafty leadership of Cardinal Richelieu (1585–1642). With the defeat of this Huguenot stronghold on the Atlantic coast, the supply line for Huguenot support from European Protestant nations was closed. Richelieu sought through statesmanship to advance French power in Europe without regard for religion, so he attacked the Protestant Huguenots in France but

supported the Protestant states in Europe to diminish the power of the Catholic Hapsburgs in relationship to France during the Thirty Years War. The acceptance of Richelieu's political policies by the French monarchy "made his King first in Europe, but second in power to Richelieu in France."

The final blow to the Huguenots occurred under Louis XIV (1638–1715). Louis, the "Sun King," famously declared, "I am the state." Having been persuaded by his advisors that there were few Huguenots left in France and that the kingdom would benefit from the eradication of those who remained, the powerful monarch signed the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. The ultimate impact of this royal fiat and reversal of Henri IV's toleration of the Huguenots was their massive exile to the Protestant nations of the world and their demise in France.

Louis XIV reigned for more than seventy years (1643–1715). He renewed persecution of the Huguenots, seizing homes and forcing conversions. In 1685, he enacted the Edict of Fontainebleau, revoking the Edict of Nantes. With their faith outlawed, the Huguenots faced forced conversion, the removal of children, execution, confiscation, incarceration, and forced service on galleys. Stripped of civil liberties (unable to marry, worship, attend school, own property, or seek redress in court) and without military and legal protection, the Huguenots either fled, were killed, went into hiding, or endured forced conversion. The repressive policies of the crown included the wholesale destruction of the Huguenots' "temples,"[3] often by their own hands.

Huguenot clergy were hung, tortured, imprisoned, or sent to the galleys, while Huguenot children were forcibly removed from their homes and raised as Catholics. Catholic citizens were encouraged to report any secret Huguenot worship services and then were rewarded with the property of the Huguenots who were captured. Military raids were regularly deployed to eradicate Protestant worship and practice. Known as *dragonnades*, since they were accomplished by the "dragons," or dragoons, they often culminated in the quartering of soldiers in Huguenot homes to impose and to ensure the anti-Protestant restrictions.

The escalating assaults on the Huguenots stripped them of one civil right after another. Their fidelity to their faith ultimately brought them execution, imprisonment, or expulsion from France. The flight of some two hundred thousand unrelenting Huguenots spawned widespread settlements throughout Europe, South Africa, and the new world.

The courageous and often poor Huguenots who remained in France continued to worship, but they had to do so in secret. Since this often

[3] The Huguenots were forbidden to call their buildings churches.

happened in wilderness areas, they began to speak of themselves as "the church in the desert." One of the great Huguenot leaders in the desert was Claude Brousson (1647–1698).[4] Brousson had been an outspoken Huguenot attorney. When he was no longer able to defend the Huguenots in court, he turned preacher, missionary, theological writer, and international advocate, counseling passive resistance. After several years of itinerate ministry in the desert, which included near-miraculous escapes and providential interventions, he was captured and martyred.

The final armed struggle of the Huguenots occurred in the desert of the Cévennes Mountains in 1702–4. The revolt of the "Camisards" (the French word for "shirt"; the people had no uniforms) resulted in several battles that ultimately crushed the last of the Huguenot resistance. This period of suffering has left remarkable stories of heroic service and martyrdom and intriguing reports of extraordinary acts of God's providence on behalf of his persecuted people.

II. *The Huguenot Diaspora*

The majority of the Huguenots were unable or unwilling to emigrate to avoid the mounting persecution by the Roman Catholic royalty. As a result, many Protestants succumbed to forced conversions or endured great suffering and even death. Approximately two hundred thousand fled, creating one of the largest mass exiles in history.[5] The Huguenot refugees sought asylum wherever they might be welcomed, particularly in Protestant regions, resulting in the creation of Huguenot communities in the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Germany, Switzerland, Russia, America, and South Africa.

The Huguenots ultimately regained rights as citizens in the aftermath of the French Revolution with the establishment of Napoleonic law. In 1985, commemorating the tricentenary of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, President François Mitterrand offered a formal apology to the descendants of Huguenots around the world. The government produced a postage stamp declaring "France *is* the home of the Huguenots" (*l'accueil des Huguenots*).[6]

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[4] For more on Brousson, see Walter C. Utt and Brian E. Strayer, *The Bellicose Dove: Claude Brousson and Protestant Resistance to Louis XIV, 1647–1698* (Brighton: Sussex Academic Press, 2003).

[5] Cf. for information on the Huguenots, "Huguenots," Wikipedia, April 11, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Huguenots.

[6] François Mitterand, "Allocution de M. François Mitterrand, Président de la République, aux cérémonies du tricentenaire de la Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes, sur la tolérance en

Throughout these regions to this day, remnants of Huguenot culture—churches, French names of towns and streets, and textile and winemaking traditions—endure as reminders of the Huguenots' global influence.

England was an important destination for the Huguenots.[7] England's reception of the refugees began with the charter of Edward VI (1547–1553) permitting the first French Protestant church to be opened in England.

About one-fifth of the Huguenot population ended up in England, with a smaller portion moving to Ireland. The Huguenots are credited with bringing the word "refugee" into the English language upon their arrival in the British Islands when it was first used to describe them.[8]

Scotland, too, was shaped by the Huguenots. "John Arnold Fleming wrote extensively of the French Protestant group's impact on the nation in his 1953 *Huguenot Influence in Scotland*, while sociologist Abraham Lavender, who has explored how the ethnic group transformed over generations 'from Mediterranean Catholics to White Anglo-Saxon Protestants,' has analyzed how Huguenot adherence to Calvinist customs helped facilitate compatibility with the Scottish people."[9]

The impact of the Thirty Years War on Germany was still being felt in sections of Germany. This added a motive to embrace the fleeing Huguenots. Cities such as Berlin and Brandenburg proclaimed their readiness for Huguenot immigration, and Berlin welcomed thousands of Huguenots.[10] Most Huguenots settled in the Netherlands, especially Amsterdam.[11] In 1685, Huguenot refugees found safe havens in Germany and Scandinavia. Some fifty thousand Huguenots established themselves in Germany, twenty thousand of whom were welcomed in Brandenburg-Prussia.

The Dutch Republic became a major destination for Huguenot exiles. After the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, the Dutch Republic received seventy-five to a hundred thousand refugees, including two hundred pastors. The Dutch helped support settlements of Huguenots in their colonies at

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matière politique et religieuse et l'histoire du protestantisme en France, Paris, Palais de l'UNESCO," République Française, October 11, 1985, https://www.vie-publique.fr/discours/137277-allocution-de-m-francois-mitterrand-president-de-la-republique-aux-ce.

[7] Robin Gwynn, "England's 'First Refugees,'" *History Today* 35.5 (May 1985), https://www.historytoday.com/archive/englands-first-refugees.

[8] History.com, Editors, "Huguenots," History, March 16, 2018, last updated, September 17, 2021, https://www.history.com/topics/france/huguenots.

[9] Owlapps.net, "Huguenots," http://www.owlapps.net/owlapps_apps/articles?id=75899&lang=en.

[10] History.com, Editors, "Huguenots."

[11] "The Huguenot Refuge," Musée protestant, 2022, https://museeprotestant.org/en/notice/le-refuge-huguenot/.

the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa and the New Netherlands in North America. The Dutch East India Company gave the Huguenot settlers farmland in South Africa. Many settlers were given land in an area later called *Franschhoek* (Dutch for "French Corner") in the present-day Western Cape Province of South Africa. The wine industry in South Africa owes significant debt to the Huguenots, some of whom had vineyards in France.

A group of Huguenots arrived in Brazil in 1555 at Guanabara Bay, present-day Rio de Janeiro, and produced the Guanabara Confession of Faith to explain their beliefs. Their settlement was destroyed in 1560 by the Portuguese.[12] A parallel experience occurred with the Huguenot settlement at Fort Caroline, near Jacksonville, Florida, which was destroyed by the Spanish in 1565.

As a result of the Huguenot diaspora, Huguenot culture, craftsmanship, and concern for religious liberty also spread to North America[13] as the colonies of the New World became an important destination for Huguenot refugees.

In New York, the area around New Rochelle was the home of many Huguenots. Huguenots settled on Staten Island, once called Huguenot Island. Pierre Minuit, according to legend, bought the Island of Manhattan for twenty-four dollars. Isaac Bethlo from Picardie, who arrived in New Amsterdam in 1652, gave his name to the island on which stands the Statue of Liberty. Pierre Daillé from Saumur can be considered the founder of the Protestant church in New York. He had the first temple built in 1686. Daillé had taught at the Academy in Saumur and came to America in 1683.[14]

The Faneuil brothers were among the first families to come to the New World from La Rochelle. In 1691, they were mentioned as the first French admitted to the Boston colony. Faneuil Hall, one of the oldest buildings in Boston, was given to the city by the Faneuil family to serve as a public market.[15]

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[12] "The Confession of Guanabara," Covenant Protestant Reformed Church, 2022, https://cprc.co.uk/articles/guanabaraconfession/; see Alderi S. Matos, "The Guanabara Confession," *Unio cum Christo* 1.1–2 (Fall 2015): 133–44.

[13] "The Huguenot Refuge in America," Musée protestant, 2022, https://museeprotestant.org/en/notice/le-refuge-huguenot-en-amerique/; Bertrand Van Ruymbeke, "The Huguenots in America," Oxford Research Encyclopedias, November 19, 2022, https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780199329175.013.874.

[14] "The Huguenot Refuge in America," Musée protestant.

[15] Jonathan M. Beagle, "Remembering Peter Faneuil: Yankees, Huguenots, and Ethnicity in Boston, 1743–1900," *New England Quarterly* 75.3 (September 2002): 388–14, www.jstor.org/stable/1559785.

Huguenots also established communities in the Delaware River Valley of Eastern Pennsylvania and Hunterdon County, New Jersey, where Frenchtown marks their presence. Paradise in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, was so named as a Huguenot settlement. The name may have no connection, but Paradise was also the name of one of the Huguenot temples in France.[16]

In 1700, several hundred French Huguenots migrated from England to the colony of Virginia. Huguenots also settled in the area of present-day Charleston, South Carolina. The French Huguenot Church of Charleston, which remains independent, is the oldest continuously active Huguenot congregation in the United States.

Huguenots left their mark on American history. Paul Revere, the silversmith immortalized in the Henry Wadsworth Longfellow poem describing his midnight ride to warn the colonists about a British attack, was a descendant of Huguenot refugees.[17] Other Huguenots in the American Revolutionary era include Jack Jouett, who made the ride from Cuckoo Tavern to warn Thomas Jefferson and others that Tarleton and his men were on their way to arrest him for crimes against the king; Rev. John Gano, a Revolutionary War chaplain and spiritual advisor to George Washington;[18] and Francis Marion, a guerrilla fighter in South Carolina. Governmental leaders Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and Elias Boudinot were all of Huguenot descent. George Washington was a descendant of a Huguenot named Nicolas Martiau.[19]

John Jay was an American statesman and Founding Father who served the United States in numerous government offices. The New York native drafted the state's first constitution in 1777 and was chosen president of the Continental Congress the following year. Two of the five people who signed the peace treaty consecrating the independence of the United States, Henry Laurens and Jay, were descendants of refugees. Laurens signed the Articles

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[16] Dan Nephin, "Blazing a Path to Paradise," *LancasterOnline*, September 16, 2012, updated, September 25, 2013, https://lancasteronline.com/news/blazing-a-path-to-paradise/article_21a6d8f4-7344-5538-95eb-4cbc82c13c39.html; "Temple of Lyon Called 'Paradis,'" International Museum of the Reformation, 2022, https://www.musee-reforme.ch/en/tresors/temple-de-paradi/.

[17] History.com editors, "Paul Revere," November 17, 2019, https://www.history.com/topics/american-revolution/paul-revere.

[18] Jacob Hicks, "The Legend of George Washington's Baptism," Mount Vernon Ladies' Association, 2022, https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/the-legend-of-george-washingtons-baptism/.

[19] Helen Holshouser, "Nicholas Martiau, Ancestor of George Washington and Jamestown Colony Engineer—52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks," Heart of a Southern Woman, April 1, 2014, https://heart2heartstories.com/2014/04/01/nicholas-martiau-ancestor-of-george-washington-and-my-9th-great-grandfather-52-ancestors-in-52-weeks/.

of Confederation for South Carolina,[20] and Jay served as the first chief justice of the United States Supreme Court.[21]

In 1924, the United States issued a commemorative half-dollar known as the "Huguenot-Walloon half-dollar" to celebrate the three-hundredth anniversary of the Huguenots' settlement in what is now the United States. As we shall consider next, the business world was impacted by the Huguenot expatriates. In America, for example, Éleuthère Irénée Du Pont, a student of Lavoisier, established the Eleutherian gunpowder mills. Howard Hughes, famed investor, pilot, film director, and philanthropist, was a descendant of Rev. John Gano.

III. *The Impact of the Huguenot Expulsion on Global Business*

The impact of the expulsion of the Huguenots from France has been a matter of scholarly discussion. The loss of the Huguenots cost the nation a substantial workforce, and a talented and educated class of citizens. The brutality of the Edict of Fontainebleau may have had a long-term negative cultural and economic impact on France and its national reputation.[22] The destruction of French royalty in the French Revolution of 1789 and the ensuing bloody chaos may have been fueled by the cultural memory of the carnage perpetrated on a previous generation of Frenchmen.[23] Typical of the zeitgeist of "*liberté, égalité, et fraternité*" (liberty, equality, and fraternity) at the start of the French Revolution, Dr. Joseph Guillotin addressed the National Assembly in 1789 to argue for equality in executions as well.[24] The device he created, the guillotine, bears his name. Might the Huguenot spirit of civility have ameliorated the troubled events that toppled the monarchy and issued in the ascent of Napoléon Bonaparte had France not been bereft of the Huguenot presence?[25]

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[20] Robert Brammer, "Henry Laurens, the Founding Father Who Was Imprisoned in the Tower of London," Library of Congress, May 13, 2020, https://blogs.loc.gov/law/2020/05/henry-laurens-the-founding-father-who-was-imprisoned-in-the-tower-of-london/; "Henry Laurens," National Park Service, https://www.nps.gov/chpi/learn/historyculture/henry-laurens.htm.

[21] History.com editors, "John Jay," January 28, 2010, last updated, March 22, 2022, A&E Television Networks, https://www.history.com/topics/us-government/john-jay.

[22] Cédric Chambru, "What Consequence Did Religious Intolerance against the Huguenots Have in France?," The London School of Economics and Political Science, October 16, 2020, https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/businessreview/2020/10/16/what-consequences-did-religious-intolerance-against-the-huguenots-have-in-france/.

[23] Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopedia, "Reign of Terror," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, August 29, 2021, https://www.britannica.com/event/Reign-of-Terror.

[24] Christopher Klein, "The Guillotine's First Cut," History, A&E Television Networks, April 25, 2012, updated August 30, 2018, https://www.history.com/news/the-guillotines-first-cut.

[25] For a study of the intersection of enlightenment and the Huguenot persecution, see J.

France's loss of the Huguenots was the world's gain. John Francis Bosher writes,

> Several waves of emigration brought Huguenots to Protestant parts of Europe …. Some of them found their way to the English colonies of North America, particularly after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, in 1685. …The refugees who left France in the generations that settled in America were not only joining the Protestant colonies of English North America but were also joining a cosmopolitan diaspora, a "Protestant international."[26]

Warren Scoville writes, "One of the mass movements of people who in recent centuries have carried superior skills and processes from one country to other areas which were in some respects 'backward' was the exodus of the Huguenots from France, preceding and following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes."[27]

The exodus of Huguenots from France created a "brain drain," as many of them possessed significant skills or had occupied significant places in society. The French kingdom

> did not fully recover for years. … The persecution and the flight of the Huguenots greatly damaged the reputation of Louis XIV abroad, particularly in England. Both kingdoms, which had enjoyed peaceful relations until 1685, became bitter enemies and fought each other in a series of wars, called the "Second Hundred Years' War" by some historians, from 1689 onward.[28]

For instance, the famous French military engineer Vauban wrote a memorial in 1688 to deplore the weakness of France that stemmed from the exiled Huguenots taking with them millions of *livres tournois* (*£*) of capital and thus accelerating the ruin of French trade and industries.[29]

The Huguenots were leaders in the textile industry, and so some countries welcomed their arrival, believing they would benefit from the immigrants' industry and contributions to their communities. An example of the positive

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Marc MacDonald, "Crossroads of Enlightenment, 1685–1850: Exploring Education, Science, and Industry across the Delessert Network" (PhD diss, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, 2015), https://harvest.usask.ca/bitstream/handle/10388/ETD-2015-03-2022/MACDONALD_CROSSROADS_OF_ENLIGHTENMENT.pdf?sequence=7&isAllowed=y.

[26] John Francis Bosher, "Huguenot Merchants and the Protestant International in the Seventeenth Century," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd series, 52.1 (January 1991): 77–102.

[27] Scoville, "The Huguenots and the Diffusion of Technology," 294.

[28] "Huguenots," Wikipedia.

[29] Cédric Chambru, "Socio-Economic Consequences of Protestantism in Early Modern France: New Evidence, Presented at the European Economic Association's Annual Congress, August 2020," EEA Congress, 2020, https://www.eeavirtual.org/node/1436.

impact of French-speaking Calvinists fleeing persecution is the Belier family, who fled to Heidelberg, Germany.[30] Calvin's city of Geneva had insufficient room for those who would have settled there,[31] but the influx of French craftsmanship helped to establish Geneva's abiding reputation as a destination for refugees and for premier clock- and watchmaking.[32]

Learning English, joining the Church of England, intermarrying, and succeeding in business enabled the Huguenots to assimilate into British culture. They founded the silk industry in England and served as private tutors, schoolmasters, and owners of riding schools, serving the upper class.

What measurable impact, then, did the nearly fifty thousand refugees entering England have on the nation? Scoville offers the following assessment:

> All refugees skilled in preparing and manufacturing silk consequently were cordially welcomed when they settled at Blackfriars in Canterbury and at Spitalfields in London …. The Royal Lustring Company, chartered in 1692, is said to have had 768 looms at work in Ipswich and London by 1695. French refugees were among its founders and provided much of its skilled labor and management.[33]
>
> Numerous other trades benefited from the special skills, processes, and ideas brought to England by the refugees. Protestant glassworkers from Normandy and Picardy, for example, helped the English gain proficiency in making crown glass for windows, cast plate glass, and mirrors. Imports from the Low Countries and France had helped to supply the domestic demand for such glassware until the wars of 1689–1713 cut off the trade. France, even in the seventeenth century, had acquired fame for such high-quality, luxury goods as laces, gloves, fancy buttons, gold and silver galleons, tapestries, and jewelry. … There were among the French refugees at least 146 goldsmiths, silversmiths, jewelers, and diamond-cutters in London; 14 watchmakers in London; 7 goldsmiths in other English towns; and 43 goldsmiths, jewelers, and watchmakers at Cork and Dublin. Other Frenchmen skilled in these occupations had already fled to England in the sixteenth century, and between 1710 and 1780 their number in London and Dublin continued to increase. Huguenots skilled in the metal trades also set up shops in England, where they fashioned needles and pins, fine quality knives and scissors, surgical instruments, elaborately wrought locks, and kitchenware of iron and copper.[34]

Scoville notes, "In 1698 it was estimated that woollens engaged the energies of some forty-two thousand Protestant families in Dublin and

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[30] Peter A. Lillback, *Saint Peter's Principles: Leadership for Those Who Already Know Their Incompetence* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2019), xxvii–xxviii.

[31] "The Huguenot Refuge in Switzerland," Musée protestant, 2020, https://museeprotestant.org/en/notice/le-refuge-huguenot-en-suisse/.

[32] "The History of the Swiss Watch Industry (Part One)," December 2018, Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce, 2022, https://www.swissbiz.ca/is_article.php?articleid=132.

[33] Scoville, "The Huguenots and the Diffusion of Technology," 300.

[34] Ibid., 304.

other places."[35] He offers further evidence for the production of hats, paper, silk fabrics, linen cloth, wool, fine hardware, gold and silver thread, window glass, glass tableware, soap, lace, and gloves, noting that "the membership lists of the Huguenot churches include artisans skilled in fashioning precious metals, glassmaking, sugar-refining, beer-making, tanning, hat-making, and various other trades.[36]

Scoville provides a report from London of two French government officials, Anisson and Fenellon, sent to England to negotiate a trade treaty. Their assessment is a revealing recognition on the part of French leadership that the expulsion of the Huguenots had been a costly policy for the nation:

> It is principally since the epoch of the Prince of Orange's reign that one must report the decadence of our trade with the English. The privileges and favors which he accorded our Protestants who withdrew to England in great number and who carried there our manufactories of silk, hats, hardware, paper, linen, and several other commodities have broken the usage in England of all similar imported goods which they formerly obtained from us. And the refugees have carried the manufactories to such a degree of perfection that even we begin now to import some of their output. There is reason to fear that they may cause our manufactories to fail by offering their output at lower prices. The raw materials used in these manufactures pay no import duties and neither do the drugs used in dyeing. And all manufactured products which pass outside the realm are also exempted from export levies. Labor which was formerly very expensive in England when employers hired only Englishmen has become as cheap as in France since our religious refugees have gone there in such great number.[37]

Given the Huguenot work ethic, frugality, and commercial acumen and energies, they likely accumulated wealth and added it to the substantial amount that they were able to take with them in their exodus from France. This suggests an enriching and furthering of the banking businesses of the host nations. Scoville quotes a letter stating that the Huguenots impacted

> the balance of trade to such an extent that the sub-director of the mint at London, a French refugee named Foucquier has confessed to us that during the four years of peace after the Treaty of Ryswick, he had received a considerable quantity of our gold louis. This he regarded as a certain proof that we were debtors of English merchants.[38]

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[35] Ibid., 311.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid., 306.
[38] Ibid., 305.

Scoville adds, "Finally, it should be noted that in 1716 a Huguenot named La Touche formed one of the strongest banks that Ireland had in the eighteenth century."[39]

The immediate impact on France due to the Huguenot expulsion is still being analyzed. While there was a "brain drain" impacting France, others have argued that the impact was less damaging on France than often claimed even though the arrival of the Huguenots was clearly beneficial to the host nations.[40] Cédric Chambru states,

> Recent studies have documented how Huguenots fostered productivity and economic development in host countries …[;] the overall effect of the Revocation in France is still not clearly understood.
>
> After 1685, approximately 200,000 Huguenots, one per cent of the total population, refused to convert to Roman Catholicism and fled to neighbouring countries. There was, however, substantial local variations in the severity of population shocks. For instance, the city of Nîmes, Metz and Sedan lost respectively 12, 15 and 20% of their population within a few years, whereas the population of Rouen and Lyon remained roughly stable.
>
> In many cities and ports, Protestant merchants had carried out a large portion of the foreign trade and dominated the textile industry during the 17th century. In other regions, they represented a significant share of the population, sometimes up to 30%, including among agricultural labourers. Many contemporaries feared that the departure of Huguenots would disrupt trade networks, endanger industrial and agricultural production, and, in turn, reduce living standards.

Chambru's analysis, however, has led him to this conclusion:

> My preliminary findings reveal that, in 1708, there were significantly more localities with a textile industry in areas with a Protestant community, even after taking into account factors such as trade connectedness, urbanisation rate and various geographic characteristics. In addition, I find no significant effect of the departure of Huguenots on the presence of the textile industry. Whereas Huguenot refugees contributed substantially to the diffusion of technological knowledge and economic development of host countries after 1685, the vast majority remained in France and continued to carry out their economic activity during the 18th century.
>
> I show that there were no significant differences in grain prices before and after the Revocation between areas with a Protestant community and the rest of France. That suggests trade networks were well functioning and markets continued to be integrated after 1685 despite the exodus of some Protestant merchants …. I interpret this evidence as supporting the hypothesis that areas mostly affected by Huguenot exodus were maybe better off in the short-run. While surprising and at odds with the views of many contemporaries, this result is consistent with other empirical findings showing that negative population shocks can have a positive effect on wages and output per capita.

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[39] Ibid., 311.

[40] Chambru, "Socio-Economic Consequences of Protestantism in Early Modern France."

> At last, I analyse the effect of the Revocation along one more dimension: the diffusion of human capital. That the Reformation, and more broadly speaking Protestantism, required reading the Bible and was one of the leading drivers of the development of education is a well-accepted fact in the historiography. Its influence in a country where Protestants had always been a minority before being officially forbidden is less well understood. I show that if areas with a higher Protestant population share before 1685 had significantly higher literacy rates in both the late 17th and 18th centuries, the effect was smaller in areas where a significant share of the Protestant population fled abroad.
>
> I document that the French Revocation and the subsequent exodus of Huguenots did not hamper the diffusion of the textile industry or impede market integration, and may have resulted in an improvement in living conditions in the short-run in areas which experienced a significant population loss.[41]

There is clearly a difference in the evaluation of the impact of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes on France between twenty-first-century scholar Chambru and early eighteenth-century government officials Anisson and Fenellon, as quoted above.

Perhaps a decisive way to assess the impact of the Huguenot exodus on global business and culture is to move from the historical immediacy of the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to the long-term generational benefits of Huguenot descendants and their contributions to their host nations. When this is done, the vast and abiding impact that those of Huguenot descent have had on Western civilization becomes readily evident by a survey of those who have impacted important facets of Western culture in the realms of the arts and entertainment, education, business, journalism, law and philosophy, military, politics and government, religion, and science.[42]

A summary of the Huguenot impact on England's business climate by Scoville may serve as a fitting general assessment of the fruitful and sweeping impact of the Huguenot legacy on the modern world:

> Although the evidence is not wholly conclusive, the French refugees apparently did not add any major new industry to the English economy. Rather, they developed special branches along lines for which France had already become famous. They raised the level of production qualitatively, and they diffused many of the skills and arts that had long been cherished secrets of French manufacturers. Hence, there can be little doubt that they acted as leaven.[43]

The Huguenot "leaven" continues to leave its life-enriching mark not just on business, but on culture and global Christianity.

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[41] Ibid.

[42] For a list of leading historical figures, see "Famous Huguenots," The Huguenots of Spitalfields, 2022, https://www.huguenotsofspitalfields.org/famous-huguenots/.

[43] Scoville, "The Huguenots and the Diffusion of Technology," 306.

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ECONOMY

Work between Creation and Re-creation

DOUWE J. STEENSMA

Abstract

This article develops biblical notions about work. People expect happiness from working hard, and many achieve that goal. However, some suffer from stress-related complaints and burnout, and some occupations also contribute to the global ecological crisis. However, many people also seek to regain the meaningfulness of work for their fellow human beings, society, and the environment. Theology can speak to the issue of work with its two faces. Work should be seen from the perspectives of creation and re-creation. It has not only instrumental value (regarding livelihood, character formation, exercise in moderation, and care for creation) but also inherent value. This notion is essential for regaining joy in work.

Keywords

Work, labor, creation, re-creation, vita activa*, creation mandate, vocation*

Human life is mainly *vita activa* (active life). For many people, activity is a source of happiness. They expect happiness from working hard, and many achieve their goals. However, there is another side to this as well. More than once, people have suffered from stress and burnout. Moreover, some occupations also contribute to the global ecological crisis. Hence, there are pleas in our Western world for regaining joy at work in the rat race, and there are also

many people who want to make meaningful contributions to their fellow human beings, society, and the environment through their work.[1]

Theology cannot ignore this active life with its two faces. Because it can give biblical guidelines regarding the well-being of man and society, theology has a message for humans in this area of life as well, primarily as a promise to anyone who works.

Work is understood to mean any compulsory and ordered activity with the primary aim of meeting the needs of people and society, creation, and culture. It can therefore be briefly defined as *vita activa* minus leisure activities and liturgical acts.[2] All kinds of activities are included: supply of food, care, and education; production and maintenance of goods; management of society and organizations; services; and every other activity from daily chores to a global project. Theology can help people regain joy in their work. It has a message about being human in all types of work, paid and unpaid, voluntary and forced, at home and elsewhere. This article outlines some theological notions that serve people and society in work situations.

I. *Origin*

The first theological notion concerns the creation of work: God gave people dominion over the earth and every living creature (Gen 1:28–29). They must work the ground so that crops can grow (Gen 2:5, 15). In this way, divine providential care for the world takes shape. People became coworkers with God—or, as Martin Luther formulated it, the mask of him who continues to take care of his own creation.[3] Not only does God call his image to work, but the order of creation also speaks. People must therefore respond to the appeal that comes to them from the created reality. In addition, they have the task not only to care for the divine work of creation but also to develop what is potentially present in it. This high position of people as God's image becomes immediately apparent in the naming of the animals (Gen 2:19).

Men and women must work together. They are the image of God not only individually but also together, herein symbolizing the task of humankind in

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[1] Govert Buijs, *Waarom werken we zo hard? Op weg naar een economie van de vreugde* (Amsterdam: Boom, 2019).

[2] Cf. R. C. Kwant, *Filosofie van de arbeid*, Filosofie en kultuur 1 (Antwerpen: De Nederlandsche boekhandel, 1964), 11–34; Miroslav Volf, *Work in the Spirit: Toward a Theology of Work* (1991; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2001), 7–14.

[3] Martin Luther, "Der 147. Psalm, Lauda Jerusalem, ausgelegt, 1532," in *D. Martin Luther Werke*, 120 vols. (Weimar, 1883–2009) [hereafter, *WA*], 31/I:436.

general. In performing their tasks, everyone uses his or her own possibilities, gifts, and talents. This connectedness implies mutual service. Work consists not only in caring for the earth but also in caring for each other.

Work is a gift from God, so it must be performed with gratitude. From the perspective of creation, work thus honors the Giver, has inherent value, and is—regardless of the result—a cheerful activity. John Calvin notes that Adam was created in paradise to work with joy. Labor was comparable to play—sweet delight.[4] Not only was this playful work aimed at livelihood, but it also reflected a joyful surrender to God and voluntary service to the neighbor. It was an expression of faith that God would give his blessing.

The fall, however, affected all human existence: thorns and thistles grow in the field, people must eat their food by the sweat of their brows (Gen 3:17–19, 23) all their lives (Eccl 1:3), and the results are not guaranteed (Ps 127:2a). Fatigue and restlessness, worry and disappointment await. Psalm 90 says, according to the Lutheran translation (1912), that our whole life is characterized by this: "Wenn's köstlich gewesen ist, so ist es Mühe und Arbeit gewesen" ("When it was costly, there was effort and work," v. 10).[5] Working hard could have destructive consequences for physical and psychological well-being. The Israelites had to experience great misery and sorrow from their slave labor in Egypt and in the promised land itself. Work, as Calvin says, has taken on a slavish character, as of someone condemned to the quarry.[6]

For many, work is literally slave labor. The fall has thoroughly disrupted the relationship between man and his labor. In ancient Greece, those who ran city-state government and citizens who participated in making state decisions looked down on all the work people did for a livelihood because such activity did not accomplish anything permanent. This attitude may have arisen because men and women from conquered nations were taken to the homes of their conquerors and labor was increasingly associated with slavery. Ultimately, the one who performed the heaviest physical work was in the lowest position on the social ladder. What had to be done for sustenance was considered equivalent to slave labor: the person who was subject to necessity was considered but a toiling animal and scarcely worthy of being called human. This ethos made it all the more necessary for citizens of the *polis* to keep slaves. Eventually, life apart from labor was considered so important in the *polis* that every kind of manual work was denigrated. Occupations were classed and

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[4] John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses Called Genesis*, trans. John King (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), 1:174 (on Gen 3:17).

[5] Cf. https://www.bible.com/nl/bible/51/PSA.90.DELUT.

[6] Calvin, *Genesis*, 1:174.

ranked on the social ladder in inverse proportion to the degree of physical exertion required. Although this distinction between work for subsistence and work for the public good continued for a long time, it disappeared under the influence of the philosophers, who emphasized contemplation, with the result that political activity too was devalued.[7]

Each period of history—the agricultural culture, the culture of manufacturing, the industrialized society, and finally the information society—has brought with it its own brokenness in the relationship between people and their labor. People still suffer from appalling working conditions, exploitation, and discrimination—children not excluded. Excessive scientific management alienates people from their work in favor of increasing profits for shareholders. Human freedom and creativity are violated. For many people, work does not really improve the development of their gifts and talents. Sometimes, working people are seen as a mere means to profit for management and shareholders.

While classical antiquity looked down on manual labor, the socialist movement disdained white-collar work. This movement does not deem anything that does not meet the criterion of productivity worthy of being called labor. Karl Marx stated that people distinguish themselves from animals in that people can use their creativity in work and potentially realize themselves; non-productive labor, on the other hand, is parasitic. The socialist movement rightly criticized the misery of exploitation and other dire working conditions. Masses of workers became alienated from the products of collective processes and did not experience the fulfillment of their humanity through their work. In contemporary society, the relationship between people and their work is still seriously disrupted: they lack job satisfaction, they are exploited, they have no possibility for the further development of their gifts and talents, and they slide into laziness.

However, the disruption of the relationship between man and his work is also reflected in an exaggerated valuation of productive labor. According to Georg F. W. Hegel, work is a path to freedom, and Marx agreed with him. This exaggerated valuation of work took on terrible forms in National Socialism (see, for instance, the slogan *Arbeit macht frei*, "work makes free") and in the communist systems of the twentieth century. In liberalism, however, the estimation of the value of labor was also high. Adam Smith pointed out the benefits of productive labor as a means of raising the standard of living of all of society. His liberal view of self-interest as the

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[7] Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, With an Introduction by Margaret Canovan, 2nd ed. (1958; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 81–85.

engine on which the economy runs has left an enduring mark on the Western world.

People expect a lot from paid work: consumption, self-realization, expression of authenticity, and prestige. Work has thus become a religion, a basic trust. As Thomas Carlyle put it, *laborare est orare* ("to work is to pray"). Because of work, it is thought, man can become what he otherwise could not have been. Another way of putting it is *laboro, ergo sum* ("I work, therefore I am"). Scientific and technological work enables societies to be organized according to their own models. The manufactured society must be a successful society with happiness as the product of its own design.

The tendency to place a high value on productive labor became particularly visible when it was seen as the means no longer to mere survival but rather to promote prosperity and wealth. Adam Smith's model, based on an "invisible hand" that ensures that economic self-interest ultimately serves the good of society as a whole, offered anything but a solution to the global problem of degrading working conditions, poverty, and unemployment.

The brokenness in the relationship between people and their work is further seen in the opposition within social contexts, such as marriage and family, companies and organizations, countries and peoples. Disrespectful behavior and irreconcilability hinder cooperation according to God's intention. This brokenness is evident in all relationships in which humans stand, including their relationships with themselves and their relationships with God. The concern for sustenance can be so great that it affects spiritual life and people become alienated not only from their labor but also from their Creator. Moreover, work apart from God is an idol and a destructive tool in the hands of godless men. The present time shows that scientific and technical work can take on demonic forms. In addition, this brokenness is reflected in the neglect of the natural environment and the well-being of animals. Scientific and technical works not only are a blessing but can also bring about a great curse.

II. *General Goodness*

Scripture also testifies to the unspeakable goodness shown by God after the fall: he immediately promised restoration of what had been violated. Through their work, he continues to use people to care for his world. Abel became a shepherd and Cain a farmer, the culture receiving a tremendous boost through the latter. Jabal was the progenitor of herdsmen, Jubal of all who play lyre and flute, and Tubal-Cain of all bronze and iron smiths (Gen 4:17–22). Noah was a farmer and planted a vineyard (Gen 9:20).

God sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous (Matt 5:45) so they all can see the fruit of their work. As long as the earth exists, there will be sowing and reaping, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night (Gen 8:22). Therefore, all hard work is profitable (Prov 14:23). Thanks to God's providence, people go out to their work until evening (Ps 104:23). By using people in his care for all of reality, he connects people with each other. Lamech names his son Noah because he will comfort his relatives in their labor and in the painful toil of their hands (Gen 5:29).

God saves his world from destruction by this providential order. Work is possible thanks to his patience, and people can also enjoy their work.[8] They can experience it not only as a means of sustenance, development of their gifts, and formation of their characters, but also as a purpose in itself. In this way, they can experience the good of creation. There can therefore be a shared joy, as shown by the farmer and his new servant: "And with one accord the toiling couple / has *enjoyed* the laborious field work."[9] God has, according to Calvin, somewhat softened the harshness of the penalty for the fall by allowing people to experience some joy in their work.[10]

In addition, religious work is not deemed more valuable than manual labor. There is nothing inferior about fetching water and chopping wood, according to Clement of Alexandria, who also points out that King Pittacus of Miletus worked in a mill and Jacob tended Laban's flocks.[11] Likewise, the Reformers—in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church—regarded daily labor as being no less valuable than the *vita contemplativa*, and they repudiated the effect of ancient Greek anthropology on theology. According to Calvin, even the lowest work can shine brightly and be very precious as long as it is done in obedience to the calling of God.[12] Therefore, employers must always treat their employees with respect and take care of their well-being.[13]

God continues to address people regarding their initial mission, namely, to rule and cultivate the earth wisely and to care for their neighbors. They will be held accountable for this. However, the Most High is also the one who has planned for salvation so that he can restore and renew the ordering of work in creation.

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[8] Cf. Helmut Thielicke, *Theologische Ethik* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1965), II/1: §1506.

[9] In Dutch, "*En zwijgend heeft't zwoegend paar / Het moeizaam akkerwerk genóten*." Willem de Mérode, *Het boek van de arbeid*, ed. K. G. Boon et al. (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 1957), 163.

[10] Calvin, *Genesis*, 1:174 (on Gen 3:17).

[11] Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus* 3.10.

[12] John Calvin, *Institutes* 3.10.6.

[13] Calvin, *Institutes* 2.8.46.

III. *Renewal*

The divine plan of salvation pertains to all human existence, including activities. God promised Abraham and his descendants a rich blessing. Israel was given the privilege of living in a land that would flow with milk and honey. That is why his people pray for that blessing (Ps 90:17). They may, according to God's promise, enjoy the fruits of their labor and be happy (e.g., Ps 128:1–2). In Israel, it became apparent in a new way that God regards people as coworkers in his care for his world. Households work on their own land and tend their livestock (Exod 20:9–10). A woman who is zealous and joyful in making garments of wool and linen is to be praised (Prov 31:13–31).

YHWH is deeply involved in the day-to-day work of his people. He is, according to Isaiah, the source of agricultural knowledge and teaches the farmer everything he must do (Isa 28:24–29). The Hebrew Scriptures deemed those who worked with their hands no less valuable than those who did administrative work. The carpenters, architects, and masons who repaired the temple in Jerusalem in the time of King Josiah were called "trustworthy men" (cf. 2 Kgs 22:6–7). Bezalel, who was in charge of the design and realization of the tent of meeting, was filled with the Spirit of God. He had wisdom and insight and was gifted in all kinds of craft: making objects of gold, silver, and bronze, using precious stones, and carving. God, through his Spirit, had also given great skill to other craftsmen (Exod 31:2–6). They were engravers, designers, weavers, and embroiderers in blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine linen (Exod 35:34–35).

In ancient Israel, work was a means by which God gave his blessing. His involvement in it was a source of comfort. Those who feared the Lord believed that they would eat the fruit of their labor and that blessings and prosperity would be theirs (cf. Ps 128:2). In contrast, disobedience would affect the Israelites in their working lives. He would then break down their stubborn pride and make the sky above them like iron and the ground beneath them like bronze. Then their strength would be spent in vain because their soil would not yield its crops, nor would the trees of their land yield their fruit (Lev 26:20).

In ancient Israel, daily work was primarily a means of meeting needs. To this end, the Israelites had to work six days a week (Exod 20:9; 16:26). Wisdom therefore incites zeal (Prov 6:6–11). The development of culture and the manufacture of all kinds of goods also fit in with this. In this way, YHWH wanted to take care of his people. When we can work, we are fed and

clothed by him who feeds and clothes people.[14] God, who cares for his creatures, commands man to act accordingly. His sovereignty goes hand-in-hand with human responsibility; they do not compete.

In particular, the Sabbath was a sign of this providential care of YHWH. On this holy day, the Israelites celebrated the fact that they could place their work in God's hands, enjoy his care, and look forward to the time when the curse on the earth would be completely removed and the struggle for livelihoods would be over. This day called the Israelites' attention to God's work and reminded them that they could not secure their own existence (cf. Exod 20:11). Associated with this sign were the Sabbath year and the Jubilee (Lev 25:11). All work was put into perspective. The Israelites could do their work in dependence on God. In addition, the Festival of Harvest, with the first fruits of the crops the Israelites sowed in their field, and the Festival of Ingathering at the end of the year reminded them of divine providence (cf. Exod 23:16).

The prophets of Israel proclaimed that in the messianic realm, too, the creative gift of work would continue to exist. Plowshares and pruning hooks have not lost their function (Isa 2:4; Mic 4:3). The people of the New Jerusalem will build houses and dwell in them. They will plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not labor in vain (Isa 65:21, 23). Farmers and shepherds will live together (Jer 31:24). The mountains of Israel will be plowed and sown (Ezek 36:9). The prophets portray a glorious future with earthly images. The Messiah brings salvation to all aspects of creation, including daily work. The results of this work that can stand the divine test are taken into the messianic realm. This means that daily work is measured not only by the creative work of God but also by his re-creation. God does not just throw away his world or people's accomplishments that are in accordance with his commands. People exercise not only a creation mandate but also an eschatological mandate.[15] God also promises the restoration and renewal of work relationships. According to the gospel, people in his realm are governed by love, fidelity, forgiveness, and respectful dealings with each other.

IV. *Fulfillment*

God has fulfilled his promise of redemption in Christ and through him has already restored and renewed his creation, including the creative gift of

[14] Cf. Augustine, *De opere monachorum* (*The Work of Monks*), 35.

[15] Cf. Darell Cosden, *A Theology of Work: Work and the New Creation*, Theological Monographs (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006), 46.

work, for those who believe this fulfillment is already a reality. Christ has delivered everyone who believes from the power of evil. Despite this reality, however, they still suffer the consequences of evil, but they may look forward to the day when the effects of the power of evil will also be over and Christ's victory will be a reality in perfect glory.

Daily work that is separated from God, however, is a power that exalts itself against him. This power manifests itself strongly in today's Western society. For many, hard work dominates everyday life not only because of the necessity and duty to work but also because people choose it themselves. Many people even expect their greatest happiness to come from work, and as a result, it takes over their whole lives. The point is that work then becomes an obstacle to faith.

The gospel, however, proclaims that Christ is supreme over every power and authority (cf. Col 2:10, 15). Christians are placed, together with Christ, above every earthly power and can use this powerful position as a tool. In this knowledge, they perform their daily work (cf. Col 3:17) and seek to do what their Lord desires. They do not live like other people or share their ideas about working life (cf. Eph 4:17); instead, they approve the will of God—what is good and pleasing to him and is perfect (Rom 12:2). In principle, their relationship to work has been restored. Labor is no longer a power that dominates them but an instrument that they use for their task as God's steward on earth. They are put in the position that Adam initially stood in. Thus, thanks to Christ, they may regard themselves as God's coworkers who care for the world with joy, gratitude, and modesty.

In addition to regarding work as something to be taken seriously, believers may perform their work with a certain degree of relaxation. They realize that their ultimate hope is not therein and that they are not justified by their good works before the supreme judge. Their lives do not depend on the results of their efforts, and they cannot thereby secure their existence. Their only holdfast is Christ. Whatever they receive as a result of their work is in their view a divine gift. God provides for the needs of his children (Ps 127:2b; Matt 6:24–34).

Believers' work ultimately bears the character of service to Christ (Eph 6:5–8). As all things are created for him (Col 1:15–20), so is labor. In fact, believers' connection to Christ is even more intimate: because Christ lives in them (Gal 2:20), Christ himself is ultimately the one who works. He has made it possible for believers to accept the gift of labor in gratitude and for this gift to be sanctified through the word of God and through prayer (1 Tim 4:4). Only in Christ can work flourish. Dietrich Bonhoeffer notes that the original image of work appears to lie in the heavenly realm: labor is the

creative service of God and Christ to the world and of men to God.[16] God wants to work in the world through Christ. Work should be focused.[17] The biblical work ethic, says Walther Bienert, is an ethos of *laborare ex oratione*: working from prayer.[18] The perfect flourishing of that work will be in God's new world.

In their work, Christians consider not only the ordering of God in creation but also the divine kingdom that has come in Christ and will one day come in full glory. On that day, God will fully restore and renew what has been broken. The church confesses the resurrection of the *material* body, which requires a similarly *material* environment. The earth is promised as an inheritance. Scripture therefore paints a future in earthly colors. Christ showed some aspects of that future in his works on earth and is still setting up signs of his kingdom. Work that is purified and sanctified by him has eternal value. Despite its flaws and shortcomings, it will continue to exist and, by God's grace, provide the building blocks of the glorious new world.[19]

In that world, the work of the godless will not be forgotten. Bonhoeffer speaks of the city built by Cain as a prefigure of the eternal city of God and notes that thanks to the invention of musical instruments, people can get a foretaste of heavenly music. Just as metals serve to decorate houses, treasures of gold and precious stones adorn the heavenly city. Metals also serve to make the sword of retributive justice.[20] So it may be that the worker perishes, but his work continues to exist. Thus, daily work purified and sanctified by Christ may share in the glorious eschatological renewal of the present world.[21] This new world is one standard by which work in the present time can be assessed.

The expectation of this renewal can motivate any worker in heavy and laborious work and give work ultimate meaning. At the same time, it places this work into perspective. Only by grace can it be a building block of the new earth. This knowledge prevents self-exaltation. The new creation is entirely the work of God. He is therefore the only one who decides which work can withstand the test. The eternity perspective therefore also provides motivation to work in obedience to God. On the last day, each person's

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[16] Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethik*, ed. Eberhard Bethge, 10th ed. (1949; repr., Munich: Kaiser 1984), 351.

[17] Ibid., 220.

[18] Walther Bienert, *Die Arbeit nach der Lehre der Bibel: Eine Grundlegung evangelischer Sozialethik* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1954), 390.

[19] Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christus: De zin der geschiedenis* (Nijkerk: Callenbach, 1958), 179–80.

[20] Bonhoeffer, *Ethik*, 222.

[21] Cosden, *Theology*, 144–76; Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 79–122.

work will come to light, and the fire will test the quality of that work (1 Cor 3:12–13).

V. *Attitude*

Because the redemption by Christ has cosmic dimensions, the world of work is also in principle restored and renewed. Therefore, Christians work in renewed gratitude to God the Father (Col 3:17). In doing so, they respond not only to the providential care of God but also to his acts of salvation.[22] Christ restored his followers to their original position as coworkers with God. Believers may answer in gratitude and perform their work in view of the glorified world yet to come. The relationship to Christ therefore provides special encouragement. Hence, Luther said that believers can bear the burden of their daily work easily, cheerfully, and with good courage.[23] In any case, for Christians, work is accompanied by an inner attitude, a shadow work, so to speak, and a reflection on how this work benefits their neighbors. In this way, work that consists of mind-numbing, repetitive actions may also acquire a more joyful dimension. Those actions will only cause real damage to workers if they are mentally imprisoned by such work.[24] Believers are not subject to a foreign power, not even the power of work that does not do justice to their humanity. This does not eliminate the need for improvement in the world of labor, which will remain until the Last Day. Gratitude is therefore not the same as being passive; rather, it goes along with a commitment to improving working conditions.

Fundamental to believers is the will of God. In all things, they should first seek God's kingdom and his righteousness (cf. Matt 6:33). This requires setting priorities. Jesus consistently pointed this out to his disciples. He had called them away from their daily work to follow him, and Mary chose the better part, listening to his teaching, over the work of serving guests (cf. Luke 10:38–42). Jesus warned against setting other priorities, such as viewing a newly purchased field or inspecting oxen (Luke 14:15–24), if this would hinder following him. But, in the end, daily work does not compete with the following of Christ. It takes shape precisely in the everyday practice of the worker.[25] Faith must shine through all the activities of the Christian.

