

Work in God's Story: Loving God, Loving Our Neighbor, and Healing the Neighborhood through Business

By Prof. Andrew Heyd, International Graduate School of Leadership

What This Seminar is Not....

- It is NOT About living out Christian morals at work
- It is NOT About principles of business success from the Bible
- It is NOT About making more and giving more to the church

What This Seminar Is...

- The Three Stonecutters
- Three Architects – work, relationships, place
- Christians as Doctors, Christians as Business Leaders

Work as Love for Neighbor

- The widow who gardens and the family next door
- Pandesal and Peanut Butter activity
- Luther: “God milks his cows through the vocation of the milkmaid”

Work, Love, and Story

- Executive Summary of “Meet the Christian Who Transformed the U.S. Mint”
- In 2006, when Ed Moy became director of the U.S. Mint, employee morale was incredibly low. The Best Places to Work in Federal Government ranked it number 211 out of 217 Federal agencies.
- He did townhall meetings, solicited ideas, received 100 employee suggestions, implemented top 5 ideas. Rose in rank to 210 out of 217.
- Did this again a second year. Dropped back again to 211 out of 217.
- Ed Moy knew that God was a worker and saw his work as good. Sought to connect the people's hard labor to an understanding of how it helped society. Started telling stories under the phrase “Connecting America Through Coins.” Beyond the toil, coins were useful both in business, as commemorating events, and more.
- the Mint rose in the rankings in three years from—from 211 to 58. It was the biggest jump in the history of the survey for any Federal agency on the list.

God's Story

- God is a worker and work is good (Gen 1)
- God made man in his image to have dominion (royal) and placed him in the garden sanctuary to **work/serve** ('ved) and to keep (priestly)
- Adam and Eve rebelled against God, which led to exile from his presence, followed by violence and eventually organized rebellion at Babel/Babylon where work was transformed into a quest apart from God
 - to build to the heavens
 - to make a city for security
 - to make a name for oneself

The Story (ii)

- God promised Abraham blessing, land, and descendants
- The sons of Abraham were enslaved in Egypt (wrong land) to **serve** Pharaoh (wrong king) who killed their descendants and had them build store cities.
- God sent Moses from his presence with the message "let my people go that they may **serve** me."
- God demonstrated his power which the Egyptians recognized as 'the finger of God' which culminated in a Passover sacrifice that judged Egypt and her gods and liberated Israel from serving Pharaoh to serving Yahweh.

The Story (iii)

- God made a covenant with Israel to be his people, to be a holy nation, and to be **royal priests** (Ex 19:4-6)
- Instead of building a city they built a tabernacle where God dwelt among them. The tabernacle has many creation themes (6+1 speeches to create, with the seventh being about rest, opens to the east, guarded by cherubim, etc.)
- Israel again **serves** as **royal priests** in the presence of God as God leads them to a promised land flowing with milk and honey.
- God provides an entrance into his presence (Lev 1-16) then as they worship in his presence they become holy as he is holy, culminating in jubilee (Lev 17-26)

Our Story in Christ

- We were also born in Adam and rebelled in Adam
- We were born into bondage
- God sent Christ who demonstrated the power of the kingdom, recognized as the finger of God (Lk 11:20). His mission is a jubilee mission (Luke 4:18f)
- Christ was our Passover sacrifice who transferred us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of his beloved son.
- We are recipients of a New Covenant, where we have identity as a holy nation and royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9)
- We are enabled to draw near to God and become transformed like him as we journey towards a promised land (Rev 21)

Key Elements of the Story

- Redemption restores Creation plan
- We have the role of a royal priesthood in both our garden work and tabernacle work.
- Our garden work is pictured in priestly terms
- Redemptive goal is people restored to right relationship to God, each other, and the earth.

How Do Business Leaders/Owners Act as Royal Priests?

- Represent God in using power to order life so it flourishes (Gen 1,2)
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Example 1: Chik-Fil-A

- Chik-Fil-A's purpose: *To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us. To have a positive influence on all who come in contact with Chick-fil-A.*
- Owner Dan Cathy: "The word 'restaurant' means place of restoration, and we think of Chick-fil-A as an oasis where people can be restored. We strive to treat people better than the place down the street. One way we do that is by remembering that we're all people with a lot of emotional things going on that don't necessarily show on the surface, so we try to offer amenities and kindness that minister to the heart,"
- They love their employees well and teach them to go the extra mile to love their customers, recognize their needs, and strive to meet them.

Example 2: SM bans Pornography / R-18 films

SM Cinemas lauded for ban on R-18 films
- Philippine Star, Aug 30, 2004

Example 3: Wendell Berry + Logging

- Profile of Charlie Fisher who runs a logging company
- Works with farm owners to harvest logs in ways they maintain the health of the forest by not over-cutting or under-cutting.
- Leads to the ability to regularly harvest from a forest for sustainable business rather than one big cut that damages the forest from growing in a healthy way
- Maintains profitability, his advice and trust leads to constant business, maintains the health of the forest and long-term sustainability

Example 4: Hustle Phoenix: Business as Missional

- Oye Wadell started working with youth in an NGO... he also ran several side businesses to support his family. He enjoyed this.
- He recognized that many of the drug dealers he worked with had similar skills sets of people he was looking for in his businesses
- He started Hustle Phoenix to teach them about the goodness of work and how it can help or hurt (drugs) a community. He provided mentors and lawyers for them to start businesses.
- He sees business as an ideal way to disciple

Example 5: Business as Fighting Corruption

- Most business leaders hesitate to take a firm stand against corruption, even in environments where it is widespread. Some may see benefits from indulging in corrupt practices such as faster processing of permits or less interference from governmental officials. At the same time, the perceived costs of corruption are low, due to poorly formulated anti-corruption laws and ineffective enforcement, which leads to a very low likelihood of prosecution and punishment.
- This does not have to be the case, and in fact, it should not be the case. Our research in Egypt, Zimbabwe, and India shows that organizations should view the prospect of building a strong ethical reputation in such environments as an opportunity, and consider the costs of resisting corruption as an investment in building such a reputation. Moreover, our research illuminates specific steps companies can take to maintain high ethical standards in environments where corruption seems widespread.
- Ethical behavior is in scarce supply in corrupt business environments such as Zimbabwe, Egypt and India, relative to highly ethical ones. Therefore, stakeholders — such as customers or investors — place a higher value on ethical behavior in corrupt environments. Moreover, ethical behavior is more noticeable in corrupt environments than it would be in ethical ones; it is easier for an ethical company to stand out in a corrupt environment.
- Finally, organizations typically underestimate the latent support for ethical behavior in corrupt environments. They should realize that stakeholders' silence on endemic corruption does not mean that they are satisfied with the status quo. An organization showing ethical leadership can galvanize ethically sensitive stakeholders into supporting it in its endeavor to fight corruption, which can lead to reputational benefits for the organization.
- Strive Masiyiwa in Zimbabwe who framed his ethical commitments in terms of his Christian Faith

How Can You Act as a Royal Priest in Your Business Or Work?