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[22] Cf. David H. Jensen, *Responsive Labor: A Theology of Work* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2006), 43–66.

[23] Martin Luther, "In XV Psalmos graduum [On the Fifteen Psalms of Ascent], 1532/33 [1540]," in *WA*, 40/III:280–81 (on Ps 128:2).

[24] Brian Brock, *Christian Ethics in a Technological Age* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 310.

[25] Cf. Martin Luther, "Hauspostille, 1544," in *WA*, 52:62.

This is particularly evident in the work done in the Christian congregation. Karl Barth made this point by arguing that the participation of believers in the service of the church takes precedence over all other activities. There, the active life of people stands in a direct analogy with divine action. Daily work is but the surface layer of what they do, just as the work of God in his providence is the outside of his work in election and reconciliation. What believers do in and through their faith communities is their actual and essential activity. Daily work is necessary for survival, and survival is necessary for faith and service. Thus, daily work is important primarily because it makes the actual work possible.[26]

Bonhoeffer also speaks of this orientation of daily work toward Christ and the cocreation of the believer with God. The divine mandate regarding work creates a work that waits for Christ, is focused on him, is open to him, serves him, and glorifies him.[27] The idea that work in the Christian community is of supreme value does not contradict the idea that daily work has its own value.

The renewal that Christ has brought also provides a new, peaceful connection between people in their work. In Christ, there is neither master nor servant, employer nor employee, director nor secretary (cf. Gal 3:28). This peaceable solidarity is expressed in respectful interaction between people in the workplace. There is forgiveness for those who fail and patience with those who fall short. However, gracious association implies neither cheap grace nor sentimentality. Persistent disrespectful behavior requires correction; love in Christ does not preclude sharp words. Moreover, no one in the workplace should be seen as merely a means to achieve the company's objectives; coworkers' self-worth and humanity must always be kept in mind.

VI. *Sanctification*

Another notion in Scripture is the guidance of the Holy Spirit in believers' work. The Spirit equips them with skills, gifts, and talents. To this end, he ties in with the constitution of believers, their social relationships, and their positions in society. What do Christians have that they did not receive (1 Cor 4:7)?

The Spirit also causes them to dislike what is not in accordance with the will of God in work situations. Furthermore, believers also experience joy

[26] Karl Barth, *Kirchliche Dogmatik* (Zollikon-Zurich: Evangelischer Verlag, 1951), III/4:590–91.

[27] Bonhoeffer, *Ethik*, 222.

in their work as a gift of the Spirit and make a cheerful commitment to accomplish something good, either directly through their work or indirectly through their income. In this way, their working attitude is sanctified. The Spirit helps people imitate Christ in their daily work and keeps them from piling up riches for themselves (Luke 12:13–21).

Reformers such as Luther[28] and Calvin[29] underlined this spiritual dimension of daily work by the word "calling" (*vocatio*). God calls people to a certain task not only in the spiritual field (in a *vita contemplativa*, "contemplative life") but also in their daily lives. This *vocatio externa* ("external calling") results in a social position or a profession. It is emphasized that believers in obedience to God must take care of the needs of their neighbors and societies.

However, the idea of vocation does not bind Christians to their status quo. People, as the image of God, are not statues. The same God who calls also gives his Spirit and wants believers to develop their gifts and talents. This pneumatological approach is complementary to the vision of work as a divine vocation, which could give the impression that one may not change one's profession. For example, Luther emphasized more than once that workers should be satisfied with their work even when working conditions are bad. Words like these give the impression that a Christian should not change jobs.

However, because the divine vocation is accompanied by the guidance of the Spirit, who appeals to gifts and talents and to believers' own responsibilities, the idea of *vocatio* does not preclude flexibility in work.

This approach suits today's society better than the one-sided emphasis on *vocatio*. The idea of *vocatio* was less problematic in premodern society, in which fewer career opportunities existed than in today's society, which is characterized by dynamism, mobility, and the need for flexibility. Both are true: God calls, and at the same time, believers must assume their responsibility under the guidance of the Spirit. The Spirit gives some individuals more than one skill or talent and sometimes a multitude of gifts. In such cases, Christians can change jobs without any problems so that they can use their skills and talents in different ways and areas. This approach also leaves more room for criticizing and counteracting alienating work than a one-sided accentuation of the *vocatio* idea. The Spirit also makes people understand their responsibility to improve working conditions; that is how he wants people to flourish in their work.

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[28] E.g., Martin Luther, "Kirchenpostille, 1522," in *WA*, 10/I:308 (on John 21:19–24).
[29] E.g., Calvin, *Institutes* 3.10.6.

The Spirit focuses on both creation and re-creation. Believers must orient themselves toward God's original idea for labor as well as to those things that contribute to the kingdom that comes in perfect glory. This future perspective is an important notion in Scripture: Christians are people of the future. Because their *vita activa* is connected to their humanity, their good works are works of the future as well. The works of the dead who died in the Lord will follow them (Rev 14:13). All believers, whether slave or free, will be rewarded for whatever good they have done (Eph 6:8). Their work will not be forgotten. However, this eschatological and pneumatological basis of daily work should not be exaggerated, because labor for livelihood remains necessary. In everyday life, changing jobs is not always possible.[30]

Another aspect of the involvement of the Spirit is the sanctification of believers through their work. The Spirit makes believers grow in obedience to and dependence on God in and through their labor. This notion has always been important in the history of the church and theology. For instance, the early church emphasized that work offers an opportunity to strengthen virtue and encouraged labor as an exercise in moderation and diligence. The monastic tradition also emphasized the value of this exercise. "Idleness is the enemy of the soul," said Benedict of Nursia.[31] Work is a kind of mental exercise. The Reformers also pointed to this notion. According to Luther, work teaches self-control.[32] It can serve as a remedy for wrong desires in the same way that the body is trained to subject its desires to the mind through fasting.[33] Labor also helps in the practice of patience: "The faithful," said Calvin, "the more they labor in procuring a livelihood, with the greater advantage are they stimulated to repentance, and accustom themselves to the mortification of the flesh."[34] In this regard, Max Weber spoke about the Protestant work ethic as asceticism outside the monastery walls (*innerweltliche Askese*).[35]

VII. *Livelihood*

The salvation of Christ brings restoration and renewal to every aspect of the Christian life. The believer's work is no longer subject to foreign powers

[30] Brock, *Christian Ethics*, 308.

[31] *The Rule of Saint Benedict*, chapter 48, trans. Abbot Parry OSB (Leominster, Hereforshire: Gracewing, 1990), 77.

[32] Martin Luther, "Ein Sermon von Ablaß und Gnade, 1517," in *WA*, 1:244.

[33] Martin Luther, "Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen, 1520," in *WA*, 7:30.

[34] Calvin, *Genesis*, 1:176 (on Gen 3:19).

[35] Cf. Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, trans. Talcott Parsons (1958; repr., New York: Dover Publications, 2003), 154.

but portends the new age in Christ. However, working for one's own livelihood remains a necessity. The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops (2 Tim 2:6). The Lord Jesus himself was a carpenter (Mark 6:3) and spoke about all kinds of professions in his teachings. Paul was a tentmaker (Acts 18:3) and did not shy away from hard work (1 Cor 4:12; 2 Cor 6:5; 1 Thess 2:9). He earned a living so that he would not be a burden to anyone (1 Cor 9:6; 2 Cor 11:9) and admonished believers to roll up their sleeves (1 Thess 5:14; 2 Thess 3:6, 11). Whoever refuses to work is not allowed to eat (2 Thess 3:10).

Likewise, people who used to rob are ordered to stop robbing and start working, so that they can earn honest livings and help the poor (Eph 4:28). It does not matter what work they do, as long as they can give thanks to God with it and do not dishonor Christ's name. Christians should look after their own business and earn their own bread. Then they do not have to turn to anyone for support (1 Thess 4:11–12; 2 Thess 3:6–13).

The early church emphasized that simple work is not despicable, referring to the example of Jesus and the apostles. On the contrary, newcomers to the congregation had to earn their own living. If, however, they did not practice a profession, according to the Didache, the community of faith could deal with them as it saw fit. This probably means that they would then be employed by the community (Did. 12:3–5). The Epistle of Barnabas compares those who do not earn their daily livelihoods through their own efforts with birds that eat the prey of other animals. They rob other people's property in a lawless way. As they walk around innocently, they look out for someone they can greedily shake out (Barn. 10:4). A church order from the third century admonishes the faithful to be diligent in their work; they who are living lazy lives are not worthy of the Christian name.[36] Faithfulness and dedication in daily work are the most important criteria for the orthodox faith.

Augustine tells about people who withdraw from work, taking advantage of others and teaching laziness, while pretending to be guardians of the gospel. The church father preferred that monks who did not want to tire their hands should keep their mouths shut as well.[37] Hermits who isolate themselves for long periods of time for prayer must first gather their own food to get through their time of contemplation.[38] God feeds and clothes his people by means of their own hands. Only when they cannot work does

[36] *Didascalia* 13.
[37] Augustine, *De opere monachorum* 26.
[38] Ibid., 29.

he provide his care in other ways. Those who are able to work must not tempt God. Work is a gift from God, who gave it to us so that we can perform it.[39] Or, as Luther said, "although the believer trusts in the care of God, he does not expect a roast chicken to fly into his mouth. Just as birds are born to fly, man is born to work."[40] This sustenance also refers to the care for one's own circle: the life union of man and woman, the household, the faith community, the organization or association, the business, the nation, or any other community to which the individual belongs.

One problem in today's society is that people's desires are increasing. Today's desires are tomorrow's needs. Work follows that track. The gospel, however, warns sharply against working without limits to store up things for oneself (cf. Matt 6:19). People need to know when to stop. The unrestrained pursuit of needs will cause harm. One can set limits by paying attention to fundamental nonmaterial needs.[41] This attention accords with Scripture. Jesus taught his disciples that they were not under the power of care (Matt 6:19–34). The same lesson is taught in the notion of the Sabbath, a day of remembrance of God's care and a day in which care for the neighbor and creation are especially central. This thought of trusting in God and looking out for the other may also be experienced in a special way in the midst of the Christian congregation. This includes looking after those who are unable to work and therefore also missing the benefits of regular, mandatory activities.

VIII. *Evangelical Dimension*

The gospel commands Christians to consciously consider the well-being of their neighbors in their daily work. This commandment has priority. Well-being should not depend on the unintended consequences of economic self-interest that would supposedly arise from some "invisible hand." The commandment in question is a necessary correction to what people are naturally inclined to do; it is, in Søren Kierkegaard's words, a pick that wrenches open the lock of self-love.[42] Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Give *us* this day *our* daily bread" (Matt 6:11). Work for the good of the neighbor therefore implies cooperation. *Koinonia* is a promise not just for a

[39] Ibid., 35.

[40] Martin Luther, "Von den guten Werken," in *WA*, 6:271–72; "Der 147. Psalm, Lauda Jerusalem, ausgelegt, 1532," in *WA*, 31/I:437.

[41] Volf, *Work in the Spirit*, 151–54.

[42] Søren Kierkegaard, *Works of Love*, ed. Howard and Edna Hong (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 34.

church community but for every community where people work together.

A Christian is first and foremost a neighbor to those given to him: children, parents, and relatives (cf. Exod 20:12; Prov 31:15; 2 Cor 12:14; 1 Tim 5:4). Likewise, the community of faith is a neighbor to the needy in its midst. In the first Christian congregations, the work of the diaconate consisted of sharing and enjoying the results of daily work together. Everyone got as much as they needed (Acts 2:44–45; cf. 4:32). Paul did his work to help the poor (Acts 20:35) and admonished believers to do their work so that they could help the poor (Eph 4:28).

Furthermore, Christians are expected to be neighbors to anyone whom they encounter on their path, whoever this person may be and regardless of race or social affiliation. This encounter takes place with all kinds of people. This contrasts with ancient Israel, where charity was mainly centered on needy fellow citizens. Whoever worked the land had to consider widows and orphans, poor people and strangers, and Levites. Israelites were to follow YHWH in his care for the needy. Therefore, there were to be no poor among his people (Deut 15:4). Jesus pointed out what the prophets of ancient Israel had already prophesied: a disciple of the kingdom must be a neighbor to whomever he finds on his way (Luke 10:36–37). Work is primarily characterized by love for one's neighbor. Paul, in his address to the elders of Ephesus, stated that by "his hard work" he set an example for them in caring for the poor, "remembering the words of Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive'" (Acts 20:35). Luther said sharply,

> He who does not work is in two ways a thief of his neighbor, namely by making someone else work for him (feeding on his blood and sweat) and by withholding from his neighbor what he owes him.[43]

Daily work should be a service to one's neighbor and reflect God's care for his world. For an employer, this also means, among other things, that when recruiting workers, he has an eye for people living on the margins of society.

Meanwhile, work continues to be a valuable means of livelihood and the maintenance of communities and a tool for character building and the development of skills and talents. This dimension of labor as a tool is not mentioned in the gospel, which merely observes that work is necessary for sustenance. What the gospel does underscore, however, besides loving service to one's neighbor, is the restoration and renewal of work in Christ.

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[43] Martin Luther, "Epistel am neuzehnten Sonntag nach Trinitatis," in *WA*, 22:322 (on Eph 4:22–28); "Von Kaufshandlung und Wucher, 1524," in *WA*, 15:302.

Work really only flourishes in Christ and through this reaches its destination. Seen from that perspective, the *vita activa* has perpetual value. This applies not only to those works that are done out of love for Jesus but also to every activity the Holy Spirit wants to use for the realization of his ends. Every good work is a building block in God's kingdom and has instrumental as well as independent value. It can be an entity that magnifies God. The standard and guideline for activity are therefore determined not only by the order of creation but also by the glorious new world to come.

In this loving service to God and the neighbor and the orientation of believers toward the coming kingdom, the community of faith plays an important role. It influences the character formation of believers and thereby the process of choosing a profession. In their midst, young people see examples of workers focused on the kingdom of God. Preaching, youth education, and personal encounters show how people in their daily work, at home or wherever, can be of service to people and society and responsibly take their places in God's good creation.

Conclusion

Theology emphasizes that no one can secure happiness in his temporary life through his work and that no one can through his good works guarantee a place for himself in the house of God. If God does not build the house, the builders labor in vain (Ps 127:1). At the same time, theology emphasizes the value of Christians' work for their neighbors and the environment. Works that are done out of love for Jesus are valuable and everlasting. Moreover, every work that fits the eternal kingdom of God has eternal value. Work is not only a matter of obedience to God's call but also of responsible and cheerful use of skills and talents under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Christians are willing to do what God wants with all their heart, as a "slave of Christ" (Eph 6:6), in their *vita activa* as in the rest of their lives. The community of faith plays an important role in the formation and equipment of Christians with regard to their work in whatever context.

Viret and a Reasonable Economy[1]

JEAN-MARC BERTHOUD

Abstract

Pierre Viret (1509–1571), a Swiss Reformer and friend of John Calvin, in his Christian Instruction and other dialogues (e.g., *Le monde à l'empire et le monde démoniacle*) developed some relevant economic principles. This article argues that Viret's thought both is biblical and reflects the creational order. Since Viret is less known, the article starts with his life and place in the Reformation. It continues by considering Viret as an economic thinker and goes on to discuss his views about money and sales taxes. It also includes a comparison between Calvin's and Viret's expositions of the eighth commandment, which highlights the originality of Viret's contribution.

Keywords

Pierre Viret, Christian Instruction*, John Calvin, state and economy, money, God's law, sales tax, creational order*

[1] Conference given for the Congresso Internacional: Riforma Protestante y Libertades en Europa, at the Department of Communication of the University of Seville on Tuesday March 31, 2009, the day of the opening of the G20 Conference in London on the then-current world financial and economic crisis.

I. *Brief Life of Viret*

Pierre Viret was born in 1509[2] in the ancient Roman and Burgundian town of Orbe at the foot of the Jura Mountains in what is today the canton of Vaud in French-speaking Switzerland. His parents were pious Roman Catholics, and after he finished the parochial school of his hometown, they sent him to Paris in 1527, at the age of eighteen, to further his higher education, with a view to his entering the priesthood. There he followed the strenuous academic discipline of Montaigu College, famous for such students as John Calvin and Ignatius of Loyola.

It was in this context of arduous study, lit up by the bonfires in which the first French martyrs of the Reformation were burned at the stake, that Viret came to see the errors of that Roman religion in which he had been brought up and his need for a personal Savior to deliver him from the curse that a holy God laid justly on him because of his sins.

Persecution led Viret, seeking refuge, back to his native Orbe. And it was there that he was confronted by his vocation. For in the spring of 1531, Guillaume Farel, that intrepid preacher of the gospel and political agent of the newly re-formed authorities of the Bernese Republic, called Viret (as he was to do with Calvin a few years later) out of the tranquility of his studies onto the battlefield of the Reformation of the church and the implantation in his country of God's mighty kingdom. At the age of twenty-two, Viret now re-formed thus became the pastor of the small evangelical congregation in Orbe, where he had the privilege of seeing his parents' conversion under his preaching of the word of God. The following years saw him engaged in a growing itinerant ministry all over French-speaking Switzerland. In 1534, two years before Calvin's dramatic call, we find Viret at Farel's side breaking the ground for the free entrance of the gospel in the city of Geneva. In 1536, the canton of Vaud was overrun by the Bernese army, which was ostensibly at war to defend Geneva from the threats of the Counts of Savoy but effectively working for the increase of Bernese power as it expanded westward. It is through the pursuit of such temporal ambitions that, in God's merciful

[2] Recent research has shown that Viret was born in 1509, not in 1511, as was generally believed. On Viret's life, see Rebekah Sheats, *Pierre Viret: The Angel of the Reformation* (Tallahassee, FL: Zurich Publishing, 2013). Rebekah Sheats has translated into English a number of Viret's works including his magnificent *Exposition of the Ten Commandments*, soon to be published by Zurich Publishing, Tallahassee, FL. See also Jean-Marc Berthoud, *Pierre Viret: A Forgotten Giant of the Reformation; The Apologetics, Ethics, and Economics of the Bible* (Tallahassee, FL: Zurich Publishing, 2010).

PIERRE VIRET
1509–1571

hand, the whole region was opened up to the preaching of the gospel. After the famous *Dispute de Lausanne* in October of the same year, a public disputation in which Viret bore the brunt of the debate, the young pastor, now aged 27, became the minister of the Cathedral Church. Apart from a brief period (1541–1542) during which he assisted Calvin on his return to Geneva after his exile in Strasbourg, the twenty-three years between 1536 and 1559 saw Viret as the principal minister of the Reformed church of the canton of Vaud, where he exercised the ministry of God's word under the heavy hand of the Bernese political and ecclesiastical power. After a long struggle with the authorities in Bern for the right of the church under his care to exercise ecclesiastical discipline over her own members, Viret was expelled from his homeland and took refuge in nearby Geneva.

Between 1559 and 1561 Viret exercised a much-appreciated ministry in Geneva at the side of his great friend Calvin, but his failing health forced him to seek a milder climate in the south of France. His health partly restored, he was instrumental in bringing about a remarkable revival, first in Montpellier and Nîmes, then in the second city of the realm, Lyon. There he exercised a highly blessed ministry during the early years of the civil wars, ending a very fruitful and eventful life as chief pastor and academic superintendent of the Reformed Church of the Kingdom of Navarre; he died there at the end of March or the beginning of April 1571 at the age of sixty-two and was buried in Nérac. The Queen of Navarre, Jeanne d'Albret, wrote of his death,

> Amongst the great losses I have suffered during and since the last wars, I count the most grievous to be that of Monsieur Pierre Viret, whom God has now taken to Himself.[3]

II. *Viret's Place in the Reformation*

Viret, Calvin's most intimate friend, known as the *Angel of the Reformation*, was by no means the minor or insignificant figure that most Reformed histories of the Reformation—when they even mention his name—lead us to imagine. He had, in 1537, founded in Lausanne the first Reformed academy anywhere. He gave much of his time to the teaching of theology to students who flocked there from every corner of Europe. This Lausanne

[3] Jeanne d'Albret aux Seigneurs de Genève, Avril 22, 1571; Papiers Herminjard, Musée de l'Histoire de la Réformation, Geneva, as quoted by Jean Barnaud, *Pierre Viret: Sa vie et son Œuvre, 1511–1571* (Saint-Amans: Carayol, 1911), 647

academy (and not the Genevan, as is too often thought) became the model of all future Reformed academies. By the time of Viret's expulsion in 1559, the Academy had up to a thousand theological students on its roll.

But this mild and gentle Christian, a man of the highest spiritual mettle, was also one of the great preachers of the Reformation. Of Calvin, Theodore Beza wrote, "none have taught with greater authority"; of Farel, "none thundered more mightily"; but of Viret he said, "none has a more winsome charm when he speaks."[4]

But in addition to exercising such great gifts, Viret was in his own right a prolific writer, author of over forty books, some up to a thousand pages in length. Most of his books were written in French, in a familiar style and in the popular form of dialogues between clearly differentiated and attractive characters designed to reach a public privileged with little formal instruction. But if the style is pleasant, the matter is profound, the knowledge of the Bible impeccable, and the scholarship immense. The pattern of his dialogues—affirmations, objections, refutations, and finally the clear, authoritative, and balanced doctrinal synthesis—harks clearly back, in a popular form but without the philosophical jargon, to the scholastic method of formal discussion.

Viret was undoubtedly (with Martin Luther) one of the finest popularizers of the Christian faith in the sixteenth century. However, his deep concern for the spiritual needs of the common people never led him (as is all too common today) to debase the content of his theological teaching. If his good friend Calvin was the consummate dogmatician and the prince of exegetes, Viret must be considered as the finest ethicist and the most acute apologist of the sixteenth century. His monumental *Instruction Chrestienne en la doctrine de la Loy et de l'Euangile; et en la vraye philosophie et theologie tant naturelle que supernaturelle des Chrestiens* (Christian Instruction in the Doctrine of the Law and the Gospel and in true Christian Philosophy and Theology, Both Natural and Supernatural)—is without doubt his major theological work and can well bear comparison, in its own domain, with Calvin's *Institutes*.

III. *Viret, the Economic Thinker*

In this all-too-brief appreciation of one of the great figures in the history of the church (often totally unknown to those who rightly consider themselves heirs of the Reformation), I would now like to show how Viret's great

[4] Henry Vuilleumier, *Notre Pierre Viret* (Lausanne: Payot, 1912), 142.

respect for God's law endowed him with an extraordinary lucidity and discernment in the field of economic analysis. In a book devoted to studying the writing of history in the latter part of the sixteenth century, French literary historian Claude-Gilbert Dubois pays close attention to Viret's biblical vision of the historical process. In so doing he brings to light the remarkable economic discernment of our Swiss Reformer.[5] Dubois's analysis is concentrated on the study of a masterpiece in Viretian apologetics, *Le monde à l'empire et le monde démoniacle*.[6] This book, says Dubois, could well be considered a modern treatise in economics written some two hundred years ahead of its time. Though in total disagreement with Viret's theocentric conservatism, the agnostic Dubois is nonetheless outspoken in his admiration of our author's perception of contemporary economic currents.

For Viret saw in the anarchical, both individualistic and monopolistic, capitalism developing before his indignant gaze a growing practical opposition to God's law and the rise of a thoroughly anti-Christian society. Viret saw in the progressive attachment of many of his contemporaries to material wealth (a fascination severed from all sense of stewardship and of accountability to God for the use of one's riches) a particularly vile form of idolatry in which the rapidity of growth in opulence—an extreme form of unfettered liberalism—was in direct proportion to the loss of religion and morality and of all sense of social responsibility. This is how Dubois expresses Viret's preoccupations:

> Behind the official public laws that are supposed to govern society one can discern the existence of those hidden perverse principles of our fallen nature that have now come to be officially accepted by a society that imposes as the norm of its new morality the perverted rules of a chaotic nature.[7]

Viret's polemic is not only directed at the unproductive accumulation of wealth by the Catholic Church but also against those inconsistent *evangelicals* (i.e., Calvinists) of his time who saw in the process of the *Reformation* a liberation from the historical (moral and legal) constraints of a partly Christianized society and thus refused all submission to the social and economic disciplines implied by the law of God. It was this godless antinomianism,

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[5] Claude-Gilbert Dubois, *La conception de l'histoire en France au XVIe siècle, 1560–1610* (Paris: Nizet, 1977).

[6] Pierre Viret, *Le monde à l'empire et le monde démoniacle fait par dialogues* (Geneva, 1561). The venality and attachment to lucre at the center of Viret's critical economic thinking is, in its manifestation during the later Middle Ages, carefully analyzed by John A. Yunck, *The Lineage of Lady Meed: The Development of Medieval Venality Satire* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1963).

[7] Dubois, *La conception de l'histoire en France au XVIe siècle*, 442.

often to be seen in what he called *deformed* (rather than *reformed*) Christians, that Viret attacked with biting irony. He saw an expression of this antisocial behavior in the *nouveaux riches* who had been quick to forget their modest origins and who now arrogantly gloried in their recent prosperity, wealth often acquired at the expense of the poorer classes who had been impoverished by the new economic order founded, to a large degree, on unrestrained antinomian monopolistic speculation. Dubois writes,

> Viret's indignation has a theological base—these Christians have betrayed that spirit of poverty which characterized the apostles; but it also bears a social character—this sterile and unproductive wealth provokes the economic enslavement of the poor to the newly enriched ruling class. What this sixteenth-century economist reproaches the Roman Church for is that its accumulation of riches had the effect of freezing its wealth in unproductive activities rather than letting it circulate freely in the money market, where eventually it would also have come to benefit the poorer classes.

And he asks,

> What is the true character of the social degradation Viret perceives in the history of his time? Its origin is theological in nature, linked as it is to human sin. It manifests itself immorally by the perversion of the created order. But it takes on the modern form of a specifically economic scandal: a perverted economic system, an unethical distribution of riches, provoked by the circulation of wealth in one direction only, its accumulation in the hands of a few. Such, proclaimed Viret, are the signs of the corruption that reigns in the world today.[8]

Viret writes,

> The greatest evil that can be imagined is when the public purse is impoverished and individual men are wealthy. This is an evident sign that the commonwealth is in an unhealthy condition, that public policy is in weak and incapable hands and that the state is under the domination of thieves and bandits who make of it their prey.[9]

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[8] Dubois, *La conception de l'histoire en France au XVIe siècle*, 453. Such biting strictures could readily be today applied to the present universal woes of our world economic disorder.

[9] Viret, *Le monde à l'empire et le monde démoniacle fait par dialogues*, 156. What an astonishingly perceptive understanding of what is at present (September 2008) happening to the government of the United States of America in its mismanagement in favor of what Viret so justly calls "thieves and bandits"—the Rothschilds, the Soros, and the Goldman Sachs of his time—of the unprecedented present financial crisis. See E. L. Hebden Taylor, *Economics, Money and Banking: Christian Principles* (Nutley, NJ: Craig Press, 1978). For an analysis of the development of the phenomenon Viret analyzes over the past four centuries, see George Knupffer, *The Struggle for World Power* (London: Plain-Speaker Publishing, 1971). For an up-to-date account of the financial control of American politics, see G. Edward Griffin, *The Creature from Jekyll Island: A Second Look at the Federal Reserve* (Appleton: American Opinion, 1994). For a description of

The economic mechanisms that lead to such an unfruitful concentration of wealth in the hands of an unaccountable financial oligarchy prepare the way for those social and political catastrophes that will inevitably destroy such an amoral and irresponsible ruling class. For, in the eyes of Viret, this infernal cycle of economic injustice must of necessity breed revolution. Economic oppression has as its direct origin covetousness and greed, an inordinate desire for the accumulation of wealth, and in the long run, such public larceny must produce the direst social unrest; such a feeling of social frustration, when it becomes conscious, ends in revolt. Viret saw very clearly that this new oligarchy made abundant use of its monopolistic domination of the apparatus of the state to draw to itself the riches of the whole nation by disrupting the natural circulation of wealth in the usual channels of production and exchange. For Viret, this stifling of the economic blood flow of industrial production and commercial exchange by a parasitical oligarchy must be broken if an equitable distribution of wealth by the proper functioning of the market is to be reestablished and the economic health of the society restored.[10] If, in the outworking of the principles of evil Viret sees all too well the judgments of God toward a rebellious and ungrateful world, he on the other hand shows us all the more clearly the blessings that flow from faithful covenantal obedience to God's commandments.

I would now like to examine with you two aspects of Viret's economic analysis that have an extraordinary bearing on our contemporary issues and problems: the fabrication by the state of virtual money *ex nihilo*, out of nothing, and the invention of the state's universal tax on every kind of sold object, the Value Added Tax (VAT).

IV. *The Fabrication by the State of Virtual Money* ex Nihilo

Viret's great friendship with Calvin in no way prevented him from, on occasion, expressing divergent theological views while, of course, sharing on all fundamental points of doctrine the same Reformed convictions. The Reformation thus gives us a striking example of the way basic doctrinal unity is in no way exclusive of a certain theological diversity. It is the mechanical

how Switzerland entered into this system of financial speculation, see Vincent Held, *Le crépuscule de la Banque Nationale Suisse: La déroute financière annoncée d'une institution en faillite morale* (Sion: Xenia, 2017).

[10] Viret was no adversary of the economic function of the market and would have been strongly opposed to socialistic state planning and redistribution of wealth; but he would have demanded that the market itself be legally and judicially subject to the financial and economic demands of God's law and that our present financial "thieves and bandits" be arraigned before the courts.

conformism of an effeminate age that cannot stomach disagreements on secondary matters in the church. Thus, on the question of the extent of the application of the detail of the Mosaic law to our present situation, Viret held a significantly different position from that of Calvin. As Robert Linder notes, "Viret, unlike Calvin, was ready to extend openly the authority of the Bible over the State."[11]

It is enlightening here to compare Viret's and Calvin's exegeses of specific texts. In his *Sermons on Deuteronomy*,[12] for example, we often find that Calvin, while not ignoring the detailed practical implications of the Mosaic law, nonetheless pays much less attention than Viret to their immediate meaning and to their application to the political, economic, and social problems of his time. Let us briefly contrast these two different attitudes by showing how they apply to a specific biblical text.

> Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights, a great and a small.
> Thou shalt not have in thy house divers measures, a great and a small.
> But thou shalt have a perfect and just weight, a perfect and just measure shalt thou have, that thy days may be lengthened in the land which the Lord thy God hath given thee.
> For all that do such things, and all that do unrighteously, are an abomination unto the Lord thy God. (Deut 25:13–16)

Let us first look at Calvin's comments on this text in his *Sermons on Deuteronomy*.

> There are two things by which above all we offend our neighbor. For some abandon themselves to fraud and evil practices, while others proceed by aggressions and insults. However, with regard to hidden malice, the worst means of all is that by which weights and measures are falsified. For just weights and just measures enable men to commerce with one another without dispute or harm. Without money with which to buy and to sell, what confusion would ensue! Now goods are also often distributed by weight and measure. Thus, when the falsification of money, weights, or measurements occurs, it is the social bond itself between men that is broken. Men are then reduced to the state of cats and dogs, whom it is impossible to approach without fear. We must thus not be surprised if our Lord manifests such detestation for the practice of falsifying weights and measures, for he shows thereby that we deal here with the worst and the most detestable kind of robbery imaginable. For when a thief proposes to carry out some thieving knavery, he only attacks one man. True, he will go from one victim to another. But we know that a thief cannot multiply himself to such a degree as to enable him to rob the whole world at one go. But

[11] Robert Linder, *The Political Ideas of Pierre Viret* (Geneva: Droz, 1964), 63.
[12] For an English translation, see John Calvin, *Sermons on Deuteronomy* (repr., Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1987).

> whoever establishes false weights and false measures is not particular as to whom he will rob. He indeed robs all and sundry alike. Thus, he so perverts the common order of society that the bond of humanity is broken. When no integrity or loyalty remains in those things that should normally help men to maintain themselves in their condition, what then will become of law and justice?[13]

Calvin then goes on to apply this particular law to what he calls *general doctrine*. By this he means the application of the principle of integrity that stands behind this specific law to divers aspects of the Christian life. He speaks of loyalty in business dealings, of just prices in commerce, of compassion for the poor, of the hypocrisy of pretending to be a Christian and neglecting these practical duties toward one's neighbor, of people's innate corruption, and of the necessity for loyalty and integrity in human relationships. He concludes on the following note:

> Let us all fear what has here been shown and may each of us walk in loyalty and integrity with regard to his neighbor. Let those engaged in commerce see that their balances and their measures be correct, that their merchandise be genuine, that they should falsify nothing and that all should use of such loyalty one to another that everyone recognize that there indeed exists a law which exercises its effective rule over our hearts.[14]

Viret proceeds in a very different manner. He devotes no less than fifty-five large folio pages of small print to a detailed exposition of the eighth commandment.[15] In our particular text, his comments cover six pages, from page 581 to page 586 (2:618–29 in the 2004–2009 edition). Instead of drawing general moral lessons from the particular statute, as Calvin does, Viret takes great pains to study the various specific applications of this precise statute in a variety of aspects of commercial dealings. That is, he develops the case law of this particular biblical statute. He does this in such a way that, though his remarks are carefully adapted to the conditions of his time and culture, they nevertheless remain applicable today. His comments constitute in no way a distortion of the Mosaic significance of the particular law under consideration.

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[13] John Calvin, Sermon CXLIV, Friday, February 14, 1556, on Deuteronomy 25:13–19, in *Opera Omnia* (*Calvini opera quae supersunt omnia*, ed. G. Baum, E. Cunitz, and E. Reuss [Brunswick and Berlin: Schwetschke, 1863–1900]), 28:236. My translation. See page 854 in the e-rara version, http://www.e-rara.ch/doi/10.3931/e-rara-1057.

[14] Ibid., 237.

[15] Pierre Viret, *Instruction Chrestienne en la doctrine de la Loy et de l'Evangile* (Geneva: Jean Rivery, 1564), 1:586–611. For a modern edition, Pierre Viret, *Instruction Chrétienne*, ed. Arthur-Louis Hofer, 2 vols. (Lausanne: L'Age d'homme, 2004, 2009), 2:591–666 (on the eighth commandment). Page numbers to this edition will be indicated in parentheses.

Let us first look at the subdivisions into which he orders his material, divisions marked by the following headings:

- Of theft committed by the falsification of quantity and of weights and measures of things sold and distributed and how such theft is detestable in the sight of Holy Scripture (2:619).
- Of the invention and usage of money, of counterfeiters and of the magnitude of the crime committed by the counterfeiting of money (2:620).
- Of thieves and counterfeiters of the word of God and of the thefts both of men's souls and of their goods committed by such means (2:261).
- Of those who clip coins and of those who consciously use false money and particularly of those responsible for the public treasury (2:622).
- Of corruption by bribes and of merchants who sell and buy justice and of the effect of this on the poor (2:623).
- Of thefts committed in the sale of foodstuffs by their falsification and the dangers which such corruptions produce (2:524).
- Of the attention magistrates should give to the quality of foodstuffs (2:625).
- Of the danger of falsification of medicines by doctors and druggists (2:627).
- Of the importance of the law given by God on weights and measures and of his threats against those who falsify them (2:627).

Speaking of the falsification of weights and measures, Viret writes,

> Such theft is frequent and very common, for it is easier to rob men by this means than by the modification of the substance of the goods sold, such material falsifications being easier to notice. For in buying and selling we must for the most part trust the weights and measures of those with whom we have to do. For we cannot always have such measures with us. The iniquity is all the greater in that those who falsify weights and measures wickedly deceive those who put their trust in them. They are thus nothing else but public thieves and bandits.[16]

Viret aptly applies this statute to counterfeiters, as in ancient times the inequality of the weight of coins made it necessary to weigh them so that their exact worth could be determined.

> First, counterfeiters are highly dangerous and very detrimental to society. For the invention of money and the technique for transforming gold, silver, and other metals into coinage was discovered by men in order to assist them in their commerce and to facilitate their mutual exchange of various goods. For commerce is nothing else but an exchange of goods between men, exchange through which they take one thing in payment for another in proportion to the value of the goods exchanged. As

[16] Ibid., 1:581 (2:619).

> the distant transportation of goods that could serve as means of exchange is cumbersome, sums of money are substituted for the goods in proportion to the value of the goods exchanged. For money is of easier transportation and is better adapted to commercial exchange than is the case for any other good.
>
> As God has given men such a means to facilitate mutual relations between men, those who pervert and confound this order provoke a great wound in the body politic and in the whole of human society. They are thus worthy of the most severe punishment, particularly producing as they do the greatest possible confusion in society, for men cannot live without commerce. Thus, whoever destroys the means of exchange resembles a public bandit, a cutthroat slitting the gizzard of the whole community. For through his fraud, he destroys every kind of good faith and loyalty, and without these human society can neither be maintained nor develop. For faith and loyalty being removed, nothing certain remains. By this means men are greatly troubled and fall into an incomparable disorder.[17]

Today the counterfeiting of money has become the common practice of the banking system with what is called fractional reserve banking and, more particularly, that of our central banks (for the most part privately owned), which outrageously rob the community by their creation of *fiat* ("virtual") money out of thin air, imaginary liquidity which they lend on interest to the state. Such creation of means of exchange, without the backing of real wealth, will inevitably lead to inflation, that is to higher prices.[18] The result of such monetary creation is, of course, the uncontrolled expansion of every kind of public and private debt, the artificial augmentation of unbacked credit, the destruction of the productivity of society by the concentration of such capital in speculative transactions, and the development of our artificial modern boom–bust cycle of inflation and monetary restriction together with the widespread expansion of totally unproductive speculation. Viret would have had much to say from a biblical perspective on our present monetary setup.[19] He was fully aware of these problems as they manifested

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[17] Ibid., 1:581–82 (2:620).

[18] On this whole question, see Maurice Allais's perspective (see the next note) and Taylor, *Economics, Money and Banking*.

[19] For an economic and ethical analysis of our present financial situation, which in many ways resembles Viret's analysis of the similar woes of his time, see the premonitory work by Maurice Allais (Nobel Prize in economic science), especially his *La Crise mondiale d'aujourd'hui: Pour de profondes réformes des institutions financières et monétaires* (Paris: Clément Juglar, 1999). In many ways Viret's thinking on social and political matters resembles that of Alexander Solzhenitsyn. See also Marcel De Corte, *Économie et morale* and *Principes d'un humanisme économique* (Liège: Université de Liège, 1958, 1965). For a similar perspective, see Rousas John Rushdoony's commentary on the eighth commandment in his *Institutes of Biblical Law* (Nutley, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1973), 448–41; Gary North's comments on Leviticus 19:35–36 in his *Commentary on Leviticus* (Tyler: ICE, Tyler, 1994); and Griffin, *The Creature from Jekyll Island*, which is largely drawn from Eustace Mullins's pioneer publication, *Secrets of the Federal Reserve* (New York: Kasper & Horton, 1952) and its sequel, *The London Connection* (Staunton: Bankers Research Institute, 1993).

themselves in his own time. He goes on to write acidly of the sin of the state counterfeiting the means of exchange in the following sparkling dialogue:

> *Timothy*: It would seem that one could quite justifiably add to the company of counterfeiters all those who clip coins and thus reduce their weight and who then make fully conscious use of such clipped coins (and not by ignorance as often happens), knowing that they are fraudulent and of incorrect weight. For though they act in a different manner from those whom we normally call counterfeiters, their deeds tend to much the same end.
>
> *Daniel*: You here touch a matter in which those who have the management of public funds are often deeply implicated. For when they receive money from the public, they take great pains to count it correctly and to refuse outright all illegitimate or unacceptable coinage. But when it comes to opening the public purse and to paying those who have served either the church or the public good, or to distributing something to the poor, God only then knows with what kind of loyalty and faithfulness they fulfill their obligations!
>
> *Timothy*: I have known some who would take the greatest care never to make any payment to those who had to do with them, particularly to the poor, without robbing them outright of a part, either of the payment due to them or of the alms they were under the obligation to distribute; and to do this they used either counterfeit money or coinage of incorrect weight and faulty appearance. And the poor who are the objects of such treatment are not even permitted to bemoan their wretched fate, though they have plainly been robbed and pillaged.
>
> *Daniel*: Such administrators are not only robbers and counterfeiters but thieves and public bandits far worse than those highwaymen who lie in wait for lonely travelers in the woods. For what more could they do to them if they robbed the poor of their very lives?
>
> *Timothy*: Nevertheless, when they collect what is their due, they take the greatest pains to count, weigh, and test whatever coins they receive in payment. But they act in a very different manner with those whom they have on their payroll and who have neither the means nor the boldness to resist their tyranny and rapacity.
>
> *Daniel*: You can be sure of that.[20]

V. *The Invention of the State's Value Added Tax (VAT)*

We shall now consider Viret's reflections on the predatory character of the modern state, and in particular on its desire to consider every human industrial and commercial activity an illegitimate source, through the abuse of taxation, of its irresponsible wealth. His analysis, which combines a strict biblical framework (this is his "presuppositionalism") with a profound understanding of the workings of the society of his time and of the historical processes that had brought the nations of Europe to their present condition

[20] Viret, *Instruction Chrétienne*, 1:583 (2:622–23).

(this is his "evidentialist" apologetic), is underpinned by two fundamental premises constantly present in his thought:

1) All reality must be understood in the light of a thoroughly biblical perspective.
2) All reality, as God's creation and the manifestation of his providential purposes, is inherently structured by the same theological and philosophical principles that we find in the Bible.

It is this basically theonomic *and* naturalist (i.e., creational) position that enables him to analyze the economic structures and the sociological dynamics of society so skillfully and so successfully. He thus combines theological, moral, philosophical, sociological, economic, literary, and historical analysis in an astonishingly unified and differentiated system of thought and refuses all gnostic dualism, every kind of that binary opposition, so common today in Christian and secular thinking, between creation and redemption, between theology and culture, between morality and economics, between society and God, between grace and law, and so forth. Where we often think exclusively in binary terms, his thought functions both in an antithetical (good versus evil, truth versus error) and in a complementary manner (all aspects of created reality are related, are interconnected). It is this balance between unity and diversity in his thinking that makes his writings, after more than four hundred years, so refreshingly up-to-date.

Viret puts his finger on a major means by which the state extorts its citizens: the universal application to all goods of the salt tax (*gabelle*), the tax first instituted in 1341 by the French King Philippe VI de Valois (king from 1328 to 1350). In a brilliant historical analysis,[21] he shows that this tax on the sale of salt was extended to almost every good sold on the market in the Kingdom of France and can thus be considered the ancestor of what we today call the VAT, the Value Added Tax, an elastic and very effective instrument in the hands of the modern almighty and tyrannical state, to fleece its citizens better.

By "tyranny" Viret means the trend of the monarchies of Western Europe—first the Holy Roman Empire of the Hohenstaufens, then those of France, England, and Spain (all imitating the absolute bureaucratic centralization of the ancient Roman Empire model restored by the Imperial Roman Papacy from Gregory VII to Boniface VIII)—toward absolutism. This trend would lead to the revolutionary nation-state and to our present

[21] Pierre Viret, *Le monde à l'empire* (1561; repr., Geneva: Jaques Berthet, 1580), 277ff.

totalitarian, democratic, statist, and oligarchic tyrannies. However, in his criticism of the fiscal abuses of tyrannical government, Viret at no time questions the divine ordinance of government, a government limited by divine and human laws, both the overarching divine biblical law and existing terrestrial legislation and jurisprudence. Nor does he deny the state its right to levy legitimate taxes. Under the title "Taxes Due to Princes and the Necessary Moderation in Their Application," he has Jerome, the historian, sociologist, economist, and theologian in his dialogues, say:

> With good reason kings and princes levy taxes and revenues so as appropriately to provide themselves with the means for the government of their people and for the administration of justice to all their subjects. For such has been ordained by God.[22]

But this, in Viret's opinion, in no way provides legitimation for the ruler's right to levy arbitrary taxes at will on his subjects. Earlier, in response to a question he had himself addressed to Tobie, who represents the common-sense position of the ordinary Roman Catholic layman of Viret's time very much interested by the gospel, the same Jerome had had the following exchange:

> *Jerome*. Have you any idea where lies the chief cause for the tyranny and the extortions of princes with regard to their subjects?
>
> *Tobie*. No doubt in the sins, both of the rulers and of the ruled.
>
> *Jerome*. If we look to God, we cannot doubt that man's sin is the true, the first, and the principal cause of tyranny. But if we look to men, the cause is to be found in the flatterers and thieves who, at court, gather around princes. Such flatterers and thieves teach princes to consider that their every wish is legitimate and thus that the bodies and the goods of their subjects are freely at their disposition and pleasure, as so much cattle. They speak as if Princes had no obligations toward their subjects; as if they had never taken the oath to govern them for their good, or to deal with them justly as good princes and faithful shepherds should do.[23]

Jerome's eloquent description of such perverse flattery of princes by fawning and cynical courtiers elicits the following vigorous response from Tobie in the section that bears the following title:

> Does the mere good pleasure of princes legitimate their every action? in particular the daily increase of "tailles" and "gabelles" [that is taxes on the sale of every commodity].

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[22] Ibid., 283.
[23] Ibid., 277.

Let us follow Jerome's reasonable response:

> What we must first discuss is the following question: Are such increases in gabelles and tailles [that is, in "value added taxes"] in the first place legitimate? This question I raise not only from the perspective of God's law but from that of ordinary civil legislation. For no human law worthy of the name can free princes from themselves submitting to the rule of law and justify their enacting whatever law they please, thus laying on the backs of their subjects whatever burden they wish. For even if their subjects were nothing more than chattel slaves, some kind of equity must even then regulate the relation between such serfs and their lord.

This leads Viret to a careful economic and historical analysis of the "gabelle" and "taille" taxes imposed by the French monarchy on the sale of every kind of good. Tobie here clearly expresses Viret's own indignation:

> Since the beginning, this tyrannical system of universal taxation has never decreased but has rather constantly grown. For princes and nobility alike never consider the ordinary revenues and taxes at their disposal as a necessary limitation to their style of life, to their projects, or to their ambitions. Rather, they only consider the fulfillment of the ambition they cherish, not examining whether their actual revenues are able to sustain such utopian dreams. … To satisfy their excessive ambitions they then look to ways of increasing their taxes and revenues.[24]

Here Jerome comments:

> In this, their action is the exact opposite of what they should in fact be doing. For, instead of limiting their lifestyle and their ambitious projects to their normal revenues and taxes, they on the contrary seek to increase such revenues and taxes in order to adapt them to the lifestyle and ambitions they have in mind. Placing themselves in this dilemma, they often undertake many ambitious and difficult projects for which they do not have the means, that is, their ordinary revenues and taxes. Their revenues not being able to cover the cost of their projected ambitions, they are forced to seek ways of raising them to the level of their inflated needs. But their subjects soon come to understand who is to pay for such extravagant ambitions.[25]

There follows a minute and hilarious enumeration by Tobie of all the objects subjected to the value-added tax imposed by the king's administration on every kind of economic activity, this in favor of the growth of the omnipotent state and its visible and invisible ruler-leeches. But time forbids my sharing with you this brilliant *tour de force* in social and economic satire.

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[24] Ibid., 280.
[25] Ibid., 280–81.

Conclusion: Reasonable Economics, Biblical and Creational

Viret perceives very clearly the consequences of such unrealistic personal, economic, and political ambitions on the part of the French monarchy: social unrest, persistent hatred of the ruling classes by an impoverished populace, and, finally, revolution. He of course disapproves of such violent reactions but clearly perceives their inevitable nature. Evil will out, and God's just judgments will not be halted. Overweening ambition will necessarily know, in due time, its fall, but in the process, the nation will be drastically, perhaps irretrievably, damaged. In Viret's view, a view expounded by his theological spokesman, Theophraste,

> such rulers are little better than mere tax collectors. … They have no care for their own people, nor any concern for the common and public good. They have no respect for the laws of the kingdom, for the correct policing of the society given to their charge, for justice or even for the safety of their kingdom. Their only preoccupation is that of drawing to themselves the wealth of the nation, this for the satisfaction of their good pleasure and for the enjoyment of sensual delights.

The means to this end: constantly and continuously increasing the universal taxation levied by the state on the sale of every good. Tobie's good sense expresses the common complaint of a people overburdened by the fiscal extortions of its rulers. He finds his consolation in the conviction that a God who is just will in time inevitably exercise terrible and grievous vengeance on such egotistical and iniquitous rulers.

> They should consider that their subjects are men like themselves, that all stand under the rule of the same God, whose will is by no means that the big should eat the small, and that kings and princes be among their subjects like lions and wolves among sheep, or like a great fish who, in the sea, devours the small about him.[26]

How are we to conclude this brief evocation of Viret's economic thought? How may we characterize his economic and political good sense? How was it possible for him to develop so precise and comprehensive an analysis of the economic and political problems of his time, analysis that is so exact that his writings can today still speak with great perspicuity to the difficulties that bedevil our own times? I will put forward, as a provisional answer, the following suggestions:

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[26] Ibid., 275.

1. He constantly looked at every aspect of reality from the point of view of God and of his wise and infallible law-word.
2. This theonomic and presuppositional attitude came from his fully biblical perspective, a perspective which witnessed to his truly catholic spirit: he took into account every aspect of God's revealed word.
3. In this, his theological thinking was very different from what informs much of the modern gnostic dualism that marks the thinking of the Christian church today: biblical theology for the church, scientific thinking, autonomous with regard to Scripture and to the created order, for nature.
4. He thus understood that the order manifested by the written word of God was the same order as that found in the created cosmos and in God's providential covenantal direction that the Lord Jesus Christ assigns to history.
5. He thus did not oppose (but rather distinguished) nature and grace, general and special revelation, for, in Viret's thinking, both creation and redemption have issued forth from the same one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This theology led him to consider every aspect of reality, however deformed today, however sinful, as a fallen witness to the goodness of the created order and capable of being illuminated by God's supernatural revelation and restored in Jesus Christ by his sovereign, almighty, and benevolent grace.
6. Thus, to speak of God and his just and merciful decrees to his contemporaries, Viret did not limit himself simply to a faithful exposition of the Scriptures (for him these divine writings were absolutely normative) but made use, in his preaching and writing, of every aspect of created and providential reality. Thus, he rightly felt that the whole of man's cultural activity was available to him as a springboard from which the preaching of the gospel would touch the minds and hearts of his audience, from popular proverbs to philosophy, from poetry to historical annals, from economic analysis to the description of the details of human and animal anatomy. He lived before the time when modern science had come to eliminate the final and formal causes from the very method of the new sciences. As all things had their end and meaning in God and were ordered and sustained by him (even in their present fallen state!), all things likewise could be brought to speak of God, if seen in the light of God's inspired and infallible Word. Thus, his fundamental biblical and creational presuppositionalism was the foundation on which rested his evidentialist use of every fact in creation

and history to speak of God and of God's immutable ordering of his creation and of every historical event.

7. Thus, to use vocabulary unknown to him, Viret was at the same time fully "presuppositionalist" and fully "evidentialist" in his apologetic thinking and in his preaching of the gospel, thus bringing all the disordered and distorted thoughts of men captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ (2 Cor 10:5). Such a catholicity—the totality of Scripture illuminating the totality of created and providential reality—was certainly one reason for the immense success of his preaching. He could thus reach out to all the preoccupations of his contemporaries in a language they could readily understand.
8. His economic thinking was thus both theological and moral, both historical and sociological, both structural and human. He could in this way perceive and express the mechanics of economic realities and, at the same time, relate such structural realities to the immediate and long-term responsibilities (both for good and for evil) of all human agents. These human agents in the economic process could thus be the morally responsible instruments for producing good fruit or corruption into the ongoing development (or disintegration) of the social order. For Viret would have considered both Adam Smith's "unseen hand" and Karl Marx's "iron laws of economic science" imaginary, for they ignored the economic covenantal impact of the responsible moral (or immoral) actions of human agents created in the image of God.
9. Finally, Viret's fully catholic, theologically inspired reflection in so many fields of human thought and endeavor comes from his being not only utterly biblical but also fully open to all the realities of God's created and providential order. In this, his thinking was in utter opposition to the dualism of that binary thinking which, since the birth of modern science at the start of the seventeenth century, has been the bane—or better still, the doom, the destruction—both of the created order and of a fully catholic Christian theology in what we, with irony, might perhaps still call "modern civilization."

It is, in my modest view, high time that the church (and through her teaching all our nations) come once more to listen to what Viret has to say of God's immutable purposes for men and of our present most distressing condition.

THOMAS CHALMERS
1780–1847

Chalmers: Pastor for the Poor

ALEXANDER (SANDY) FINLAYSON

Abstract

Thomas Chalmers (1780–1847) was a Scottish churchman known for his leadership of the evangelical movement in the Church of Scotland, which culminated in the formation of the Free Church of Scotland. While a pastor in rural Scotland and then in Glasgow, he developed a unique approach to caring for the poor. This article looks at the development of his thoughts, the implementation of his ideas, and his lasting legacy.

Keywords

Thomas Chalmers, Free Church of Scotland, poverty, Poor Laws, education, diaconal ministries

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Thomas Chalmers was born on March 17, 1780.[1] Over the next sixty-seven years, he would lead a very public life as pastor, university professor, visionary social reformer, and leader in the church. As well as being a churchman who spoke and wrote on theology and the Bible, he was a man of many interests who published works on subjects as diverse as the economy, sociology, and politics.

He was a man who cared deeply about the less fortunate in society, and there were aspects of his ministry that were focused on addressing the very

[1] Some of the material in this article is drawn from my book *Chief Scottish Man: The Life and Ministry of Thomas Chalmers* (Leyland, England: Evangelical Press, 2021). Used with permission from Evangelical Press.

real social problems of his time. He had specific ideas about how to reduce the grinding poverty in Scotland's cities and improve access to education, and he sought to implement them during his pastorates in Glasgow.

Responses to his ideas have been mixed. Some see Chalmers as a person who wanted to mold the working population into his conception of what a moral citizen should be. Others see his attempts to improve the conditions of the working class through the charitable efforts of the church as laudable and something that the church should be emulating today.

Before we look at some of his specific ideas, it is important to understand the context in which he lived. At the time of his birth in 1780, Scotland's population was approximately 1.5 million. By the time of his death sixty-seven years later, the population had increased to nearly 2.8 million. To place this population growth in context, during the whole of the eighteenth century, Scotland's population had grown by less than six hundred thousand people.

Scotland was deeply impacted by the Industrial Revolution. It saw major growth in industry and a shift from a largely agrarian economy to one based on factory-based production. The population explosion, seen chiefly in Scotland's largest cities, brought with it major social problems. Unemployment, drunkenness, and crime were all too prevalent. John McCaffrey describes the prevailing conditions:

> The growing specialization in agriculture and the advent of steam-powered machinery helped to localize labor in towns, creating physical problems in health, housing and sanitation. The economic problems of growth, cyclical fluctuation and structural unemployment ensured that the transformation would not be easy. The emergence of new social groupings in new locations led to divisions between classes which were not simply physical but moral and cultural too.[2]

Scotland had long recognized that provision needed to be made for the poor. Prior to the Reformation, the monasteries had provided some care for the poor; this then passed largely to the Church of Scotland. The Poor Law, which had been enacted by the Scottish Parliament, came into effect in 1574. It gave the provost and baily of each town or burgh the power to levy taxes on the burgesses, provided that the town council agreed. In rural areas, the responsibility for providing relief was assigned to local parish churches. In 1672, another act was passed that required local landowners to provide funds, half from their own pockets and the other half from their tenants. While the system had been significantly stretched during times of

[2] John F. McCaffrey, "Thomas Chalmers and Social Change," *Scottish Historical Review* 60.1, no. 169 (April 1981): 40.

crisis brought on by crop failures and the resulting famines, under normal circumstances, it had worked reasonably well.[3]

In Glasgow, where Chalmers would serve in two parish churches between 1815 and 1823, poor relief had been the responsibility of four different groups: the churches, where relief was managed by the minister and elders, the town council, the incorporated trades, and the Merchants' House. Eventually, these four groups began working together more closely. Under the direction of a board of management led by the Lord Provost, the Town's Hospital was planned with the stated purpose of providing medical care, food and clothing, work, and housing for those living in poverty. Planning began in 1730, and the hospital opened on November 15, 1733.[4] This hospital has been described as "an experiment bold and progressive, but in the end no answer to urban poverty as the local economy continued to expand."[5] Charity dispensed by churches and private citizens was also insufficient at a time when the population was growing and the number of the poor was increasing.[6]

Chalmers's approach to caring for the poor began to develop during his ministry in Kilmany, which lasted from 1803 to 1815. It is important to remember that when he began his ministry there, he was not a born-again Christian. Rather, he had entered the ministry because it was considered a respectable occupation, and he had hoped that it would also allow him to advance his reputation and become a prominent voice in Scotland and the rest of Great Britain.

While in Kilmany, Chalmers spent some of his time working on a book entitled *An Enquiry into the Extent and Stability of National Resources*. He hoped that the book, which he paid to have published in 1808, would contribute to the relatively new field of political economy. In the book, he wrote that if British society were properly organized and regulated, then the economy could flourish based on internal production. His thesis assumed a largely agrarian population that could produce enough food and other materials to support basic human needs. As a result, it did not sufficiently come to grips with the forces of industrialization that were already

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[3] For a discussion of the evolution of poor relief in Scotland, see Michael Fry, *A Higher World: Scotland, 1707–1815* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2014), 157–88.

[4] For a history of the development of the Town's Hospital, see Fiona MacDonald, "The Infirmary of the Glasgow Town's Hospital, 1733–1800: A Case for Voluntarism?," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 73.1 (1999): 64–105, http://www.jstor.org/stable/44445195.

[5] Fry, *A Higher World*, 166.

[6] For detailed statistics of the poor in Glasgow, see John Roxborogh, *Thomas Chalmers: Enthusiast for Mission, the Christian Good of Scotland and the Rise of the Missionary Movement*, Rutherford Studies in Historical Theology (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1999), 157–58.

beginning to change Great Britain permanently. The book attempted to make the case that a strengthened British economy would give the country confidence on the world stage. He further suggested that the government should not allow unfettered industrial growth, as that would be bad for the peace and stability of the population.

Note that Chalmers's book favorably cites the work of Thomas Robert Malthus and his work, *The Principles of Population*, published in 1804. Malthus argued in part that an "irresponsible increase in family size could lead to low incomes and misery all round."[7] Instead, people should marry later in life to reduce the size of their families. Further, there needed to be much better education so that people would "understand the benefits of supporting smaller families on their incomes and of increasing their wages by decreasing the labour supply."[8] Malthus also argued that civil poor relief, as stipulated in the Poor Laws, should be abolished because it caused people to be dependent on the government rather than being industrious.

The most crucial feature of Chalmers's book for our purposes was his argument that those who had great personal wealth and privilege should not be living their lives simply for their own pleasure or at the expense of the less fortunate. He was not arguing for the abolition of society's structures or even its hierarchy, but he did argue for much higher taxes to be leveled on those who could most afford to pay. He also argued that the individual worth or value of a person did not depend on how much money they had or how much property they owned but rather on their contribution to the nation's ideals and aims. The book was unsuccessful as a publishing venture, but it remains important for its indication of Chalmers's interest in socio-economic issues, and he would continue to adapt some of these ideas to his parochial model of pastoral care.

Chalmers's conversion to evangelical Christianity, which took place over a period of two years between 1809 and 1811, revolutionized his approach to his ministry. Instead of viewing the pastoral ministry as a way of gaining recognition and achieving wealth and status, he now saw that he was called to preach the gospel and serve his parishioners. In addition to his preaching and teaching, he turned his attention to the physical needs of the poor in the parish. It has been noted that

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[7] Donald Rutherford, "Malthus and Three Approaches to Solving the Population Problem," *Population* (English Edition, 2002–) 62.2 (2007): 215, http://www.jstor.org/stable/27645305.

[8] Stewart J. Brown, *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), 117.

> he employed his influence to secure medical assistance, food and clothing for the poor. … He also personally donated substantial sums. On 21 February 1814 … he noted in his diary his personal commitment to support two aged pensioners. … On the same date, he vowed in the future to devote ten percent of his annual income "to the relief of the wants of others either spiritual or temporal."[9]

Chalmers moved from Kilmany to Glasgow in 1815 to become the minister of Tron parish church. The parish had been established in 1484 and, after the Reformation, had become Presbyterian in 1592. The church building itself had been rebuilt in 1794 and seated about thirteen hundred people. It was located just outside the official parish boundary, which was not unheard of, but it does indicate that the original concept of the parish system had broken down. Funding for the work of the parish, including payment of the minister's stipend, came largely from pew rents, which were moneys paid for the privilege of having an assigned seat in the church. At the time of Chalmers's installation, the total population of the parish was approximately eleven thousand people, but nearly half of those were not members of the Church of Scotland. Some of these people attended other churches, while others did not go to church at all because they either could not afford the pew rents or were not interested in attending. The parish was a very poor one, and it would not be long before the new minister would begin to realize just how big the task that lay before him was. As he began to come to grips with the spiritual and temporal problems in the parish, he developed a threefold approach: meeting physical needs, providing for better education, and proclaiming the good news of the gospel.

His first step was to begin systematic parish visitation. Beginning in November 1815, Chalmers, along with elders from the church, began visiting the residents of the parish. He spent whole days visiting as many as seventy families a day, and over the course of two years, he was able to meet most of his parishioners. He knew that he would not get to know the people intimately, but he did take care to keep statistics on each family and made careful notes of the specific needs that he discovered.

He soon recognized that the needs of the parish were so great that he could not make a difference on his own. As a result, he began to actively seek help from within his congregation. Tron parish was divided into twenty-five districts or proportions, and each of these districts was supposed to have an elder who was responsible for pastoral oversight and care. However, when Chalmers was installed as minister, there were only eight elders. Eight men could not properly care for the thirteen hundred who

[9] Ibid., 77.

regularly attended the church or the eleven thousand outside the church. So, during his first year as minister, Chalmers began to look for suitable candidates for the eldership.

Twelve younger men were elected to the office of elder, and, by December of 1816, Chalmers had trained and was ready to install the new elders. All of them were well educated and had both the money and the time necessary to devote themselves to the work of the church. At their ordination, Chalmers told them that under God it would be up to them to see that the parish system could be made to work in the context of a large city. While he conceded that the parish system had broken down in the cities of Scotland, it did not have to remain that way.

He then went on to give them a threefold charge. First, it was their duty to teach the good news about Jesus through regular visitation. Second, they were to look proactively for those who truly needed material assistance from the church. They should encourage families to help themselves and, wherever possible, care for their own, but the elders were to make sure that people who genuinely needed it would be provided with support. Third, they were to encourage others who regularly attended Tron parish church to become actively involved in parish life. His hope was to mobilize the resources of a middle-class congregation to give of their time, talent, and treasure to care for the less fortunate.

Increasing the level of education was a key component of Chalmers's vision. A Sunday school society was established in December 1816 with only four teachers. By the time Chalmers left the parish three years later, there were over forty teachers and forty-seven schools, almost half the total number of schools in all of Glasgow. In addition to providing both literacy and religious education for many young people, Chalmers's Sunday school scheme had another major benefit: some of the teachers, who had previously been unaware of the difficult living situations of many Glasgow citizens, learned of the state of the inner city and were moved to devote significant efforts to improving the conditions.

As Chalmers continued his work at Tron parish, he was especially frustrated by the way in which the relief money for the poor was administered. Pew rents covered church expenses, including ministerial stipends, and separate collections were taken for the relief of the poor. These were controlled by the General Session, which was made up of ministers from each of the parishes. Money was then sent back to individual parishes based on the size of the poor population in the parish. If the needs outweighed the distributed funds, then those cases were referred to Town's Hospital, which was funded out of a local assessment.

Chalmers came to view this system as overly complicated and began to campaign to keep all collections for the poor within the parish for the exclusive use of the parish. During 1818 and 1819, he increasingly advocated for the abolition of the system itself. In so doing, he clashed with other evangelicals in the Church of Scotland who believed that while the current system was not perfect, it was better than what Chalmers was advocating. One of Chalmers's failings was that he held his views with considerable tenacity, and he was not always gracious when debating with others. So now, his views on poor relief and his personal manner placed him at odds with those who should have been his natural allies in the Church of Scotland.

The Glasgow Town Council had been planning to create a new parish in the east end of Glasgow for some time. They had not planned on creating a new parish for Chalmers, but he seized upon the plans as a means of moving forward his vision for parish ministry in Scotland's cities. As he thought about implementing a fuller vision in a new parish, he was careful to ensure that wealthy pew holders at Tron parish church would be given the opportunity to move to the new parish if they chose. He also secured an agreement that he could take some of the elders from Tron parish to the new parish. This meant that he would be starting with a core congregation who could provide him with the manpower and financial resources necessary to make the experiment work.

As Chalmers began work in the new parish of Saint John's, he quickly saw that a robust diaconal ministry would need to be established to carry out the work of caring for the poor in the east end of Glasgow. To the deacons, he gave these instructions:

> When one applies for admittance through his deacon upon our funds, the first thing to be inquired into is, if there be any kind of work that he can yet do so as either to keep him altogether off, or as to make a partial allowance serve for his necessities; the second, what his relatives and friends are willing to do for him; the third, whether he is a hearer in any dissenting place of worship, and whether its session will contribute to his relief, and if after these previous inquiries it be found that further relief is necessary, then there must be a strict ascertainment of his term of residence in Glasgow, and whether he be yet on the funds of the Town Hospital, or is obtaining relief from any other parish. If upon all these points being ascertained the deacon of the proportion where he resides still conceives him an object for our assistance, he will inquire whether a small temporary aid will meet the occasion, and state this to the first ordinary meeting. But if instead of this he conceives him a fit subject for a regular allowance, he will receive the assistance of another deacon to complete and confirm his inquiries by the next ordinary meeting thereafter, at which time the applicant if they still think him a fit object, is brought before us, and received upon the fund at such a rate of allowance as upon all the circumstances of the case the meeting of deacons shall judge proper. Of course, pending these examinations the

> deacon is empowered to grant the same sort of discretionary aid that is customary in other parishes.[10]

There was a clear intent in these guidelines that deacons should seek to help people help themselves. It was hoped that deacons could help the poor find work or encourage their families to help them if funds permitted. While some have argued that Chalmers was trying to reduce the funds used for poor relief as an end in itself, this was not the case. Rather, as Michael Fry has noted, Chalmers was seeking "the reformation of individuals who, through self-help, could lessen their own degree of dependency. At the same time, the rich were called on for greater charity."[11]

The moral reformation that Chalmers sought could only be achieved through the preaching of the good news of Jesus Christ. This can best be summed up in his words from a sermon based on Ecclesiastes 4:13, in which Chalmers makes this powerful statement about the power of the Christian gospel to change the world. The gospel, he said, is

> the great instrument for … elevating the poor. … Let the testimony of God be simply taken in, that on his own Son he has laid the iniquities of us all. … Jesus Christ died, the just for the unjust, to bring us unto God. This is a truth, which, when all the world shall receive it, all the world will be renovated. Many do not see how a principle, so mighty in operation, should be enveloped in a proposition so simple of utterance. But let a man, by his faith in this utterance, come to know that God is his friend, and that heaven is the home of his fondest expectation; and in contact with such new elements as these, he will evince the reach, and the habit, and the desire of a new creature. It is this doctrine which is the alone instrument of God for the moral transformation of our species.[12]

Chalmers's methodology, a mix of gospel preaching, education, and monetary support, showed promising results within the parish. The population of Saint John's parish continued to increase during his tenure there, while the number of those considered paupers decreased. What did not work as well was his expectation that this "godly commonwealth" would be replicated throughout Scotland.

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[10] William Hanna, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Thomas Chalmers, D.D., L.L.D.* (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable & Co., 1852), 2:299.

[11] Michael Fry, *A New Race of Men: Scotland, 1815–1914* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2013), 176.

[12] Thomas Chalmers, "On the Advantages of Christian Knowledge to the Lower Orders of Society," in *Sermons and Discourses of Thomas Chalmers, D.D., LL.D., Now Completed by the Introduction of His Posthumous Sermons* (New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 1854), 2:343–44.

In 1823, Chalmers left Saint John's for an academic position at Saint Andrew's University. Subsequently, he would take up positions at the University of Edinburgh and then, following the Disruption in 1843, New College. Although he was no longer actively involved in pastoral ministry, he remained very concerned about the needs of the poor.

Widespread famines in 1845 and 1846 placed considerable strain upon both church and state as they struggled to meet a very real need. First, in 1845, the potato crop failed in Ireland, and then, in 1846, the failure was even more widespread. In the autumn of 1846, Chalmers was instrumental in raising more than fifteen thousand pounds from within the Free Church for famine relief, which placed the Free Church at the forefront of relief efforts. By early 1847, the situation was made even worse by the outbreak of typhoid. It was clear that private philanthropy, either from individuals or churches, could not meet this need. There were calls among some to let the epidemic run its course. This appalling lack of concern was based on the bizarre idea that moral failure of the inhabitants of the affected areas of Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland had brought on the famine and the plague. Chalmers angrily denounced this unfeeling attitude in a letter published in *The Witness* on March 6, 1847. He bluntly called these attitudes unchristian. Rather than spending time blaming the poor for this terrible situation, he argued, Christians should be doing all that they could to alleviate the distress.

Then, in what can only be seen as a major change in his views, Chalmers argued in an article for the May 1847 issue of *The North British Review* that a crisis of the proportions that was currently being faced could only be dealt with direct government intervention.

> What may suffice in ordinary [situations], clearly will not suffice for the present overwhelming visitation. There is an imperious call for the Government to come forward—and this not to supersede the liberalities of the public, but to … add thereto the allowances of the State; or rather, for the State to be the principal almoner in such a dire emergency, and its distributions supplemented to the uttermost by the charities of the benevolent.[13]

He also argued that if this meant increased taxation on the wealthier in society, then the government should take this action. It has been argued that this is evidence that Chalmers was completely abandoning his ideal of the godly commonwealth. This is an overstatement. It is better to see his

[13] Thomas Chalmers, "Political Economy of a Famine," *North British Review* 7 (May–August 1847): 261–62.

views as an adaptation to a moment of crisis in Ireland and Scotland and a recognition that the church could not herself deal with the crisis without assistance.

As we seek to assess his legacy, although some have argued that Chalmers's vision of society was outmoded and oppressive to the poor, he cannot be accused of not caring for the spiritual and physical needs of those outside the walls of his church. Not all needs were met, but the mobilized and reinvigorated eldership and diaconate did make a difference. There were people who still remained in great need, but in both the parishes that Chalmers served and the city of Glasgow as a whole, there was improvement as a result of these initiatives.

While he saw care of the poor as central to the mission of the church, he was not afraid to adapt his views to meet changing needs in society. It has been rightly noted that in "his own time he was much admired for his depth of commitment to his work and his decision to go and live among the poor."[14] In the twenty-first century, his understanding that the gospel must be clearly preached and that there is an obligation laid upon the church and the society as a whole to care for the needs of the poor and disadvantaged is still true. It is still a message that needs to be heard.

[14] Fry, *A New Race of Men*, 176.

The Common Grace Agency of Capitalistic Corporate Strategy in God's World

SCOTT A. QUATRO

Abstract

The contemporary zeitgeist presents an unapologetically harsh and troublingly distorted perspective regarding the role of capitalistic corporate strategy in the world. I argue that much of this is due to a misunderstanding of the fundamental purpose of business strategy, which is exacerbated by theologically flawed impositions onto the business sphere of the created order. In response, I argue that capitalistic corporate strategy is part of God's good creation and by God's design serves as a primary source of common grace by unleashing prosperity, engendering profit, and showering provision in and on the world—and perhaps will continue to do so for eternity.

Keywords

Common grace, sphere sovereignty, creation, consummation, meta-narrative, strategy, corporate strategy, capitalistic, capitalism

I. *Trouble on Both the Secular and Sacred Fronts*

There is no doubt that capitalistic business and corporate strategy have historically been marred by the curse of the love of money. There are numerous historical examples of businesses in the United States alone having a negative impact on the world due to greed manifest in everything from oppression of workers (e.g., the Homestead Strike) to intrinsically dangerous products (e.g., the Ford Pinto) to financial statement and stock manipulation (e.g., the Enron bankruptcy). And this historical track record has understandably catalyzed organized movements of protest and response in both the secular or societal and the sacred or church camps over time. In a contemporary sense, these protests and responses have merged into a pivotal moment in the history of capitalistic corporate strategy.

1. *Secular Response—From Capitalistic Strategy to Socialistic Strategy*

Contemporary secular culture has increasingly challenged the fundamental design of capitalistic corporate strategy, namely, the pursuit of profit-making through intrinsically risk-based capital allocation in a freely competitive market. This is driven by the presupposition that profit is inequitable at best and outright extortion at worst. A second, related presupposition is that profit only benefits the owner or capitalist; that is, those who have taken the risk and allocated financial capital to support a particular business strategy with the goal of realizing a profitable return on their invested capital. These two related presuppositions have undergirded two significant contemporary secular movements that are clearly reflective of the current contempt for capitalistic corporate strategy.

The Occupy Wall Street Movement: Pushing Toward Redefinition

The Occupy Wall Street movement (and the related, more global, Occupy movement) unfolded between 2011 and 2016. At its core, the movement came about because of the occupiers' perception that corporate profits were pursued and generated solely to benefit wealthy capitalists. It also challenged the very legitimacy of profit-making and capitalism, espousing a more socialist economic ideology. Arguably, the Occupy Wall Street movement gave evidence that the die was cast—the contemporary culture was demanding a redefinition of corporate strategy, one that is decidedly less capitalistic in its orientation.

The Business Roundtable: Redefinition Codified

Fast forward several years, and the Occupiers' message had reached the boardrooms of the world's most powerful US-based corporations, many of which maintain membership in the Business Roundtable (BRT), a nonprofit lobbyist organization focused on promoting the role of business and corporate strategy in the world. Since 1997, the BRT had embraced a Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation delineating profit-making for shareholders as the central purpose of capitalistic business and corporate strategy. In 2019, that statement changed dramatically, replacing profit-making and *share*holder primacy with value-creation and *stake*holder primacy. At its core, I would argue that the BRT's redefinition was driven by the perception that corporate strategy needed to be oriented around broad societal or socialistic good, as opposed to narrow profitable or capitalist good.

2. *Sacred Response: From Capitalistic Strategy to Spiritualized Strategy*

Mostly concurrent with the secular response outlined above, the Business as Mission (BAM) movement emerged and gained momentum between 2005 and 2015 as a parallel sacred response that resulted in an arguably even more drastic redefinition of business and corporate strategy. BAM redefines the core purpose of business and corporate strategy even farther away from capitalistic aims, establishing evangelism, discipleship, and global economic development as the core purposes or aims of business and corporate strategy. At its core, the BAM redefinition was driven by the perception that corporate strategy needed to be oriented around particular spiritual good, as opposed to narrow profitable or capitalistic good.

II. *Theologically Grounded Responses to the Secular and Sacred Redefinitions*

There is much to be troubled by about the secular and sacred redefinitions of corporate strategy that have emerged in today's culture. This article cannot provide an exhaustive theological response. That said, we can through the lens of Reformed theology offer specific and significant arguments and answers, starting with a principled and specific response to the BAM movement and continuing with some broad application of the specific constructs of the metanarrative and sphere sovereignty, all of which will lead to my primary premise, namely, that capitalistic corporate strategy is designed by God to be an agency of common grace by generating prosperity, profit, and provision in the world.

1. *The Distortion of the BAM Movement*

Given the mission of this journal and the growing influence of the BAM movement in Christian business practice and education circles, it seems fitting to start with a specific and reasonably lengthy response to it.[1] Indeed, the BAM movement has the potential to undermine the very legitimacy of Christian business education and capitalistic corporate strategic practice. This danger becomes particularly clear when BAM is viewed through the lens of the systematic Reformed theological tradition, which helps us to understand better business and its essential role as a key component of God's good creation. Specifically, BAM is fundamentally flawed in the following key ways:

BAM is based on a dualistic foundation. BAM reinforces the false sacred-secular dichotomy by positioning business as mission as sacred and business as business as secular. In contrast, Reformed theology declares *all* legitimate business work as sacred means of imaging God and contributing to the ongoing revelation of his kingdom.[2]

BAM reinforces a dual-class citizenship. Related to the first point, BAM creates a dual-class citizenship among business academics and practitioners alike. In contrast, Reformed theology declares *all* of God's people working in business or in *any* other context as cocreators with him, equally but differentially contributing to the ongoing revelation of his kingdom.

BAM violates God's sovereign intention for his creation. BAM imposes the God-given or designed mandate of the church onto business, and vice versa. In contrast, the Reformed tradition celebrates God's good intent for business as being separate and distinct from his good intentions for the organized church. More on this below in the section on the applicability of sphere sovereignty.

BAM undermines profit. Whereas BAM distorts the core essentials of business, thereby threatening sustainable business enterprise, Reformed theology reinforces profit-making as a morally and religiously sound mandate unique to business. More on this later in the section on profit-making as intrinsically good in the sphere of business, as pursued through the agency of capitalistic corporate strategy.

BAM is inauthentic. BAM enterprises run the risk of disenfranchising many of their stakeholders due to mixed motives and lack of full disclosure

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[1] For the origins of much of my thinking regarding Business as Mission, see Scott A. Quatro, "Is Business as Mission a Flawed Concept? A Reformed Christian Response to the BAM Movement," *Journal of Biblical Integration in Business* 15.1 (2012): 80–87, 102–3.

[2] For grounded explorations of this truth, see Lee Hardy, *The Fabric of This World: Inquiries into Calling, Career Choice, and the Design of Human Work* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), and Timothy Keller, *Every Good Endeavor: Connecting Your Work to God's Work* (New York: Dutton, 2012).

regarding the proselytizing nature of BAM enterprises. In contrast, Reformed theology celebrates the ideal of business being a primary means of extending shalom to all people and even to all of creation.

2. *The Holistic Truth of the Metanarrative Affirms Capitalistic Corporate Strategy*

As a theologically rich frame, the Christian metanarrative illumines and affirms capitalistic corporate strategy[3] by helping us to make sense of the God-designed purpose, current state, and future state of humanity and the created order, including capitalistic corporate strategy.

Creation. God created all things good, including capitalistic corporate strategy. By God's design, capitalistic corporate strategy is a primary means by which humans have exercised dominion over God's world. We must be careful not to distort our perception of the rightness of capitalistic corporate strategy with an overemphasis on the wrongness of how humans have stewarded that part of God's creation.[4]

Fall. All things have fallen from their original goodness, including capitalistic corporate strategy. But again, we must be careful not to distort our perception of the rightness of creation with an overemphasis on the wrongness of how humans have stewarded creation.

Redemption. All of creation has been redeemed by Christ's work on the cross, including capitalistic corporate strategy. We must be careful not to limit the application of the gospel only to humans, and specifically only to God's people.

Consummation. All of creation is being made new, including capitalistic corporate strategy. We must be free to consider the possibility of business activity and even some semblance of capitalistic corporate strategy playing a role in the eternal kingdom. More on this later in the concluding thoughts to this article.

3. *The Foundational Truth of Sphere Sovereignty Affirms Capitalistic Corporate Strategy*

Perhaps even more cleanly and demonstrably, the rich theological construct of sphere sovereignty affirms capitalistic corporate strategy.[5] It does so by

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[3] For a substantive and holistic discussion of the metanarrative applied to business and corporate strategy, see Jeff Van Duzer, *Why Business Matters to God* (Downers Grover, IL: IVP Academic, 2010).

[4] Albert M. Wolters, *Creation Regained: Biblical Basis for a Reformational Worldview* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985).

[5] For a concise and actionable overview of sphere sovereignty, see Richard J. Mouw, *Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 23–27.

celebrating God's good design for business and capitalist corporate strategy as being sovereign and distinct from God's good design for other components of the created order. The concept of sphere sovereignty was codified by the Dutch Reformed theologian and statesman Abraham Kuyper. The essence of Kuyper's seminal doctrine is that God intentionally orders creation with diversity and integrity such that each sphere of society is independently good and must be appreciated as such.

The broad implication of Kuyper's thinking is that economic life, family life, civic life, school life, and even church life are distinct and sovereign. The specific implication is that there are different God-ordained norms for each sphere such that a business must not be run like a church, an educational institution must not be run like a governmental agency, and so on. This is *not* to say that God has not ordained universal norms that transcend all spheres (e.g., admonitions against the love of money as discussed above or the command to love your neighbor as yourself). But it *is* to say that some God-ordained norms are constrained to specific spheres (e.g., the command for the state and the church to care for the poor, the command for the church to evangelize the nations, the command for business to prosper resources and generate a profit). Thus, corporate strategy ideally aligns with God's good design for the sphere of business as opposed to his equally good design for the sphere of the church or the sphere of the state. Again, the fundamental lesson here is that God intends for business and the church and the state to be separate and yet complementary spheres of creation. Further, it is a tricky endeavor indeed to merge the mandates imposed on these different spheres of God's creation, as the secular BRT and sacred BAM movements have done.

III. *Prosperity, Profit, and Provision Flow from the Common Grace of Capitalistic Corporate Strategy*

All of this points toward the beautiful and God-designed common grace agency of capitalistic corporate strategy in the world. We return to the thinking and worldview of Kuyper, the theologian most credited with codifying the theological construct of common grace.[6] With common grace, Kuyper delineated a clear appreciation for how God upholds secure, civil society in our fallen world.

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[6] Abraham Kuyper, *Wisdom and Wonder: Common Grace in Science and Art* (Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press, 2011).

1. *Prospering the World by Exercising Dominion*

In this vein, one can argue that the sphere of business is fundamentally about stewarding and prospering creation in line with the cultural mandate articulated in Genesis 1:28. This passage declares that God's image bearers are to care for creation and make it fruitful by exercising dominion and taking charge of the productive capacity of that creation. Directly related to this conversation, businesses are charged with the task of prospering all that God has created through the agency of capitalistic corporate strategy. In doing so, God uses business and capitalistic corporate strategy to extend common grace to all people, meeting legitimate product and service needs, providing livelihoods, and generating wealth for many. Through business activity, God showers common grace goodness equally on both his people and the unredeemed. This is by God's design, and it represents his will for the business sphere of creation.

Further underscoring this is the potentially amazing benevolence that flows from combining the productive capacity of humans, raw materials, and capital. By exercising rationality and creativity, humans combine raw materials and capital into finished products and services that shower goodness on the world. And as God's image bearers, the humans exercising dominion have the greatest impact on the prosperity that flows from combining the productive capacity of the three components. It is a remarkably simple, but profoundly true, equation:[7]

$$\text{Humans}^{100} \times (\text{Materials} + \text{Capital}) = \text{Prosperity}$$

This equation clearly shows the impact that humans operating in the sphere of business have as cocreators with our creator God, regardless of whether those particular humans have been reconciled to that creator God. This happens optimally when the humans are oriented around the gravity of the calling before them, namely, unlocking the prosperity-generating potential of creation consistent with Genesis 1:28. Of course, this does not always happen. Because of the fall, the impact of the human component of the equation can lead to an erosion of prosperity in an order of magnitude consistent with the potential multiplication of prosperity. The impact of humans for good or for ill is arguably one hundred times greater than the impact of materials and capital. This is at once a humbling and motivating

[7] The work and capitalistic corporate strategy practice of Dennis Bakke, as recorded in his deeply personal and insightful executive memoir, has significantly influenced my thinking regarding a prosperity equation; Dennis Bakke, *Joy at Work: A Revolutionary Approach to Fun on the Job* (Seattle: PVG, 2005).

reality—all the more reason to bestow honor and dignity on the humans working in business, those charged with developing and implementing capitalistic corporate strategy consistent with its intrinsic purpose and goodness.[8] Arguably, the BRT and BAM movements profiled above have eroded that honor and dignity, instead imposing an instrumental goodness on business and capitalistic corporate strategy. Stated plainly, the BRT movement codifies the instrumentality of providing social welfare as the focus and intended outcome of good corporate strategy, while the BAM movement codifies the instrumentality of evangelizing and discipling the nations as the focus and intended outcome of good corporate strategy. Those movements mostly (BRT) or completely (BAM) miss the intrinsic goodness that flows from simply unlocking the prosperity-producing potential of creation through capitalistic corporate strategy.

Starbucks can serve as an example of a company that has not missed the mark in this regard.[9] Starting over fifty years ago with a single Seattle-based location in Pike Place Market, Starbucks has grown to become the world's largest branded coffee chain operator and retailer. Starbucks now operates over thirty thousand locations globally and ranks as the 114th-largest US-based publicly traded company. From the beginning, Starbucks was intent on unlocking the productive capacity of creation in the form of knowledgeable employees, globally sourced coffee served in well-located and equipped stores, fueled by significant capital investment and profitability. It has not shied away from difficult decisions throughout its history to maintain its ability to foster prosperity, including temporarily shutting down all US-based stores in 2009 to retrain employees and permanently closing down more than six hundred underperforming stores in that same year—all while significantly increasing its commitment to engaging in "fair trade coffee"[10] by buying from the world's coffee farmers and suppliers. Starbucks has remained firmly committed to unlocking the prosperity that comes from optimally combining human capital, material capital, and financial capital, as equated and codified above.

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[8] Jeff Van Duzer, *Why Business Matters to God* (Downers Grover, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 23–25.

[9] The current CEO, Kevin Johnson, is a signatory of the BRT Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation, although I personally doubt if Howard Schultz would have been; he was a staunch proponent of free trade and markets and the longtime architect of the capitalistic corporate strategy of the company for over 37 years until his retirement in 2018.

[10] Starbucks has codified their particular approach to fair trade coffee as Coffee and Farmer Equity (C.A.F.E.) Practices. Starbucks defines this coffee buying commitment as "a verification program that measures farms against economic, social and environmental criteria, all designed to promote transparent, profitable and sustainable coffee growing practices while also protecting the well-being of coffee farmers and workers, their families and their communities."

2. *Profiting the World by Multiplying Talents*

The prosperity-generating potential of capitalistic corporate strategy is undergirded and multiplied by the potential for profit to be generated as the result of optimizing the combination of humans, materials, and capital. And the greater the return generated on talents entrusted to a corporate strategist (a reference to Matthew 25:14–30), the more benevolent that prosperity potential becomes. This principle seems clear, but still, many Christians have difficulty with seeing profit-making as morally or spiritually sound.[11] Perhaps one of the most central and cherished macro-level Christian doctrines applicable to this tension is the doctrine of stewardship, which declares that humans are stewards or agents charged with the task of prospering all that God has created. They are accountable for their prosperity-generating work, but they do not truly own the humans, materials, and capital that they are stewarding in performing that work.

This perspective has tremendous implications for capitalistic corporate strategists intent upon generating profit. In short, the Christian doctrine of stewardship can be viewed as being remarkably consistent with normative expectations for strategists operating in the sphere of business relative to profit-making. This is true in the following four ways:

First, viewing humans as stewards for God is like viewing strategists as agents for shareholders or capitalists. While I am not proposing that the gravity of the responsibility is the same, nor am I comparing God ontologically to shareholders, I find the principle to be clearly applicable. Just as stewards do not own the components of creation (plants, animals, themselves, other people), strategists do not own the factors of production (employees, property, buildings, equipment, raw materials, inventory, capital). As God owns creation, the capitalists (shareholders) own the corporation. As stewards are accountable to God without ultimate ownership or control, so too are strategists held accountable by shareholders/capitalists without ultimate ownership or control. Finally, just as stewards are charged by God with prospering creation for God's purposes, agents are charged by shareholders and capitalists with maximizing the return on their invested capital.

It is particularly insightful to view these four comparisons as being inherently harmonious as opposed to simply demonstrating remarkable parallelism. Stated more clearly, when strategists consistently live out the

[11] Much of my thinking borrows and has evolved from my earlier work regarding the moral and religious soundness of profit-making. See Scott A. Quatro, "Profit Matters: Christian Religiosity as Support for Milton Friedman's Provocative Claim," in *Executive Ethics: Ethical Dilemmas and Challenges for the C-Suite*, ed. Scott A. Quatro and Ronald R. Sims (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2008), 49–62.

four points of stewardship outlined above, they are, by definition, demonstrating God-like stewardship. Hence, profit-making is arguably not only morally and spiritually sound; it is a moral and spiritual imperative for strategists operating in the business sphere, most clearly so when those same strategists are also God's people.

As referenced above, perhaps the most compelling passage from Scripture in this vein is the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25:14–30. This passage may be interpreted as nothing less than an explicit command for stewards and strategists to prioritize and even maximize profit-making. In this account, three steward-agents are entrusted with varying amounts of capital according to their abilities. The most effective steward is given the most capital. In the end, when the capitalist asks for an account from each of the steward-strategists, the two that generated a profitable return on the capital are praised, while the one that generated no return or profit is summarily dismissed. Thus, it can be argued that God clearly expects stewards to maximize profitable returns on his capital. And while this lesson is clearly intended to apply more broadly to all resources entrusted to stewards for the spiritual purpose of growing God's kingdom, the direct applicability regarding strategists and profit-making is particularly striking.

3. *Provision for the World by Meeting Daily Bread Needs*

By unleashing the God-designed prosperity of creation, and generating profit as a result, the benevolence of God's common grace flowing through capitalistic corporate strategy now reaches the level of daily provision for all stakeholders impacted by business. In a very real way, many people have their "daily bread" needs (Matt 6:1 ESV) met through the prosperity and profit of business. Let us return to the example of Starbucks and consider the operation of the local Starbucks store in Lookout Mountain, Georgia, just a short drive from the college where I serve on the faculty. This is *my* Starbucks—and I am thankful that it is so easily accessible. I am a big fan and loyal customer. And I gladly hand over $2.40 for a Grande Pike Place coffee—partly because it is really good coffee, but also partly because of all the provision that I know flows from that $2.40. Of course, not all of the $2.40 is profit. But the fact that there is a profitable return available to Starbucks is what makes it willing to engage in its corporate activities. In short, every penny of the $2.40 is undergirded by Starbucks's pursuit of profit via capitalistic corporate strategy, and an analysis of the normative financial statements from the last several years of Starbucks operations reveals the provision that eventually flows to the major corporate stakeholders

in virtuous ways because of Starbucks's successful implementation of capitalistic corporate strategy.[12]

Provision for Suppliers

The biggest piece of shared prosperity directly generated by my $2.40 Starbucks purchase is provision for suppliers. The various suppliers of coffee, packaging, and the other raw materials necessary for cultivating, roasting, packaging, distributing, and retailing my coffee end up receiving approximately $0.94 of my $2.40. This includes thousands of coffee farmers located all around the globe, some of them having relationships with Starbucks going back over thirty years. Of course, all of these suppliers have employees and other customers beyond Starbucks, and I suspect that virtually all of them operate in communities where they pay taxes on their own corporate profits. So every other category of corporate stakeholder outlined below relative to the shared prosperity generated by my $2.40 Starbucks purchase is replicated by each of the individual suppliers that gets a piece of the $0.94 from that purchase.

Provision for Employees

The second-largest piece of my $2.40 ends up in the pockets and bank accounts and even the stock portfolios of Starbucks's employees. In fact, roughly $0.78 is accounted for in this manner. Most of this goes to the employees in the form of direct compensation (base pay, bonuses), but some of it goes to Starbucks's store-based partners (as they are called) in the form of indirect compensation (benefits), and many of these benefits are not typically made available to retail store employees. These include comprehensive health benefits, a company match of 4% to 6% for retirement plan savings, college education benefits, and perhaps most impressively (especially for part-time retail industry employees), a discounted stock purchase plan that enable Starbucks' hourly store-based employees to become shareholders as well.

Provision for Shareholders

Shareholders are next in line. This reality might surprise most of the Occupy Wall Street activists from several years ago, who were remarkably uninformed as to the share of my $2.40 Starbucks purchase that ends up making it to

[12] Much of my thinking borrows and has evolved from my earlier work regarding the benevolence of profit-making. See Scott A. Quatro, "Profit Profits!," in *Executive Ethics II: Ethical Dilemmas and Challenges for the C-Suite*, ed. Ronald R. Sims and Scott A. Quatro, 2nd ed. (Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing, 2016), 63–72.

the shareholders. It seems that most of the occupiers assumed that the largest share ends up in the hands of "greedy" shareholders. But in fact, the shareholders are third in line at Starbucks, with around $0.28 being their take. In the case of Starbucks, most of that $0.28 is reinvested into the company rather than paid out to the shareholders as dividends.

Provision for Communities

The next easily identifiable piece of my $2.40 purchase literally makes it possible for the local community of Lookout Mountain to exist. Again, the occupiers discussed early in this article appeared to have been blissfully ignorant of this piece of the equation. Altogether, roughly $0.25 of my $2.40 goes to pay local, state, and federal sales and income taxes, which in turn funds the local elementary school my four children attended, the local police force that patrols our streets, the recent improvement project that resulted in the better paving and traction on those streets, and even illumines the streetlamps that light those streets. All of this is before we consider beneficiaries in the larger communities of the state of Georgia (e.g., Georgia Southwestern State University and Georgia Institute of Technology, where President Jimmy Carter was partially educated), the United States (e.g., the US Naval Academy, where President Carter eventually graduated), and even the global community (e.g., President Carter was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002 for his post-Presidency global diplomacy and human rights–related efforts). All of this is partially funded or undergirded by the $0.25 in tax revenues generated from my $2.40 Starbucks purchase.

Provision for Customers

The last easily discerned piece of my Starbucks purchase can be thought of as enlightened "consumer self-interest." It sounds odd to think about it this way, but without profit, my ongoing and evolving coffee needs will simply not be met by Starbucks via its capitalistic corporate strategy. Of course, the profit potential compels Starbucks to make the coffee available to me—but also to invest in the research and development endeavors, store improvements, and employee training that further enhance my coffee consumption experience down the road. All told, about $0.04 of my $2.40 makes its way back to me in the form of future enhanced coffee experiences.

Provision for All Stakeholders Collectively

Then there is the rest of the $2.40. So far, we have accounted for $2.29 of my Starbucks purchase. The remaining amount of approximately $0.11 is

harder to fundamentally trace to any one corporate stakeholder group, but rather it flows as an aggregate to all of them.

IV. *The Eternal City and World*

Let us finish by considering the possibility of the fully consummated kingdom, when heaven and earth come together again.[13] For me, this involves imagining the God-designed perfection and potential prosperity of the garden, which by God's design was the entire world pre-fall. Consider this reality for a moment. In the beginning, our God created all things good, including us. The world was perfectly created and resourced, but not perfectly prospered. Our God placed us in the center of all things as viceroys and charged us to make much of the world, to have dominion, and to steward all things wisely. I imagine that we would have filled the earth, building cities and businesses, formulating and implementing capitalistic corporate strategy, weaving together the giftedness of humans, abundant raw materials, and capital to profitably create products and services that help communities to flourish through abundant provision, and through all of this, bringing God's goodness and shalom to the world. Thus, I firmly believe that we must reaffirm God's good intent and design for business and capitalistic corporate strategy, moving away from the socialistic and spiritualized misdirection espoused by the BRT and BAM movements. We must do this boldly, addressing the systemic impact of the fall on God's good creation, enthusiastically working to make all things new in and through business. In my vision, through business, capitalistic corporate strategy works as the powerful and pervasive agent of prosperity, profit, and provision that God designed it to be—maybe for eternity.

[13] A close friend and colleague here at Covenant College gifted me a copy of J. Richard Middleton's remarkable book *A New Heaven and a New Earth: Reclaiming Biblical Eschatology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014). It has spoken to me with clarity about the possibilities of our eternal home and existence and allowed me to dream about what that may be like.

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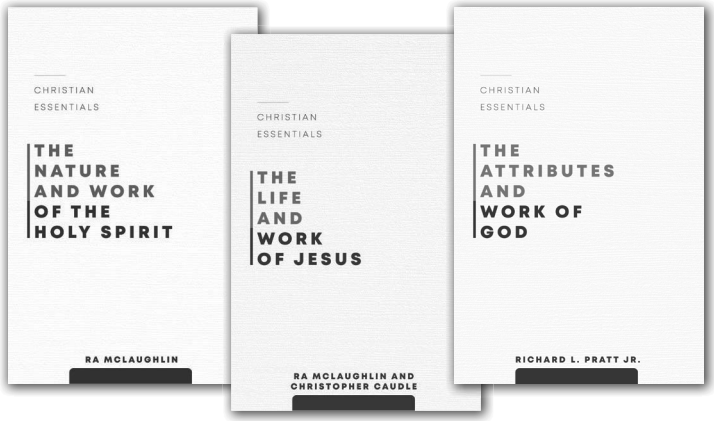

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We Were Created to Work: From the Beginning, Economics Is a Fundamental Aspect of Life

PAUL A. CLEVELAND

Abstract

We were created by God in his image and given the job of taking dominion over creation. This implies that we were created to work, and thus, economics was built into God's design. This cultural mandate was not revoked because of sin, but nature was cursed. Sin makes the economic task harder. It also makes governments necessary to punish wrongdoing. However, government's role is limited. Moreover, because governments use force to accomplish their end, that power can and has been misused. In the name of charity, governments often use power in illegitimate ways; the institution can never be charitable because government giving requires government taking.

Keywords

Imago Dei*, cultural mandate, dominion, free enterprise, economics, government, fall, curse of nature, charity, work*

I. *The Cultural Mandate*

> Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth. (Gen 2:28 ESV)

The first question the Westminster Shorter Catechism asks is, "What is the chief end of man?" And the answer is, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever." The next question we should ask ourselves is, "How did God design his creation so that we could fulfill this end?" And then, how are we to engage the created order to accomplish the task? The answer to these questions is found in the cultural mandate. The first thing to note is that God never intended for people to be passive. Instead, he gave humanity a job. God intended for us to rule over his creation.

It is interesting to note that while Adam was created with a good mind, he did not know everything there is to know. We observe this reality when God brings the animals before Adam to see what he would name them (Gen 2:19). This is an act of philosophy wherein Adam has to begin the process of classification. He has to discover the very nature of things that God created and act on what he has learned so that he can take dominion. This would require work in which man's discovery of the natural order would then be turned into various inventions and products that would in turn be used in the process of taking dominion. Property would be the result of each individual's efforts in taking dominion.

But we might ask ourselves, "How does this activity glorify God, and how do we enjoy God in that work?" In the first place, God says that he worked to create nature. As his image bearers, when we work to achieve the end for which we were created, we reflect the glory of God. Not only that, but in the process, we ought to be brought into a deeper relationship with our Creator as we observe the wisdom and majesty of his created order of things. That is, in the process of working and producing things that enable us to take dominion, we should be awed by nature in a way that helps us draw closer to God. We should always see his providential hand in all of life and sing the praise of the God of creation because we look beyond nature and see the Creator. In an unfallen world, this process would go on forever, and every day would be better than the day before. We would know full well that tomorrow would be better than today. In addition, we could never get to the end of the task because there is no end to the depths of God himself or of his creativity.

There is an important point that should not be missed: God built economics into his creation from the beginning. Since we are all limited and finite and live in space and time, our work requires choice. If I investigate the nature of the various animals that God has created, I cannot use that same time to plant a vineyard. Choosing one thing over another always means there is a cost. Doing one thing means not doing another thing. This is the very first principle of economics. Namely, there is an opportunity cost to all human action. Or, to put it another way, there is no such thing as a free lunch.

A second important point that needs to be made is that we are not all the same. While Adam and Eve both bear the image of God and are equal in that sense, they did not share the same role. Furthermore, as we all know, when children are brought into this world, they have different talents, personalities, and affections. What one person excels at and is interested in is not necessarily what another is interested in. But these differences are part of God's design and are, in fact, to our benefit. As one person studies various animals and their behavior, she can write down her observations to the benefit of others. At the same time, someone else is interested in planting a vineyard and perfecting his art of winemaking, thus benefiting the student as they engage in trade with each other. This same specialization is present in the church as God has given different spiritual gifts to different people for the edification of one another (cf. 1 Cor 12:4; 14:2; 1 Pet 4:10).

II. *The Fall and the Curse of Creation*

It was not long before this process was interrupted by sin. Human rebellion resulted in numerous consequences. Among them was God's curse of nature.

> Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, "You shall not eat of it," cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat of the plants of the fields. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return. (Gen 3:17–19 ESV)

While the disobedience of Adam and Eve resulted in the fall of creation, it did not end the cultural mandate. Rather, it meant that work in this world would be far less fruitful. Not only that, but it meant that nature would work against human efforts. The curse of the ground has resulted in nature tending to thwart our efforts to rule over it. There will be entropy and decay. Hurricanes, tornados, floods, droughts, earthquakes, and volcanoes will

sometimes destroy the things we have made. Work in this world will be difficult, and we will have to deal with a variety of hardships in it. Nevertheless, God did not set aside the mandate.

Not only will nature work against us, we also will tend to work against one another when we engage in our sin. Rather than honoring our father and mother (Exod 20:12), we are just as likely to dishonor them and to suffer loss for that reason. Instead of respecting the lives of others, we are prompted by sin to hatred, as evidenced by Cain's murder of Abel (Gen 4:8). Instead of sexual relations being kept in the context of marriage as intended by God, various forms of sexual perversion will arise in culture. Instead of respecting the property of others, we are tempted to steal what we want. Instead of honesty in all our relationships, we are prone to lies and deception. Finally, all of this stems from our prideful, covetous nature, because of which we play god and attempt to rule over everyone else. It should be said that self-righteousness is our default position as sinners as we try to pass the blame for the ills of this world onto others and refuse to recognize our own failures. Moreover, we are less likely in our sin to appreciate the glory of God. Only when we come to Christ are we willing to make a good confession of our sin and to begin to move away from it as the Holy Spirit does his work of grace in our lives, driving us relentlessly to Christ.

The important point to gain from recognizing the problems that sin has spawned is that this world will never be perfect. Simply put, there are no perfect people and, thus, there will never be perfect institutions and associations. Instead, societies and nations will come and go. Early successes in nations will be due largely to some greater adherence to truth and justice, but the tendency in history is for complacency to allow for the erosion of virtue and the fall into degradation. The question arises, can people ever be trusted with freedom and liberty to interact with one another given the pervasive nature of sin? The answer is yes, since that is the context that God designed for human action. Despite the fact of sin, we should nevertheless embrace political, religious, and economic freedom.

III. *Why Freedom Matters*

In the nineteenth century, the French economist and statesman Frederic Bastiat spoke to the reason why freedom is foundational even in the face of a sinful world. In his book titled *Economic Harmonies*, he wrote,

> Deny evil! Deny pain! Who could? We should have to forget that we are talking about mankind. We should have to forget that we ourselves are men. For the laws of Providence to be considered as *harmonious*, it is not necessary that they exclude evil. It is enough that evil have its explanation and purpose, that it be self-limiting, and that every pain be the means of preventing greater pain by eliminating whatever causes it.
>
> Society is composed of men, and every man is a *free* agent. Since man is free, he can choose; since he can choose, he can err; since he can err, he can suffer. … Now, all error breeds suffering. And this suffering either falls upon the one who erred, in which case it sets in operation the law of responsibility; or else it strikes innocent parties, in which case it sets in motion the marvelous reagent that is the law of solidarity. The action of these laws, combined with the ability … of seeing the connection between cause and effect, must bring us back, by the very fact of suffering, to the path of righteousness and truth. … But if evil is to fulfill this purpose … the freedom of the individual must be respected.
>
> Now, if man-made institutions intervene in these matters to nullify divine law, evil nonetheless follows upon error, but it falls upon the wrong person. It strikes him whom it should not strike; it no longer serves as a warning or a lesson; it is no longer self-limiting; it is no longer destroyed by its own action; it persists, it grows worse, as would happen in the biological world if the imprudent acts and excesses committed by the inhabitants of one hemisphere took their toll only upon the inhabitants of the other hemisphere.[1]

In this, Bastiat points out a significant fact about liberty: When people act in a world of freedom, they are responsible to bear the consequences of their actions. Whether the consequences are good or bad, in many cases they are likely to fall upon the one who acts. As the apostle Paul wrote, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal 6:7). There are boundaries to human action. Folly and immorality often result in hardship and suffering for the sinner himself. Suffering of this sort is a warning from God that the foolish and immoral person should change his behavior. Likewise, prosperity and success generally serve as signals that one's actions please our Lord. However, these signals will only work as long as people are unable to impose the costs of their actions on others.

On the other hand, if the actions of one person cause others to suffer, it should result in the solidarity of the community to penalize that behavior. But, if human institutions are constructed in a way that allows people to transfer the costs of their behavior onto others with impunity, then folly and immorality can spread as the less principled people gain political power and transfer the costs of their folly and immorality. For this reason, the existence

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[1] Frederic Bastiat, *Economic Harmonies*, 3rd printing (Irvington, NY: The Foundation for Economic Education, 1979), xxx–xxxi.

of material success is not a sufficient sign of moral living, and the occurrence of poverty is not the sufficient sign of immorality. To discern the issues of morality, we would have to look more closely at the institutional structures and the individual nature of human action that resulted in the prosperity or the poverty to make that assessment.

Beyond this, God is gracious and merciful and is not bringing what ought to be the immediate consequences of our sin to pass. Throughout the Scriptures we read that God is long-suffering. As a result of his patience, it can be difficult for people generally to respond rightly. This is why God's law is so important for us. In addition to conscience, the law reveals to us our individual sins and our need for salvation.

Consider for the moment how the Christian view changes everything. Christian anthropology overarches the entirety of the Scriptures. On this basis, Christian scholars have advanced various theories about social relationships that have led to the development of various societal institutions. Among these is the concept of sphere sovereignty (subsidiarity), which provides some overarching guidelines to govern social relationships. In his lectures on Calvinism (1898), Abraham Kuyper developed the concept and applied it to the various areas of life.[2] The idea of sphere sovereignty is straightforward enough.[3] Namely, he argued that each person is created in the image of God and is both rational and volitional. On this basis, he asserted that people are free to choose their own course of action. However, they are not free from God or from his moral judgments.

This analysis is shown to point in the right direction when we consider the alternative. If a virtuous life is only possible by eradicating the freedom to act, what would society look like? Someone or some group would have to rule over everyone else. But where would we find the person or group that is totally virtuous and, thus, able to rule and direct human action to the ultimate good? If people cannot be trusted at all, then no one would qualify as a fit ruler. And since we would not be able to find a fit ruler, that position should be limited to keep those in authority from becoming tyrants who run roughshod over people and oppress them relentlessly. There is only one person who has ever been qualified to rule as king, and his name is Jesus. Moreover, he promotes setting people free when they individually submit to his rule (cf. John 8:32, 36).

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[2] Cf. Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931).

[3] See his inaugural address on the topic, Abraham Kuyper, "Sphere Sovereignty (1880)," in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 461–90.

One of the main problems in the United States today is that we have increasingly sacrificed the liberty of the person as we have replaced the natural, God-given rights of the individual with legal positivism, which asserts that individuals have no God-given rights and that the law is whatever people generally adopt for the so-called "common good." This process began during the early part of the nineteenth century as skeptical political philosophers promoted their atheism. One prominent figure among them was Jeremy Bentham, who argued that laws should be based on a hedonistic calculus; that is, any potential law should be assessed through a cost-and-benefit analysis. According to Bentham, if the benefits outweigh the costs, then the law should be implemented regardless of its effect on the natural rights of the individual. While Bentham and his most famous student, John Stuart Mill, were generally in favor of free enterprise, utilitarianism is by its nature a collectivist view of humankind and a rejection of Christian morality. This has become more and more evident in American culture as dependency on government escalates. This has not eliminated pain and suffering but has actually promoted it and is the kind of system that allows some people to transfer the suffering for their sin onto others by legal means. In addition, it has led to increasing division in society as people are more and more pitted against one another in political terms.

Rather than engaging in mutually satisfactory trading relationships, people clamor for government intrusion into the lives of their neighbors to secure the wherewithal for their own particular desires and needs. Rather than relying on civil liberty as the foundation for human progress, the nation has progressively adopted various forms of coercive government. In each of these schemes, people are allowed to transfer the negative consequences of their actions onto others. It was this point that caught the attention of Richard Weaver in his book *Ideas Have Consequences*, in which he compares the situation to that of a spoiled child:

> The spoiled child has not been made to see the relationship between effort and reward. He wants things, but he regards payment as an imposition or as an expression of malice by those who withhold for it. His solution … is to abuse those who do not gratify him. … The truth is that he has never been brought to see what it is to be a man. That man is a product of discipline and of forging, that he really owes thanks for the pulling and tugging that enable him to grow. … This citizen is now the child of indulgent parents who pamper his appetites and inflate his egotism until he is unfitted for struggle of any kind. … [If he could realize the reality that something greater than himself exists, if he could recognize the virtue of God] and not simply respond to coercion—he might genuinely realize human progress.[4]

[4] Richard M. Weaver, *Ideas Have Consequences* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 113–15.

IV. *The Fundamental Importance of the Family*

> Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. (Gen 2:24)

Any good economist understands that free markets offer us the best hope for economic prosperity. Even in a fallen world, the freedom for people to trade voluntarily among themselves provides an environment in which people can serve one another in mutually beneficial ways. However, such freedom must ensure that everyone is free from coercive force and deceptive fraud, which aim to steal rather than serve. As a result, a free market tends to function best when people generally embrace a healthy respect for the property rights of others. But how can such a respect for the rights of others be advanced?

This question is immediately related to a correct understanding of the role of government in a fallen world. The sad truth is that we are born into this world as sinners only interested in our immediate interest regardless of the interests of others. This brings us to the importance of the family in promoting a healthy society. Children are naturally born into the world in a family and need that family to provide everything for survival, and this is by God's design. Given that they are born sinners, the importance of this institution cannot be underestimated. Little sinners will ignore the interests of others and be rather antisocial if their needs are not immediately met.

It falls to parents to redirect the self-centeredness of the child toward an enlightened self-interest that is more social and willing to respect the rights of others. Any parent understands this is a slow process and sometimes painful for parent and child alike. Anyone who reflects honestly upon his own life will note many occasions of fits of anger along with the strong emotions of jealousy, envy, and greed. It is the parents' job to temper these emotions in the child through discipline as best they can. Indeed, this is best done by leading the child to Christ. Unfortunately, some parents neglect their responsibility or abdicate it altogether. Moreover, even with the best upbringing, children will grow up and become independent, and there is no guarantee they will live rightly as adults.

As adults, when we fail, we need people in our lives to admonish us against continuing in behaviors that are detrimental. While everyone falls short, such interaction tends to limit our outward evil actions. Nevertheless, when this fails and our evil overflows to the detriment of others, it is an occasion where outside force may be necessary. That provides a role for institutional government.

The apostle Paul provides such a role in Romans 13:1–5. In his admonishment to submit to governing authorities, he says that the role of government is to punish wrongdoers. This is a singular activity. Accordingly, it is not the purpose of government to manage the economy, or provide people with economic goods, or provide benefits for some special interests, or to engage in any other activity that people can engage in privately. In regard to the chief task, we should ask ourselves if the purpose of government is to punish *all* evildoing? That cannot be what the apostle has in mind. If that were the task of government, it would have to execute everyone including the governing officials. In this same letter, Paul has already made the case that everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23) and is therefore worthy of death. It seems clear that what he has in mind is that governments should punish the most heinous forms of evil, such as murder, rape, and theft, to secure civil peace. In addition, he well understands that governments historically stray way beyond this activity in his instructions to his readers. He argues that to be free from the fear of government, people should simply live according to God's law and do good. Like the other apostles, Paul surely recognized that doing so can well put you at odds with government as he was executed by it.

V. *The Nature of Charity in a Fallen World*

When I was a child, we often visited my grandparents. I thought I knew them well, but some situations brought new revelations about who my grandparents were. On one occasion, I remember something that has remained with me to this day. A family that I had never seen before and would never see again came by to visit my grandparents. But my grandparents seemed to know them well. The family was a couple with their daughter. I really cannot remember the faces of the husband and wife. They were not remarkable in any way to me. I guess I was around the age of nine or ten, so I suppose I paid them no more attention than I would most unknown adults at the time. But I do remember their daughter and do remember my grandmother's actions all the while they were in her home. The couple's daughter was both severely mentally handicapped and physically deformed. When the family arrived at my grandparents' house, they were eagerly welcomed in. After coming in, the mom quickly spread a blanket on the floor of the living room and the dad, who was carrying the child, laid his daughter on it. The little girl was around the age of four or five years old and was unable to move off the blanket. She just lay there as if she were a newborn infant. What happened next was that my grandmother immediately got down on

the floor with the little girl and focused her full attention on this child. She talked with her, played with her, and gave her undivided attention for quite some time even though the child never spoke a single word. Indeed, only the babbling sounds of an infant came from her lips.

In our modern culture, many would question my grandmother's actions; they would not see the point. After all, they would assume that the child did not know anything and would not remember anything. She was severely deformed. Moreover, in our modern world of convenience, it was clear that she was a hardship for her parents and would never be able to care for herself. But my grandmother paid her special attention as if she were the only girl in the world. Why? My grandmother taught me something that day. Every person, no matter their limitations, is created in the image of God and is therefore worthy of respect. To be sure, the curse of the ground has resulted in all sorts of hardships in this world. Natural disasters plague us. Physical illnesses cause us pain and misfortune. And we can descend into various plagues of our own making. But one thing remains certain: people are made in God's image. My grandmother knew this. I do not know what happened to that little girl after that day. I never saw her again. I suspect her life was brief. But my grandmother knew that she was significant. After all, she bore the image of God. My grandmother has since passed away. I suspect both she and that little girl are having the pleasure of regular visits and spending time together in the presence of God as they await the new heaven and the new earth.

This is the picture of true Christian charity. It is not some sort of government handout. Rather, it involves the personal interaction between the giver and the receiver. Governments are never charitable because government giving requires government taking. That is not charitable. All government action uses some sort of force to accomplish its ends. It is the duty of governments to secure the peace of society by punishing those who clearly violate the legitimate rights of others. That is, governments should punish murderers, rapists, and thieves. Governments are simply not an institution that can be the conduit of charity.

The only thing that governments can rightly do is to secure a degree of outward conformity of behavior to maintain a degree of justice in a fallen world. Governments can never change the heart of anyone. They can only punish the worst forms of transgression. They cannot mandate charity because charity is voluntary sacrifice motivated by love. Any law instituted to use force to take something from one person to give it to someone else is essentially a form of legalized theft. As one writer observes,

> The original concept of charity as an expression of love, now appears to have been replaced by a concept of government-guaranteed security. … [But this method is] uncharitable because love was replaced by force. The spirit of charity was debased to "public welfare," and the shift from personal responsibility to grants by the state was on. … The element which gives meaning to charity is personal responsibility, but that element is lost when the edicts of the state are substituted for the voluntary decisions of persons.[5]

J. Gresham Machen understood this very well when he wrote *Christianity and Liberalism*. He understood the importance of liberty in promoting spiritual growth. In his defense of traditional Christianity against the liberalism of his day he wrote,

> The whole development of modern society has tended mightily toward the limitation of the realm of freedom for the individual man. … It never seems to occur to modern legislatures that although "welfare" is good, forced welfare may be bad. In other words, utilitarianism is being carried out to its logical conclusions; in the interests of physical well-being the great principles of liberty are being thrown ruthlessly to the winds. The result is an unparalleled impoverishment of human life. Personality can only be developed in the realm of individual choice. And that realm, in the modern state, is being slowly but steadily contracted. … When one considers what the public schools of America in many places already are—their materialism, their discouragement of any sustained intellectual effort, their encouragement of the dangerous pseudo-scientific fads of experimental psychology—one can only be appalled by the thought of a commonwealth in which there is no escape from such a soul-killing system. … The truth is that the materialistic paternalism of the present day, if allowed to go on unchecked, will rapidly make of America one huge "Main Street," where spiritual adventure will be discouraged and democracy will be regarded as consisting in the reduction of all mankind to the proportions of the narrowest and least gifted of the citizens.[6]

The true picture of charity is given by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Ephesians, where he says, "Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need" (4:28). Note the order of the admonishment: If you are taking something from someone else by force or fraud, stop it. Be productive in your own life, and do not consume the fruits of your labor entirely on yourself. Only then will you be able to participate in true charity, which is always a voluntary act. Beyond this, it should also be recognized that the main goal of charity should be to promote the greatest degree of independence possible for the recipient of our gifts.

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[5] Russell J. Clinchy, "Charity: Biblical and Political," *Essays on Liberty* 1 (1990): 159–60.

[6] J. Gresham Machen, *Christianity and Liberalism* (New York: Macmillan, 1934), 10–15.

Our primary example of this kind of charity is Jesus. In Christ, we have the Son of God condescending to our level in the incarnation, living a life of perfect submission to the Father and willingly going to the cross to accept the wrath of God for the sins of his people (Phil 2:5–8; cf. 2 Cor 8:9). In short, Jesus earned salvation for his people and can give his righteous record to whomever he wishes. Here is the picture of charity that those called to Christ should emulate in their lives.

Conclusion

Work is a good thing. It was instituted by God and is meant to be something that would connect us to him in deeper ways. As families emerged, new image bearers of God would enter into his creation. Not only that, but each person would be unique and possess individual gifts and talents. The process of taking dominion would require everyone to develop and employ their talents not only for their own benefit but for others' as well. The results of our efforts to take dominion over creation should result in great praise to our Creator as we increasingly discover the glory and majesty of his being.

Sin entered the world as Adam and Eve ignored God's commandment and rebelled against him. While it resulted in their alienation from God, themselves, and nature, it did not set aside the dominion mandate. In God's curse of creation, it did mean that nature would no longer cooperate with man's efforts. Work was no longer easy, nor was our work going to always be enjoyable. From that point forward, there would be hardship in our work. Nevertheless, we can find joy in our work if we seek to look beyond the production to see the hand of God and his character.

One facet of life in the fallen world is that we will all suffer. We can suffer for our own sins, and we can suffer for the sins of others. When we suffer for our own sins, it provides an opportunity for us to confess them to God and turn to him for grace and mercy and a renewed heart to put sin aside. When we suffer for the sins of others, it provides an opportunity for us to practice forgiveness and charity. We also suffer in this world as a result of the curse of the ground. Once again, this provides opportunities for us to practice charity towards others. Finally, when we suffer for Christ, it is an opportunity to understand more deeply what our Savior endured to atone for our sins. So, suffering in this world has its purpose. As the apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the Christians in Rome,

> More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and

> hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. (Rom 5:3–5)

When the issue of government arises, God's ideal is for each of us to be individually self-governed in submission to his rules. Part of what it means to bear God's image is that we were meant to be individually sovereign over our own affairs. In fact, when Moses wrote Genesis, the phrase to "bear the image of God" was used throughout Egypt and Mesopotamia. However, it was not used to apply to people in general, but only to the king.[7] Thus, when it is applied to all people, it is meant to give us a new insight into God's grant of free agency in this world.

In a fallen world, such free agency does result in personal failures to govern ourselves rightly. The family has always been God's chief institution with an authoritative structure. The man is the head of the family, and the wife follows his lead. The children fall under the rule of their parents. Thus, it falls to the family to teach self-government as all people are born into families. The main duty is to teach children the word of God as commanded in Deuteronomy 6:7. The more that children grow to embrace the word of God and his commands, the more they are likely to be self-governed and the less intervention into their lives is necessary. The church can and should come alongside the parents in this endeavor. However, the church cannot assume the duties of the parents, who are most closely connected to the children.

Nevertheless, in this world, there will always be people who simply will not respect others and must be punished. It falls to the governments of this world to do this. Yet, the power to punish can easily be employed for evil rather than good. In fact, human history proves that the tendency has been for the most prideful and haughty among us to seek for this power. When they gain it, they become overlords, tyrants, and despots. They believe that they are cut from finer cloth and imagine themselves to be gods over all. Their oppression of others proves otherwise. This is why all forms of collectivism fail and invariably result in human misery.

Leaders in Christ's kingdom do not seek power. Rather, they seek Jesus and desire to follow him. When they do this, they become servants. They set aside their desires in order that they can serve others. They do not look for political strategies or governmental means to solve the problems of this world. There are no solutions to be found in those pursuits. As Scripture

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[7] See Edward M. Curtis, "Man as the Image of God in Genesis in Light of Near Eastern Parallels" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1984).

declares, "Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation. When his breath departs, he returns to the earth; on that very day his plans perish" (Ps 146:3–4). There is only one solution to the problems we face in this world and that is the gospel of Jesus Christ. As Christ's church expands, there can be relative peace in this world, but that will only occur when his church stays "on mission, on message, and in ministry."[8]

[8] Harry Reeder, Briarwood Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama.

Six Days You Shall Work? Robotics and the Reformed Ethic of Labor[1]

PETER A. LILLBACK

Abstract

After summarizing issues related to the Fourth Industrial Revolution and robotics in relation to work, this article offers biblical, Reformed, and Puritan perspectives on labor. It continues by examining the potential for loss of work due to technology. Finally, in response to these challenges, it offers a few worldview considerations and explores pastoral solutions.

Keywords

Fourth Industrial Revolution, Robotics, work ethics, Protestant and Puritan work ethics, Fourth Commandment, work and rest

I. *Introduction: The Fourth Industrial Revolution*

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is upon us. Klaus Schwab, founder and executive chairman of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, explains:

> We stand on the brink of a technological revolution that will fundamentally alter the way we live, work, and relate to one another. In its scale,

[1] This article was originally a lecture for the Westminster Theological Seminary Conference in Korea at Yullin Church, Seoul, in October 2018.

> scope, and complexity, the transformation will be unlike anything humankind has experienced before.[2]

As we seek to understand this unfolding revolution, we should place it in the context of the three prior industrial revolutions:

> The first: *water and steam power* enabled mechanized production.
> The second: *electric power* enabled the creation of mass production.
> The third: *electronics and information technology* or *digital power* enabled the automation of production.
> The fourth: *fusion of digital technologies* is enabling the powerful merging of the hitherto distinct physical, digital, and biological realms.

To sense the tidal wave of technological advances, simply consider these ten breathtaking technological breakthroughs that now regularly appear in the news: artificial intelligence, robotics, the Internet of Things, autonomous vehicles, 3-D printing, nanotechnology, biotechnology, materials science innovations, energy storage, and quantum computing.

Robotic artificial intelligence has been part of our lives for some time, from the manufacturing of cars to information and billing management. Now, robotics is on the cusp of offering such global advances as food service by robot, autonomous delivery service by drones, self-driving cars and trucks, and robotic home helpers, and agricultural harvesters and planters; robotics promises the elimination of dangerous and tedious jobs in manufacturing and even the removal of humans from the frontlines of warfare through robotic warriors and drone aircraft.

In this article, I will consider the interplay between the emerging technologies of artificial intelligence,[3] robotics,[4] and big data.[5] The question that these specific advances raise for us is what impact they will have on human labor and how this impact engages our Reformed doctrine of work, as stated

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[2] Klaus Schwab, "The Fourth Industrial Revolution: What It Means, How to Respond," *World Economic Forum*, January 14, 2016, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/01/the-fourth-industrial-revolution-what-it-means-and-how-to-respond/. See also Jonathan Craig, "Facing a New Industrial Revolution—Alex Cook," *Vision Christian Radio*, March 6, 2018, https://vision.org.au/radio/2018/03/06/facing-a-new-industrial-revolution-alex-cook/.

[3] For a brief introduction to artificial intelligence, see "Artificial Intelligence (AI)," *Techopedia*, last updated October 7, 2021, https://www.techopedia.com/definition/190/artificial-intelligence-ai.

[4] The engagement of universities in robotic development is highlighted at "The Robotics Institute," *Carnegie Mellon University*, 2022, https://www.ri.cmu.edu/.

[5] See, for example, Michael Fuller, "Big Data, Ethics and Religion: New Questions from a New Science," *Religions* 8.5 (2017): 88, https://doi.org/10.3390/rel8050088.

in the classic language of the Fourth Commandment: "Six days shall you work" (Exod 20:9).

II. *The Robotics Revolution from a Biblical Perspective*

I am a church historian, not a futurologist or a prophet or the son of a prophet. Prognostication is beyond my ken. Nevertheless, as a student of social forces from the past, I suggest issues about which we ought to be concerned. In the Reformed tradition, we assert that all truth is God's truth. We seek to engage the world from the perspective of the knowledge of God, affirming God's sovereign purpose and providential governance of the cosmos. Accordingly, we should address these emerging technological advances from a vantage point of divine purpose rather than fearful uncertainty. Our sovereign Lord has anticipated all things in his divine providence. It is our privilege as his vice-regents to anticipate or providentially to foresee emerging developments to the best of our ability inasmuch as we are created in the image of this glorious God of providence.

What, then, will happen when traditional manual labor has been largely made irrelevant? For those humans who do not have the requisite skills to engage the high technological realm of intellectual labor, this is a real danger. Robots, while expensive at first, ultimately prove to be remarkably economical because of their accuracy and their ability to work at high speeds for vast stretches of time—all this without complaints to superiors or need for vacations, raises, medical care, or costly insurance.

Each industrial revolution has increased human power over human activities, the environment, and the cosmos. To put it in biblical terms, with the approach of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, we are facing a giant stride toward the fulfillment of the cultural or creation mandate. Genesis 1:26–28 relates the cultural mandate given to unfallen humanity:

> Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

Yet we take this giant stride toward the fulfillment of the cultural mandate with the omnipresent reality of fallen humanity's autonomy as evidenced at the Tower of Babel in Genesis 11:1–9:

> Now the whole earth had one language and the same words. … And they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." And they had brick for stone, and bitumen for mortar. Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be dispersed over the face of the whole earth." And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of man had built. And the LORD said, "Behold, they are one people, and they have all one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. And nothing that they propose to do will now be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and there confuse their language, so that they may not understand one another's speech." So the LORD dispersed them from there over the face of all the earth, and they left off building the city. Therefore, its name was called Babel, because there the LORD confused the language of all the earth. And from there, the LORD dispersed them over the face of all the earth.

This ancient account depicts the vast potential for good and evil bound up in the human power that is simultaneously shaped by the image of God and humankind's inherent sinful rebellion against the rule of the Creator. This dialectic between humanity's ability for good and the ability for harm through technological advances is recognized in current discussions of labor and robotics.

The possibility of great benefits from the Fourth Industrial Revolution is celebrated. Schwab declares, "The possibilities of billions of people connected by mobile devices, with unprecedented processing power, storage capacity, and access to knowledge, are unlimited."[6] Analysts of the Fourth Industrial Revolution with its army of robots with artificial intelligence anticipate the raising of global income levels, the improvement of the quality of life on a global scale, and the great availability of products through giant leaps in efficiency, productivity, and lowering of costs.

However, the potential challenge to manual labor by robotic advancement has not been overlooked by theorists[7] or Christian theologians.[8] On

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[6] Schwab, "The Fourth Industrial Revolution."

[7] Alex Williams, "Will Robots Take Our Children's Jobs?," *New York Times*, December 11, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/11/style/robots-jobs-children.html; "The Future of Jobs: Employment, Skills and Workforce Strategy for the Fourth Industrial Revolution," *World Economic Forum*, January 2016, http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_Future_of_Jobs.pdf; Joseph Pistrui, "The Future of Human Work Is Imagination, Creativity and Strategy," *Harvard Business Review*, January 18, 2018, https://hbr.org/2018/01/the-future-of-human-work-is-imagination-creativity-and-strategy; Tim Dunlop, "A Job Revolution Is Coming, and We Can't Ignore It," *ABC News*, July 29, 2015, http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-30/dunlop-a-job-revolution-is-coming/6658032.

[8] Kevin Brown and Steven McMullen, "How to Find Hope in the Humanless Economy," *Christianity Today*, June 21, 2017, https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2017/july-august/how-to-have-hope-in-humanless-economy.html; "A Christian Survival Guide to the Rise of the Robots," *Not Only Sundays*, October 20, 2017, http://www.notonlysundays.com/christianity-robots/;

September 2, 2018, an article in the *Daily Beast* raised the question, "What happens when robots do all the work?"[9] Disruption of the traditional workforce seems inevitable and potentially dangerous.

Thus, we consider the darker issues of the robotic revolution. Consider Erik Brynjoffsson and Andrew McAfee's *The Second Machine Age*, a *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and *Washington Post* bestseller. They claim that such robotic advances will likely yield greater inequities due to the likelihood of disruptions to labor markets.[10] The loss of jobs in various segments of the labor force may lead to the loss of meaning, income, and identity for many and may even fan the flames of social unrest, revolt, addiction, and suicide. Moreover, new moral dangers are already arising through robotic developments that encourage illicit human sexual activity. There is a burgeoning new industry of robotic sex dolls and brothels, and even the criminal exploitation of children through robotic child rape dolls. Will robotics confront us with other criminality, such as robotic enemies programmed to murder or to cause other mayhem as a new species of already pandemic computer malware and malicious hacking?

Artificial intelligence and robotic progress engender unease in the public, as seen in human-humbling accomplishments by artificially intelligent machines. Most of us have long turned to calculators for higher-level mathematical operations. More recently, victories have dethroned human champions in the intellectually competitive games of chess, Jeopardy, and Go. The cyborg conquest of humanity, once a staple of science fiction, now seems a possibility to many. How should we view robotics if this new reality may make manual labor obsolete, displacing a vast army of laborers who will have no opportunity for meaningful work or a steady income?

III. *The Reformed View of Work*

As we address the issue of human labor, considering robotic technology, we should keep in mind not just the notion of the cultural mandate but also the concepts of creation ordinances, the Fourth Commandment, and the importance of the Christian ethical concerns for good works, self-sufficiency, and generosity.

Kenneth J. Barnes, "A Theology of Work for a Post-Industrial Age," *Theology of Work*, https://www.theologyofwork.org/external-materials-hosted-by-tow-project/a-theology-of-work-for-a-post-industrial-age.

[9] Clive Irving, "Labor Day 2040: What Happens When Robots Do All the Work?," *Daily Beast*, September 2, 2018, https://www.thedailybeast.com/labor-day-2040-what-happens-when-robots-do-all-the-work.

[10] "The Second Machine Age," 2022, http://secondmachineage.com/.

While traditional manual labor is often arduous and frequently dangerous, it is not simply a result of the curse for those in the Reformed tradition. The creation account shows us that Adam was to keep the garden even in a perfect world, albeit without the challenges of thorns, thistles, and death or blood, sweat, and tears. According to John Murray's classic study of ethics, *Principles of Conduct*, labor is one of God's creation ordinances, as seen in Adam's call to keep the garden of paradise (Gen 2:15). Human labor is a means of fulfilling the creation mandate of Genesis 1:28–30 that accompanies humanity's lofty calling as the *imago Dei*.[11]

Moreover, as we consider Scripture, we discover that the moral law of God summarized in the Ten Commandments places the Sabbath side by side with six days of human labor, following the pattern of the Creator's divine week of labor followed by a holy cessation from such labor (Exod 20:8–11). The Fourth Commandment teaches both work and worship. Importantly, labor is not in the second table of the law, the means of loving our neighbor, but in the first table that defines our love for God. Just as the Sabbath is an expression of loving God, so also is a week of labor done with excellence for the glory of the Creator.

Thus, the Fourth Industrial Revolution confronts the Fourth Commandment. How will the development of robotics impact the large body of human manual laborers? What will the results be? What should the church do to anticipate this coming reality as she strives to fulfill the duties of evangelism, love for neighbor, and being salt and light in a fallen world? Are there opportunities for us as believers to help shape culture as it enters the era of robotics to the glory of Christ and for the advancement of his kingdom?

The world, of course, is often oblivious to or even directly hostile to the Christian worldview and its biblical perspective on labor. Nevertheless, it is generally recognized that work is essential to human flourishing.[12] One's labor is often integral to identity and purpose for life. The meaning of the lives of many is often bound up in an intimate interplay between personhood and the work that they accomplish and the benefits of the fruits of their labor. For those who have no transcendent reference point of ultimate value and eternal existence of the soul, as cherished by the

[11] John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957), 35–44; cf. https://cultivatejournal.com/articles/creation-ordinances.

[12] Bill Mitchell, "Work Is Important for Human Well-Being," *Modern Monetary Theory*, September 16, 2016, http://bilbo.economicoutlook.net/blog/?p=34412; "Community Post: Twenty Men Fixing a Road," *Theology of Work*, https://dev.theologyofwork.org/the-high-calling/blog/community-post-twenty-men-fixing-road; cf. "On Work and Human Flourishing: Twenty Men Fixing a Road," Washington Institute, http://www.washingtoninst.org/620/on-work-and-human-flourishing-twenty-men-fixing-a-road/.

Christian, their terrestrial expression of meaning is often inextricably identified with their labor.

An important theme that reflects the centrality of labor for the Christian ethic is the interplay of labor, generosity, and the good works of the believer. Let us just note that the essential duty of good works for the Christian and the resulting benefit of self-sufficiency enables generosity and care for others. We might consider these Pauline texts:

> We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For they gave according to their means, as I can testify, and beyond their means, of their own accord, begging us earnestly for the favor of taking part in the relief of the saints. (2 Cor 8:1–5)

> For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. (Eph 2:10)

> Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. (Eph 4:28)

> But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content. ... They [the rich in this present age] are to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share. (1 Tim 6:8, 19)

> ... waiting for ... the appearance of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works. (Titus 2:13–14)

In view of such passages, it is clear why the challenge of robotics to meaningful labor should be a concern for Christian thinkers. This is particularly clear as we take a brief excursus into Puritan ethics in regard to work.

IV. *Puritan Work Ethics*

A helpful place to engage the Puritan view of labor is found in Leland Ryken's "Milton's Sonnet on His Blindness and the Puritan Soul." Ryken addresses the question raised by John Milton's line, "Doth God exact day-labor, light denied?"[13] Ryken writes,

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[13] Leland Ryken, "Milton's Sonnet on His Blindness," in *Puritan Piety: Writings in Honor of Joel R. Beeke*, ed. Michael A. G. Haykin and Paul M. Smalley (Fern, Ross-shire: Christian Focus, 2018), 195–213.

> The octave of Milton's sonnet is a progressively worsening anxiety-attack, and it is rooted in Puritan views of work and vocation. No Christian group thought and wrote more helpfully on the subject of work than the Puritans, and that thinking informs the first eight lines of Milton's sonnet.[14]

Ryken identifies three Puritan tenets behind Milton's sonnet:

> First, the Puritans believed that God calls all people to their work in the world. This is the famous Puritan concept of vocation. Perkins asserted in his classic *Treatise of the Vocations or Callings of Men* that "every person … without exception must have some personal and particular calling to walk in." Richard Steele (1629–1692) wrote that "He that hath lent you talent hath also said, Occupy till I come." Richard Baxter (1615–1691) similarly directed, "Acquaint yourselves with all the talents which you receive from God, and … keep a just account of your receivings."[15]
>
> A second and related cornerstone of Puritan thinking about vocation is that God is the one who calls people to their tasks and the judge to whom people are accountable. Perkins wrote that "God himself is the author and beginning of callings." That being the case, those who work in their callings must do so in an awareness that they are accountable to God as the judge of their efforts. Baxter advised that Christians must do their work "as in God's sight, passing to his judgment" while Cotton Mather (1663–1728) explained, "Let every Christian … act in his occupation with an eye to God, acting as under the eye of God." In the complete works of Thomas Manton (1620–1677), two whole volumes are taken up with sermons on the parable of the talents, and one of Manton's main points is that God will conduct "an exact account" of how we have exercised the talents he has given. In a Puritan context, much is at stake in whether and how a people pursue their callings in the world.[16]
>
> Thirdly, to make matters even more problematical for Milton in his state of recent blindness, the drift of Puritan thinking was to give priority to the active life and to disparage idleness and inactivity. Theoretically the Puritans found a place for rest and recreation in their lives, but in practice they gave precedence to work. Not surprisingly, Baxter was a particular exponent of elevating work and action: "Naturally action is the end of our powers. … It is for action that God maintaineth us and our abilities: work is the moral as well as the natural end of power. … It is action that God is more served and honoured by." "God doth allow none to live idly," wrote Arthur Dent (1553–1607), while Robert Bolton (1572–1631) called idleness "the very rust and canker of the soul." An early signpost to Protestant thinking on the elevation of the active life and demotion of non-work was Martin Luther's commentary on Genesis 2:15: "Man was created not for leisure but for work."[17]

The three ideas summarized by Ryken help us to appreciate why the Reformed theological world must concern itself with the potential loss of labor. Without godly work, what becomes of the fact that everyone has a

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[14] Ibid., 204.
[15] Ibid., 204–5.
[16] Ibid., 205.
[17] Ibid., 205–6.

calling? If robotics disrupts the possibilities for vast numbers, what does the dislocated believing laborer do with the fact that the God who calls will also judge on the basis of the diligence exerted by the Christian? And if robotics leaves people with a life of inactivity and purposelessness, what becomes of the fact that it is the active life that pleases God preeminently? Biblically motivated contemporary "Puritans" are compelled to consider the future of work in light of the arrival of robotic technology.[18]

The biblical and Reformed work ethic calls for careful planning for the church in view of the looming issues of the dislocation of workers due to the robotic revolution as we anticipate the care of the people to whom we will minister.

V. *Potential Impact of the Loss of Labor on Technological Advances*

The rise of the so-called millennial generation illustrates the potential dysfunction that technology may create. These young people have never lived without the presence of smartphone technology as a pervasive element of their lives.[19] Maladies that are associated with their technological reality are addiction to their smartphones,[20] growing depression due to incessant online comparison, and competition[21] leading to a growing trend toward teen suicide.[22] The ability to carry on personal face-to-face conversations and interpersonal interactions are apparently being diminished.[23]

Such impacts on millennials may well anticipate the impact of technological disruption on other facets of society. The sharp rise in suicide among taxi drivers due to impact of the competition from Uber reflects another example of the disruptive force of new technology as it ends previous labor

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[18] Ibid., 206.

[19] Catey Hill, "Millennials Engage with Their Smartphones More Than They Do Actual Humans," *Market Watch*, June 21, 2016, https://www.marketwatch.com/story/millennials-engage-with-their-smartphones-more-than-they-do-actual-humans-2016-06-21.

[20] "25 Surprising Facts about Phone Addiction," *Addiction Tips*, 2022, https://www.addictiontips.net/phone-addiction/phone-addiction-facts/.

[21] Jean Twenge, "Teenage Depression and Suicide Are Way Up and So Is Smartphone Use," *Washington Post*, November 19, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/teenage-depression-and-suicide-are-way-up--and-so-is-smartphone-use/2017/11/17/624641ea-ca13-11e7-8321-481fd63f174d_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.39dff22c5fe7.

[22] Lulu Garcia-Navarro, "The Risk of Teen Depression and Suicide Is Linked to Smartphone Use, Study Says," *NPR*, December 17, 2017, https://www.npr.org/2017/12/17/571443683/the-call-in-teens-and-depression.

[23] A. J. Agrawal, "Teens Are Struggling with Face to Face Communication: Here Is Why," *Forbes*, May 4, 2017, https://www.forbes.com/sites/ajagrawal/2017/05/04/millennials-are-struggling-with-face-to-face-communication-heres-why/#1e7437e926e8.

patterns, creating emotional turmoil in response to the displacement and layoffs caused by declining businesses and industries.[24]

This, however, begins to reveal to the church some of the ministry focus that the Fourth Industrial Revolution will necessitate. Higher-level labor skills will be needed as previous manual labor jobs are assumed by robots that do not need vacations, health insurance, or higher salaries and do not create labor disputes with owners. Spiritual, emotional, and career counseling will become vital skills for the church that will minister to those impacted in the labor market by the robots of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. A sense of irrelevance and the loss of personal dignity will escalate for those whose lives had previously been defined by their job skills. New training schools in technology and centers for vocational and spiritual counseling will likely become new business and ministry opportunities for the church so that believers can engage with these potentially traumatic experiences.

It seems nearly inevitable that a new "haves and have-nots" class distinction with class tensions will arise with the fruits and dislocations and disruption of a culture shaped by robotics as once-steady salaries are lost with the disappearance of jobs. The already existing margin between the rich and the poor will likely widen, deepening the struggles that already exist between urban and suburban and the gentrified and ghetto elements of large cities. This, too, will create a need for a new type of missionary, one who enters the impoverished and disenfranchised community of displaced laborers to share not only the gospel but new technological skills. This parallels the work of previous generations of missionaries, who reached people groups with the gospel along with education, health care, transportation, business, and communication.

VI. *Worldview Considerations*

The church views these issues through a lens that is completely different from the one used by secular entities, and consequently the method used to deal with them will be completely different.

Nature vs. supernaturalism. As believers, we do not view the world merely mechanistically or materially. Because we view God and the human soul as spiritual realities, we will not work to solve this new challenge merely by means of business modeling and more clever robotic inventions. To meet

[24] Corky Siemaszko, "In the Shadow of Uber's Rise, Taxi Driver Suicides Leaves Cabbies Shaken," *NBC News*, June 7, 2018, updated June 8, 2018, https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/shadow-uber-s-rise-taxi-driver-suicides-leave-cabbies-shaken-n879281.

the new need, the church's ministry to the soul of the people and the church's mission to maintain human dignity and to proclaim the hope of the gospel of Christ will be required.

Demographics. Family size will likely continue to decline as the robotic revolution continues. A possible parallel is the gradual decline of the classic large farm family when agriculture was done by limited machinery to the small nuclear family in the industrialized world. Families facing urban life with its costliness and challenges have reduced in size to thrive with limited budgets and little ability to grow the food needed to sustain the family.

Imago Dei *and the Creation Mandate*. Our biblical commitments to humans as the *imago Dei* and the necessity to obey the creation mandate call on us to affirm human dignity and seek to use our God-given ability to harness nature—inclusive of robotics—to glorify God and love our neighbors.

Providence. Indeed, given the doctrine of providence, we joyfully sing, "This Is My Father's World," affirming that the advances in technology are no surprise to God and that in his common grace through the Holy Spirit, developments in robotics can and should be used for the glory of God. His divine omniscience always knew these developments would come.

Scripture and Biblical Ethics. The sufficiency of Scripture and Jesus's Golden Rule provide the needed ethical basis to engage these challenges and construct a way of life that blesses all men and advances the goodness of the Creator in this world.

VII. *Not Fear but Anticipation and Preparation: Potential Solutions and Responses*

As we consider potential solutions and responses that will enable us to prepare the church for responding to the rise of robotic labor, we begin with the proposal coming from Silicon Valley that asserts that the government needs to provide a universal living wage to everyone.[25] This may be one conceivable secular solution to the challenge. However, we must ask what realities the church can consider.

First, the law of supply and demand argues that the advance of robotics will also call for the need for a continuing market. Provisions will become more accessible and less costly as the buying power of the displaced will

[25] Jathan Sadowski, "Why Silicon Valley Is Embracing Universal Basic Income," *The Guardian*, June 22, 2016, https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jun/22/silicon-valley-universal-basic-income-y-combinator; Sonia Sodha, "Is Finland's Basic Universal Income a Solution to Automation, Fewer Jobs and Lower Wages?," *The Guardian*, February 19, 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/society/2017/feb/19/basic-income-finland-low-wages-fewer-jobs.

decline and the cost of producing the goods will also be lower. Therefore, a future market is a given.

What need will there be for products and services from robots if there are no consumers of those products? Hence, marketers will need to sustain the ability of displaced workers to continue to use their products. A McDonald's with an army of robots serving hamburgers is useless if there is not a population capable of buying those hamburgers for their meals.

Second, new educational structures will be needed that the church can assist in creating and managing. The concerns raised by these advances should not mask the new opportunities that this same technology affords. The accessibility of technology, given its omnipresence, means it can become part of the ongoing training of those impacted by the technological advances. Artificial intelligence and big data can be harnessed by both church and ministry leaders to enable the potentially displaced to become more effectively integrated into the new realities brought about by robotics. This is a strategic time to reconsider the educational model that has been used throughout the Western world. A curriculum that emphasizes creativity and practical technological skills rather than structured general knowledge may more effectively prepare the average laborer for the coming changes. Consider, for example, the fascinating movie *Most Likely to Succeed*, which argues that the changing realities of our global technological world demand an entirely distinct educational model that encourages invention, creativity, and entrepreneurship to prepare for the future.[26]

Finally, there are many other possible avenues for the Christian community to consider as it seeks to prepare to minister to those impacted by the disruption of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, among them these:

- Pro-life family planning—to address a godly family and a manageable size of family for the future
- Necessary organizational activity to minister to these needs, such as refocused gospel organizations that will minister and witness to the new "poor"
- Opportunities to pursue athletics, arts, and creativity, as there may be a large block of time due to less required time for work
- Application of the new technologies to enable the personal growth and education of these various people, such as self-learning and personal management technology that may apply insights gleaned from the burgeoning information of accessible big data

[26] "Most Likely to Succeed," 2017, https://teddintersmith.com/mltsfilm/.

- Ethical training to enable a godly response to the use of robots and the three-dimensional pornography that it is making so readily available
- Political stability to assist the disenfranchised, which will require new applications of Christian-based internal political oversight.

Preservation of classic human activities will also continue to provide a viable opportunity for ministry. This is important due to the danger of a postrobotic and postdata collapse in society due to the vulnerabilities of a highly technologically interdependent world through an electromagnetic pulse from an atomic blast or solar eruption.

Conclusion

As we anticipate the future, given the emergence of robotics and the many facets of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, let us keep our theological focus sharp and confident. We face not a materialistic universe but a God-governed supernatural cosmos. Thus, we must consider social changes and demographic concerns in light of the foundational truths of Scripture. The *imago Dei* and the creation mandate governed by divine providence encourage us to ever assert that this world is our Father's world. Divine omniscience long ago anticipated such radical changes and equipped the church to face them through the sufficiency of Scripture and the Golden Rule. Indeed, one of our tasks is to assure that the artificial intelligence systems of the future world of robots are developed in such a way that they integrate into their algorithms these very truths of human dignity, the truths of Scripture in theology and ethics, and the duty to care for the poor. If we are engaged in this process, we look at a future where robotics will only help us to advance the gospel, build the church, and advance the kingdom of Christ to the glory of God.

ETHICS

Public Theology and the Public Sphere

ANTONIUS STEVEN UN

Abstract

This article presents Abraham Kuyper's principles of sphere sovereignty, structural pluralism, and confessional pluralism as effective means for resisting the pressure to compromise—always a danger for public theology. Public theology, as distinct from political theology, concerns civil society. In this sense, Kuyper's structural pluralism is an important element for the connection between public theology, civil society, and the public sphere. Kuyper's political thought is therefore viewed from the perspective of public theology.

Keywords

Public sphere, public theology, Abraham Kuyper, sphere sovereignty, civil society, structural pluralism, confessional pluralism

Public theology presupposes that the public sphere exists. Without the public sphere, public theology cannot exist. Therefore, in this article, I want to show the strong connection between the public sphere and public theology.[1] There are several aims of this article.

[1] This article is taken from Chapter 2 of my dissertation with certain adjustments; see Antonius Steven Un, "Chapter 2: Public Theology and the Public Sphere," in "Theology of the Public Sphere: An Interpretation of the Philosophy of Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas from the Perspective of the Theology of Abraham Kuyper with Implications for Public Theology and the Indonesian Context" (PhD diss., Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 2020), 8–23.

First, I want to show the necessity of the public sphere for public theology. The public sphere becomes the place for public theology to operate and to find public issues that shape its themes and approaches.

Second, as the problem of the translation of theological categories often haunts public theology, in this article I propose the vital importance of Abraham Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty in general and his principle of confessional pluralism in particular.[2]

Third, in addition to the problem of translation, another problem often makes public theology seem to contradict itself, namely, the pressure and temptation to compromise its particular messages. In this regard, I suggest that Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty is necessary for public theology.[3] While his principle of confessional pluralism strengthens public theology to overcome the pressure and temptation to compromise, his principle of structural pluralism is needed for an understanding of the role of civil society.

Fourth, I aim to show that public theology is differentiated from political theology in that the second is engaged mainly with the state and the first with civil society.

I will indicate the importance of Kuyper's sphere sovereignty principle mostly by using analyses by scholars of public theology as sources. To explain the connection of public theology and the public sphere, I will make a comparative analysis between public theology and certain notions very close to it, namely, public religion, civil religion, and political theology. Before analyzing more deeply the connection between public theology and the public sphere, I will elaborate a brief definition of public theology.

I. *A Brief Definition of Public Theology*

The term *public theology* was first coined by Martin Marty in his decisive article "Reinhold Niebuhr: Public Theology and the American Experience."[4] However, Marty does not give an explicit definition of public theology;

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[2] On Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty, see Abraham Kuyper, "Sphere Sovereignty," in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 461–90. See also Abraham Kuyper, "Calvinism and Politics," in *Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1931), 78–109.

[3] Though I want to show the importance of Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty to encourage the role of public theology in the public sphere, I do not intend to elaborate on it in detail as I have dealt with that elsewhere. See Antonius Steven Un, "Sphere Sovereignty according to Kuyper," *Unio Cum Christo* 6.2 (October 2020): 97–114.

[4] Martin E. Marty, "Reinhold Niebuhr: Public Theology and the American Experience," *Journal of Religion* 54.4 (1974): 332–59.

later scholars would define it. Here, I am surveying the definitions of public theology from six scholars. Ronald Thiemann defines public theology as "faith seeking to understand the relation between Christian convictions and the broader social and cultural context in which the Christian community lives."[5] According to Robert Benne, public theology is "the engagement of a living religious tradition with its public environment—the economic, political, and cultural spheres of our common life."[6] Sebastian Kim gives another definition of public theology as "Christians engaging in dialogue with those outside church circles on various issues of common interest."[7]

While those scholars seem to give a more general definition of public theology, other scholars are going to have a more comprehensive and more detailed definition. In Duncan Forrester's view, public theology is

> rather a theology, talk about God, which claims to point to publicly accessible truth, to contribute to public discussion by witnessing to a truth which is relevant to what is going on in the world and to the pressing issues facing people and societies today.[8]

Harold Breitenberg defines public theology as

> theologically informed descriptive and normative public discourse about public issues, institutions, and interactions, addressed to the church or other religious body as well as the larger public or publics, and argued in ways that can be evaluated and judged by publicly available warrants and criteria.[9]

For Max Stackhouse, the term "public theology" is used

> to stress the point that theology, while related to intensely personal commitments and to a particular community of worship, is, as it most profound level, neither merely private nor a matter of distinctive communal identity. Rather, it is an argument regarding the way things are and ought to be, one decisive for public discourse and necessary to the guidance of individual souls, societies, and, indeed, the community of nations.[10]

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[5] Ronald F. Thiemann, *Constructing a Public Theology: The Church in a Pluralistic Culture* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991), 21.

[6] Robert Benne, *The Paradoxical Vision: A Public Theology for the Twenty-First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 4.

[7] Sebastian Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere: Public Theology as a Catalyst for Open Debate* (London: SCM, 2011), 3.

[8] Duncan B. Forrester, *Truthful Action: Explorations in Practical Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 127.

[9] E. Harold Breitenberg Jr., "What Is Public Theology?," in *Public Theology for a Global Society: Essays in Honor of Max L. Stackhouse*, ed. Deirdre King Hainsworth and Scott R. Paeth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 5.

[10] Max L. Stackhouse, "Public Theology and Ethical Judgment," in *Shaping Public Theology:*

From these six definitions, I will draw several commonalities that are essential to public theology. I will use the definitions and the commonalities for further explanations.

First, public theology is rooted in a set of particular convictions. This point is indicated by some of the terms used by those scholars such as "faith seeking to understand," "a living religious tradition," "Christians," "a theology, talk about God," and "theology … related to intensely personal commitments and to a particular community of worship."

Second, public theology is differentiated from other branches of theology in that whereas theology focuses on the audiences inside the private or particular communities, public theology intends to speak to those outside particular religious communities. This essential point is exhibited through the several audiences mentioned, such as "the broader social and cultural context," "public environment—the economic, political, and cultural spheres of our common life," and "the larger public or publics."

Third, public theology focuses on responding to or engaging with public issues. This crucial element appears through the themes that public theology emphasizes, such as "various issues of common interest," "the pressing issues facing people and societies today," and "public issues, institutions, and interactions."

Fourth, public theology prioritizes a public engagement between theologians and people in the public sphere. This kind of public engagement presupposes a communication that can be understood by those outside the circle of particular religious communities. Several public theology scholars mentioned above emphasize this point by using the terms "faith seeking to understand the relation," "the engagement," "public discussion," and "public discourse." Public theology is expected to provide arguments that can be understood and examined by "publicly available warrants and criteria." This can be called "publicly accessible truth." Thus, the public sphere is necessary since it becomes the locus for such a kind of "publicly accessible truth."

II. *The Necessity of the Public Sphere*

Public theology, however it is defined, presupposes the public sphere. We could even call the public sphere a constitutive element of public theology. At least, we can view the importance of the public sphere for public theology from two points. First, the public sphere is a space where public theology

Selections from the Writings of Max L. Stackhouse, ed. Scott R. Paeth, E. Harold Breitenberg Jr., and Hak Joon Lee (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 116.

can operate. Second, the public sphere generates issues that public theology engages. I will now explore these points.

The public sphere is a space where public theology operates. Public theology is differentiated from other branches of theology in that it intends to publish in the public sphere. This does not mean that all theology brought into the public sphere is essentially public theology; it does mean that all public theology is intended for use in the public sphere, either its contents or its approaches. Katie Day is right when concluding, "Theology becomes public theology as it becomes a relevant participant in the public sphere."[11]

The public sphere is not only a space for public theology to operate; it is also necessary in that it provides public issues that public theology would engage. Jürgen Moltmann claims, "Its subject alone necessarily makes Christian theology a *theologia publica*, public theology. It gets involved in the public affairs of society."[12] The content of the public affairs of society is the public sphere. Thus, getting involved means entering and engaging in public affairs in the public sphere. This understanding does not mean that public theology must deny its particular theological heritage. Indeed, public theology has two aspects, namely, one transcendent and the other immanent. In one sense, public theology brings prophetic voices into the public sphere; these prophetic transcendent voices speak out in the depths of a darkened society. In another sense, public theology is a priestly response to weeping from below, a lament of people in excruciating circumstances. I call the former the transcendent aspect of public theology and the latter its immanent aspect. The transcendent aspect of public theology is its distinctive and prophetic voice that derives from its particular tradition. The immanent aspect of public theology is its ability to take issues from the public sphere and understand the approaches shaped by the public. We might conclude that the public sphere is vital for public theology in that it is a space where its transcendent aspect is shared.

The immanence of public theology in society involves the conveyance of issues from society to it. Public theology needs empathy so that it can listen and pay attention to society, and understand its pressing issues. At the proper time, public theology takes part in this struggle. Public theology comes as a partner in cordial communication to share its distinctive contributions. The supply of issues from society to public theology in the public

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[11] Katie Day, "Social Cohesion and the Common Good: Drawing on Social Science in Understanding the Middle East," in *A Companion to Public Theology*, ed. Sebastian Kim and Katie Day (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 215.

[12] Jürgen Moltmann, *God for a Secular Society: The Public Relevance of Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 1.

sphere does not necessarily crown society as the agenda setter. Forrester calls on public theology to decide from among the many issues "which seem most pressing at a particular time."[13] Apart from a more "natural" criterion, he puts forward two more "supernatural" criteria. Public theology should view *sub specie aeternitatis* (what is universally and eternally true) and "discern the signs of the times." By these criteria, the transcendent aspect of public theology plays a pivotal role. Thiemann highlights the immanent aspect by applying Clifford Geertz's "thick description" method to public theology. A public theologian is called to "offer a careful and detailed" theological conviction that intersects with the issues and practices of contemporary public audiences.[14] Thus, the public sphere is necessary for public theology in that it becomes the place for sharing the transcendent aspect of public theology and to shape its immanent aspect through the public issues received from the public sphere. When public theology accommodates its immanent aspect, it is tempted to compromise its transcendent aspect when it is translated.

III. *The Problem of Translation*

The above definitions of public theology indicate the intention to translate the language of theology to make it accessible to the public. This concern is made explicit by a finding that "most thinkers believed religious convictions should be translated into a more properly 'public' vernacular before they enter the public sphere."[15] The intention to translate theological language into language accessible to the public is based on the fact that public theologians are speaking beyond the walls of church and seminary. Thus, in engaging public issues, public theology must be done in a manner that is "genuinely public."[16] This means that public theology should be "adopting forms of reasoning that [are] compelling, at least potentially, to those who [stand] beyond the borders of the religious community … if theology [is] to reach a broader audience, it [is] necessary to move past the technical jargon that rendered it all but incomprehensible to those outside one professional guild." The first step toward this translation is that public theology should

[13] Duncan B. Forrester, "The Scope of Public Theology," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 17.2 (2004): 6.

[14] Thiemann, *Constructing a Public Theology*, 21–22.

[15] Charles T. Mathewes, *A Theology of Public Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 3.

[16] Linell E. Cady, "Public Theology and the Postsecular Turn," *International Journal of Public Theology* 8 (2014): 295.

learn "the language of the secular world in such a way that Christian discourse relates to it."[17] In short, a "good public theological praxis requires the development of a language that is accessible to people outside the Christian tradition."[18]

The intention to translate the particular language and reason of public theology entails many problems. First, the translation process of public theology into publicly accessible secular language contradicts the very nature of public theology, which opposes the liberal thesis of the privatization of religion. Mary Doak even equates public theology scholars who require such translation with the "liberal rationalists, who oppose the inclusion of specifically religious beliefs in public policy debates on the grounds that religious beliefs lack the basis in shared rationality necessary for civil debate."[19] Marty speaks of public theology as part of public religion "to identify the imbrications of religion," which is an ideological rejection of the commitment to the privatization of religion.[20] Public theology in particular, and public religion in general, can be identified as the "deprivatization of religion." José Casanova in his important work on public religion defines the deprivatization of religion in two ways: the rejection of the privatization of religion and its inclusion in the public sphere. Casanova first means "the fact that religious traditions throughout the world are refusing to accept the marginal and privatized role which theories of modernity as well as theories of secularization had reserved for them."[21] He then completes his definition of the deprivatization of religion as "the process whereby religion abandons its assigned place in the private sphere and enters the undifferentiated public sphere of civil society to take part in the ongoing process of contestation, discursive legitimation, and redrawing of boundaries."[22] Public theology as part of the deprivatization of religion should reject the pressure to translate its own language and reason. When public theology submits and translates its language and reason, it has accepted being relegated to a sequestered place assigned by liberal rationalists.

Second, the intention to translate public theology into publicly accessible secular language might possibly cause the loss of certain distinctive contents

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[17] John W. de Gruchy, "Public Theology as Christian Witness: Exploring the Genre," *International Journal of Public Theology* 1 (2007): 27.

[18] De Gruchy, "Public Theology as Christian Witness," 39.

[19] Mary Doak, *Reclaiming Narrative for Public Theology* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 14.

[20] Quoted in Cady, "Public Theology and the Postsecular Turn," 293–94.

[21] José Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 5.

[22] Ibid., 65–66.

of public theology.[23] For example, it is commonly known that the target language in the translation process does not necessarily have the various distinctive idioms of the source language. Further, certain distinctive doctrines or perspectives of a religion cannot be easily translated into secular language. The possibility of loss in the translation process occurs not only in perspective but also in the purity of the Christian faith.[24] Thus, the integrity of public theology is put at risk since the prophetic voices of public theology are compromised to serve the public agenda. Moreover, it is not uncommon that the purity of public theology is exchanged for facilities from the political elites so that political agendas can be served. Public theologians who are eager to serve political agendas in their private interests are indeed "doing more salesmanship than theology."[25]

Instead of translating, public theology should dare to raise its head and speak its own language and reason in the public sphere. Stackhouse is convinced that theology is in itself public for two reasons.[26] First, Christian belief is not "esoteric, privileged, irrational, or inaccessible"; rather, it is both "comprehensible and indispensable for all, something that we can reasonably discuss with Hindus and Buddhists, Jews and Muslims, humanists and Marxists." Second, Christian theology might possibly give "guidance to the structures and policies of public life. It is ethical in nature." The rejection of translation is not only based on the public nature of Christian theology but also on "the fact that theology is not 'neutral.'" Rather than disqualifying theology "from participation in public discussion … because of its distinctive perspective, theological findings can make an effective contribution to public issues."[27] Therefore, "Christian truth claims should rather be described within their own frame of reference if one is to serve their persuasive power and if they are to have any value outside the community of faith."[28]

As mentioned above, the intention to translate the religious language and reason of public theology first comes from the pressure of the privatization-of-religion thesis, which endorses a kind of public sphere that is committed to neutrality. The empowerment of public theology to enter the public sphere with its own unique and distinctive language and reason could come

[23] See Doak, *Reclaiming Narrative for Public Theology*, 14.
[24] Cady, "Public Theology and the Postsecular Turn," 296.
[25] Mathewes, *A Theology of Public Life*, 5.
[26] As quoted by Benne, *Paradoxical Vision*, 4.
[27] Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere*, 10.
[28] Ernst Conradie (1993), as quoted by Ignatius Swart and Stephan de Beer, "Doing Urban Public Theology in South Africa: Introducing a New Agenda" *HTS Theological Studies* 70.3 (2014): 9, https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i3.2811.

from Kuyper's principle of confessional pluralism. As I have argued before, Kuyper believes that all human beings are "by nature incurably religious."[29] This belief encourages religion in general and public theology in particular to become truly and consistently religious in both private and public life. Not only that, faith or religion becomes the basis for "every act of thought" and all "human intercourse," thus making religion constitutive and essential for human life.[30] Therefore, it is impossible for a religious citizen to speak without his or her religious language and reason in the public sphere. As we will see, not only does the principle of confessional pluralism strengthen public theology to speak with its particular language and reason, it will also empower public theology to overcome the pressure and temptation to compromise.

IV. *The Pressure and Temptation to Compromise*

For several reasons, public theology as defined above in engagement with various publics runs the risk of compromising its prophetic voice. First, pressure from governmental and market power occur because the public theology that comes out of the church or seminary sometimes critically addresses the social injustice of the state and the market through the prophetic voices in the public sphere. After Hitler came to power, Dietrich Bonhoeffer was forced out of radio broadcasting for criticizing Hitler on the radio.

Second, in the opposite direction, governmental and market power may instead provide tempting offers to soften the voice of public theology in the public sphere. Political elites can give public offices to religious leaders or theologians, especially if they come from the religion of the majority. The political power can also provide funding for facilities and permits for the construction of houses of worship. The market gives money and other luxurious facilities to theologians so that they no longer speak out in the public sphere.

Third, the compromise of public theology can also occur due to public pressure within the public sphere. For example, it is not easy for public theology in Macao or Las Vegas to criticize gambling and its related crimes because most of the population get their income from gambling and its derivative businesses.

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[29] Un, "Sphere Sovereignty according to Kuyper," 105.
[30] Ibid., 106.

Compromise will end up adjusting public theology to the publics' contents, approaches, and agendas. In some sense, adjustment can only be made in the immanent aspect of public theology, namely, the issues and the approaches. No adjustment can be made to the transcendent aspect of public theology, namely, its prophetic voice. The adjustment of its prophetic voice contains many risks.

First, it will destroy the nature of public theology. Public theology presupposes the distinctive and constructive voices brought from the Christian community into the public sphere. By nature, public theology is a ministry to bring sound biblical doctrines to bless the common people in the public sphere. Adjusting theological voices decreases its distinctiveness.

Second, the adjustment of the transcendent aspect of public theology destroys the nature of pluralism. Pluralism presupposes diversity instead of uniformity of voices in the public sphere. Public theology's compromise contributes to making society uniform instead of plural.

Third, the twist of the core values of public theology destroys communal creativity and cultural heritage. It impoverishes society.

To these notes, we can add the warning of public theology scholars. Kim says,

> for the authentic and sustainable engagement of the Church in the public sphere, the Church needs to guard against the temptation to take pragmatic approaches and to measure the result of ministries in numbers or external appearances, and to develop a public theology suited to the issues and relevant to the context.[31]

While Kim reminds us of the temptation, Thiemann reminds us of the pressure:

> Public theology is a genuine risk-taking venture. By opening the Christian tradition to conversation with those in the public sphere, public theology opens Christian belief and practice to the critique that inevitably emerges from those conversation partners.[32]

Following David Tracy, Thiemann's model for the relationship between public theology and the publics is "mutual criticism." This does not mean that public theology will easily adjust its theological core to the publics. Thiemann reminds us that "such radical reshaping of the tradition should take place only after prolonged and rigorous inquiry, but openness to that

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[31] Kim, *Theology in the Public Sphere*, 10.

[32] Thiemann, *Constructing a Public Theology*, 23.

possibility is an essential element of a faith that honestly seeks critical understanding."

It is important for public theology to maintain its authentic identity and prophetic voice due to the differentiation between public theology and civil religion, as Marty originally intended when the American sociologist Robert Bellah popularized the notion of civil religion.[33] Civil religion is here understood as a "public religious dimension" that is "expressed in a set of beliefs, symbols, and rituals." Based on the analysis of the American context, Bellah perceives that there are "certain common elements of religious orientation" that are shared by the great majority of the citizens. He mentions several examples: the citation of the divine names and attributes in United States presidential inaugurations and in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Civil religion also has some articles of belief such as the sovereignty of God, though those articles are not collected in a formal creed. Although civil religion absorbs many beliefs and values from the majority religion of a country, it is not necessarily identified with that religion. Civil religion is not a kind of a sectarian denominational group inside the religion of the majority and is not intended to substitute for it. In the American context, for example, the civil religion is not Christianity since neither the founding fathers nor the presidents ever mentioned Jesus Christ's name in their official addresses or documents. The purposes of civil religion are to provide the right feeling for political responsibility to the state and loyal sociability to the nation and to provide symbols as the expression of "the primal freedom of the 'people'" and the cultivation of a 'general will.'"[34]

In articulating public theology, Marty criticized civil religion. I explain those criticisms by referring to scholars who have built on Marty's article. The Durkheimian roots of civil religion, which "[envision] a homogenous religion uniting a nation," according to Cady, "failed to do justice to … pluralism" and are "too easily appropriated for the sacralization of the state and society, rather than for its critique and transformation."[35] Pluralism presupposes theological convictions and religious traditions that must be differentiated from the solitary model of civil religion. Uniformity, as assumed by civil religion, demolishes religions' unique identities as well as the wealth of their rituals, ceremonies, heritages, traditions, and confessions.

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[33] Robert N. Bellah, "Civil Religion in America," in *The Robert Bellah Reader*, ed. Robert N. Bellah and Steven M. Tipton (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006), 225–45.

[34] Max L. Stackhouse, "Civil Religion, Political Theology, and Public Theology: What's the Difference?," in *Shaping Public Theology*, ed. Paeth, Breitenberg, and Lee, 191.

[35] Cady, "Public Theology and the Postsecular Turn," 294.

The sacralization of the state and society could lead to the rise of totalitarian or despotic regimes and endanger democracy. Religious legitimation used by the state may exacerbate its crime against humanity. Even a mere political and legal legitimation of the state has very powerful authority that can be misused if left unchecked. This brings to mind Lord Acton's famous sentence, "Power tends to corrupt, absolute power corrupts absolutely." The calling of public theology is not to "celebrate the social system and its culture" as whatever they are, but rather, to change them.[36]

In addition to these criticisms, in my opinion, civil religion's use of religious values to sacralize the state at the same time desacralizes religions. Religious values are separated from the main focus of religions, which is spiritual-supernatural-transcendental activities. Religious values come under the agenda of political-natural-earthly activities. Not only that, civil religion also separates religions from their inherent identities. Religious values are borrowed while religions' identities are killed off. Moreover, civil religion in some sense can be categorized as a softer secularization because religion is not involved institutionally in the public sphere. The classic example of this is the politicization of Christianity by the Roman Empire. German public theologian Wolfgang Huber writes,

> In the term of dialectics, this Christianization of the Roman Empire effected simultaneously the secularization of Christianity and the definitive emancipation of Christianity from its Jewish roots. The radical nature of the Christian mission was thereby weakened.[37]

When Christianity was adopted as the Roman Empire's state religion, it at once became secular. Christianity, directly or indirectly, was adjusted to come in line with the political agenda and interest of the Roman Empire. In this context, Christianity as a whole religion, when taken by the Roman Empire, was weakened. Moreover, if the universal values of Christianity were taken to form a civil religion, it would be even more weakened.

To differentiate itself from civil religion with its many problems, public theology should maintain its authentic identity and prophetic voice without compromising with the publics, either political power, economic force, or social pressure. Public theology needs a theoretical framework that might empower its authentic presence in the public sphere, which at the same time might relocate the state and the market in their own spheres to stop

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[36] Stackhouse, "Civil Religion, Political Theology and Public Theology," 195.

[37] Wolfgang Huber, "Human Rights and Biblical Legal Thought," in *Religious Human Rights in Global Perspective: Religious Perspective*, ed. John Witte Jr. and Johan D. van der Vyver (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1996), 49.

them from becoming predators and invading other spheres. Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty is vital to filling this need. Public theology as it comes out of churches and seminaries is a part of civil society.[38] Thus, public theology needs a theoretical framework that endorses the structural pluralism of society, in which civil society is empowered according to the nature and purpose of each institution. Moreover, public theology as part of a confessional group needs a theoretical framework that endorses confessional pluralism in a society in which each religious group is empowered to have various public manifestations. Here, Kuyper's principle of sphere sovereignty, with the principles of structural pluralism and confessional pluralism, could be utilized to empower public theology in particular and civil society in general.

V. *Public Theology and Civil Society*

Public theology is not intended for a specific and narrow audience. The aforementioned definitions of public theology indicate that the audience of public theology is related to "the broader social and cultural context,"[39] which consists at least of "the economic, political, and cultural spheres of our common life."[40] The term "public" in public theology thus must be expanded beyond politics or the state to include "exploring normative questions about societal life," recognizing "the significant role that 'mediating structures' can play."[41] This is precisely the difference between public theology and political theology. Public theology believes that

> the public is prior to the republic, that the fabric of civil society, of which religious faith and organization is inevitably the core, is more determinative of and normatively more important for politics than politics for society and religion.[42]

Political theology as indicated in this differentiation believes the opposite. Political theology, according to Stackhouse, is rooted in Aristotle's philosophy, which saw "the political order as the comprehending and ordering institution of all of society."[43] In brief, the new wave of post-Auschwitz political

[38] Rudolf von Sinner, "Public Theology as a Theology of Citizenship," in *A Companion to Public Theology*, ed. Kim and Day, 245.

[39] Thiemann, *Constructing a Public Theology*, 21.

[40] Benne, *Paradoxical Vision*, 4.

[41] Richard J. Mouw, "Calvin's Legacy for Public Theology," *Political Theology* 10.3 (2009): 433.

[42] Stackhouse, "Civil Religion, Political Theology, and Public Theology," 197.

[43] Ibid., 192.

theology advanced in Europe mainly through Vatican II and the World Council of Churches.[44] The prominent thinkers of this new wave are the Catholic theologian Johann Baptist Metz and the Protestant theologian Moltmann. According to Stackhouse, the heirs of this new wave remained committed to "a rather centralized state, a state not focused on colonial expansion or military conquest or nationalist solidarity, but on an integrated and politically managed economic policy."[45]

A similar differentiation between public theology and political theology is drawn by Breitenberg. While political theology should "confine its interests and focus primarily or exclusively to politics and political institutions, the rights of individuals within specific nations, or the relationship between Christians and the political realm," public theology "especially in its constructive, descriptive, and normative forms, is concerned with a variety of other publics, including economic, artistic, environmental, academic, medical, and technological publics."[46] It is obvious that the publics of public theology do not consist only of the state. We could recall Tracy's classic classification of three publics, namely, the church, the academy, and society.[47] Stackhouse expands on and criticizes Tracy's three forms of public. For Stackhouse, the Western classification of publics—"the authentic religious public" (that seeks holiness), "the political public" (that seeks justice), "the academic public" (that seeks truth), and "the economic public" (that seeks creativity) is "still much too narrow and shallow."[48] Considering the criticisms coming from various sources, there must be a "redefinition of a broader public" in which "the great philosophies and world religions, which have demonstrated that they can shape great and complex civilizations over centuries must have a place."[49] The development of public theology that follows this redefinition should "include a much-enlarged conversation." Despite this criticism, Stackhouse is imagining a crowded public from which can emerge the conversational partners for public theology.

This differentiation does not imply necessarily that public theology is "antipolitical." The building of the political, educational, judicial, medical, and other institutions is necessary.[50] Nevertheless, what public theology is

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[44] Ibid., 193.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Breitenberg, "What Is Public Theology?," 15.
[47] David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981), 3.
[48] Stackhouse, "Public Theology and Ethical Judgment," 117, 118, 131.
[49] Ibid., 131–32.
[50] Stackhouse, "Civil Religion, Political Theology, and Public Theology," 197.

to do, according to Stackhouse, is "to guide choices about the just and unjust use of coercive force" and to direct the political power "to be [the] limited servant of the other institutions of society, not their master." This means that while political theology "inclines to have a political view of society," public theology "tends to adopt a social theory of politics."[51] Public theology can at the same time be equated with and differentiated from socialism. It can be equated to socialism in terms of its view of "the fabric of society as decisive for every area of the common life." Yet Stackhouse differentiates public theology from socialism for two reasons. First, public theology does not accept "the polarization of the classes as the fundamental characteristic of society—either in theory or in fact." Second, it also does not expect "the state to control economic life by centralized planning and capitalization."[52]

In view of these arguments, a key question appears. Does Christian public theology, especially for Protestants, have a theoretical framework that can organize a complex society in which civil society is strengthened? Stackhouse names Johannes Althusius's "consociation of consociations," which is "a federation of covenanted communities," and Kuyper's "basic theory of the relative sovereignty of the spheres of life."[53] The principle of sphere sovereignty as articulated by Kuyper, earlier posited by Althusius, and later developed by Herman Dooyeweerd, emphasizes that

> the sovereignty of independent spheres such as the family, schools, and workplaces are expressions of the sovereign will of God. Each sphere has a relative autonomy and specific character that needs to be respected. Government has a role in ordering and protecting the general good, but it does not have the authority to interfere with or determine the character or *telos* of each sphere. In turn, the state is bounded by the sovereignty of other spheres.[54]

Public theology needs and is also empowered by the principle of sphere sovereignty, especially as articulated by Kuyper, if it is to strengthen civil society. Thus, participants in the public sphere coming from several social spheres could contribute according to their own *telos*. Not only that, and more importantly, the principle of sphere sovereignty also provides a framework for strengthening the public sphere—a framework most needed by public theology. The principle of sphere sovereignty empowers the public

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[51] Ibid., 199–200.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 201.
[54] Luke Bretherton, "State Democracy and Continuity Organizing," in *A Companion to Public Theology*, ed. Kim and Day, 103–4.

sphere not only by strengthening civil society by guiding its participants but ontologically empowering it by interpreting it as a sovereign sphere in which megastructures such as the state and the market must not intervene.

Conclusion

I have established the necessity of the public sphere for public theology. Starting with its definition, I have presented the public sphere as the place for public theology to operate and to get public issues that will shape its themes and approaches. For public theology, the public sphere in one sense is essential but, in another sense, brings several problems. The intention of public theology to translate its particular languages—or the outside force to translate—might cause several problems. For instance, it will affirm the liberal thesis that religion is exclusively a private matter. This kind of thesis contradicts the nature of religion in general and public theology in particular. It also contradicts contemporary sociological facts. One of the contemporary sociological facts is marked by "the rediscovery of the sacred *in* the immanent, the spiritual *within* the secular."[55] In Kim and Day's expression, "Religion has re-emerged in the public square in higher relief and in new forms."[56] Describing this turn, Cady states,

> In the academy religion was largely ignored: that is not our world. In recent decades the public face of religion has exploded, nationally and internationally. It is not just that there is a greater recognition of religion's public role, though that is certainly part of it; we have also witnessed a notable resurgence of religion in public life, a resurgence that has caught most scholars and analysts by surprise.[57]

Therefore, Kuyper's principle of confessional pluralism is needed to encourage public theology to speak with its unique voice in the public sphere.

Kuyper's principle of confessional pluralism is also necessary for public theology to overcome the pressure and temptation to compromise its transcendent voices. This kind of pressure or temptation will cause public theology to become similar to civil religion. This conception has many problems and has been criticized by many scholars as destroying the nature of pluralism, avoiding the distinctive contributions of public theology, and sacralizing the state and society. Public theology would thus lose its prophetic role in society.

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[55] Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 2.
[56] Kim and Day, eds., *A Companion to Public Theology*, 18.
[57] Cady, "Public Theology and the Postsecular Turn," 297.

The last but not least of Kuyper's principles, structural pluralism, is vital for viewing, understanding, and encouraging the role of civil society in the public sphere. In relation to public theology, civil society is essential and even constitutive. By this notion, public theology is differentiated from political theology. While the latter is mainly focused on the state, the former is focused on civil society.

A Theological and Biblical Examination of Anger

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Abstract

Not only is Christian anger, properly defined, biblically permissible, but it is also required. In service to this thesis, I will first examine arguments regarding the permissibility of anger. Then, I will seek to refute an argument that states that anger is never advantageous. Finally, I will argue that anger is not only *valid* but is biblically *required* in certain circumstances. It will hopefully be clear that the claim that humans should never express anger is more pagan than Christian. On the other hand, anger is a dangerous emotion that must be checked and balanced by the essence of God as revealed in his word. Humans are made in his image and should emote accordingly.

Keywords

Anger, theology proper, self-defense, biblical theology, indignation, wrath, ethics, sixth commandment, justice, forgiveness

I. *Validating Anger*

There are eight Old Testament Hebrew words for anger and at least two New Testament Greek words.[1] One of the oldest biblical demarcations of anger is connected with the Hebrew word for nose (*'aph*; אַף). At some point, this word became equated with anger such that turning anger away from a person is, literally,

[1] For a brief survey, see Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 2:222.

"to turn your brother's nose [*'aph-'akhikha*; אַף־אָחִיךָ] from you" (Gen 27:45). This use occurs around eighty times in the Old Testament.[2] The significance for our purposes is the apparent connection between one's nose and anger. According to one dictionary, "there is a clear connection between anger and snorting, e.g., in Ex 15:8; Ps 18:16; Job 4:9."[3] The connection seems to be primarily one of displeasure; snorting was equated with displeasure in the Old Testament, as it is today.[4] This core element of strong displeasure is evident across the range of Old Testament words denoting anger. Similarly, in the New Testament, anger is equated with a "state of relatively strong displeasure."[5] The various biblical terms, then, cohere with our modern definition of anger as the result of strong displeasure. The definition of anger and wrath (the terms are used interchangeably) we will operate with can be articulated this way: A disposition of one person to another person or thing that is marked by displeasure, disgust, and the desire to remove the person or thing from the influenced person's perception.

This feeling of displeasure, or anger, has been described as a necessary human response to certain stimuli for thousands of years. In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle famously said, "The man who is angry at the right things and with the right people, and, further, as he ought, when he ought, and as long as he ought, is praised."[6] Thomas Aquinas wrote much on this issue.[7] Responding to the objection that Christians should arbitrate passionlessly since this is the way the impassible God operates, Aquinas says, "In God and the angels there is no sensitive appetite, nor again bodily members: and so in them good does not depend on the right ordering of passions or of

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[2] Ludwig Koehler et al., *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 1:77 (hereafter, *HALOT*).

[3] G. Johannes Botterweck and Helmer Ringgren, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 1:351.

[4] *The Merriam-Webster Dictionary* (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 2004), s.v. "snort." Cf. animals' snorting is often a response to stimuli that indicate personal danger.

[5] Frederick W. Danker, Walter Bauer, and William Arndt, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 720 (ὀργή).

[6] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 1125b.25–29, in *The Works of Aristotle*, ed. Mortimer J. Adler and W. D. Goetz, trans. Philip W. Ross, 2nd ed., Great Books of the Western World (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc.; Robert P. Gwinn, 1990), 8:373–74.

[7] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province (London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, n.d.), I, q. 81, a3; I–II, q. 9, a2; II–II, q158; Thomas Aquinas, *Disputed Questions on Evil*, trans. John A. Oesterle and Jean T. Oesterle (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 12.1; Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. C. I. Litzinger, Aristotelian Commentary Series (Notre Dame: Dumb Ox Books, 1993), 800–815 (pp. 256–59).

bodily actions, as it does in us."[8] Aquinas and others argue that certain angry passions are part of who we are as embodied creatures made in the image of God and, therefore, we should allow them to manifest albeit in a masterful way (and not in a mastered way).

William Mattison, building on Aquinas, argues that people should express anger to promote virtue. If it is good to be angry at certain things, like the torture of infants, then "the best way to guard against vicious anger [i.e., bad anger] is not to seek to quell all experiences of anger, but rather to habituate one's anger so that it arises virtuously."[9] Of course, not all anger is good (or virtuous), but depending on its object (that on which the anger is focused), it *can* be good, says Mattison. In the words of Jochem Douma, "Hatred, anger, envy, and vindictiveness are rejected [in the Bible]. Still, all four of these can be expressed in legitimate ways."[10] So, if one is angry over a person torturing children and focuses that anger rationally and in accordance with Scripture (e.g., he does not use blasphemous profanity to condemn the torturer's actions) then his anger should be deemed good.

Biblical counseling discusses certain types of anger in positive terms. David Powlison shows that human anger (when expressed correctly) is not always wrong since it is ultimately rooted in who God is as the God who hates sin: "You actually work the way that God says you work. You have the capacity for just outrage because he does."[11] Human anger is just insofar as it mirrors God's anger: "Like God, you are displeased at betrayals of love …. The reason these things anger you is because they anger God."[12]

This understanding of anger as rooted in God's character is climactically seen in Christ. The *Dictionary of Bible Themes* has an extensive section on Christ's anger and describes it this way: "Jesus Christ's controlled emotion arising from his unswerving opposition to evil and his determination to eradicate it." It provides at least thirty different instances of Christ's anger displayed in the Gospels and Revelation.[13] If Christ gets angry, then it seems that we should too. However, Christ also does miracles at will, reads minds, and forgives people who did not directly sin against him; we cannot

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[8] Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I–II, q. 24, a3, ad 2.

[9] William Mattison, "Virtuous Anger? From Questions of 'Vindicatio' to the Habituation of Emotion," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 24.1 (Spring/Summer 2004): 176.

[10] Jochem Douma, *The Ten Commandments: Manual for the Christian Life* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1996), 230.

[11] David Powlison, *Good and Angry: Redeeming Anger, Irritation, Complaining, and Bitterness* (Greensboro, NC: New Growth Press, 2016), 111.

[12] Ibid., 110–11.

[13] Martin H. Manser, *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies* (London: Martin Manser, 2009), s.v. "Jesus Christ, anger of."

do those same things Christ does. The discussion above, then, serves to show that Christ's righteous anger is something that we can emulate because it is part of our interaction with the fallen world as his creatures. We should be righteously angry with sin because humans were perfectly created with passions (Aquinas and Mattison) and, as such, are hardwired to hate the breaking of God's law (Powlison). If Aquinas, Mattison, and Powlison are right, then God has created us with certain passions that emulate his perfections. One of those passions is righteous anger. Christ, as the perfect man, exemplified righteous anger for us. We, as renewed individuals, should seek to emulate him.

An Objection to Anger

Though the likes of Aquinas, Mattison, and Powlison argue that anger can be positive, others disagree on more practical grounds. Glen Pettigrove, following a different philosophical trend (that of David Hume) argues that meekness—at the cost of righteous anger—should be sought.[14] He does not argue that a meek person cannot get angry but argues that anger almost always harms the cognitive process and therefore should be avoided. Before we examine biblical arguments regarding the use of anger, we should consider Pettigrove's argument to determine whether the potential allowance of anger is worth pursuing if, practically speaking, anger is always a detriment for humans.

Pettigrove's argument against anger is primarily based on experiments in which patients were angered in one way or another and then asked to perform a variety of cognitive tasks. His main argument against the use of anger is that it is not as effective as meekness, which is substantiated by behavioral experiments. The data seem to show that people were hindered no matter the stimuli (so long as the effect of anger was produced) or the cognitive task when they were angered.

The results indicate that, when compared to a control group of neutral or depressed participants, angry participants were regularly too optimistic about tragedy (underestimating how many people die in various natural disasters), more prone to accept stereotypes even though they see themselves as less biased, and more prone to accept and pursue punitive measures for those whom they perceived to be in the wrong.[15] This cognitive cost borne by anger leads Pettigrove to suggest that we should most highly praise meek people who are able to recognize wrongdoing. In the absence of overwhelming evidence, meek people are unwilling to draw unfavorable

[14] Glen Pettigrove, "Meekness and 'Moral' Anger," *Ethics* 122.2 (January 2012): 341–70.
[15] Ibid., 361–64.

conclusions about the agent's motives. Quoting Butler, Pettigrove shows that this characteristic "freedom from mistrust, and disposition to believe well of our neighbour," extends so far that the meek would "rather be deceived than be suspicious."[16]

Pettigrove, however, counters that the potential communicative capacity of anger (e.g., communicating the authenticity of one's beliefs) does not outweigh its communicative hindrances:

> Anger may, at times, communicate morally significant content to others, but likewise, it may interfere with such communication because the form in which it is delivered draws their attention away from the substance of the message.[17]

Even if the potential clouding of cognition that anger entails is worth the communicative payout, Pettigrove argues, the benefit is slim at best. Marriage counselors take pains to teach couples how to communicate without anger because the presence of anger almost always shrouds intended verbal communication in a veil of fear and defensiveness. He also rightly shows that martial arts training emphasizes the need to remain calm while fighting in order to maintain energy as efficiently as possible and to maximize one's ability to perform strategically advantageous movements. Anger unsurprisingly hurts marriages and surprisingly hinders hand-to-hand fighting.

Therefore, Pettigrove argues that it is not wrong to display righteous anger, but that it is pragmatically advantageous to resist doing so in the interest of being meek. Meekness, he argues, can detect wrongdoing, but it is generally unwilling to resist that wrongdoing (at least, insofar as anger is required) because it "hopes all things." Meekness is seen to be the opposite of anger since the former hopes that the indications of wrongdoing are misleading, while the latter assumes that they are accurate.

It is not an oversimplification to say that Pettigrove's preference for meekness mirrors much of the modern perspective on Christian engagement. Paul Yeulett aptly describes this sentiment:

> To be a Christian meant simply to absorb every kind of attack, and this maxim applied at every level of society. … To demonstrate anger in the face of any kind of provocation was a denial of the character of Christ, which was what we should all seek to emulate.[18]

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[16] Ibid., 366.
[17] Ibid., 369.
[18] Paul Yeulett, *Jesus and His Enemies* (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2013), 74.

When considering Jesus as presented in the four Gospels, on the other hand, Yeulett was "confronted with the notion of righteous anger. To respond robustly to evil was presented as the Christian, even the Christ-like, thing to do."[19]

Even though meekness can provide cognitive benefits over anger, as Pettigrove argues, sometimes clearer thinking is not the most important element in a social interaction. For example, if someone witnesses a woman being mugged, the anger that the bystander should experience is so essential to motivating him to help the woman that a small cognitive reduction seems a meager price to pay. If the bystander, in his anger, is unable to process how severe the future punishment of the muggers should be (which is one of the three detriments to cognitive processes that Pettigrove notes), it is irrelevant to his intervening and helping the woman. The point is that anger can be a beneficial emotion in social situations where action is desired and precise cognition is not of utmost importance. Furthermore, Pettigrove concedes that anger may actually *improve* cognitive ability by reducing confirmation bias.[20] To be sure, anger is not helpful when doing calculus, but it does serve a purpose in limited situations. Thus, it is too simplistic to say that meekness is always advantageous when compared to anger.

Most importantly, Christ and his apostles often opted for a predominantly angry response (though meekness was not completely absent). A key distinction between righteous anger and unrighteous anger is an outward disposition. In his analysis of Christ's incarnational love for humanity, Paul Miller shows that Christ's anger is always "other-centered" and affirms, "His anger is centered on others' welfare. … Jesus gets angry at anything that prevents love to people (compassion) or dependence on God (faith)."[21] On regular occasions, Christ was justly angry.

How do we distinguish between unjust and just anger? First, righteous anger should be outward focused. We should get angry at things that harm God's people or denigrate God. In his commentary on Psalm 35, James Boice says, "It is one thing to forgive a wrong done against us personally. To do so is commendable. But it is quite another thing to overlook a wrong done by an evil person to another party."[22]

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[19] Ibid., 74.

[20] Glen Pettigrove, "Meekness and 'Moral' Anger," 363, n. 71; cf. Maia Young et al., "Mad Enough to See the Other Side: Anger and the Search for Disconfirming Information," *Cognition and Emotion* 25 (2011): 10–21.

[21] Paul E. Miller, *Love Walked among Us: Learning to Love like Jesus* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress, 2001), 97.

[22] James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms 1–41: An Expositional Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2005), 301.

Secondly, righteous anger is constructive. Powlison calls this "the constructive displeasure of mercy." Though it seems counterintuitive, anger can be a manifestation of a merciful heart. Powlison puts it this way,

> *The constructive displeasure of mercy* traverses exactly the same ground as simple anger. But it's on a different spectrum altogether. It does not act like the typical hostilities … [Rather,] it says, "That's wrong—and I will be constructively merciful in pursuing whatever is just, whatever makes things right, whatever does good."[23]

Miller also notes the constructive nature of Christ's anger: "He says little—and what he says and does is constructive. Love controls Jesus' expression of anger."[24] Powlison makes the striking point that Adam and Eve should have been angry with Satan in the garden of Genesis 3. Of course, they failed to exercise righteous anger. If it were not for that abject failure, "the first act of anger would have been in Genesis 3, instead of Genesis 4 (when Cain murdered Abel)."[25] Anger, then, is a vital component of the Christian life. We *must* be angry at the things that God *condemns* because he must be angry at the things he condemns.

II. *Self-Interested Anger?*

There is also an egoistic element to anger in Christian ethics. Though anger should be primarily channeled to the offenses against God and secondarily to the ones that offend the neighbor, it is also the case that we as individuals can, and even should, be angry with offenses against ourselves. Indeed, the Bible does not teach Stoicism—the idea that anger should always be avoided. Biblical anthropology applies to all people, including us, not just others. If another person holds to the biblical ethic, they will be angry with offenses aimed at us. It should not, therefore, be seen as sinful to feel the same way as that other person. If *they* are justified in feeling angry at an offense levied at us, *we* should be similarly justified in feeling the same way about the same offense. To argue otherwise would be more Stoic than biblical. This is implied in such texts as Mark 12:31, where our Lord says, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31; Matt 19:9; Luke 10:27; cf. Gal 5:14; Jas 2:8, referring to Lev 19:18). The self-love referred to is a necessary component of the teaching. If it were sinful to love oneself, it would be contradictory to use that sinful inclination as the basis for righteously

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[23] Powlison, *Good and Angry*, 73.
[24] Miller, *Love Walked among Us*, 92.
[25] Powlison, *Good and Angry*, 63.

loving others. Since it is biblically warranted, on the other hand, to love oneself, self-love is then used as the litmus test for other-love. The standard by which we—justly—love ourselves should be the same standard by which we judge our love of others.

1. *Pacifism: Philippians 2:3?*

We must, however, deal with biblical data that might indicate the opposite. In response to the claim that the Bible teaches personal pacifism, we will look at a range of texts that will help us survey the issue. The command to "count others more significant than yourselves" (Phil 2:3) does not negate the responsibility to be angry with personal harm. Counting one as more significant by no means entails that the more significant person may sin against or otherwise willfully harm the less-significant person. This was and is a foundational element of revolution and reformation alike—though the powers that be are indeed more significant and are due honor and respect (Rom 13:1–7), they nevertheless are bound by a mutual ethical code that requires equitable treatment of subordinates. The status of the king as superior does not provide him with the justification to lord it over his subjects and abuse them (Matt 20:25; Luke 22:25). Therefore, considering one as more important than oneself does not necessitate that the subordinate never become angry when the superior abuses him.

2. *Pacifism: Matthew 5:39?*

Most significant in the biblical data, perhaps, is the command to "turn the other cheek" when personally harmed (Matt 5:39; Luke 6:29). In examining this key passage, we must remember that the historical context indicates that the topic Jesus is addressing "is more a matter of honor than of physical injury."[26] Jesus's historical milieu was that of a thoroughgoing honor-shame culture. Therefore, his interactions with the Pharisees often dealt with this topic (and it is also why his statements were shocking). William Hendriksen and Simon Kistemaker show that the context indicates that Jesus's primary intention was to combat vindictive revenge (which would be ubiquitous in an honor-shame culture):

> When Christ's words (verses 39–42) are read in the light of what immediately *follows* in verses 43–48, and when the parallel in Luke 6:29, 30 is explained on the basis of what immediately *precedes* in verses 27, 28, it becomes clear that … Jesus is condemning the spirit of lovelessness, hatred, [and] yearning for revenge.[27]

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[26] R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 220.

[27] William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel According to*

Therefore, Jesus's words are directed against a spirit of vindictiveness, not righteous self-preservation. Of course, this does not justify all attempts at self-perseveration since this desire can easily give way to selfishness and greed. The point is that some level of self-preservation is warranted. We will further analyze this passage by means of another in the next section.

3. *Pacifism: Romans 12:21?*

This emphasis on negating revenge in Matthew 5:39 seems to be borne out by, in Calvin's words, "the best interpreter of this passage," that is, Paul.[28] In Romans 12:21, Paul says, "Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Though there is not a direct allusion to Christ's words here, the content is clearly parallel. Paul seems to summarize the teaching of Christ by telling the Romans to overcome evil (e.g., a slap on the cheek) with good (e.g., a longsuffering response). The impetus for Paul's remarks is seen two verses before: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord'" (Rom 12:19, citing Deut 32:35). The Old Testament imperative to leave vengeance to the Lord is followed by the Pauline imperative to overcome evil with good. Therefore, Paul is connecting longsuffering (or cheek-turning) with the refusal to enact vengeance, not anger. Thus, we see contextual clues in Matthew, Luke, and Romans that cheek-turning is imperative in the realm of vengeance, not in preventing continued abuse or personal harm via righteous anger.

4. *A Biblical and Confessional Defense of Self-Defense*

To answer the question as to whether a Christian may exhibit anger toward another person, other passages must be considered. Matthew 5:39 and passages like it read in isolation could be understood to indicate pacifism. However, the biblical corpus generally precludes it. (As an aside, we will not occupy ourselves with a discussion on national pacifism. Though personal and national pacifism are related, they are distinct discussions. We will therefore only occupy ourselves with the former, as it pertains to the topic at hand.) The connection between justified anger as a response to personal abuse and self-defense seems obvious. According to our definition, anger is a feeling of strong displeasure that naturally lends itself to responding to the stimuli by seeking its removal. Therefore, if we can show that the

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Matthew (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953), 310.

[28] John Calvin, *Commentary on a Harmony of the Evangelists Matthew, Mark, and Luke*, trans. William Pringle (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 298.

Bible presents self-defense (or the physical neutralizing of another person by physical force) as warranted, we will see *a fortiori* that it also warrants the feeling of displeasure that must precede the action. Warranted self-defense necessitates warranted anger.

We will quickly note the highpoints in defending the doctrine of personal self-defense. Both Reformed and Arminian theologians support self-defense as a biblically warranted action. Norman Geisler says, "God permits life taking in self-defense (Exod. 22:2), in capital punishment (Gen. 9:6), and in just war (cf. Gen. 14:14–20)."[29] Francis Turretin similarly defends the rightful use of lethal self-defense:

> Defensive homicide is not forbidden when anyone, for the purpose of defending his own life against a violent and unjust aggressor (keeping within the limits of lawful protection), kills another. … The reason is clear. Although it is not lawful to return like for like and to avenge oneself, still to repel force by force and to defend oneself belongs to natural and perpetual right.[30]

The Westminster Larger Catechism 136 makes a similar statement in regard to the sixth commandment:

> The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, *except in case of* public justice, lawful war, or *necessary defence*; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labour, and recreations; provoking words, oppression, quarrelling, striking, wounding, and whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.[31]

In the Edinburgh edition, Exodus 22:2 is cited as the prooftext in a footnote following the italicized text above, which shows a consistent interpretation of the passage (Geisler and Turretin cite the same text). The Westminster divines may have had in mind national defense and not personal defense, but this interpretation seems to ignore the personal nature of the context in which things like "anger, hatred, envy" and "immoderate use of meat [and] drink" are primarily personal and not national actions. Also, if "necessary defense" is to be understood as national, the inclusion of "lawful war"

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[29] Norman L. Geisler, *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 114.

[30] Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, ed. James T. Dennison Jr., trans. George Musgrave Giger (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 1997), 2:115.

[31] Westminster Assembly, *The Westminster Confession of Faith: Edinburgh Edition* (Philadelphia: William S. Young, 1851), 294–96 (emphasis added).

would seem to be redundant. Further, it seems the Larger Catechism is not only allowing for necessary defense but is mandating it since "neglecting … the … necessary means of preservation of life" is listed as one of the "sins forbidden in the sixth commandment." Finally, we note that the Larger Catechism distinguishes anger in general from "sinful anger," which indicates that there is such a thing as righteous anger.

We turn next to Luke 22:36. Just before Jesus's betrayal at the hands of Judas and the religious leaders, "He said to them, 'But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one.'" Some interpret this passage spiritually and see Jesus speaking of a spiritual sword.[32] This interpretation would have Jesus mean that his disciples ought to take courage in the midst of upcoming trouble. However, this spiritualized understanding bifurcates Jesus's literal use of "moneybag" and "knapsack" with a spiritual use of "sword." If the disciples really needed money and provision, would they not really need a sword? Further, that the disciples furnish real swords two verses later would imply that Jesus meant it literally. Jesus's response to the presentation of these swords is simply, "It is enough" (Luke 22:38). Note that he does not condemn his disciples or encourage the amassing of more arms. He does not tell them to get rid of their swords, but he does not congratulate them either. Exodus 22:2, Turretin, the Larger Catechism, and Luke 22:36 all allow for the use of lethal self-defense for Christians.

5. *Combining Cheek-Turning and Sword-Wielding*

How do cheek-turning and sword-wielding fit together? Jesus tells us to turn the cheek, and he allows for the use of a sword to defend oneself. Are these not contradictory commands? No. These commands cohere in that the former is given in regard to vengeance (see II.1–3 above), while the latter is given in regard to personal defense. Jesus commands us to turn our cheeks to those offenses that are against our reputation. He does not want us to return the offense as a means of saving face or balancing the scales, as it were. However, he does not tell us to turn our cheeks to fatal blows. If our lives are in danger, the proper Christian response is to seek to preserve life. Therefore, anger (or the disposition of strong displeasure) is a justifiable state for Christians in circumstances where their well-being is threatened. For example, it is warranted for a Christian to be angry with a person who wants to imprison him unjustly (cf. Acts 23:3). This is notably the case in

[32] William Hendriksen and Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the Gospel according to Luke* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1953), 976.

colonial and early American slavery. Black Christians regularly used the Bible as justification for their anger toward whites who were enslaving them.[33] In this way, we have an example of just Christian anger constructively utilized for both personal and corporate good.

Therefore, the foregoing shows that the key distinction between licit and illicit Christian anger is that of offense and defense. If a Christian's anger is in service of an offensive attack upon an enemy in the interest of vengeance, he has trespassed upon God's sole territory, for vengeance is his and his alone (Rom 12:19). On the other hand, if a Christian is angry when compelled to defend himself or another from a violent attack, he is doing not only something permissible but also something good because he is emulating God's love for creation that is manifest as anger for those who seek to do it harm.

III. *The Categorical Imperative to Anger*

In this final section, we will examine the potential for a theological imperative to anger. The previous sections sought to establish anger as a valid Christian response to certain stimuli. In this section, we will seek to take another step in the same direction by showing that God's attributes not only *permit* anger but *compel* it.

When conducting biblicoethical investigation, there is nothing more foundational than the being of God. Ethical imperatives are not arbitrary for the Christian. Rather, they are rooted in who God is as the immutable creator of all things. Therefore, ethics cannot change since God cannot change (Num 23:19; 2 Tim 2:13; Titus 1:2). John Murray puts it this way: "The ultimate standard of right is the character or nature of God. The basis of ethics is that God is what he is, and we must be conformed to what he is in holiness, righteousness, truth, goodness, and love."[34] Friedrich Julius Stahl says,

> The good is not a law for the divine will (so that God wills it because it is good); neither is it a creation of his will (so that it becomes good because He wills it); but it is the nature (*das Urwollen*) of God from everlasting to everlasting.[35]

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[33] See Mark A. Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019), 220–24.

[34] John Murray, *Principles of Conduct: Aspects of Biblical Ethics* (1957; repr., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 177.

[35] As quoted in Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003), 3:261.

Though the conversation regarding God's nature and ethics usually centers around God as a God of love, we also must consider his wrath. Murray, for example, focuses on the imperatives that are spawned by God's love, but he also says, "The demand of love, unrelenting and all pervasive as it is, does not abrogate the demand of justice."[36] In his commentary on Romans, Murray shows that God's wrath, or hate, is something that must be reckoned with rather than relegated to the dustbin of theological inquiry. He says,

> We must, therefore, recognize that there is in God a holy hate that cannot be defined in terms of not loving or loving less. Furthermore, we may not tone down the reality or intensity of this hate by speaking of it as "anthropopathic" or by saying that it "refers not so much to the emotion as to the effect." The case is rather, as in all virtue, that this holy hate in us is patterned after holy hate in God.[37]

At this point, Herman Bavinck provides a caveat in regard to God's hate: "YHWH's hatred almost always has sinful deeds for its object (Deut 16:22; Ps 45:7; Prov 6:16; Jer 44:4; Hos 9:15; Amos 5:12; Zech 8:17; Rev 2:6), only rarely sinful persons (Ps 5:6; Mal 1:3; Rom 9:13)."[38] God's wrath, according to Bavinck, is only rarely aimed at individuals.

When we put these claims together, we see at least two pertinent implications of God's being that shape our ethical inquiry: 1) God's hatred for sin compels us to action no less than his love for goodness; 2) the major note struck in terms of God's wrath is that of a disposition toward evil in general, not individuals.[39] Individuals are nevertheless objects of God's wrath to some lesser degree. The question is, then, do we allow ourselves to be angry with specific persons rather than just evil in general? This is pertinent because God may do things that we cannot. In Bavinck's words, "Just as a father forbids a child to use a sharp knife, though he himself uses it without any ill results, so God forbids us rational creatures to commit the sin that he himself can and does use as a means of glorifying his name."[40] As we conclude, we will seek to answer two questions: 1) If God is only "rarely" angry with individuals, *can* we be angry with individuals? 2) *Should* we?

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[36] Murray, *Principles of Conduct*, 179.

[37] John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans: The English Text with Introduction, Exposition, and Notes*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 2:222.

[38] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 2:223.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid., 2:218.

1. *Wrath for the Individual?*

It is difficult to claim that God is only angry at actions when he punishes agents for those actions: "The objects of the Divine anger, accordingly, are *men* who oppose themselves to the Divine will."[41] For example, Samuel records the anger of the Lord that prompted his judicial wrath against Amalek. The Lord commands Saul to mete out his punishment upon Amalek: "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt. Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have'" (1 Sam 15:2–3a). God's anger is directed toward Amalek for his actions against Israel. In regard to Saul's sin, the individuality is heightened. Even though "Saul *and the people* [who] spared Agag and the best of the sheep" (1 Sam 15:9) and Saul placed the responsibility on the latter by claiming that it was they, not he, who kept the sheep (v. 21), the response of the Lord is, "I regret that I have made *Saul* king" (1 Sam 15:11a). Samuel concludes the narrative this way: "And Samuel said to Saul, 'I will not return with you. For you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel'" (1 Sam 15:26). The word translated by "reject" (*ma'as*; מָאַס) is the same whether its subject is Saul or God. This word can also mean "to spurn, despise."[42] First Samuel 15 is then not only an instance of divine anger against an individual, but it also seems to emphasize the individuality of this wrath.

It is much the same in the New Testament: "It is possible to deny the doctrine thus conveyed [i.e., God's wrath], and to rid our hearts of the fear it conveys; but it is not possible to deny that NT writers held this doctrine, and owned this overwhelming terror."[43] In Acts 5:4–5, we see the sins of two individuals being met with divine execution as Ananias and Sapphira are punished for sinning against the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the penalty for the sin of this couple is meted out individually since Ananias dies about three hours before his wife is given a chance to repent (cf. Rom 1:18; 4:15; 9:22; Eph 2:3; 5:6). Clearly, therefore, God's wrath toward individuals is biblical and probably not rare, as Bavinck thought, as indicated by God's recurring wrath for *individuals* when they commit sinful *actions*.

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[41] James Hastings, John Selbie, and Louis Gray, eds., *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics* (New York: T&T Clark, 1908), 1:478 (emphasis added).

[42] Koehler et al., *HALOT*, 1:541.

[43] Hastings, Selbie, and Gray, *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*, 1:479.

2. *Biblical Data Regarding Individual Anger*

In answering the primary question (regarding biblical data that may delimit, mitigate, or condone Christians emulating God's hatred for certain individuals), one immediately calls to mind the difficult imprecatory psalms. We have already dealt with passages that would seem to mandate personal pacifism and have shown that they are in reference to an offensive action motivated by pride. Therefore, they do not preclude humble self-defense. We must now deal with passages that seem to say something different. The imprecatory psalms (e.g., Pss 7, 35, 69, and 109) give one the sense not only that they exculpate the elect for feeling hatred toward certain members of the reprobate community but that they provide a paradigm for following suit.

Outside the imprecatory psalms, similar locutions are be found throughout the Psalter and in other places (cf. Job 19:25; Jer 11:18–20; 18:19–23; Neh 4:4–5; Rev 6:10; 18:20). For our purposes, we will briefly examine a psalm that is not typically regarded as imprecatory. David says, "Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with complete hatred; I count them my enemies" (Ps 139:21–22). This passage perfectly illustrates the theological concept we have been arguing in distinctly practical terms—the hatred of individuals must be modeled, and based on, God's hatred. That is to say, "If God hates or implacably opposes the wicked (Ps 11:5; cf. Ps 5:7; Jer 12:8; Hos 9:15), the psalmist enthusiastically pledges his likemindedness (cf. Ps 26:5)."[44] Furthermore, we remember that "evil for the psalmist was no abstract idea; it was embodied in evil people."[45] David's disdain for an individual is based on that same disdain for that same individual in the heart of God.

The imprecatory psalms indicate that there should be a tension in the Christian such that part of him hates those who hate God, but another part of him longs to see those same people lovingly redeemed into the warm confines of God's blessed community. There should be a simultaneous hatred for them and desire to see them abundantly blessed, even at great personal cost. Though this may sound contradictory, it is rather an anthropomorphic manifestation of God's will. God both hates the evil one (Ps 5:6; Mal 1:3; Rom 9:13) and desires to see him saved (John 3:16; 1 Tim 2:4). Part of this tension is due to the hidden will of God. Some men are eternally predestined for salvation, while others are passed over in reprobation before the foundation of the world. In Calvin's words, "God hates sin [and] we are also hated by him as far as we are sinners; but as in his secret counsel he

[44] Leslie C. Allen, *Psalms 101–150*, WBC 21 (Waco, TX: Word, 2002), 330.
[45] Ibid.

chooses us into the body of Christ, he ceases to hate us: but restoration to favour is unknown to us, until we attain it by faith."[46]

There is, however, another sense in which the imprecatory psalms indicate tension, namely, between two good things—God's justice and his mercy. Both justice and mercy are good. To place one above the other would be to place one part of God beyond another. However, all that is *in* God *is* God. We cannot say that his gracious disposition to the reprobate is better than his wrath. His mercy is not ontologically superior to his justice since they are both attributes of his infinite perfection. At this point the analogy (an analogy that should not be confused with an univocism) between our actions and God's is striking. Our constant tension and failure to be properly oriented to the reprobate is a manifestation of God's perfection. The impossibility that we experience in trying to hate an evil person but also desire to see him saved is part of the liturgy of adoration. For God does not fail in this regard, and our failure sends us Godward. That which is incomprehensible is, somehow, reality for God.

This is not a bare mystical abdication of theological precision. There is for us, at the same time, an experience of simultaneous hatred and forgiveness, both in regard to others and even ourselves. For example, there is a part of us as Americans (or at least there should be) that wanted to see Osama bin Laden converted to Christianity, even though another part of us rejoiced when he was dealt deadly justice. In a similar way, we hate the part of us that is still clinging to sin (Heb 12:1) but rejoice in the part of us that is being renewed day by day (2 Cor 4:16; cf. 3:18).

This anthropological consideration leads us to a theological insight. Calvin's introduction to his theological masterpiece shows that thoughts about God are inextricably linked to thoughts about man.[47] The tension we see in the Bible regarding God's disposition toward sinners is ultimately rooted in *us*. There is no tension in God. There is no "part" of him that fights against another "part," because he has no parts. This recognition of the ostensible difference between God's gracious and wrathful orientation(s) to man serves to show the disunity of fallen man. Man is created to be in right relationship with God; the ethical rejection of that relationship creates in man a failure to be human.[48] God's disposition to fallen man is not hard to understand because God is divided; it is hard to understand because we are.

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[46] John Calvin, *Commentary on Romans* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software, 2010), 198.

[47] John Calvin, *Institutes* 1.1.1.

[48] Cf. Robert D. Golding, "Making Sense of Hell," *Themelios* 46.1 (2021): 145–62.

God's disposition, however, will be much easier to understand at the consummation. This is because the sheep and the goats will be clearly divided (cf. Matt 25:32). Individual humans will be either wholly devoted to Christ or not. The division between saint and sinner will no longer reside within the heart. The demarcation will be the unbridgeable chasm between those in Christ and those without him.

Until that time, we should seek to imitate God by being gracious to those who wrong us and hating evil people who want to destroy the kingdom of God. We recognize the inherent disparity between these two positions and praise God that he unifies them. But we also grieve that the incongruity is a result of the de-creational aspect of sin, which we brought into the world. This recognition enables the Christian to do something that no other man can do—he can hate the evil person from a position of humility. This is because the things in the person that he hates are also in himself. In the words of J. H. Bavinck,

> As soon as I understand that what he [i.e., a hostile person] does … I also do and continue to do again and again, although in a different form; as soon as I actually stand next to him, I can in the name of Christ stand in opposition to him and convince him of sin, as Christ did with me and still does each day.[49]

There is, therefore, a grief in the heart of the Christian who hates God's enemies, such that another part of him wants to see those enemies saved. The world, on the other hand, can only hate by means of a (false) sense of superiority. Not so for the Christian. The haughty enemy is only unchristian. The Christian sees the destruction of himself in the destruction of God's enemies, for he made himself God's enemy no less—and perhaps even more—than the other (Rom 5:10). Nevertheless, his unquenchable desire for God's glory causes him to sing with great pangs of yearning the words of the LORD to our Lord Jesus, "The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool'" (Ps 110:1). Christians are biblically justified in being angry, but they recognize that only God's anger is perfect. God's perfection, far from being detrimental to our action, compels us to strive to follow him.

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[49] J. H. Bavinck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions* (Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1960), 242–43.

The Merciless Ethic of Trans Acceptance: A Biblical Response

JAMES N. BEEVERS

Abstract

This article examines and ethically assesses "transgenderism-affirming" approaches to the phenomenon of gender dysphoria. It discusses major approaches, identified as "modern" and "postmodern." These rely respectively on either scientific "evidence" or philosophical criticism. It examines the life experiences of transgender individuals, laying further foundations for an ethical evaluation from a Christian worldview. It shows that neither modern nor postmodern "trans-affirming" approaches fit a Christian framework. Key biblical truths that speak to this issue include the binarity of sex and gender (synonymous in the biblical worldview), the unity of body and soul, the derivative nature of human identity, the need to extend truth and mercy to the suffering, and the objective nature of truth in a revelational framework.

Keywords

Transgenderism, gender, gender spectrum, ethics, brain-sex theory, postmodernism, critical theory, critical gender theory, Judith Butler

I. *Approaching the Subject*

The topic of transgenderism has been catapulted to the forefront of public discourse in a dramatically short period. In the ever-growing LGBTQIA+ acronym, three of the current seven letters are dedicated to phenomena related to transgenderism: trans, queer, and intersex.[1] The sheer political weight behind the movement used to be disproportionate to the actual prevalence of transgenderism.[2] In recent years, however, the number of individuals identifying as something other than their birth sex has exploded. A poll conducted in February of 2021 reported that fully one-sixth of "Gen-Z" adults now identify as LGBT, with nearly 2.2% identifying as "transgender" or "other."[3] Another recent survey, with a sample size of over three thousand, found that 9.2% of *high school* students had a gender identity that did not align with their "assigned" sex.[4] By contrast, the Christian ethical literature on the topic is limited compared to what is available on issues like homosexuality, extramarital sex, or masturbation.[5] Much of the ethical literature, written as recently as the end of the twentieth century, simply does not include a discussion of gender.[6]

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[1] Including intersex people in the acronym is illegitimate from a biblical viewpoint. However, the phenomenon of intersexuality, a genetic disorder, is often evoked by transgender activists to argue that sexuality is not binary.

[2] A recent doctoral dissertation estimated that approximately 150 people annually apply for transgender surgery in Germany, a country of over 80,000,000 inhabitants. See Yves Steinmetz, "Geschlechtsangleichende Operationen bei Frau-zu-Mann-Transsexuellen mit Phalloplastik" (MD Diss., Universitätsklinikum Hamburg-Eppendorf, 2010), 16.

[3] Samantha Schmidt, "1 in 6 Gen Z Adults Are LGBT: And This Number Could Continue to Grow," *Washington Post*, February 24, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2021/02/24/gen-z-lgbt/.

[4] Kacie Kidd, "Nearly 10% of Youth in One Urban School District Identify as Gender-Diverse, New Study Finds," *Conversation*, June 3, 2021, https://news.yahoo.com/nearly-10-youth-one-urban-193150921.html.

[5] One admirable attempt to create clarity on issues of gender, including on intersexuality, is the recent Nashville Statement; see Council for Biblical Manhood and Womanhood, "The Nashville Statement," August 29, 2017, https://cbmw.org/nashville-statement/.

[6] Recent attempts at closing this gap are Peter Jones, "Transgender: Transitioning to Nowhere," *Unio cum Christo* 4.2 (October 2018): 27–48, and Carl Trueman, *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020). Trueman focuses especially on the question of the "self," exploring how "expressive individualism" as Western society's highest value demands emancipation from all external limitations that may be placed on one's chosen personal and sexual identity (and demands societal recognition and approval thereof!), including those imposed by biology. This contributes to a more nuanced understanding of what we will explore under the heading of "postmodern approaches." Jones helpfully explores how a rejection of the "creation" concept, that is, that there is something outside of this world (Twoism), makes each individual his own final reference point for self-definition, since this world is all that exists (Oneism).

1. *Methodology*

One difficulty in dealing with transgenderism arises from the conflicting nature of the theories set forth by those who claim to represent the transgender "community." To achieve a useful balance between simplification and specificity, this article will subdivide trans-affirming approaches into two camps: "modernist" and "postmodern," the former describing and classifying approaches that operate within an *objective*, "scientific" framework, and the latter classifying approaches that adopt the framework of critical theory, critiquing the concept of the gender binary itself. Individuals may draw from both approaches. Those who use a postmodern approach to transgenderism may cite "brain-sex" studies rather than relying exclusively on philosophical criticism, and those seeking an objective basis may simultaneously hold postmodern views of biology. The distinction remains helpful, however, for the discussion of two *theoretically* distinct systems.

The ethical evaluation will be self-consciously Christian. The epistemological ground for a Christian ethic is the word of God as revealed in Scripture. Far from being a liability, divine revelation is the only philosophically coherent source for an objective ethic. *De facto*, there can be no universally binding postmodern ethic. Furthermore, any rationalistic appeal to the "obvious," or "reasonable," is ultimately self-referential, ascribing authority to one's own conclusions. Authoritative laws require an authoritative lawgiver. God's will for all humans is found in general and special revelation.[7] Both nature and Scripture are binding. Without Scripture, even the search for the "natural law" is frustrated by the subjectivity, biases, and limitations of human reason, thereby bringing the Christian ethicist into the same bind in which the rationalist finds himself. Arguments about right and wrong can only be founded upon a worldview that views humanity as *ordered* toward an objective good, a good that compels obedience, demands conformity, and is knowable. It has been suggested that this "biblicism" creates epistemological problems since there is no universally recognized authority to adjudicate between competing interpretations.[8] This critique underestimates the extent to which the highlighted problem, real as it may be, is compounded exponentially by removing Scripture altogether. Scripture alone, as the voice of God, is the only adequate basis for any ethical evaluation.

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[7] Our approach contrasts with that of Norman Geisler, who argues that special revelation contains God's will for Christians only; see Norman Geisler, *Christian Ethics: Contemporary Issues and Options*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), 16.

[8] David Gushee, "Reconciling Evangelical Christianity with Our Sexual Minorities: Reframing the Biblical Discussion," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 35.2 (Winter 2015): 144.

2. *Aim and Conclusion*

We will outline trans-affirming approaches and offer a biblical critique. Scripture speaks unambiguously to the issues raised by transgenderism. It is necessary to carefully delineate the implicit and explicit beliefs and assumptions in trans-affirming theories. I will use the terms "transsexual" and "transgender" synonymously, as well as "gender-affirming" and "trans-affirming."

We will argue that a trans-affirming approach cannot survive within a modernist framework and that the postmodern framework is to be rejected. We will show how postmodern ideological approaches increasingly dominate the discussion. This results in a distortion of the truth that comes at the expense, primarily, of the suffering and death of transgender individuals, who do not receive the care they need. Finally, we will argue that both the trans-affirming modernist approach and especially the trans-affirming postmodern approach have no place in a biblical worldview. They should be unequivocally rejected in favor of helping those suffering from gender dysphoria accept their biological sex.

II. *Between Brain-Sex Theory and the Gender Spectrum*

1. *Attempts at a Modernist Approach to Transgenderism*

Because the postmodern approach is dominant in contemporary pro-trans discourse, less time will be given to the modernist approach. In this article, "modernist" describes the idea that the trans person is a "woman trapped in a man's body," or vice versa.[9] To the modernist, "men" and "women" are still the norm, notwithstanding the complication that male brains are occasionally found in female bodies or vice-versa.[10] In gender-affirming therapy, hormonal or surgical intervention is not seen as *transforming* but as *affirming* what is *essentially* present.

One term for this is the brain-sex theory.[11] This theory posits that the transgender brain reflects observable characteristics more consistent with the person's "internal" or "chosen" sex than with their biological sex. Unfortunately, many studies supporting this view are biased.[12] One

[9] J. Michael Bailey and Kiira Triea, "What Many Transgender Activists Don't Want You to Know: And Why You Should Know It Anyway," *Perspectives in Biology and Medicine* 50.4 (Autumn 2007): 521.

[10] Bailey and Triea's term "feminine *essence* narrative" is helpful for understanding this approach; see ibid.

[11] Ibid., 522.

[12] Mohammed Mohammedi and Ali Khaleggi have provided an overview of the various studies and brain areas targeted for research; see Mohammed Mohammadi and Ali Khaleghi,

brain-sex study examined the size of a collection of cells in the hypothalamus, concluding that male-to-female brains were "female-typical."[13] The study was widely touted as supporting the brain-sex theory and was used as the basis for the Gender Identity Research and Education Society's support for transsexual treatment.[14] Unfortunately, these findings were meaningless. The study failed to differentiate between transgender individuals who had undergone hormone therapy and those who had not. Consequently, they were examining the brains of male-to-female people who had already undergone extensive estrogen therapy. As it happens, the region of the brain they were examining is highly dependent on hormones, with smaller sizes being associated with estrogen.[15] In short, the "female-typical" brains "trapped" in the male bodies were "female-typical" because they had been treated with female hormones. Other studies tried to rectify this oversight but, inexplicably, used imbalanced control groups to distinguish "male-typical" from "female-typical" brains.[16]

It is beyond our scope to provide an exhaustive overview of the medical literature, but this is unnecessary for an ethical evaluation. The Christian ethicist *absolutely must* note that the *implications* drawn from brain-sex studies are neither scientific nor neutral. For example, brain-sex theorists interpret evidence for a "female-typical" brain in a male as justification for transgender surgery, and even if some of them grant that a certain area of the individual's brain is atypical and the vast majority of biological data still points to an agreement with the male birth sex, they do not take this as evidence that the person should *not* transition. We argue instead that if the person's physical body is 99% male-typical and 1% female-typical, it is not obvious why the amputation of healthy body parts or other therapy to attempt to generate a physical mirage that conforms more closely to the 1% is justified. To the trans activist, the "ought" can only be derived from the "is" when the "is" supports the preconceived "ought." Thus, in a purely modernist framework, transgenderism cannot survive: no matter what ancillary data points are collected in support of transgender identity, nearly every physical marker will reflect the birth sex. Even if one were able to determine the brain phenotype of a trans person reliably, would a

"Transsexualism: A Different Viewpoint to Brain Changes," *Clinical Psychopharmacology and Neuroscience* 16.2 (2018): 137–38.

[13] Bailey and Triea, "What Many Transgender Activists Don't Want You to Know," 525.

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 526.

[16] Giuseppina Rametti et al., "White Matter Microstructure in Female to Male Transsexuals before Cross-sex Hormonal Treatment: A Diffusion Tensor Imaging Study," *Journal of Psychiatric Research* 45.2 (February 2011): 199–204.

modernist pro-trans surgeon have the intellectual consistency to turn away a gender dysphoric patient asking for surgery who does *not* have a "trans" brain? Ultimately, if one is searching in the physical body to justify a pro-trans approach, one will search in vain.

2. *The Postmodern Approach*

The etiology of gender dysphoria is still widely debated and not fully understood.[17] As outlined above, the evidence for a "trans brain" remains elusive. The increasingly dominant postmodern approach is untroubled by this since it is rooted in neo-Marxist criticism of the concept of gender itself.[18] The rise of these ideas in the popular consciousness is documented by the Q in the ever-growing LGBTQ, and the ambiguous "+" often appended. "Queer" is not the same as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or trans. "Bisexual" is no longer the same as "pansexual," since bisexuality implies binarity. Finally, the rise of the "gender spectrum" idea, which contains potentially infinite genders, demonstrates the ascendance of the postmodern approach. While early criticism affirmed the reality of "sex" but attacked "gender" as a superimposed structure, newer criticism does not sharply distinguish the two.[19] This is seen in the ever-louder calls for the acceptance of transgender athletes to compete against their *chosen* sex, not their biological sex. The philosophy underlying this is the neo-Marxist critique of gender. What has sometimes been termed "neo-Marxism" by sociologists is an application of the Marxist "criticism" of oppression to other social hierarchies (e.g., class, race, gender, and sexuality) that goes beyond Marx's original critique of economic, class-based hierarchies.[20] This is often closely connected with postmodernism.

Jacques Derrida, Michel Foucault, Jean Baudrillard, and other postmodern thinkers expanded the Marxist critique of power dynamics to other societal assumptions and structures. Baudrillard taught extensively on the use of media as a tool for maintaining social hierarchies, echoing Marx by connecting his insights with an attack on the "capitalist" structure.[21] Derrida, perhaps the most influential postmodern thinker, argued that any

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[17] For example, some leading researchers argue that gender dysphoria arises from an unusual sexual fetish in which one is sexually attracted to the conception of oneself as the opposite sex; cf. Bailey and Triea, "What Many Transgender Activists Don't Want You to Know," 527–29.

[18] Scott Appelrouth and Laura D. Edles, *Sociological Theory in the Contemporary Era: Text and Readings*, 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge, 2011), 374.

[19] Ibid., 372.

[20] Ibid., 374.

[21] Kip Kline, "Jean Baudrillard and the Limits of Critical Media Theory," *Educational Theory* 66.5 (October 2016): 645.

opposition of metaphysical concepts entails a power dynamic of hierarchical privileging and subordinating.[22] This idea underlies many popular-level appropriations of postmodernism, where concepts like "true" and "untrue" are criticized as inherently flawed. It is argued that the concept of objective truth is *itself* created to maintain the status quo. A recent bulletin by the Smithsonian Institute on racial issues, clearly indebted to critical theory, applied this by stating that "objective, rational linear thinking" is an illegitimate aspect and assumption of *whiteness*.[23] Derrida himself opened the door to criticism of sexuality in arguing that the West is characterized by "phallogocentrism," which entails a privileging of the phallic, that is, the male, over against the female.[24] In Derrida's theory, these oppositions must be *deconstructed*, that is, revealed to be nothing more than social constructs.[25]

Foucault described his life's work as "to create a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are *made subjects*."[26] To this end, he wrote prolifically on topics ranging from hospitals to mental institutions. For example, in *Madness and Civilization*, he seeks to expose the power dynamics at play in the creation of binary concepts such as "sane" and "insane." This idea of the power dynamics at play in the "opposition" of metaphysical concepts underlies the attack upon the concept of gender. Foucault strongly influenced Judith Butler. Thus, Butler, perhaps the foremost modern thinker on gender, writes in her seminal work on gender,

> Foucault points out that juridical systems of power *produce* the subjects they subsequently come to represent. … Feminist critique ought also to understand how the category of "women," the subject of feminism, is produced and restrained by the very structures of power through which emancipation is sought.[27]

Butler argues that the concept of "woman" is created to maintain structural power. She rejects the idea that women can be seen as a specific essential category, calling gender an "unstable fiction."[28] Instead, gender is "performative," that is, a sustained set of acts that we take to be indicative of an

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[22] Jack Reynolds, "Jacques Derrida (1930–2004)," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, https://www.iep.utm.edu/derrida/#H2, Metaphysics of Presence/Logocentrism.

[23] Marina Watts, "In Smithsonian Race Guidelines, Rational Thinking and Hard Work Are White Values," *Newsweek*, last modified July 17, 2020, https://www.newsweek.com/smithsonian-race-guidelines-rational-thinking-hard-work-are-white-values-1518333.

[24] Reynolds, "Jacques Derrida."

[25] Ibid.

[26] Michel Foucault, "The Subject and Power," *Critical Inquiry* 8.4 (Summer, 1982): 777.

[27] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1990), 2 (emphasis original).

[28] Appelrouth and Edles, *Sociological Theory in the Contemporary Era*, 372.

internal gender essence but is nothing more than stereotyped behavior.[29] As Christoph Raedl summarizes, the sexual binary is viewed as a social construct, created to *maintain a hierarchy that privileges males*.[30] Similarly, Irene Brown and Joy Misra argue that gender maintains the hierarchy of "domination."[31] To the postmodernist, what must be rejected is the association of gender with biology.[32] This view, while new in the depth of its radical criticism, has its roots in earlier Leninist theory, which argued that the nuclear family was a capitalist institution that kept women in subjugation.[33] We are left with a theory that views human beings as infinitely malleable. Much of what was previously seen as dictated by nature is revealed to be nothing more than a societal construct. It does not matter what genitalia one happens to be born with. One could be "gender fluid" and change gender every day. From the perspective of postmodernism ("standpoint epistemology") individual *self-identification*, not biology, is the authoritative source of truth.

We should not underestimate the extent to which the postmodern critique dominates the language of trans activism. Further, it should be noted that postmodern theory is a loose categorization of ideas that are not always internally consistent. In popular discussions, some might argue that a trans athlete is objectively a woman, while simultaneously holding that the only thing that makes them a woman is self-identification. Thus, a quasi-biological argument is combined with criticism of gender itself. Trans activists are not necessarily self-conscious critical theorists. Nevertheless, the "modernist" and "postmodern" views summarized above are the intellectual fountainheads of trans activism. Though the resulting ideology is a curious blend of contradictory propositions, this may be unproblematic if "truth" itself is an (oppressive) social construct. Nevertheless, ideas have consequences.

3. *Examining the Trans Experience*

To be trans is to sever one's gender identity from one's biological sex. The outcomes in the lives of those who suffer from gender dysphoria and choose to follow the advice of trans-affirming philosophies are sobering.

According to a recent University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) study, transgender and gender-nonconforming people have a lifetime

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[29] Ibid., 373.

[30] Christoph Raedl, *Gender: Von Gender-Mainstreaming zur Akzeptanz sexueller Vielfalt* (Giessen: Brunnen, 2017), 22.

[31] Irene Brown and Joy Misra, "The Intersection of Gender and Race in the Labor Market," *Annual Review of Sociology* 29 (June 2003), 489.

[32] Raedl, *Gender*, 22.

[33] Alexandra Kollontai, "Communism and the Family," in *Selected Writings of Alexandra Kollontai*, trans. and ed. Alix Holt (Westport, CT: Laurence Hill, 1978), 250–60.

suicide attempt rate of 41%.[34] This astronomical rate has long been the object of speculation. According to the 2013 edition of the DSM-5, published before the UCLA study, "Gender dysphoria … is associated with high levels of stigmatization, discrimination, and victimization, leading to negative self-concept, increased rates of mental disorder comorbidity."[35] Thus, mental disorder comorbidities were unequivocally attributed to discrimination. The UCLA study, which evaluated the results of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey (NTDS), was tasked specifically with investigating this claim. They concluded, "Overall, the most striking finding of our analysis was the exceptionally high prevalence of lifetime suicide attempts reported by NTDS respondents across all demographics and experiences."[36] The suicide attempt rate did increase dramatically in certain circumstances: 78% for those who experience sexual or physical violence at school, 69% for those who experienced homelessness, and 54% for those who experienced discrimination in some other form.[37] Nevertheless, the baseline for suicide attempts (41%) remained at least ten times higher than that of the general population. The 2019 update of the study expanded the data to include not only suicide attempts but also serious suicidal thoughts. It showed that 81.7% had seriously considered committing suicide.[38] It would not be unreasonable to assume that between 90% and 100% of trans and gender-nonconforming individuals experience extreme depression.

Perhaps the most shocking finding of the 2014 survey was the *adverse effect* of transgender therapy.[39] Dividing respondents into "Do Not Want It," "Want It Someday," and "Have Had It," the survey examined the effects of trans-affirming therapies on the suicide rate. Of these categories, those with the highest suicide attempt rate were those who either *wanted* treatment or had already had it; that is, those most fully embracing transition were most suicidal. On average, those who had already had the therapy had a 33%

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[34] Anne Haas, Philip Rodgers, and Jody Herman, "Suicide Attempts among Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults: Findings of the National Transgender Discrimination Survey: 2014 Version," Williams Institute, January 2014, https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Trans-GNC-Suicide-Attempts-Jan-2014.pdf.

[35] American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders: DSM-5* (Arlington, VA: American Psychiatric Association, 2013), "Gender Dysphoria."

[36] Haas, Rogers, and Herman, "Suicide: 2014 Version," 1.

[37] Ibid.

[38] Jody Herman, Taylor Brown, and Ann P. Haas, "Suicide Thoughts and Attempts among Transgender Adults: Findings from the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey," *Williams Institute*, September 2019, https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Suicidality-Trans-gender-Sep-2019.pdf, 1.

[39] For a similar analysis of the data from the UCLA study, see James Beevers, "A Brief Survey of Christian Sexual Ethics," https://wts.academia.edu/JamesBeevers, 15.

higher suicide rate than those who did not want it.[40]

Predictably, the later edition of the study, now called the "full version" on the website, removed this data. The new graph on transgender therapies erases the "Do Not Want It" category and focuses on alternate metrics which occasionally show a temporary minuscule reduction in suicide attempts "over the last 12 months" for those who receive therapies, even though the *lifetime* attempt rate remains higher for those who undergo therapy.[41] Even in this selectively chosen data, the suicide rate for those who have not "transitioned" remains by far the lowest, particularly if they do not *want* to transition at all.[42] Nevertheless, the Williams Institute now claims that one of the three *key findings* of the study is that "access to gender-affirming medical care is associated with lower prevalence of suicide."[43] This "summary" is at odds with the findings of the study, which are further supported by a Swedish long-term follow-up study of those who underwent transgender surgery, which showed that even ten years later, the suicide rate remained astronomically high.[44] The Swedish study concluded that while surgery may alleviate the distress of gender dysphoria, it is by no means a cure.

Lastly, the evidence indicates that manifestations of gender dysphoria, especially in the case of minors, are not nearly as fixed as might be presumed. As Paul McHugh notes, at least 70%–80% of children who report at clinics with transgender feelings spontaneously lose those feelings as they grow into adulthood.[45] Other studies have concluded that only 12% of male children who report gender dysphoria persist in this identity.[46] By definition, those who are cemented in their gender identity through puberty blockers or "gender-affirming" treatment become "trans" or some related

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[40] This figure is the mean between "Do Not Want It" and "Have Had It"; see Haas, Rogers, and Herman, "Suicide: 2014," 8, table 5.

[41] Herman, Brown, and Haas, "Suicide: 2015," 17.

[42] Ibid., 17, table 4.

[43] Cf. Williams Institute, "Report: Suicide Thoughts and Attempts Among Transgender Adults," September 2019, https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/suicidality-transgender-adults/.

[44] Cecilia Dhejne et al., "Long-Term Follow-Up of Transsexual Persons Undergoing Sex Reassignment Surgery: Cohort Study in Sweden," Karolinska Institute, February 22, 2011, https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article/file?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0016885&type=printable, 5.

[45] McHugh was one of the first to provide sex-reassignment surgery at Johns Hopkins in the 1970s. He canceled the program when he realized that the treatment was not bringing about positive effects; cf. Paul McHugh, "Transgender Surgery Isn't the Solution," *Wall Street Journal*, May 13, 2016, https://www.wsj.com/articles/paul-mchugh-transgender-surgery-isnt-the-solution-1402615120.

[46] Devita Singh, "A Follow-Up Study of Boys with Gender Identity Disorder" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2012), ii.

designation. Of these, approximately 40% will attempt suicide and 80% will contemplate suicide.[47]

These statistics represent dramatic personal suffering. It is not obvious that the interests of those who suffer from gender dysphoria align with the interests of the critical theorists who wish to abolish the concept of gender. While the experiences of those suffering from gender dysphoria are weaponized to argue that gender is a social construct, it is questionable whether the rejection of creation as the normative standard has borne positive fruit in the lives of those who have adopted a trans self-concept.

4. *Conclusions and Methodological Implications*

An ethical evaluation of transgenderism must focus on its underlying ideology. Merely quoting the biblical evidence that gender binarity is the created norm is a facile response. Transgenderism is only *one* fruit of a society-shaping philosophy that demands a Christian response. Thus, we have first focused on "trans-affirming" ideas and approaches. We have shown that, while some seek a biological basis for gender dysphoria, critical theory is the driving force behind the evolving landscape of trans-affirming approaches. The following ethical evaluation will address both biology and critical theory.

III. *Toward an Ethical Evaluation of Transgenderism*

The following evaluation of transgenderism and associated phenomena does not deal with gender dysphoria *per se*. A person's level of comfort with their physical body and what Scripture says about it are not the subject of this discussion. Rather, the evaluation will focus on the ideologies and actions associated with "trans-affirming" behavior, self-presentation, self-conceptualization, and therapeutic intervention. It will be argued that a biblical worldview must categorically reject all trans-affirming approaches in favor of counseling and treatment that affirms the bodily reality of those suffering from gender dysphoria. Those who wish to approach the issue scientifically ("modernists") should abandon trans-affirming therapy as the way forward, particularly in light of the post-therapy suffering of trans individuals. This issue is best explored by first critiquing critical theory, associated with the postmodern approach, and then evaluating the ethical issues through a biblical lens.

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[47] Cf. the data from the 2014 and 2015 versions of the NTDS study cited above.

1. *Critical Epistemology*

Postmodern critical theory is epistemologically flawed and fundamentally irreconcilable with a biblical worldview. Critical theory views all reality through the lens of power and so sees propositions that claim to reflect objective truth as hegemonic power plays. Postmodernism famously rejects any objective *religious* claim as just such an epistemological power play, which should give Christians pause.[48]

This view makes a truly postmodern ethic impossible. While postmodernists make ethical claims, including the implication that the identified power plays are wrong and should be resisted, there is no limiting principle that hinders the application of radical criticism to their own claims. Standpoint epistemology is intrinsically relativistic. Herein lies the true problem with the postmodern project of creating "critical genealogies" to identify areas where power structures have colored society's lenses. Critical theory retains the implicit presumption of a universal standard by which the "subordinations" (e.g., cis-normativity, patriarchy, racism, institutionalization, and ableism) are judged unfair and deeply wrong. Critical theory is associated with a metanarrative that runs from oppression to liberation.[49] But metanarratival claims about the proper teleology of humankind are inherently theological. The conclusions drawn about the nature and purpose of humankind are informed by metaphysical assumptions.

In the biblical worldview, there is a knowable ethic that corresponds to the will of the Creator. The twentieth-century apologist Cornelius Van Til writes,

> Man cannot think and cannot act truly unless he thinks and acts analogically. The very presupposition of man's being able to sin is that from the outset God created him a perfect moral character. And the very possibility of sin implies *the plan of God as its background*.[50]

As Van Til notes, the idea of a binding ethic presupposes that there is a knowable standard by which an action is to be evaluated. If this standard is to be binding on all humankind, it must come from one who has authority over all humankind. In Van Til's language, humans fundamentally orient

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[48] Robert Segal, "All Generalizations Are Bad: Postmodernism on Theories," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 74.1 (March 2006): 158–59.

[49] Neil Shenvi and Pat Sawyer, "The Incompatibility of Critical Theory and Christianity," *The Gospel Coalition*, May 15, 2019, https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/incompatibility-critical-theory-christianity/.

[50] Cornelius Van Til, *Christian Theistic Ethics* (Phillipsburg, NJ: The Presbyterian and Reformed, 1980), 36.

themselves *analogically*, that is, they imitate the divinely created standard. This is an irreducible presupposition of the biblical worldview. The postmodern critical theorist cannot explain, without self-contradiction, why the oppressed ought to be liberated. Critical theory is unable to produce an "ought" without borrowing from the presuppositions of the Christian worldview. Thus, not only the *conclusions* of critical theory must be critiqued; the epistemology employed in coming to those conclusions must be critiqued as well. The standard by which all ethical claims must be measured is the Creator's will as revealed in Scripture and general revelation.

2. *The Goodness of the Body*

Fundamental to the biblical worldview is the conception of human beings as psychosomatic unities of body and soul. Trans-affirming approaches operate from the deeply metaphysical presumption of an inner essence, not unlike a soul, that constitutes the true self, inhabits the body, and can *be* a gender different from that of the body. As Melissa Moschella notes, this popular conception involves a body-self dualism.[51] The "I" or "self" is the conscious, thinking thing, while the body is a nonpersonal instrument of the self.[52] The "dualist," who perceives that their sexual organs do not match their internal gender, concludes that the best course of action is to change the body.[53] The New Testament was written in a philosophical context that has striking parallels to this view, and the echoes of Greek philosophy in the trans-affirming view are difficult to overlook.[54] By contrast, the biblical view affirms that human beings *are* body and spirit. As Jürgen Moltmann notes, although many in the Middle Ages thought of "likeness to God" as beginning only beyond the body, the creation story teaches that human beings "in our full bodiliness" are created in the image of God.[55] We read in Genesis 2 that the man was created "from the dust of the ground" (*'aphar min ha'adamah*, עָפָר מִן־הָאֲדָמָה) and afterward infused with the breath of life (v. 7). First Corinthians 6 is perhaps the most crucial text on this issue. Paul asks his readers, "Do you not know that your bodies [*ta sōmata humōn*; τὰ

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[51] Melissa Moschella, "Sexual Identity, Gender, and Human Fulfilment: Analyzing the Middle Way Between Liberal and Traditionalist Approaches," *Christian Bioethics* 25.2 (2019): 195.

[52] Ibid.

[53] Ibid., 196.

[54] Cf. Plato, Phaedo 64a-e, in *Plato in Twelve Volumes* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Plat.+Phaedo+64&fromdoc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.01.0170.

[55] Jürgen Moltmann, *Ethics of Hope*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2012), 101–2.

σώματα ὑμῶν] are *members* of Christ?" (v. 15). In verse 19, he informs his readers that the *body* is the temple of the Holy Spirit. In context, Scripture is teaching that the actions of the body are not negligible, counter to the quasi-Platonic dualism that had influenced the Corinthian church but is foreign to Scripture.[56] Paul teaches that not only is the *soul* united to Christ, but so also is the *body* (v. 15). This teaching is mirrored in his insistence that the body will be raised (1 Cor 6:14; 15:35–50; Acts 17:32). As the Westminster Confession states, God "created man, male and female, with reasonable … souls, … after his own image" (4.2).[57] "Man" is not coterminous with "soul." In the early church, this question was strongly debated in the context of Christology. Docetism, the view that Christ only seemed to have a body, was categorically rejected. No one without a body could be truly human.

This basic truth has everything to do with an ethical evaluation of transgenderism. The biblical worldview makes it impossible to affirm the claim that trans persons *are* something separate from their body. Fundamentally, gender dysphoria is the perception that one's body does not match one's gender. Consequently, as McHugh notes, it is a "disorder of *assumption*."[58] Other disorders of assumption include bulimia, the idea of dangerously thin people that they are, in fact, overweight. The transgender person assumes that what is given in nature is *wrong*.[59] Body integrity identity disorder (BIID) is not unlike gender dysphoria in this sense. People with BIID desire "the amputation of one or more healthy limbs or … desire a paralysis," believing that certain limbs are foreign elements that do not truly belong to their "self."[60] Those with BIID explicitly compare their desire for amputation to the desire of transsexuals for surgical reassignment.[61] Intentionally paralyzing a person with BIID would be a grievous violation of the Hippocratic principle of nonmalfeasance. However, instead of opting to help those with gender dysphoria to bring their *perception* in line with bodily reality, doctors routinely perform amputations on otherwise healthy reproductive organs. In some states, including California, counseling a

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[56] Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 462.

[57] *Westminster Confession of Faith* (1646; repr., Glasgow: Free Presbyterian Publications, 1990), 32; https://www.ligonier.org/learn/articles/westminster-confession-faith/.

[58] McHugh, "Transgender Surgery Isn't the Solution."

[59] Ibid.

[60] Sabine Müller, "Body Integrity Identity Disorder (BIID)—Is the Amputation of Healthy Limbs Ethically Justified?," *American Journal of Bioethics* 9.1 (January 2009): 36.

[61] Ibid.

person under the age of 18 to accept their birth sex is illegal.[62] From a biblical worldview, this rejection of creation is reprehensible, indefensible, and merciless toward those suffering from gender dysphoria. Certainly, the encouragement of transgender inclinations in children, pushing them toward the physical strains and lifelong miseries of a gender transition, is a form of socially acceptable child abuse.[63]

From a biblical perspective, those suffering from gender dysphoria should be helped to accept their body through various therapies. The body should not be irreversibly damaged in pursuit of greater conformity to a hypothetical internal essence. From the Christian perspective, this arises from the fundamental truth that the body is not ancillary to the identity of an individual, nor is there a gendered internal essence at odds with created reality. The extreme suicidality of postoperative trans individuals should be a sufficient datapoint to argue for the rejection of the "internal essence" theory. Changing the body to match the hypothetical internal essence does not decrease the profound confusion and suffering; indeed, it adds to it.

3. *The Binarity of Sex*

The final point that must be addressed is the question of the binarity of sex. As discussed above (II.3), critical theory attacks the concept of the gender binary as a social construct. In the view of deconstructionist trans advocates, humans are born on a gender spectrum. Approximately half have male genitalia and the other half have female genitalia. The idea that those with male genitalia should be seen as belonging to the category "men" is a social construct, created primarily by men to disenfranchise women. Thus, many trans advocates hold that, while *biological* sex is binary, *gender* is multiform.

In this study, we have drawn no sharp distinction between gender and sex even though, as mentioned, this distinction is crucial to some. This is because there is no unanimous distinction drawn by trans-affirming activists and theorists. If the concept of biological sex were truly not the subject of the debate, there would be no argument in favor of including trans-*gendered* athletes in sporting events of the opposite *sex*. The distinction between male sports and female sports is drawn not on the basis of societal stereotypes about gender but on the basis of physical sex. Not only is the idea of a

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[62] Legislative Counsel, "Sexual Orientation Change Efforts: Senate Bill 1172, Ch. 835," September 30, 2012, https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201120120SB1172, Section 1e.

[63] Though deeply relevant, the subject of providing irreversible puberty blockers to children is beyond the scope of this study.

gender spectrum biologically untenable, but it is also antithetical to the biblical view of gender and sexuality. Given the essential unity between bodily sex and the designation of "woman" and "man" attached to the respective sexes throughout Scripture, it is safe to conclude that Scripture knows no bifurcation between sex and gender. Consequently, references to "man" and "woman" in Scripture refer to both sex and gender. In light of this, the scriptural case is unambiguous.

Many modern issues are not explicitly addressed by Scripture and must be evaluated by way of analogy. This is emphatically *not* the case with transgenderism. The binarity of gender is not a foregone conclusion of the biblical text but an explicit teaching affirmed throughout Scripture. In the creation account of Genesis 1:27, the terms "male and female" are highlighted to point to sexual distinctions in the creation of humankind.[64] In the extended creation account, Eve is created separately from Adam, not to fill a deficiency of *number* but to fill a deficiency of *role* (לֹא־מָצָא עֵזֶר; *lo' matsa' 'ezer*, "a helper was not found"; Gen 2:20). Eve was not a second Adam; she filled a deficiency of kind. Precisely this creation account is used throughout Scripture to affirm the distinctive *gender roles* of the sexes (Eph 5:22–33; 1 Tim 2:13; 1 Cor 11:8). Furthermore, Scripture emphatically forbids any blending of the sexes. Women are to be distinguished from men and neither are to blur the line, even in matters of dress (it prohibits cross-dressing in particular: see Deut 22:5; 1 Cor 11:14)![65] Indeed, the distinction between men and women, especially in marriage, reflects something about the nature of God himself and his relationship with his covenant people (see Hosea; Eph 5:22–33). The distinctions between men and women reflect Christ's relationship to the church. Consequently, they are not mere points on a wider spectrum. The implication of an essential difference between bride and groom is woven into Ephesians 5.

Scripture univocally views the very concept of sex and gender as created by God to correct what would otherwise be "not good" (Gen 2:18). The binarity of sex and gender is not an afterthought, nor is it a foregone conclusion of the biblical text. It is explicitly taught and affirmed. The gender binary is not a societal construct of Western civilization. Rather, it is created by God and clearly recognizable in nature.

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[64] Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, WBC 1 (Dallas: Word, 1987), 33.

[65] The meaning of the prohibition of wearing "things pertaining to women" is debated; some argue that it refers to the cultic practice of priests wearing female clothing in the service of goddesses, though this remains unconvincing. Cf. Duane L. Christensen, *Deuteronomy 21:10–34:12*, WBC 6b (Dallas: Word, 2002), 495–96.

4. *Conclusions and Practical Implications*

The two biblical truths that make it impossible for a Christian to adopt a trans-affirming stance are 1) the body is not ancillary to the psychosomatic unity that defines human identity in the biblical worldview and 2) the binarity of gender or sex is not a social construct but is defined by God and woven into the fabric of nature. In the biblical worldview, identity is given by the Creator (Eph 3:15; Acts 17:38), not created by the creature.

Christian churches and counselors should proceed with those who suffer from gender dysphoria in the same way they proceed with other individuals with disordered assumptions. The word of God teaches that true freedom is found in receiving our identity from God, not turning inward to create or decipher our (gender) identity. Consequently, the Christian is equipped with the most powerful counseling tool: the truth. Both experientially and theologically, transitioning does *not* alleviate the burden of gender dysphoria. True freedom is found in accepting one's identity as created by God, even if there may remain a level of discomfort with one's physical body. Nothing hinders those with gender dysphoria from living lives of fruitful discipleship in obedience to the word of God and dependence upon Christ. Their struggles and sufferings may be unique, but these are not insurmountable (Phil 4:13), nor are secular trans-affirming approaches equipped to alleviate them. Finally, the hope of the resurrection and the shedding of the "body of death" (Rom 7:14), with its disordered desires and imperfections, is the *final* hope for those suffering from gender dysphoria. The church is uniquely equipped to minister to the suffering since her Savior is no stranger to suffering.

IV. *Summary and Conclusions*

To provide an ethical evaluation of the various issues surrounding transgenderism, it has been necessary to spend much of this study defining the issues. We have argued that trans-affirming approaches are to be rejected.

A trans-affirming approach fails to find justification even within a modernist, scientific view. The evidence for an objective "brain sex" is inconclusive at best and biased in its interpretation. Furthermore, this theory is significantly undermined by the results of trans-affirming therapies. One would expect greater conformity between one's "brain sex" and one's physical body to alleviate the mental suffering trans individuals face. Instead, these problems are compounded by all forms of therapy (cf. section II.3).

Finding no objective basis for transgenderism, postmodernists turn to neo-Marxist critical theory. Derrida, Foucault, and Butler focus heavily on

the systems of power involved in the *production* of the concept of gender. Given the suffering that those with gender dysphoria face, this move is both philosophically problematic and deeply unethical. Critical theory weaponizes gender dysphoria to prove a wider point about power dynamics in society. "Cis-normativity" (the notion that one's birth or cis gender is normative) becomes one more epithet, not unlike sexism, heteronormativity, racism, classism, or capitalism, by which the critical theorist attacks the structure of society. Through the ascendance of critical theory in the popular consciousness, the trans-affirming movement has gained significant political impetus, leading directly to the affirmation of trans identities. As we have shown, this inexcusable encouragement of a serious "disorder of assumption" directly harms those who suffer from gender dysphoria.[66] It is not unfair to compare the encouragement of gender transitions with encouraging a bulimic person to lose weight.

Postmodern epistemology cannot provide a rationale for adopting its conceptualization of society. By stripping itself of a metaphysical basis, it loses its ability to speak with ethical authority. Consequently, any ethical evaluation must be drawn from Scripture, not the relativism of standpoint epistemology. Critical theory is only able to produce an "ought" from its criticism by blending its worldview with the Christian worldview, in which moral imperatives are grounded in the will of God. Scripture speaks with remarkable clarity to the issues raised by transgenderism. Human identity, in the biblical worldview, is not limited to the soul as true "self." Instead, body and soul are united in an inseparable unity. The body is created by God and is fundamentally "good." Consequently, it is not justified to engage in the mutilation of the physical body in pursuit of a hypothetical inward identity. Lastly, the binarity of sex is unmistakably taught by Scripture, not merely implied. Biblical teaching is unintelligible if gender exists along a spectrum.

An ethical approach to the suffering of trans individuals must seek to provide counseling and care in the pursuit of aligning self-conceptualization with the physical body. The method by which these are brought into alignment is not the mutilation of the body; rather, it is helping individuals accept what God has created. Any philosophy that weaponizes the suffering of gender dysphoria for social criticism is reprehensible and incompatible with Christianity.

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[66] As explained in section III.2, "disorder of assumption" describes phenomena such as bulimia and body identity integrity disorder, in which one's perception of the body is out of step with what is given in nature.

BUSINESS

Panel on Business and Leadership

BONZ HART, STEVEN T. HUFF, HUGH JACKS, FRANCIS I. McGOWEN, AND JOHN WEISER

with Peter A. Lillback (2021)

This panel is based on Zoom interviews Peter Lillback conducted in the late summer and fall of 2021. It complements the interview with Tandean Rustandy, an international and Indonesian businessman. The interviews explore the relationship between business and faith, the joys and challenges of business leadership, and current economic issues. The panel aims to equip church leaders and pastors to better minister to businesspeople, but it also addresses young people considering a career in business and others interested in the topic.

Bonz Hart grew up in a Christian family with an older brother who graduated from Westminster Theological Seminary. He is a lifetime entrepreneur, having started a software company in his home office above his garage. That company grew into a large industrial software company with software implemented in more than eighty countries with sixteen global offices. Since selling his company in 2018, he has had the joy of partnering with Westminster Seminary in several initiatives.

Steven T. Huff graduated summa cum laude with a BS in physics from Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia and was inducted into Phi Beta

Kappa. He earned an MS in physics from the California Institute of Technology before serving as a counterintelligence agent in the US Army Intelligence Agency. He then entered the Central Intelligence Agency as an operations officer. After five years, he left the CIA to found Sensor Systems, Inc., a software company specializing in image processing applications for high resolution remote sensing and advanced 3D medical imaging markets. After a series of mergers and acquisitions, the resulting company (Overwatch Systems) was sold to Textron. He serves on the board of Helix Steel, a United States company that manufactures an innovative microsteel reinforcement for concrete.

Hugh Jacks is retired president and CEO of BellSouth Services, an organization he grew to more than 13,500 associates. Prior to BellSouth, he was the national director of business services at AT&T with 128,000 associates in forty-eight states. He was interim CEO of Provident Insurance and chairman of the compensation committee, and he has been active on the boards of AmSouth Bancorporation, Durr-Fillour Medical, Acme Cleveland Corporation, Bell Core, ATT International, and South Central and Southern Bell Companies. He currently serves on the board of Trijicon, located in Wixom, Michigan, is an elder at Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama, and is on the boards of the Christian Foundation of Alabama and Westminster Theological Seminary. He has been an active speaker for Young Business Leaders, Christian Businessmen's Committee, and Outdoor Sportsmen's Fellowship.

Francis I. McGowen is a 1972 graduate of the University of Notre Dame and a 1975 graduate of Villanova Law School. He practiced law at the law firm of Drinker, Biddle, and Reath in Philadelphia and in 1976 followed in his father's footsteps and joined the automobile business. He was the president of McGowen Lincoln Mercury Isuzu, Inc., of West Chester, Pennsylvania, and in 1997 he opened CarSense in Uwchland, Pennsylvania. He sold McGowen dealership in 2000 to concentrate on making CarSense the finest used car dealership in the region, opening five dealerships before selling the business to the Penske Automotive Group in 2017. He is a ruling elder of Proclamation Presbyterian Church in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, serves on the board of trustees of Westminster Theological Seminary, and is a member of the board of advisors for the 4.2.20 Foundation, a missionary organization based in Israel. He has been married to his wife Polly for 41 years, and they have three children, and eight grandchildren.

John Weiser is chairman of the Westminster Theological Seminary Board of Trustees, a founder and elder at Fort Worth Presbyterian Church, TX, and a retired international hedge fund manager. Now a private investor and philanthropist, he enjoys life with his wife of 54 years, three children, and six grandchildren.

I. *Bonz Hart*

PETER A. LILLBACK: *How did the Lord call you to himself, and how did your Christian experience shape the beginnings of your work as a businessman?*
BONZ HART: I was fortunate to grow up in a Christian home and with loving parents. I also had the opportunity of being involved in churches as I was growing up and had the example of an older brother who also loved the Lord. So, all that contributed to my always having a tender heart toward the things of the Lord, although I also was interested in causing trouble and enjoying the temporary thrill of bad behavior. In high school, it became obvious to me that I needed to decide which master I was going to serve, myself or the Lord. And the Lord graciously drew me closer to himself. During that time and after that, as I was going through college and then working for others, he showed me the dysfunction of nonbiblical values: the difference between servant leadership, which Christ taught, and the world, its power, control, and financial focus. So, as I was excited about the Lord, the question was, If you really love the Lord, do you need to go into full-time Christian service? This reasoning to me raises the question of compartmentalizing life that way. Rather, is not the opportunity to impact people great within the business world, where you can live your faith and see people where they are not able to posture and hide as much as they may in a church situation? So, being in business was always natural to me; I loved it. I started projects working when I was a preteen and then in high school to have my own money, and then I carried on through college. It has always been a natural part of life for me.

PAL: *Was there a moment when you said, "I want to be a businessman. I really like going after financial success as well as the ability to do good"?*
BH: I do not know that there was one specific moment. I was a little bit of a reluctant entrepreneur. I was frustrated with the world's way of running businesses and doing things versus loving others and caring about them as a primary concern. I was never money motivated; I was more opportunity motivated.

PAL: *As you look back at your education, what were the forces that really helped to shape you in your pursuit of a business career?*
BH: I think that the old adage applies that you pay for an education one way or the other, learning by doing and learning from successes and failures, being honest with yourself. For me, the cost of lying to yourself when you are a business owner is a good taskmaster to keep you honest and keep you truly evaluating things and not being deceived by what you wish they were.

PAL: *How do you make a distinction between a businessman and an entrepreneur? Are they the same or different?*
BH: I think they are different. A businessman can excel in a variety of discrete tasks. You can be a wonderful salesperson, a great manager, or a finance person and succeed very well in business. But an entrepreneur gets the privilege and the liability of wearing all those different hats, as well as having to have the strategic vision for what *this* could be and how it needs to change to become *that*. Most entrepreneurs are probably like pastors: they need to be called. It is not a choice that you make out of a list of several different things. Another way to say that is, if you are unemployable by others because you are always thinking of the best way to do something, then you are probably an entrepreneur.

PAL: *As you set out into business, what direction did you take, and how did it develop through the years?*
BH: My first formal job was working at a newspaper doing the highly skilled job of putting the inserts in the paper! It taught me a lot about boredom and frustration. Then, I worked in a hardware store and had a variety of other jobs through the years. It was more an evolution, a cumulation of different experiences, and seeing the importance of two things: One, does the business model hold together (meaning, will that actually work)? And two, do you produce real value for your clients that they want to pay for?

And young kids will ask me, "How do I pick a profession?"

I say, "In reality you often need to pick something you enjoy doing that other people do not because people will pay you to do something that they do not want to do."

A great example would be that we are happy to pay somebody to figure out taxes and not to have to read all those crazy rules. So, a lot of things fall into place once you understand how gifting and opportunity come together. What drew me to software was it was brand new when I started.

One time, as I was sitting in an airplane, somebody said, "What do you do?"

I said, "I make software."

And they said, "Oh, do you make blankets?"

That is how foreign the idea was that you could actually sell something that ran on computers, that would have value. Cell phones have changed the world in that regard. Another appeal software had to me was that it costs nothing to store, and it can be sold to many different customers. You can produce a set of code that provides value and then you can scale up at very low cost compared to so many other things you could do.

PAL: *As you set out in business, what was your business, and how did that advance through the years to your ultimate culmination of service in that business?*

BH: There were many steps in that progression and different businesses. Then I zeroed in on software as something new that could demonstrate real value. It just made sense, as you could automate the processes that take so much time and then leverage what computers do really well—that is, store a lot of information and do a lot of calculations. All that coming together was a big opportunity, and I was crazy enough to start a business by myself with the idea of focusing on the reliability of major pieces of equipment in the industrial environment. So, when businesses are counting on equipment to run and it does not run, there is no cash flow for them. That is a problem that no one knew how to solve, nor did I. Working together with major corporations to solve that problem took twenty-four years of my life, and we were able to grow from that one problem and one employee, when I started, to over 500 when I sold the company.

PAL: *What was the biggest challenge you confronted as a business leader that engaged your Christian faith and required you to use Christian principles?*

BH: The idea that there is separate truth from God's truth is a fallacy, meaning there are details about God's truth that are not spelled out in the Bible, but the foundation of human interaction, of anything that works well in business is biblical, and it comes from the Ten Commandments, it comes from treating other people the way you want to be treated, loving others in a sacrificial way. Businesspeople can creatively apply biblical principles in a way that enables and encourages, so that even if someone does not share those beliefs, they see the benefit. The other day, I was listening to part of the history the Quakers. Even though some of their views were radical and kept them outside the mainstream of English society, the fact that they were honest made them very successful in business. To me, that is a great example of the impact of applying a biblical principle. It is the difference between a short-term benefit and a long-term benefit; so, the challenge is always how

to communicate biblical principles in business with love, with compassion, with caring in a way that encourages people to live according to God's standards, which will make the business successful.

PAL: *What was the most daunting challenge you faced where your Christian faith sustained and guided you?*
BH: There were many in terms of how to make payroll when things did not work out as planned—believing in the sovereignty of God and that balance between knowing that all things are under his control and work together for the good [cf. Rom 8:28] and the reality of meeting a certain situation. I tried to look at crisis situations as the best opportunity to teach, because people discount your words but watch your actions. A good example would be a long-term trusted bookkeeper. I was flying back from the Middle East on business and right before I was told to shut down my phone, I got an email where they said that they discovered that she had stolen money, and they had escorted her to the door. I had eighteen hours to think: Does that mean all the money, and how bad is this going to be when I land? I could rest in the Lord that it was his business, not mine and know that he was going to sustain it to the degree that he values it in his plan. So, getting there, I was able to teach about forgiveness to a company that had been rocked to its core in terms of whom they could trust and why they thought they could trust that person and what to do after finding out they could not. I went from hurt and frustration to "This is beyond my control." In that opportunity to talk about forgiving, I thought we could probably have a big impact on her life; it turned out we were not able to see a demonstrable impact, but it had a demonstrable impact on others as we talked about it and just talked about how we dealt with it.

PAL: *She did not steal everything, because the business continued.*
BH: It was another good lesson in savings. I did not think we had any extra money in the company's account, so I was not taking any out, except what I needed, but she understood that there was enough extra to fund her lifestyle without visible harm to the company. It was a good example of why setting aside extra money is a good idea. If I had known that the surplus was available, I would have loved to have it as a savings account.

PAL: *As you look at the business climate today, what are your thoughts as to why the woke movement seems to be impacting so many in the large social media industry, maybe even in other big businesses? How has that happened, and what are your concerns as you watch that unfold?*

BH: I think it all comes from our image-bearing desire for justice and fairness. The ability to influence situation so that others are treated fairly is wonderful, but how you apply it and how you relate to people and what you think your responsibility is to them is another matter. The issue in this day and age is not a matter of me changing myself, but of me changing you. So, I prescribe what you should do to build me up, to create self-righteousness in myself for my views versus your views. But living it yourself and humbly understanding that loving others as yourself is a big enough task, and if we take that to heart, then all the injustice and all those issues eventually will get taken care of! Weeding those weeds of hatred and wanting to treat others differently out of your own heart is the hard part. But woke just ends up declaring how everyone else should behave, criticizing but not practicing. Whenever you have movements like that, they fall on their faces because what happens is those folks cannot live out what they say. Therefore, they get discredited and end up with a reverse racism issue: because you are this, I have the right to treat you badly. That is the opposite of Scripture, loving your neighbor, the great lesson of the Samaritan [Luke 10:30–37] on how to treat others. It is a wonderful opportunity to communicate personal responsibility in how we love people and show that the real issue is not human institutions but the heart. It is only through Christ that that can be changed.

PAL: *As you counsel young people thinking about a career in business, what do you indicate as absolutely essential if they are to take this track?*
BH: Although it is trite and has been said before, the idea is that you have a plan, and that the value you are going to create is in serving others during this journey. It may not work out the way you expect; it may work out better! But if your orientation is serving others, then you are going to have a very different stance in the world. If your goals are dictated by caring for others, not by financial factors—your true success may be in impacting just one person's life and their family. It may hopefully be more than that, but you ought to be very careful to guard your heart that you are not going into this with selfish goals and motivations. We all know capitalism works with a degree of selfishness, but that should be tempered by our desire to love and serve others.

PAL: *What advice would you like to share with people in business or who are thinking about business?*
BH: For all of us, the opportunity is to practice what we believe and teach and to lead with love. Indeed, when you are trying to work in a cross-cultural, international environment, the universal language is love, and that can be communicated in any language and any variant of religion. When we try to

protect our own feelings, we make rules on why we do not need to love certain people, which destroys our testimony and effectiveness. We have to bear in mind that they are God's children, created in his image, and have the desire, as image bearers, to be treated fairly and to be cared for. The thing I had to struggle with was that my lack of love came from self-protection. I did not want to have to care about anybody else. I did not want to have anybody else counting on me for something and then criticizing me. That added to a lack of love for them, and they picked that up regardless of what I said.

PAL: *One of the blessings that comes to businesspeople who serve is the increased opportunity for philanthropy and caring for things that are important. What principles would you share as something for people to emulate?*
BH: When you exit a business, hopefully you have financial reward to share. If you do not, the Lord is also teaching you and graciously enabling you to learn other lessons. For one who desires to be more like him, any outcome is God's plan and a time to rejoice and learn. When you have a successful outcome, then you see the opportunity to share first with the people that helped you with that outcome and then second, to apply the talents the Lord gave you to share with those beyond. In the realm of philanthropy, it can be transaction based: "I need money, you have money, give me money." That results in giving without relationship and without value besides the money. Everyone who has had an experience of growing their business and working in the business world knows that help is beyond just cash. The other key for philanthropy is humility. Because you had a successful outcome does not mean that you know everything about everything, and sometimes we can get confused by that. Stewardship before the Lord must be questioned and evaluated: Is he going to acknowledge that you were sensitive to his wisdom and invested wisely in kingdom causes? It was a big transition for me to go from having no money, always worried about having enough money to make payroll, to being able to share some of those resources with others. How do you do that wisely? Again, the lesson for me is, Do I love people enough to care about them, or am I living in a protective bubble with my own rules, not the Lord's rules?

PAL: *Thank you very much. It has been a delight to hear your thoughts and about your pilgrimage. Are there any loose ends that you might want to share?*
BH: I would just say that the conventional wisdom in the business world, often called best practices, is not always the best practice. You have to take the part of that best practice that is based on biblical teaching and apply it

in a loving way. However, most best practices in business are based on protection: of the business, the management, and your own feelings. And so, what people hate about business is that lack of love, compassion, and care. To just say "business is business" is often an excuse not to apply ethics and morality and bring honesty to the situation. A good example is when you are planning to fire somebody. The lawyers will tell you, "Just say, it is not working out." Well, often that offends the employee's sense of justice more than to be told the real reasons for why the employment relationship did not work out, so they can reflect and learn. So, do you really love someone enough to care and share with them, even though it might put you in some risk? You have to do it wisely, but to me, if you could impact a life at such a critical emotional moment, and if you love them enough to care for them when you are letting them go, then that is a wonderful opportunity. Your actions in business must fit the gifts God has given you and not simply conform to conventional wisdom. If we reflect God's love and grace, then we will stand out as different. To me just taking the "easy" way out is a real indictment of the world's methods.

PAL: *I am glad you shared that because the role of the leader often comes to the point of having to make hard decisions like that. We really appreciate your time.*

II. *Steven T. Huff*

PETER A. LILLBACK: *I would like to begin by asking you to share briefly how you came to faith and about your Christian experience. When did the Lord draw you to himself?*

STEVEN T. HUFF: I did not really have a conversion experience. As long as I can remember, I believed, and I owe that a lot to my family. My grandfather was a pastor. My mother, according to my earliest memory of her, would pray with us as children. So it was always a natural part of my life, and I was always a believer. There was never really a time when I did not believe. When I got older, I started to question more. And probably to the world, I did not seem to be much of a believer. Often, I would sort of prod for answers, but not necessarily get them. I pushed harder and harder, but in my heart, I actually was a believer and was just looking for rational answers.

PAL: *Was there a point in your life where you felt like your Christian commitment became more essential to who you are and what you are doing?*

STH: It was really after I got married, after having children. When I was single, I was satisfied that God was real and was the God of the Bible, but I

did not feel a need to evangelize. I am sure that it was very shallow on my part, but nonetheless it was where I was. I had been raised in an essentially Christian environment, the culture was essentially Christian, so I really did not see the need to defend it all that much. It was the dominant culture then and did not seem to really be under attack, and so, while I was a Christian, it was not a central part of what I did on a daily basis to advance the kingdom.

PAL: *What was your educational background, and how did that work out into your professional career?*
STH: I was never really interested in being a businessman. When I was quite young, I was always very interested in science and, probably like a lot of young kids, liked things that blew up, made loud noises, so I got interested in chemistry and rockets and that sort of thing. I started making rocket fuel explosives and gradually developed my interest in science. That was back during the space race when there was a lot of interest in rocketry. That gradually matured into more of an interest in science and physics. From high school on and in college, pretty much all I wanted to study was physics and math. I studied business, corporate economics, and things like that, but they were not really central to my interests. They were checking the box to get the requirements to graduate. I was in army intelligence for a while and then worked for the government. And it was friends there with a business background who got me thinking about leaving the government and starting a business with them. That pushed me in that direction—not any grand plan or scheme on my part.

PAL: *What has your business career looked like, how did you engage in it, what were your products or services, and how has that continued to unfold?*
STH: In the beginning, when I first left the government, it was at the advent of these new things called microprocessors. It was apparent that these would become much more capable over time. So a friend of mine that also worked for the government and had gone out working for a system integrator talked me into starting a company with him to bring the advantages of these microprocessors coupled with the Unix operating system, to the sort of government applications that we were familiar with. The idea was that you could lower the cost tremendously with these new technologies. So that is where I began. It was integrating microprocessors and the Unix operating system into some fairly specialized applications for processing sensor data.

While we were building data processing systems for specific sensors, usually a small imaging center, we shifted to providing products for satellites.

About that time, the big satellite programs were running into some difficulties because their satellites had this wonderful digital imagery, but they could not afford the processing systems for all the analysts to process it in a digital format. So they would actually write it to film and look at it on light tables, like they used to do it in the old days. Back then, this was classified, but now it is all very public. And so they began to look at how they could bring a lower-cost solution to looking at satellite imagery. So we looked at taking these microprocessors and applying them to that problem. It was on the edge of being possible, and over a period of a few years, as the graphics technology from gaming people caught up to it, we found out that we could build what they call low-cost workstations to allow everyday analysts, not just the special ones, to ingest and process digital imagery in its full glory. That had analogs in the commercial world, and people were starting to launch high-resolution commercial satellites. So our software also migrated into those commercial spaces. Then we developed that part of the company that was doing 3D medical imaging. A lot of the internal technology we were using also applied to the medical world. So being able to fuse MRI scans with positron emission tomography or CAT scans, we would put them in a common frame of reference and register them all together. In this way, you could watch the growth of a tumor in 3D, for instance, or better yet, the shrinking during treatment. So we developed into all-things imaging.

PAL: *From that point on, how has your further application of business skills developed with your success and the new applications of your interests?*
STH: That business grew to where it was fairly dominant in its spaces and then, after 9/11, it became apparent to the government that they had a real data fusion problem: one hand did not know what the other was doing. And so we merged with another company that did tactical intelligence analysis, and that was later sold to a large Fortune 500 company. After selling the company I had a non-compete clause, so I had to stay out of the defense/intelligence business. I looked around for other things to do and ran across a really interesting technology that would make concrete much stronger. As you are probably aware, concrete is very strong in compression; it is hard to crush. But it is relatively weak in tension; it is fairly easy to snap it. At the time, out of curiosity, I wanted to see if I could build something that would last for a very long time having low life-cycle costs and very low energy consumption. It turns out that insulated concrete is great for that. It can last a very long time, but you have to solve this problem of tension. At that time, I ran across a fellow who developed a technology at the University of Michigan. It is called helix, and basically what it does is take a

high-tensile-strength steel wire and give it a special patented shape in coils, where it almost looks like a little spring or a little screw. That method greatly improves the durability and the reinforcement characteristics of concrete. He had started a business to do this. When I ran across that, I invested in his company, sort of bought out their debt, and invested some equity. I have been involved with that company for the past several years. And it is doing quite well now, it has significantly advanced what people thought of as a dead technology (concrete). And almost everywhere you look, there are new things that can be done. If you are smart like this guy, Luke Pinkerton, then you can often come up with clever solutions that nobody else has thought of.

PAL: *As you look at your business career, what would you say has been the most challenging part of being a Christian in business as you try to follow Christ and compete in the business context?*
STH: During my career, it was not nearly as difficult as I think it is today. Christianity was still dominant in the culture, and while it was not like people wore it on their sleeves, as you got to know people, it became apparent that probably a majority of people were overtly Christian. I do not think this is the case today. In the business spaces I was in, there was quite a respect for honesty and integrity and for living those Christian values. The businesspeople I was associated with, while they were certainly capitalist, it was not the almighty buck; the buck would have to be subservient to a larger cause. Making money for the sake of making money was not regarded as honorable. Today, a lot has changed. It is probably much more difficult for younger people today. People did not go around evangelizing every day, so it is not like you were proselytizing in business meetings, but there was an undercurrent of a Christian worldview and an understanding that there had to be a larger purpose for all this.

PAL: *What has been the biggest challenge you faced that brought together both your concern for business and your following of Christ?*
STH: Within business, what you would have to do is to decide what your priority is. I was not interested in being in business just for the sake of business. I may have been an anomaly because I was basically a frustrated engineer pulled into business. Providentially, I was led down a path where the business became worth a fair amount of money. So we sold the business at the right time, and the question was, what do you do with that? You could take it and go to the south of France and buy a yacht and enjoy cocktails for the rest of your life, or you can look for other things to get involved with that

hopefully would have a little more meaning. It is what I tried to do in some of these other business ventures. The gentleman I mentioned, Luke, is a Christian, and I was trying to help out other people that were at that sub-critical-mass point and have the right worldview, the right purpose in life, and were not in business just to make dollars for the sake of it.

PAL: *What have you chosen to do to engage the culture because of your business success? How are you trying to continue your Christian witness?*
STH: Shortly after selling the business (because of my background in science, and academically I was a physicist), I engaged a new question. There is a huge movement in the culture today that teaches that science and Christianity are incompatible, that somehow science teaches that there is no room for God anymore, nothing for God to do, and that all the smart people are atheists, that science has solved all the problems of the origin of the universe. It was a little bit surprising to me that it had caught on to such a great extent, because when I was a student, I knew and worked with Nobel Prize winners who knew they were really smart people but also knew their limits. They were often extremely narrowly educated. Today, the culture looks to them for answers on big questions that they never studied and know nothing about. I approached you and Westminster with the idea of getting conferences to address that problem in the culture. We sponsored conferences where scholars would discuss these issues and hopefully bring educational materials to the audience that they could use in their daily walk.

As time went on, it became apparent we could only reach relatively small numbers of people through conferences, and we decided to do a film on one of the presenters, Professor John Lennox, who is a very good speaker. One example of providential intervention: we were looking for credible scientists to address this issue that were also Christian. That is hard to find today because, in the early days, when the departments were dominated by scientists who were Christians, they would allow atheists in their department as long as they did good science. That is no longer the case. I mean there is a hostility towards Christians in the academic community that has become very aggressive, and so it is actually difficult these days to find Christians who are scientists, especially in the physical sciences. As we looked around, we identified Professor John Lennox from Oxford University. He is a mathematician who is also very involved as an apologist and has written extensively on these subjects. Through our medical imaging branch, I happened to be over in Oxford getting a tour of the John Radcliffe Hospital with the Dean of Medical Sciences at Oxford. In his office, he had all these humanist awards, and it was obvious he was not our kind of fellow from the

worldview standpoint. But it occurred to me after the interview that it is just possible he might know Professor Lennox. I asked if he knew John Lennox and he replied, "Ah yes, a delightful fellow," and put me in touch. Although Oxford is a pretty big place, he actually knew John Lennox, and even though they are on opposite sides of the fence in terms of the existence of God, they had a warm relationship. I was then able to invite him for one of the Westminster conferences and establish this relationship that has endured now for several years.

There is the old joke about mathematicians and how to spot the extrovert mathematician at a social function. The answer is that the extrovert mathematician is staring at your shoes instead of his own. You know, John is not like that. I know a lot of physicists and mathematicians who want just to be left to themselves. John, however, is a real people person; he loves people, dealing with people, talking with people. And so he is both a professor of mathematics at Oxford who has street credibility with the secular community, and he loves people and has studied these questions of apologetics and the relationship between science and faith his entire life. So we decided to do a film that would document his life. He has had many debates with people like Richard Dawkins, Lawrence Krauss, and Christopher Hitchens, the name brands in the atheist community. But one of the unfortunate things is that people like Dawkins are household names, but Professor Lennox is not. So the idea is to help, at least in some little way, to capture him, his arguments, and his personality and to hopefully make him a little more accessible to the public. So we embarked on those types of activities through a foundation sponsored by some of the money we made from selling our company. The filmmaking has gone on for a long time, but again, it has been an opportunity to meet many others trying to push in that same direction. People like Ben Carson and others who have a little broader recognition with the public and have been then trying to fight that same good fight.

PAL: *Do you have any advice to share with young people who have a Christian heart and are thinking about a possible career in business?*

STH: It is going to be very hard to work for large Fortune 500 companies with the kind of woke-ism that is going on now and to live out your principles without becoming schizophrenic. I would encourage young Christians to become entrepreneurs, to build small businesses. It is going to be very difficult. Even if it takes a lot longer than you think, it is also going to be much more rewarding. At the end, you will be happy that you did it, but you do have to realize that it is going to take a lot of hard work. Also, it is probably best not to wear your faith on your sleeve. Christian businesses or

businesses that advertise as Christian in the secular public sometimes develop a bad reputation for not necessarily living up to what they claim. So I would be cautious about trying to use your Christian commitment as an advertising scheme. Rather, let it flow more naturally out of the performance of your business. It is going to be important to build back small businesses that can support Christian families. I talk to people all the time that are just aghast at how rapidly woke-ism has taken overtaken large corporations—and the government—in a very aggressive way.

PAL: *Well, Steve, I want to thank you so much for your time. I really appreciate it.*

III. *Hugh Jacks*

PETER A. LILLBACK: *When did you come to faith, in particular the Reformed faith?*

HUGH JACKS: I cannot remember not loving God. My folks were not regular church attenders; they were Primitive Baptists, and services were held monthly. I made a public profession of faith at the age of fourteen. Early in marriage, we went to church, prayed, and tithed, but looking back, I had lost some of my fire for the Lord. In God's mercy, I attended a meeting for evangelism run by Campus Crusade for Christ in Ridgecrest, North Carolina. As I listened to Bill Bright and some others preach during that week, God really turned my life around. In 1984, we moved back to Birmingham from New Jersey, and I was introduced to Frank Barker [1932–2021].[1] We began going to this church, and that is when the Reformed faith really started to wash over me. Frank was followed by Harry Reeder. While I have always believed in the Reformed faith, I just did not understand it. In God's timing and grace, I have served on the Westminster Seminary board, and that continued to reinforce it. I heard good preaching when I was a Southern Baptist, but the clarity that Frank and Harry brought is what really gave me understanding.

PAL: *How did your call to business come about?*

HJ: I have always loved the military, and my heroes were the people who won World War II. I thought it would be great to have a career in the military. As a freshman in college, I took the naval aviation test and qualified. When

[1] Frank Barker was one of the founders of the Presbyterian Church of America and the founding pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church in Birmingham, Alabama. Cf. Kennedy Smartt, *I Am Reminded: An Autobiographical, Anecdotal History of the Presbyterian Church in America* (Georgia, 1994), 58, 100–101.

I graduated from college, I started flight school at the naval air station in Pensacola, Florida. In God's providence, I was discharged due to a football injury. My brother was a career telephone company employee and encouraged me to interview with Southern Bell. Although a public affairs major, I wound up in the technical part of the business in Alexandria, Louisiana. My first boss, a very effective leader and a voracious reader, would often ask me what I was reading and what I was learning from it. After a series of assignments, I moved to Atlanta in public relations at the corporate headquarters. While there, I was selected to spend the summer at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota, with fourteen other guys from across the Bell system. The taste I had developed for reading served me well as the focus was on literature, politics, and leadership.

PAL: *What are the most important principles that guide you as a business leader?*
HJ: My guiding principles are embodied in several Scripture passages.

The first one is Proverbs 3:6, "In all your ways acknowledge him." I made a commitment that I would never deny or hide my commitment to Christ.

Number two is Colossians 3:17, which is, work hard and be diligent "in all you do," just as if you were working for the Lord. Every work is to glorify God.

The third one is Leviticus 19:18: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." It is leading with love for your people, not for personal aggrandizement or recognition or even a successful business.

And then four is 1 Peter 5:5, which commands, "Clothe yourself with humility," and states that "God opposes the proud." Translated into a godly business principle, the janitor is equally important as the CEO.

PAL: *What was the most challenging aspect of leading in business in general, and specifically as a Christian CEO?*
HJ: The biggest challenge was in getting people to form a team, seeing and believing in the same vision. To achieve that end, it takes a lot of walking around and individual face time. You have to walk in your people's shoes before they will follow you.

Another challenge is in creating a positive atmosphere in a negative world. It is essential to use both positive and negative situations to encourage desired character traits in individuals and the organization.

Operating as a Christian in a non-Christian environment obviously brings a lot of pressure. I would get a lot of advice that I did not follow, and thankfully, I was able always to achieve a good result for the company.

It is important to honor company policy. However, I never hesitated to

allow Bible studies and prayer meetings on company premises as long as they took place during nonworking hours. Because I did not cover up my Christianity, I was invited to speak and present the claims of Christ on many occasions across the country, at governors' and mayors' prayer breakfasts, hunting conventions, and churches.

PAL: *What is the biggest challenge for success in business?*
HJ: Just a couple of things come to mind. Overall, the greatest challenge to success is the temptation to interfere with the way people manage. I think back to some of my bosses who allowed me to use my own judgment. I fell into the "ditch" a number of times, but they picked me up, told me where I had gone wrong, and then communicated the faith they had in me. The temptation is to manage people too closely. For me specifically, the biggest challenge was pulling together 125,000 people from twenty-three companies over forty-eight states into one cohesive team.

And then, as president of BellSouth Services, it became even a bigger challenge, as we were given fifty-three people and told to build a company that would allow for merging South Central Bell and Bell International along with Bell South Services into one company. We merged into one (BellSouth) in nine years. During that period, our company, Bell South Services, grew from 53 to over 15,500 people.

PAL: *Is there anything you would have done differently if you looked back?*
HJ: I would spend more time mentoring young people in leadership principles and about the righteous use of personal power. I would also be more focused on the need of people versus the need of the organization.

PAL: *What counsel you would give young adults preparing to enter the business world?*
HJ: There is an old adage that says, "Know what the main thing is, and keep the main thing the main thing." And so know your main thing and that it is of eternal value.

Most of us just live our lives routinely until the end, and then we look back with many regrets because we did not do the things we wish we had done. So I encourage people to write their obituary and then live in light of that day.

And then, do not fix blame; fix problems.

People trump process, and leadership always focuses on people, not just process. To be successful, you need to encourage your people. When you are successful, be sure to praise your people. If there is failure, look in the

mirror. Jim Collins argued in his book based on hundreds of interviews with CEOs that all successful companies have one characteristic in common: CEOs who operated from a foundation of humility and who always put the people ahead of themselves.[2] Further, be sure your biblical values direct your management style, and do not hide your faith in Christ.

PAL: *What is the most rewarding and satisfying thing for you as a businessman?*
HJ: It is very rewarding to see people with different abilities and philosophies and work life experiences come together as a team and then to hear them say, "We did it!" Also, it was most satisfying to see those in the organization receive promotions and lead well.

PAL: *What pursuits have you been part of to keep fit, focused, and fresh for the pressures of business leadership?*
HJ: First, it is having a regular time to study God's word and striving to be "a doer of the word" [cf. Jas 1:22]. A loving, supportive family is critical. Regular exercise, rest, and recreation are critical. When I would pull away from the business to be on a safari, my heart rate would drop by ten beats per minute. Vacations with family are so restoring, and reading widely is essential.

PAL: *What is your greatest concern regarding the economy?*
HJ: Inflation is my greatest concern. We have too much money chasing too few products right now. Oil is a central driver of our economy, and limiting the supply puts pressure on all areas of the economy.

Then, government is now competing with business. The present administration is making many rules and regulations, and there are possibly tax increases in the making. If you tax a business, that always flows through to the consumer, which puts more pressure on inflation. And we have a university system that is turning out more and more graduates who have no business skills but have a hatred for the free enterprise system while feeling that they deserve everything that the free enterprise system now gives them. And, of course, the new woke culture is moving among CEOs. A helpful book on that subject is *Fault Lines* by Voddie Baucham.[3] That issue has the great potential to destroy business culture and churches unless we wake up and fight back.

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[2] James C. Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap … and Others Don't* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001).

[3] Voddie T. Baucham Jr., *Fault Lines: The Social Justice Movement and Evangelicalism's Looming Catastrophe* (Washington, DC: Salem Books, 2021).

PAL: *What final insights would you like to share with us?*
HJ: Our country is in crisis with a lack of godly leadership. Everyone is doing what seems right in their own eyes [cf. Judg 17:6; 21:25]. Our walls are truly broken [cf. Neh 2:17]. And as Christians, we are admonished to pray "for kings and all who are in high places" in 1 Timothy 2:2. As God's people, we need to pray that we will again be led by leaders who are led by God. We need to be guarding our homes. Following Joshua, I do not know what others might do, "But for me and my house, we will serve the LORD" [Josh 24:15]. And then to remember Nehemiah—he told people to build a wall near their house [cf. Neh 4:1]. I would encourage our readers to really think, know, and pray about supporting public theology. We are in an environment where the street is influencing the church. There are a few practical things we can do: we can take care of home, our own family; we can support public theology and seminaries like Westminster in sending experts trained in the Bible to the world to proclaim Christ. And then having done all, we are called to stand.

IV. *Francis I. McGowen*

PETER A. LILLBACK: *In a nutshell, how did the Lord call you to himself, and how has your business career been related to that?*
FRANCIS I. McGOWEN: I embarked on my business career prior to coming to Christ and was schooled at Notre Dame for undergrad and Villanova University for law. I practiced law for fourteen months in Philadelphia before my father became quite ill from heart disease. I was an only child and went into the business at his request. Initially, I did legal work and some business work, but six months after he passed away, I became rapidly engrossed in the business side of the venture. But the pressures of working with his partner were significant. My dad was a World War II vet who could handle tough guys, and this man was very smart but very challenging. It really created pressures that God used, among other things, to bring me to himself a few years later. As a young Christian, I tried to find the interface between strong commitment to Jesus, love for his word, devotional life, and what I would call, for lack of a better term, a hard-charging successful business career. I was discipled by a very godly man who had been a lawyer and a judge; he grew me up in the Scriptures and pointed me in the direction of gospel work as a layman. He strongly encouraged me at one point to work with Campus Crusade's Executive Ministry. It was through Reformed brothers—like you, Pete, whom I met in a Bible study in West Chester, and John Ykema, and a few others—that I began to understand the intersection of business

calling and a love for Jesus and a desire to serve him fully. That began to develop from the time I was about 32 years old.

The business side of life is really the school of hard knocks; you think you learned some things in college and grad school, but I learned a lot through working in the business realm. My father's partner and I separated early on, maybe at the beginning of 1983, and then I was on my own. I thought that I had the bull by the horns and everything was going to work out as I wanted, but the Lord allowed the bottom to fall out. We almost went bankrupt in '84 and '85 for various reasons. I did not value my good people as I should have, and I lost three vital people within a six-month period. The Lord taught me a very hard lesson: in our business lives, God has given each of us gifts with intensity and ego drive, and we pursue those gifts with prayer as much as we can, but we are absolutely dependent on good ethical people to come alongside us in the venture. That experience humbled me tremendously. From that point forward, I put a premium on growing my people, loving them, and being honest with them, giving them the genuine opportunities that they deserve, so that they will drive the ship forward. That is what I saw the Lord do.

I kept reading the Scriptures and studying, even took courses at Westminster, but God kept calling me back to business. God put me in the line of my father, a merchant, and my grandfather also, who was the general sales manager for Stetson hats. I read Os Guinness's book *The Call* as well,[4] and finally, I surrendered and followed the Lord's bidding to be a Christian businessman. That is how I progressed from before Christ to trying to honor Christ in all aspects of my business and daily life.

PAL: *As you look at your role as a Christian businessperson, what are the best things that Christian faith has brought to your work? How has faith shaped your day-to-day life in doing your business?*

FIM: You realize, as a believer when you delve more into Scriptures, that he is the vine and we are the branches [cf. John 15:5]. That reality is true in every area of our life. I recognized that I was to be in Christ for my business planning and execution, seeking him, listening, poring over Scripture to see if there was anything in particular that the Lord had for me regarding my work. Otherwise, I could easily be cast up on the shore. So, the main thing would be dependence on Christ, through the Spirit, for strength, wisdom, courage, and, as I alluded to previously—asking the Lord to supply the people needed to accomplish the goals that God has put in your heart.

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[4] Cf. Os Guinness, *The Call: Finding and Fulfilling the Central Purpose of Your Life* (Nashville: Word, 1998).

Early on, I learned that alongside dependence is integrity, which does not mean just truth telling but integrity in every aspect of your life. You can be taken advantage of if you are operating in that vein, but ultimately people are drawn to folks who have and demonstrate integrity in their affairs, especially in the business in which they are employees.

Dependence on Christ's provision and integrity were the key elements of my Christian faith; and, of course, you need to pore over the Scriptures, learn how vital prayer is, and even how to pray. You also learn through the Scriptures that, in addition to seeking wisdom from God's Spirit, you need to get counsel from others—godly brothers and sisters.

PAL: *What were the most notable challenges you faced in business, and how did your Christian faith enable you to engage those effectively?*

FIM: As I alluded to, we almost went bankrupt back in the spring of '84, mainly because of losing those three key people. I did not have enough support to direct the business properly at that time. My mentor, Dave Bauch, happened to be unavailable when the bank was calling in a $250,000 loan by five o'clock, or they were going to shut our accounts. I did not have anybody else like Dave. I went in the bathroom behind my office in Westtown and got on my knees, face on the cold porcelain, and with a few tears cried out to the Lord: "Lord you have got to help me, I know you see me, I am begging you to show me what to do." He directed me to call my mother to get to a stock broker who helped my mother and father in their investments. We were able to extract money from an account downtown. Within a couple hours of beginning that process, the money was in the necessary account at our bank in West Chester, by 4:30 in the afternoon. I did pay my mother back not long after that. That was an example of coming to the edge of the cliff, having nowhere to go. My friend, advisor, and comforter, Dave Bauch, was not in town, so it was just the Lord and me crying out, and he was sufficient.

Another time, one of many, was our first year of operation at CarSense. We had grand plans. It was hard to get the development approved and the building constructed. We had a good team of people, but in the first ten months, we lost $475,000. My board was terrified for me. My closest friend on the board, Roy Myers, called me up at home the night after that board meeting when this was disclosed, and advised me what he thought I should do. He said, "The only people that can lose money like that in ten months, their last name is Rockefeller."

I had indicated to them that I wanted to follow advice, so that if the board had said, "No, you better pack it up," I would have tried to close things down, sell off the cars, and market the real estate.

We put it to a vote, and by a margin of one they said, "Keep trying. The concept is good. Let us see if God will not turn it around." And he did, praise the Lord. So as thin as our cash reserve was, we had just enough to make it through. And, for the next year, we were modestly profitable and then, by his grace, profitable every year for the next twenty-one years that I was in business there.

PAL: *As you look at your business, how would you describe your Christian faith guiding you in those years of success?*
FIM: In some respects, we were almost tested more with success than in the cauldron. I prayed very hard and intensely when we were desperate. But in the good years, you can get sloppy and lazy and think too much about the blessings, the achievements, and not realize how utterly dependent you are every step of the way. I got a little too relaxed in my pursuit of the Lord and his word. But not long after that, we had so many downturns or valleys that the Lord quickly brought me to my knees. Once again, I would be crying out to Jesus, and he would bring some form of deliverance to me. We had a general contractor in our third store—the construction started about seven years after we opened the first store—and he defrauded us of $900,000 plus, and we did not have cash reserves. As the township of West Hampton, New Jersey, did not like replacing general contractors on approved plans, I could not bid it out and get a major commercial general contractor without going all the way through the approval process again. I had to get somebody who would work under me, so I became the general contractor, which anybody who knows my building knowledge would laugh about. By God's grace, through a friend of a Christian friend, I found a man who had retired from a major commercial development building business in South Jersey—Ed Hedger was his name. We met, hit it off immediately, and he came in like a general foreman, and that was acceptable to the township because I was the general contractor and my name and credit were on the line fully, not just for financing, but for the township obligations. And that enabled us to build the building, and the Lord made that $900,000 up in short order when we opened. So that was another example of crucible living and crying out, then seeing the Lord come in, like a flood.

PAL: *What do you think is perhaps the biggest challenge for a Christian who works in the business realm? What are the things that are the most challenging to be a faithful Christian in the business world?*
FIM: I would say the biggest challenge is maintaining proper balance in your life, which seems very vanilla-ish, but it is so easy to get too far into the right

lane or the left. Most Christian businessmen, I think, would be in my situation. I was a relatively young married man with three children. I had come to Jesus maybe ten or twelve years before the times we are discussing. The church wanted me to serve, which I did, as an elder. I wound up on the school board of the Christian school where my kids went. My kids were at the time maybe eight, eleven, and fourteen. And they needed a lot from Dad; they needed Dad to love them, to teach them, to encourage them, and to help them find their skills and gifts and their best path in God's world. You could not delegate that to anybody, like I do at work. Because of the urgency and the scope of problems that arise suddenly, like a summer thunderstorm, the balance of the ship can easily be upset. So, you need to maintain a good devotional life, praying and poring over the Scriptures. I love Joshua 1:8 [ESV],

> This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate upon it, day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. Then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

I need my nose in the word and by the Spirit's power, to walk with Jesus. And if a Christian businessman does not appreciate the importance of balance in his life, then there could be a comeuppance that could quickly take you out. So, balance and maintaining your spiritual edge are two critical things. Of course, there are a number of other material things, earthly secular things, that are vital, but for the Christian businessperson those things are pivotal.

PAL: *What advice would you give to some young Christian folk thinking about entering the business world?*

FIM: I would say it is a noble calling. Are you hearing that from the Lord, or is it just from what you have observed from friends or your father's friends? What is the motivation behind it? And if the motivation seems sound, I would encourage them to finish their education, if they have not already done so, because God in my case did not waste a drop. While I was selling cars as a junior or senior in college, I did not have a girlfriend, so I took a real estate financing course at Wharton Business School at night—not the Business School, but the undergrad—I drove downtown a couple nights a week to take real estate financing. I thought this would be a nice thing to know. It turned out that the knowledge that I picked up through that course, which was taught by one of my father-in-law's real estate friends, was absolutely vital for me in being able to see the Lord put

together our developments for the five dealerships.

So, besides developing yourself, find your skill set. Really sharpen that edge. Focus on what you do best. Understand what you do not do well. And hire good people to complement you in those areas where you are lacking, godly ones who are also skilled in the work, if possible. And if you do not think you are lacking, go back and review yourself again. I would say the ability to stay humble, which comes only by God's grace, to be circumspect or self-reflective, is vital for planning the future of a successful business and for maintaining and developing the relationships that are necessary.

PAL: *What joys does a Christian businessman have looking back at a career serving the Lord in the business world? What are the things for which you say, "Thank you, Lord, that I had this privilege"?*

FIM: There is an expression about having a boat, that your second-best day was the day you bought your boat and the best day was the day you sold it. And so, I love that God enabled me to develop my skills and talents and use my faith as the rudder for my business life, that he did amazing things, and that we got past all the pitfalls and shoals that were out there, trying to wreck our ship. But now, looking back on it, I say, "Lord you were amazing. You brought me up and brought me through, and then, when you were finished, Lord, you said that is enough." Proverbs states somewhere, "Do not go on seeking to gain wealth" [cf. Prov 23:4]; I always wondered about that, and then, as I got to be about 65, the Lord said, "Let's start a new plan Fran, and I have other things for you to do." So then, you get to go from predominantly working to amass resources to strategically using your gifts and talents and energies to dispense those resources, which is a joy beyond anything I had imagined. That was all brought about because when God early on said, "Fran, I do not want you to be a pastor or a teacher, I want you to stay in business." Because I stayed with his calling, I have this great privilege of ministering the disposition of the resources that he has entrusted to me, and it is a joy of joys and I count it as an immense blessing and privilege.

PAL: *Do you agree with the saying, "Be giving while you are living so you are knowing where it is going"?*

FIM: Yes, one hundred percent. And to get into the weeds on that a little bit, I think for a Christian businessman and his wife that the real question for their financial planning is, "How much is enough for our kids, and what can we reasonably live on, without being excessive?" As the Proverbs put it, "If you find honey, do not eat too much of it" [cf. Prov 25:16]. That is the

"giving while you are living" principle right there. Then you do not have to worry about giving because you have set aside in your mind an amount for your kids' needs and what is appropriate for you and your wife, and then you give the rest. You do not give it all in one chunk, at least I was not led to do that, but you set up a plan where you will give it prayerfully and intelligently over time. Polly and I and the executive director of our foundation are trying to give as thoughtfully and prayerfully as we sought to accumulate wealth.[5]

PAL: *Are there any final thoughts that come to mind?*
FIM: I would say, "Do not be surprised at the fiery trials" [cf. 1 Pet 4:12]. When people understand their gifts, recognize God's call, and begin the journey, it is a shock when a category five hurricane blows in, and they feel they are going to be swamped and killed, and that all the hopes and plans were for naught. Yet that is the very time when you get to wholeheartedly walk by faith and see the Lord do mighty things.

PAL: *Amen. Well, Fran, thank you.*

V. *John Weiser*

PETER A. LILLBACK: *John, please, tell us how the Lord connected you with Westminster Seminary and what roles you have been involved in through the years of your service here.*
JOHN WEISER: It must have been in the 80s. I was a fairly young Christian attending a Presbyterian Church in America. My pastor was on the board of trustees, and he asked me if I would consider giving, which I was delighted to do. I had been raised in a fairly liberal church and was attending another liberal denomination with my family when I got converted. The Lord really laid on my heart the importance of seminary.

My story involved Romans 12:2: I had my mind completely transformed from the old man to the new man, and in that process, I saw how important theology and doctrine are. Later, it became more poignant to me how a seminary is really sort of out of sight, out of mind for almost everybody. I became passionate about how important Westminster is, and my wife Terri and I have always had a heart for giving to ministries that have trouble raising money yet are really important. In contrast, world mission or ministries that

[5] Cf. "4.2.20 Foundation: The Whole Word for the Whole World," https://4220foundation.com/.

do TV ads rake in the money very easily. When I became a ruling elder in the Presbyterian Church in America, I was asked if I would consider being on the board. I started in 1996 and have served on several committees.

One year, I was chairman of the board, and I decided I did not want to be chairman because I like to engage, and the tradition as chairman at Westminster is pretty formal—the chairman moderates the meeting but does not vote and does not speak on an issue unless there is a tie. I became chairman again two or three years ago, and my attitude has changed about the role because I have been one of the leaders of the changes taking place at Westminster driven by the exigencies of change in higher education, including the availability and excellence of online learning. I am convinced about the importance of leadership at this time versus in my first time as chairman. Back then, it was pretty much business as usual: recruit students, raise the money to pay for the seminary, and do it again next year. But now everything is changing, not the least of which is we are undergoing the complete renovation and virtual reconstruction of the Westminster campus, which I am passionate about as well because the facility needs rejuvenation.

PAL: *How did you come to a personal faith in Christ, and how did your call to business relate to that?*

JW: My coming to faith is an interesting story. I was an investment manager, running a hedge fund from about 1976 on until I retired in 2013, and unbeknownst to me, I made quite a bit of money all at one time. Prior to that, I was not a believer at all, and I really was not even seeking. The financial world was not as popular and visible as it is now; it was in the back pages of the press. One interesting thing about my conversion is that nobody shared the gospel with me, nor do I know of anybody who could have prayed for me. But the Lord gave me this money, and it was not until six months to a year later that I began to realize that it really did not make me any happier. At first, I thought I had the American dream, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow; and then it slipped through my hands like sand. You buy a new car or a bigger TV, and it is fun for a little while. But it never satisfies what I would now call the "cross shape vacuum" in the human heart that nothing will satisfy apart Jesus alone.

One day I read the story in Mark 5:1–20 about the Gerasene demoniac. He has a legion of demons cast out, and they go into the pigs, and the pigs run down the hill. And the man who was healed asks Jesus if he could follow him. Jesus said, "No, go back and tell the people what great things the Lord has done for you" [vv. 18–19]. And that jumped off the pages at me; I was not going into full-time ministry. Rather, I was just to carry on in the

business world, where I was able to earn more than the average person could and use that, stewarding it for the glory of God. I had easy interaction with people on Wall Street, which is a pretty dark place really, and was able to share the gospel with people there who might not have heard it anywhere else (not with a whole lot of fruit, I want to say, but some). So I got away from the idea of the pyramid of importance of Christianity: the foreign missionaries are first, and then come the pastors, and on down to us normal people who really do not matter very much. The whole life concept became very real for me in that.

PAL: *Did you think about business while you were going through college, or is that something that developed after? How did that career first take root in your life?*
JW: After college, I did not really know what I wanted to do. Honestly, I am not a very talented person, so I really could not have made it through law school or medical school. My older brother told me to go to work for a bank because you can do a lot of things in a bank without changing jobs and bouncing around and ruining your résumé. He added, "Be sure to go to a commercial bank, do not let them put you in the branch system, because if you do that, you will never leave the branch management system, and you will get bored with it." And so I got put in a management training program and put on rotation through various departments in the bank. I still remember and picture sitting at a desk with a very ancient monitor, which had markets up on it. It was the very early days of electronic markets, and I just fell in love with it; I loved the uncertainty and the gambling aspect of it, gambling with good research and knowledge and decision making. I remember thinking, *I would have done this for nothing*, I liked it so much.

PAL: *And you continue to enjoy those screens, I gather. Is that right?*
JW: I did all through my career. I have always loved markets, economics, and politics because all those things feed in the price of investment products. I have always loved current events and still do.

PAL: *With the Lord beginning to speak deeply to your heart, what were some of the challenges that you had to encounter as a Christian in the business world?*
JW: I was impressed early on by the commandment to "let your 'yes' be yes and your 'no' be no" [Jas 5:12]. And so, I began to try to act with a very high degree of integrity in the financial world and how that might work itself out. For example, you talk to the same people over time every day; I never said "I will call you back" if I did not mean it. I might say, "I am busy, call me back." I wanted to operate with the highest level of integrity. Another aspect

of the world I inhabited requiring integrity is that you can literally trade hundreds of millions of dollars of securities on your word alone, and these are not backed up with paper trails until a day or two later.

Another challenge was treating my counter parties with a high degree of respect and behaving differently because it is a coarse, rugged world with vile language and strip bars and all that sort of thing. I remember being taken on a European tour for the purposes of evaluating the likelihood of the European Union forming. A major Wall Street firm organized this trip for ten or so people from very significant accounts of theirs. In France, they took us into this up-market strip bar. As soon as I figured out what was going on, because the show had not started, I got up and left. One of the guys came out and said, "Hey, I am sorry."

I said, "Well, I just do not participate in that kind of thing and will walk back to the hotel by myself." I am sure I was chatted about quite a bit. I always tried never to go to places the Lord would not want me to be, striving to maintain a very high degree of integrity, even when it might cost me something.

PAL: *What would be some lessons and truths that you think a pastor should understand to communicate to people in their congregation who are thinking about pursuing a business career and to pastors counseling people who might go into the business world?*

JW: The obvious one is the value of all business practices and to dispel the notion of a hierarchy of callings. Indeed, entrepreneurs in particular invent new things that bring about goodness for culture, which is a good thing. The accumulation of capital or wealth is a good thing if you think about it. If a farmer does not have enough savings to buy a tractor, then his productivity is going to be very low. If, for instance, businesspeople do not accumulate capital to take the risk on new life-saving pharmaceuticals, they will never get developed. So, business has a very central role to play for the welfare of humankind. Secondly, it is crucial to counsel them to take care; as the parable of the sower puts it, not to let the cares of the world grow up and choke out the good seed that has been thrown in the soil [Matt 13:22]. It is very easy to just keep consuming and never realize that you only have this wealth to shepherd it for a little while. You are a steward on this earth, and when you pass on to glory, somebody else is going to be stewarding it. So, what will be said of you when your stewardship is done? Those couple thoughts come to mind, but that question could use a lot more of reflection.

PAL: *One of the things facing our young people today is the rise of Marxist socialist thought that really challenges the idea of profit and the value of capital. As a*

Christian businessman, what should be in our apologetic arsenal to defend the legitimacy of business for those who say it is just not a good field for Christians?
JW: Business is a very important field. I add, though, concerning the growing influence of Marxism, that a functioning democratic, free market economy is slipping away largely because the fear of the Lord is dissipating very quickly from the American landscape. A businessperson with lots of freedom and the ability to accumulate capital needs to remember the second great commandment, to "love your neighbor as yourself" [Matt 22:39], because capitalism can get nasty and without respect for fellow human beings. The converse of that is socialism, which dominates the culture, takes command over humankind, winds up defeating the benefits of a free-market economy that creates so many wonderful and culture-improving products—not all of them are, of course. We have to look at the historical facts: Russia, formerly the Soviet Union, Cuba, and Venezuela are still far behind the West. China completely oppresses its people and cares not one iota about loving their neighbors. I think that the reason we see the American culture falling apart is maybe that the fear of the Lord has gone from our land. The next rung down on that ladder is the breakdown of the family, and when the family breaks down, it all breaks down, and that is where we are today.

PAL: *If you were to look back through your career, what was the biggest challenge you confronted and how did your faith help you through it?*
JW: I was most challenged during the housing crisis. In 2008, I had a trade that was very large, tied to housing insurers that go by the names of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, who are mortgage guarantors. As I got in a real deep loss, I phoned my boss, knowing what a kind and good man he was, and I said, "Listen, you have been very patient with me. If you would like to get rid of me, I will go quietly and without any disruption because I have exceeded the patience I deserve."

And he said, "No, I believe in you, and you stay with it." And I did, and it all worked out OK. So, that was a pretty dark time, and I was the man in the foxhole praying more vigorously. But it worked out all right; it did not have to. It was probably a good humbling time for me personally because I had never had a down year in something like 34 years. I was pretty cocky, probably, and it took the legs right out from under me.
PAL: *So, at that moment humility and authentic prayer was what God used to sustain you, is that right?*
JW: I think so, yes.

PAL: *Are there any other thoughts you would like to share with pastors or future leaders who have Christian hearts, looking at business?*
JW: Well, there is one thing. That is, pastors seldom really understand the world that businesspeople live in. They might say, "You should be having one hour of quiet time in the morning, and you and your wife should have some prayer time together and maybe Bible reading at dinner." Yet, most people in the business world do not control their own schedules the way ministers do. And these days, with productivity being such an idol, men and women are working way harder than when I was a young man. I have never worked more than 35 or 40 hours a week. Today, it is just common for people to be doing 60 hours. One thing would be getting into their world and understanding the world they live in. When you pastor them, you have to realize that in order to continue to be the primary breadwinner, they have to live in the reality that they find themselves in, and they need to be pastured in a way that it is manageable for them. They need to be careful of the cares of the world taking them down because there are sirens all around. For example, I always made it a point never to go to lunch with a female colleague without someone else being there and to draw boundaries for myself. There were not as many women in the business world when I was younger, but now, men and women travel together. When the business dinner is over, no drinks in the bar and afterwards go to your room alone! You have to set up safeguards because other people do not have the morality you do, and you'd better be wary of the fragility of your own strength in the face of temptation. The petition of the Lord's prayer, "Lead us not into temptation" [Matt 6:13], is really relevant today because we are a minority who carry the moral values that we do.

PAL: *John, we really appreciate your time, and your authenticity blessed me, and I know your words will bless others.*

INTERVIEW

Interview with Tandean Rustandy

PETER A. LILLBACK AND BENYAMIN INTAN

(October 15, 2021)

Tandean Rustandy is the founder and CEO of PT Arwana Citramulia Tbk—a leading ceramic tiles manufacturer in Indonesia and one of the top-performing ceramic tile manufacturing companies in the world. He is a member of the Yale School of Management Advisory Board and the Advisory Board of the University of Indonesia's Master of Management Program, is a trustee of the University of Chicago, and sits on the Council of the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. In 2017, the Social Enterprise Initiative Center of the University of Chicago Booth School of Business was renamed the Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation in honor of his commitment to philanthropy, environmental issues, and social justice. He obtained his Bachelor of Science from the Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado, and his Master of Business Administration from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business.

PETER A. LILLBACK: *Let us begin with a word of prayer.*

> *Lord, would you bless our time of dialog and interaction with our brothers Tandean Rustandy and Benyamin Intan. We pray that it will be fruitful for your glory and that it will bless your people around the world. We thank you for the honor to spend this time in your presence and for your glory. And we ask in Christ's name. Amen.*

It is our pleasure to interview Tandean Rustandy, an international businessman who has served in important positions in business in Indonesia, in the United States, and in Europe as well. So, I would like to begin by asking you a question about your personal faith. How did you become a Christian? When did your faith become personal to you?

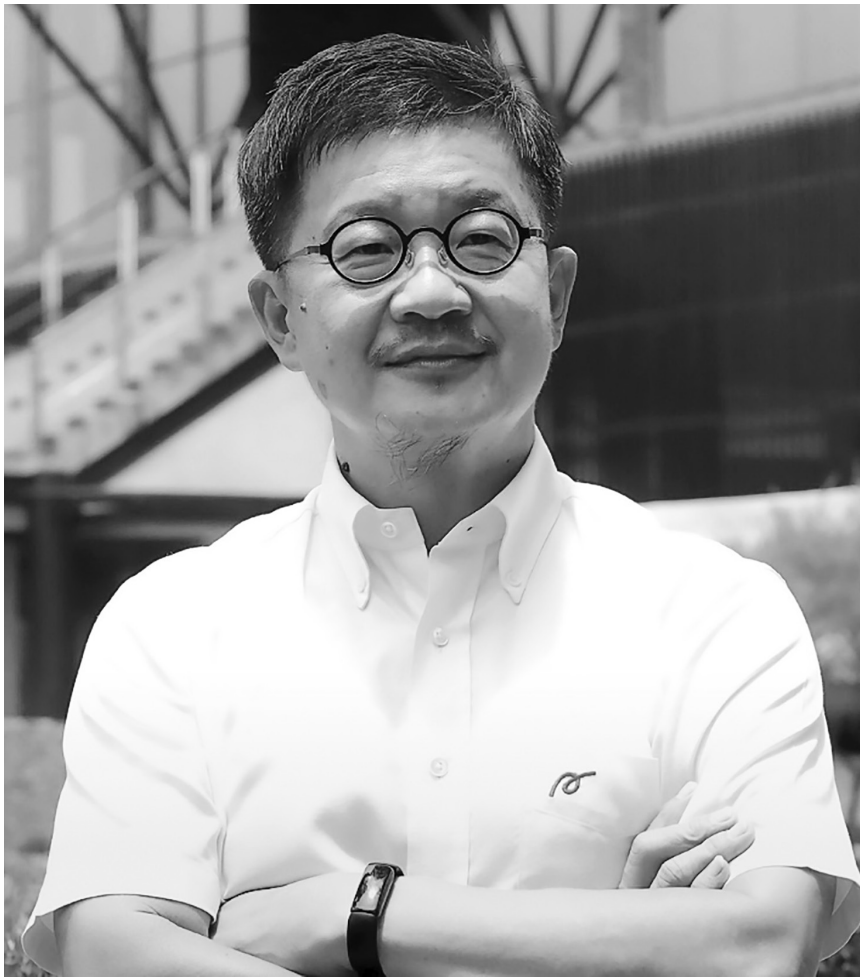
TANDEAN RUSTANDY: I got to know Christ in 1981, when I was in high school in Toronto, Canada, by reading and understanding the Bible. At first, I did not have faith at all but was following friends, going to church. God gave me chances to grow in faith gradually. From being charismatic, then becoming a Pentecostal when I came back to Indonesia in 1987, I gradually learned about Reformed theology, and that was a turning point for my life. I realized that whatever things we have, we have to give back, and that whatever we achieve is a blessing. If you are asking about my personal faith, I pray daily that God keeps giving me opportunities, because I live in the world. Every one of us lives in the world full of sin, so I am really afraid that I cannot finish the race [2 Tim 4:7]. I really hope that for the remainder of my life I can maintain the same kind of faith, fully submitted to God.

PAL: *At what stage in your life did you begin to think about a career in business? Is that something you aspired to from younger years, or did that develop later in your life?*

TR: As a third-generation Indonesian Chinese, I did not have any chance to serve as a doctor, a pilot, in the military, or working in government. Especially, coming from Kalimantan [Borneo], the only way was to study, find a job, and later start a business.

PAL: *You began your career by studying internationally. Where did you study, and how did that prepare you?*

TR: I am one of the few people in Indonesia who had the chance to study abroad. I attended secondary school in Singapore and in Canada. I did my undergraduate at CU Boulder [the University of Colorado Boulder] in finance, graduating in 1987, and then my MBA from the University of Chicago School of Business. The variety really built up my way of thinking. Since I was young, I have been studying abroad; that means that I had to be self-disciplined. When I was not a Christian, everything was about relying on myself and being disciplined. Humbleness is a very strong foundation for me, personally, especially because I was not from a wealthy family. Becoming a Christian improved my way of life. Before, my mindset was how to become someone through personal wealth. But as time moved on, I learned that although education is extremely important, faith made me



TANDEAN RUSTANDY

wiser—it informed me that no one in this life, even my parents, will sacrifice everything in the way Jesus sacrificed himself for me. I apply that when I do business; I think how I can sacrifice—of course, not the same way Jesus has done, but I try my utmost to sacrifice everything, to build people up. Being from a minority as a Christian entrepreneur, I like to cultivate the attitude of being salt [Matt 5:13], to give back and impact society.

PAL: *Upon your return to Indonesia, how did you decide on a particular business, and how have you developed that business?*
TR: When I got back in 1987, I did not have any idea of becoming an entrepreneur at all because I did not have the capital, the network. I was just thinking of a job, a salary, so that I could take care of my parents and my brother; that was my number one priority. I never thought about setting up a business. I had to look for a proper job to give back to my parents. As time moved on, I worked in the timber industry. I advanced in my position until I was second in the company, the CFO, but I was not satisfied because the company was not run in an effective way. What do I mean by that? A lot of entrepreneurs in business do not create institutional value, because what they care about is individual value. In a corporation that runs for a long time, you need to promote institutional value. That is why many businesses across the world do not last long unless they are run in a professional way. So, I quit and started my own business. I told myself, "Try to run it differently from the normal way in Indonesia." I gradually put together the things I had learned from my education and from my faith to form a ceramic business. Indonesia is rich in natural resources, and most people, when they start out, like to get into the natural resource industry. However, I was not able to do that because I did not have the capital, so I got into the ceramic business.

PAL: *So, you put together some principles that are important for a business. What were the guiding principles? And how do they reflect your values as a Christian?*
TR: Before I started my business, I already had a vision. That vision was not only a slogan; I needed to understand it and apply it to my daily life and the business's daily operation.[1] First, what is the vision of the company? Of course, everyone wants to be the best, so the first principle is, how to be the best? Secondly, how do you achieve this through creativity and innovation? You have to stay ahead of the curve by being creative and innovative and

[1] "Our Vision: To be the best company in the ceramic industry, full of creativity and innovation, and able to contribute to the development of the country and the society." Cf. Arwana Ceramics, 2022, https://arwanacitra.com.

not following others. You are thinking new things and innovating every day. The third principle comes from the Bible: How can I meaningfully contribute to society and the country, rather than just to the shareholders? So, striving to be the best through creativity and innovation means you always have to work in new ways. If you are successful, you have to give back everything to society, to the country—that is a meaningful contribution.

PAL: *Some principles that you also maintain, which I found unique when I toured your plant, are your concern for creation and the well-being of the environment. How did you make those decisions, and what have you done in a business that is highly material sensitive, that has polluting elements, to keep it clean, ecologically safe?*

TR: We apply the vision as to what is best. It is not how to become the largest, the wealthiest, but to be the best as a Christian. My business deals a lot with natural resources. My raw material, clay, is God given; my energy—not electric but LNG [liquid natural gas]—is God-given. Those running the company, the factory, are God-given human beings. I keep these three most important things in mind. We have to be best, number one. From Genesis 1, we learn that God created everything for us, but we need to be wise and responsible and to manage what God has given. So, it is about how to be green. Of course, I myself, I love greenery, I love peacefulness, and I love my people to be wealthy. But I have the mindset that God created everything and gave us responsibilities. If you accept Jesus as your Savior, then you understand about creation. This is why our factories are clean. We build up the environment and try to maintain and protect it. At the same time, we talk about preserving the environment, making use of material in an efficient way so as not to waste raw material. So, having the money does not mean that you just increase the capacity and produce more.

Dr. Intan, you are teaching the same subject, maybe for twenty or thirty years; the more you teach, the more you learn, in greater detail. It is the same thing running a business. You have opportunities to branch out, but you are focused on running the business. Do you excel?

So, God gives us an opportunity to be the best by focusing, functioning better in comparison with others. But the important thing is not only being focused but humanizing people, becoming more human. I think that is why the company has been doing so well from day one until now.

PAL: *As you have run businesses through the years, what was the greatest challenge you have faced as a businessman, and how has your Christian faith enabled you to address that challenge?*

TR: We face challenges every day, but the biggest is really *how can I control myself?* Starting a business is similar to entering professional sport, let us say, basketball. At first, you are a rookie; you have motivation, inspiration, and you never had any money before, and suddenly, you are paid so much. After a while, as you play basketball every day, your motivation will gradually go down. Likewise, with the same kind of business day after day, how do I make myself stay on top? How do I inspire and motivate myself? Number two, when you only have one dollar, and when you have five, are you the same person? There is entitlement: you have the money; you need to spend, to live that kind of lifestyle. In this respect, am I able to control myself and maintain the same way of life? Number three, to begin with, I had no power, no net worth, but now I have power and net worth, so how do I stay humble? Of course, you need competition to stay alive in business, and running a business is always a challenge, but the biggest challenge is always myself.

PAL: *Now you have had the opportunity to develop into broader international business scope, including the institutions you studied with in your earlier years. What role have you played in the schools where you studied now that your business has grown, and how do you care for the institutions that blessed you earlier in life?*
TR: Let me start with CU Boulder, which has for me a strong sentimental value because it was there that for the first time I lived in the real Western world. When I studied in my high school in Toronto, I still had a lot of Asian friends, but in Boulder, I did not have Asian friends and needed to work. My first paycheck was at CU Boulder. And I started at the lowest level, working in the dormitory, where I had the opportunity to build up trust. I kept thinking, *Why does the school give me an opportunity? I came with nothing*. Looking back, I benefited from the education and lifestyle at CU Boulder. I started my life, as I said earlier, with an emphasis on discipline and relying on myself to accomplish many things, and the school gave the best education, and that school is still surviving. As in the family, parents take care of everything, but children do not take care of the parents well. Likewise, in the church, conflicts occur, as I have experienced in charismatic and Pentecostal circles, and the church rejects its leaders. I did not want to neglect my alma mater, CU Boulder, that gave so much to me. CU Boulder is a public school—it belongs to the state—and yet it survives; its ranking keeps moving up. So, when I was blessed by God, in terms of money, I thought it was best for me to give it back rather than to spend it or to give it to my children. Of course, I have to give for the church work, for God's work, but I do it in a different way. The challenge is always to give back to education. I am extremely proud that at the time I started to talk with the dean of the

business school nine years ago, the ranking of the school was not top fifty, but today it is top twenty. They were willing to listen and to adapt. And though they do not have many resources, they are able to do it. And I asked myself, *is it enough?* I said, *not really*. At CU Boulder, the business and engineering schools are next to each other, but there was no connection between them; everyone is proud: "I am from the college of business!" "I am from the college of engineering!" Yet different colleges should work together. For instance, if in the business school you do not learn about ethics and just think about how to make money, it will lead to a crazy world. If the engineering students, being very specialized, do not understand about the economy, then they just become machines. So, they need to be in partnership. I proposed an idea: since the two colleges are so close to each other, why not start a partnership and have new courses, like an entrepreneurship class for engineering students, which students from both schools can take? An idea is an idea, but the most important thing is that God gave opportunities to prove that something could be done within the state and a public school. The last five years were not easy—a lot of states are short of funding for universities—and yet the University of Colorado was able to complete the building.[2] That is really a great joy.

PAL: *You also serve on the board of the Chicago Business School. What have been your insights into the business world from the vantage point of a business school and university board member?*

TR: As University of Chicago alumni, from the business school, we have that mindset that there should be no intervention—we have to do it by ourselves, we have to make the market create the market, the market creates the demand, and the demand creates the supply—a free market. So, when I was in the board of council of the Chicago Business School, I had an idea. In 1970, Milton Friedman, a Nobel prize winner from the university, wrote a very famous article in the *New York Times*, where he argued that the only social responsibility of big corporations is to get something, to make a profit, and only in this way they can give back.[3] I do not totally agree, as I believe

[2] "Business and Engineering Expansion: The Rustandy Building," Leeds School of Business, Boulder, https://www.colorado.edu/business/about/business-engineering-expansion; cf. Julie Poppen, "Alumnus Tandean Rustandy Makes Surprise 7-Figure Gift Announcement at Ribbon-Cutting," *CU Boulder Today* (November 8, 2021), https://www.colorado.edu/today/2021/11/08/alumnus-tandean-rustandy-makes-surprise-7-figure-gift-announcement-ribbon-cutting.

[3] Milton Friedman, "A Friedman Doctrine—The Social Responsibility of Business Is to Increase Its Profits," *The New York Times*, September 13, 1970, https://www.nytimes.com/1970/09/13/archives/a-friedman-doctrine-the-social-responsibility-of-business-is-to.html; cf. http://websites.umich.edu/~thecore/doc/Friedman.pdf.

that the school cannot just teach people to make money and to excel in the corporate world, and so the idea of the Center for Social Sector Innovation was conceived. The center encourages smart, kind-hearted, well-educated people to go into nonprofit organizations and into the public sector. The idea that I am always trying to sell is that the school should train not only businesspeople for the corporate world but also smart and generous people to serve society. And then, thank God again, finally, some of the top-gun professors agreed with this kind of idea to support the social sector. This idea, at first a very small thing from a developing country, is now really accepted by scholars respected in their field. It is similar to the parable of the mustard seed, where a very small seed becomes a very big tree [Mark 4:31–32].

PAL: *Benyamin, are there any questions that you would like to ask Tandean?*
BENYAMIN INTAN: *Yes. In about two weeks, at CU Boulder, they will open a building combining business and engineering. Can you tell us why you think they are disciplines that cannot be separated? What do you mean by combining these two fields of study?*
TR: First of all, I am a graduate from the business school, with an accent on mathematics. The way I make a decision is based on numbers, and it is the same thing for an engineer; you cannot make a decision without making a calculation. But the majority of business graduates make a decision by selling an idea. An architect can build a house on a strong foundation that will last for one hundred years because it is based on calculation. By contrast, an economic forecast—rarely longer than five years—is most of the time wrong because it is not grounded in good modelling. Thus, a decision should not be made only on how well you can sell an idea but also by figuring out the data. That results in a better decision. Therefore, engineers by themselves cannot be the bosses; they need to work with entrepreneurs; similarly, businesspeople always want to be entrepreneurs, but they keep selling an idea that is not there, as it is often not properly grounded in calculations. As an aside, the Bible as the word of God is for me more trustworthy than the ideas sold in the corporate world. I am thankful to God for the opportunity he has given me to make a connection between business and engineering in the context of a public school and thus promote greater truthfulness in the business world.

BI: *You already told us about your contribution to the school you attended. Could you tell us about your contribution to Indonesia, both in your involvement with the armed forces and as an advisor to the board of the economy and business school of the University of Indonesia, considered one of the best in the country?*

TR: I think that the biggest contribution in my life is not outside but in Indonesia. In light of Ephesians 2:10, how can I make a meaningful contribution to society and to the country? I think that the best organized institution in Indonesia is the armed forces. I am not the kind of person who just gives money to nonprofit organizations or foundations, but I feel that I need to go one or two steps deeper. I need to build partnerships with institutions where people can instantly feel the difference. The armed forces is the right institution for me to work with, not because of friendship or connections, but because they share the value of serving the people of Indonesia. Moreover, they are willing to sacrifice without recognition. I always believed in that very simple principle. This is why I have a very close relationship with the armed forces.

The Indonesian economy has been run and is influenced by the Faculty of Economics and Business of the University of Indonesia. Indeed, most of its deans become government ministers—trade, finance, and national development ministers. Are they really good? I do not think so. If they were really good, Indonesia, being independent for so long, would be running in a proper way, like Singapore, Switzerland, or Germany, and many more countries. So when my close friend, Ted Snyder, finished his second term as a dean at the University of Chicago and was recruited to be the dean of the School of Management at Yale, he shared the idea with me that he would like to build the Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM) with the goal that every country gets the best business school and to found a global alliance.[4] He asked me to introduce him to the three business schools in Indonesia so he could choose one. I started to do networking with the University of Indonesia and its faculty of economics. I argued, "If your school were really good, how come it is not even ranked withing the top one hundred? You need to learn from the best schools and be open to the management ideas." Networking was not easy, but I believe that God gave me an opportunity when a new dean, Ted Snyder, was selected who had graduated from an Ivy League school and had a background in mathematics and statistics. He tried to make the partnership happen. I am very proud that now that the University of Indonesia is ranked with the top one hundred. That means you are selling something from a specific standpoint. The most important thing for me is not to be part of an advisory board but to have an impact. So, this is my involvement in higher education.

I am also concerned about lower education. The majority of Indonesians are poor and do not live in big cities, yet the majority of the better schools

[4] "Global Network for Advanced Management (GNAM)," Yale and the World, https://world.yale.edu/global-network-advanced-management-gnam.

are in the big cities, so how can they get a better education? In my mind, we have to build up the vocational institutes to help create better opportunities for children who do not live in the big cities to go to better schools. So, I am involved with the army in building schools. For me, if you want to change the world, you have to start by changing education.

BI: *You are part of a project involving the government support of higher education. Can you tell us about that?*
TR: Yes, I am involved in a program related to the government and higher education—related to the Ministry of Education, Culture, Research and Technology. (Previously, it was under the previous minister, Muhammad Natsir, of the Ministry of Research and Higher Education.) The Indonesian government sends students to the United States and pays for the costs. However, if you are smart and go for a PhD program, you do not have to pay since the school will pay for you. Why then does the government have to spend that kind of money? The basic idea is to recruit the best students (undergraduate and graduate) in Indonesia and train them, for one or two years, just like in army training, by paying them a salary. We help them to apply to the best schools in the United States where they do not have to pay. In this way, you save money for the government. So, they prepare themselves and go to the schools they want to go to. The University of Chicago is a partner in mentoring them, to train them, to go to the better institutions and universities in the United States. I try to connect some institutions in Indonesia to send their best employees to study public policy. For instance, the Bank of Indonesia sends their best employees to Chicago. So that is the work.

I believe that human resources, human capital, is the most crucial resource in running the country to become better, to run corporations better; for that, you need a person with education and knowledge. This is also true in the church. I am not talking about the faith, but I believe that the church needs the help of people knowledgeable in business. For instance, although the Chicago Divinity School has top scholars, the dean of the school, being responsible for fundraising to keep on top and on par with the rest of the university, needs business expertise.

BI: *Maybe one last question. Can you tell us about the Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation at the University of Chicago, and what is its purpose or goal?*
TR: The school named the center after my family name.[5] Basically, my vision

[5] "The Rustandy Center for Social Sector Innovation," The University of Chicago Booth School of Business, 2004–2022, https://www.chicagobooth.edu/research/rustandy.

matches that of the tagline of the center, "Doing good is worth doing well." Often, MBA graduates aim to go into big corporations: top companies, top paying jobs. That is what society in general views as a successful career. That is what most people who go to business school aspire to. But I do not necessarily agree with that notion. Business is not all about money. To be successful is not all about being rich or powerful. To me, business should not be all about profit but about creating value or impact. So a business school should teach its students about not just how to make money but also how to create value and make an impact in society.

Consider a graduate from business school who works for an NGO and is stationed in Nigeria. How much would he or she get? Maybe thirty to forty thousand dollars a year or so. The base salary would be relatively low compared to those who work in New York. But an expat in Nigeria can often expect everything to be provided: housing, transport, and living expenses on top of your salary—albeit the level of living is obviously of lower standard than in New York. So you get a low base salary but many perks or incentives. But the main incentive is that you will get a lot of experience and exposure in Nigeria. You will have to face challenges and figure out a lot of things. In the end, you will gain much more exposure, independence, and decision-making skills compared to if you were to work in the United States. What you get are these intangible assets that you would not get working a good or comfortable job in the United States. Let us consider another graduate who works in New York City and earns $120,000. While your pay is higher, I would argue that your job is less meaningful. Furthermore, the cost of living and expenses are much higher in New York, and the consumerism culture is a lot stronger there. So you will earn more but spend a lot more; maybe even more that you earn. From this example, I would argue that people who choose to work in Nigeria would get more in the end. What you get is not just in monetary, but also some intangible, values. You might have a good life in New York, according to your expectations. But if you are working in Nigeria, you are acquiring new knowledge, you adapt yourself to a new environment, and you become a better person for the future. In Nigeria, your life will be more meaningful because you are creating impact and value to society. This exemplifies the idea I am trying to sell.

Likewise, Jesus, as God, came from heaven and chose to be born on earth. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son" [John 3:16]. He came down to serve, to save us from our sins [cf. Phil 2:6–8]. Most people have this idea that in life we start at the bottom and have to keep going up. They want to climb up—monetarily, socially, and in terms of status; but I do not think that is all there is to life. I can be what I am today because I never think that

I need to be going all the way to the top. Rather, I always think how I can serve people lower and lower. It is counterintuitive, but the lower you go, the higher you go. You get more when you serve more. You gain everything when you let go of everything by following Jesus. This is the basic idea behind the Rustandy Center, which seeks to recruit people with a heart to serve in the social sector, for nonprofit organizations. This is a very simple idea.

PAL: *Is there anything that we did not ask you about that you would like to share with us, any final thoughts?*
TR: I would like just to add one small thought. I think that as Christians, we are too exclusive, and as Calvinists, we are extremely exclusive. And that is not what God wants us to be. Jesus said, you are like sheep among wolves [cf. Matt 10:16]. So, in our lives, we have to be proud as Christians, and we are to be proud to be Calvinists, but is this really what we want to apply in our daily lives? The simple quote from Mahatma Gandhi, "My life is my message" [cf. Jas 1:22]—we incarnate that by doing God's work, serving his personal interest. I think that the idea of incarnating our message is taboo in the church. Is the church as an institution aligned with God's values?

PAL: *Those are very searching questions that we need to meditate on. So, thank you very much. Maybe one more question and then I will conclude. As you look at the economy around the world today, is there any hope of it finding some normalcy? Or are we looking at a very difficult time given international debt, international tensions, and competition?*
TR: Everything comes back to the personal ego. Look at the United States; the rich are getting extremely rich, the poor extremely poor. For me, the most important thing about the economy is that God has given us everything; the problem comes from ourselves: we are too greedy and do not respect others. When you are rich, you do not want to listen the advice of others because you are very rich and powerful. I think that is wrong. Our current economic situation is not about shortages but greed. Some people like to work hard; some people do not want to work hard, and they complain. As we know from the Old Testament, fighting among tribes was common, and strife was also prevalent in the New Testament. Today, we keep fighting, and tomorrow we will keep fighting. So, it is time for all the religious leaders to think about the institutional value that God has given them; in that way, they will slowly influence people. I believe that we can make the world a better place not by relying on the president or the prime minister but by relying on God to touch the hearts of the people.

PAL: *Tandean, thank you so very much. We appreciate it. Ben, how about you conclude our time in prayer.*
BI: *Yes, shall we pray.*

> *Our heavenly Father, we give thanks to you for the interview with Mr. Tandean this morning. We pray that this interview can be a means for your glory. We pray for Mr. Tandean, his family, his business, and his ministry in your kingdom through the company that you have entrusted to him. We pray also, Father, for Dr. Lillback and Westminster Theological Seminary, that you would help him as president to establish your kingdom through Westminster, to be a means for your glory as well. We pray also for STTRII and our Reformed Evangelical Movement in Jakarta, that you would help us to grow and to walk in your paths always. Thank you, Father. In Jesus's precious name we pray. Amen.*

IN MEMORIAM

In Whan Kim

(1946–2021)

It is with sadness, yet in the hope of Christ's resurrection, that we announce the death of one of *Unio cum Christo*'s editorial board members, Dr. In Whan Kim (1946–2021). We extend our sympathies to his family, colleagues, and friends.

Dr. Kim served at Chongshin University and Seminary and more recently as President of Daeshin University and Seminary, Gyeongsan, South Korea. Ordained in the Presbyterian Church in America in 1981, he served as a pastor in the United States and Korea. A trained Old Testament scholar, he wrote many books and articles in Korean and English. He completed his PhD dissertation, "An Analysis and Evaluation of the Tithe Practice of the Korean Protestant Church from the Perspective of the Biblical Tithe Law," at the University of Wales in 2000. A philanthropist, he was awarded the Recognition of Education by the President of the Republic of Korea (2011). He was active in several international societies, in particular the World Reformed Fellowship. (For more information, see "Dr. In Whan Kim (In memoriam)," https://wrf.global/about/board-of-directors.)

Graveside remarks for Dr. In Whan Kim by Peter A. Lillback

I am so grateful that I can consider the life of Dr. Kim as a life of a brother in Christ, an older brother in the Lord, a dear friend who ministered to me and with me, a fellow theologian and Westminster graduate, a board

member of the seminary, a guide to the lovely land of South Korea, a respected and honored Reformed theologian in his homeland.

While we must say our farewells, we do so with a firm hope in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "Because I live you shall live also" [cf. John 14:19]. On those days when we shall miss this beloved brother, father, husband, colleague, friend, and counselor, let us be comforted by the Scriptures.

This is our blessed hope, a hope that will sustain us through all the challenges, difficulties, sorrows, disappointments, heartaches that will come because he is no longer with us. But we shall see him again because the Lord Jesus Christ has gone to prepare a place for him and for us.

This is the everlasting life our brother In Whan Kim now knows and enjoys. He awaits God's love fulfilled with even greater joy with the glorification of his earthly body in the eternal kingdom of Jesus Christ. Let us all rejoice, for this is the reality that defines our lives and our future both now and forever.

To God be the glory—great things he has done!

CONTRIBUTORS

JAMES N. BEEVERS is a PhD student at Westminster Theological Seminary pursuing research in Hebrews in addition to guest lecturing at various institutions. Forthcoming publications include two commentaries on the Johannine epistles (2022, 2023). His particular research interests lie in hermeneutics, ethics, and the integration of biblical doctrine and life. He is a frequent contributor at Faith in Practice Ministries (faithinprac.com/podcast).

JEAN-MARC BERTHOUD was born of missionary parents in South Africa. He read history and English literature at the University of the Witwatersrand, followed by doctoral research at the Sorbonne and the University of London. Conversion to the Christian faith in 1966 changed his orientation to long-term engagements in various fields of manual labor. As an apologist and ethicist, he has written many books in French and English, including *Pierre Viret, the Forgotten Giant of the Reformation* (Zurich Publishing, 2010); *Pierre Viret the Theologian: Reformed Theology and Contemporary Application* (Psalm 78 Ministries, 2019); and *In Defense of God's Law* (Zurich Publishing, 2022).

PAUL A. CLEVELAND is a professor of economics at Birmingham-Southern College. He serves as a senior fellow for the Institute of Faith, Work, and Economics, as a fellow at the Manuel H. Johnson Center for Political Economy at Troy University, an adjunct scholar for the Apologetics Resource Center, and an advisor for the American Enterprise Institute. He is the author with Clarence B. Carson of an economics textbook, *Basic Economics: A Natural Law Approach to Economics*, 4th ed. (Boundary Stone LLC, 2018). His most recent two-part article, "The Rise of Private Property in America," December 3 and 9, 2019, is available online at the Liberty Fund, https://www.econlib.org/the-rise-of-private-property-in-america/.

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