LIVING INTEGRATION

FAITH OF OUR FATHERS:
CONTEMPORARY LESSONS FROM HISTORICAL CHRISTIANS ON INTEGRATING FAITH AND BUSINESS*

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ABSTRACT

Efforts to integrate faith and work have existed for as long as people have followed the God of the Bible. Christian businesspeople of today have much to learn from the experiences of their forbearers. One particularly instructive community is the Quakers of eighteenth century America, particularly those who led the whaling industry based on Nantucket Island. This paper examines Quaker whaling practices in light of five principles central to the Quaker faith: work is ordained by God, the purpose of business is service, the dignity and equality of all human beings, peacemaking, and steadfast convictions. Connections to contemporary business practices are made throughout the paper. The paper concludes with several challenges to current Christians in business who desired to live lives as fully integrated as their Quaker forefathers seemed to live.

INTRODUCTION

Edmund Burke once said, "Those who don't know history are destined to repeat it." A corollary could be: those who don't know history are destined to reinvent the wheel. The last two decades have seen increasing and widespread interest in "spirituality in the workplace" (e.g. Mitroff & Denton, 1999; Lindsay, 2007). Even the secular Academy of Management birthed an interest group called management spirituality and religion in the 1990s. For many, spirituality in the workplace is a new phenomenon, but for Christians, it is as old as Adam and Eve. A "great cloud of witnesses," not just in the pages of Scripture (Hebrews 11-12:1), but in the secular marketplace as well, has preceded us. Much can be learned from prior believers who actively sought to integrate their faith and their business practice.

One particularly instructive community of believers is the Quakers of 18th century America. Faced with limited occupational choices due to what other Christians at the time considered their somewhat unorthodox beliefs, many pursued careers in business (Surdyk, 2009). And since to be a Quaker meant that every aspect of one's life had to be guided by the Quaker understand-

ing of divine Truth, it was only natural that faith would shape their business practice. This was especially true of eighteenth century Quakers living on the small island of Nantucket, thirty miles off the southern coast of Massachusetts. Largely because it was a remote island settled by just a handful of families, Nantucket Quakers were a tight knit group. Indeed, Nantucket developed in the 1700s what has been called the most successful self-contained community of Quakers, or Friends as they called themselves, anywhere in the world (Leach & Gow, 1997). The influence of Quaker beliefs on all aspects of island life, from architecture to dress to land ownership to the practice of business, was widespread.

Quakers practiced Christianity according to the principles of honesty, accountability, and simplicity, among others (Surdyk, 2009). Five principles will be the focus here:

- Work is ordained by God.
- The purpose of business is service, not wealth accumulation.
- The dignity and equality before God of all human beings.
- Peacemaking.
- Steadfast convictions.

Each of these principles has clear implications for the practice of business. And each principle is rooted in Scripture. Robert P. Tristram Coffin described his forefathers, who were Nantucket Quaker whalers, this way (Early, 1941, p. 37):

My ancestors were fine, long men,
  Their hands were like square sails,
They ran the lengths of longitudes,
  Harpooning spouting whales.

Men to put a twinkle in
  The proud eye of their Maker,
Standing up against the winds
  On the square toes of a Quaker.

From Baffin's Bay and Davis Strait
  To the Serpent of the South,
They had the whale-gaff in the fist
  And Scripture in the mouth.

After setting the context of Quaker whaling on Nantucket in the eighteenth century, each principle will be illustrated as business on Nantucket is traced from the mid through the late 1700s. The paper will conclude with a challenge to contemporary Christian businesspeople to consider how they might express a commitment to integrate their faith and work that is as strong as it was for these believers of old. Although the focus here is primarily historical, connections to more contemporary analyses of faith at work (e.g. Miller, 2007) should be clear.

18th-Century Quakerism in Nantucket, Massachusetts.

People came to Nantucket from the mainland for religious and/or economic reasons. Puritan Massachusetts was not friendly toward non-Puritans. Nantucket began, then, with a spirit of religious tolerance. First settled by Europeans in 1659, in time, the Society of Friends became the dominant religion on the island (Macy, 1972). Calling themselves "friends"—drawing from a term Jesus used of his followers (St. John 15:14)—these believers sought to return to the principles and practices of the early Church. Central to their faith was the "Inner Light" or Spirit of God which indwelt every Friend. Although Quakers disliked the term "trinity," they did believe in the transcendent God of Christianity, in his son, Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God led Friends to Truth by shining its pure light in and through them (Abbott et al., 2003). A core tenet of their belief was St. John 4:24: "God is Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Unless otherwise noted, Biblical references are from the King James Version, the version of the Bible used by Nantucket's early Quakers).

Quakerism left virtually no corner of a person's life untouched: how to speak, how to dress, how to settle disputes, appropriate public manners, and more. The intent was not to be legalistic, but rather to demonstrate that in order to really be true, Truth had to be lived out in daily life. Consistency of behavior and belief was an indicator of true faith (Woolman, 1845). Natural-

ly, then, Truth had implications for business. An influential Quaker reformer of the mid 1700s who visited Nantucket, John Woolman, wrote: "It is evident that all business which hath not its foundation in true wisdom, is not becoming a faithful follower of Christ …" (Woolman, 1845, p. 303). Woolman, a tailor and merchandiser in addition to being a Quaker minister, often spoke and wrote about how Quaker business people should act in the marketplace. His thoughts will be revisited later in this paper. For now it is worth noting that this approach to faith–business integration is remarkably similar to what Lindsay (2007), who studied modern evangelical business leaders, identified as "fourth floor" integration in which values, assumptions, and symbols permeate the ethos of believers' marketplace engagements.

"Merchandize", or what we today refer to as business, was a fully acceptable profession for Quakers as long as it was practiced according to God's Truth. The strong morality and work ethic associated with Quakers led them to be viewed as reliable and trustworthy business people (Surowiecki, 2002). At a time when there were far less legal controls in the marketplace, Quakers and non-Quakers alike felt very comfortable doing business with members of the Society of Friends. Most 18th-century Nantucketers were observant Quakers as well as successful business people (Leach, 1976). What business was there on an overgrown sandbar thirty miles at sea?

The 18th-Century Economic Powerhouse of Nantucket.

Herman Melville had firsthand experience with Nantucket business people. He describes them this way in his epic novel, *Moby-Dick* (p. 98), which was based on the fateful voyage of a Nantucket whale ship:

> Two-thirds of this terraqueous globe are the Nantucketer's. For the sea is his. … The Nantucketer, he alone resides and riots on the sea; he alone, in Bible language, goes down to it in ships; to and fro ploughing it as his own special plantation. *There* is his home; *there* lies his business … (There he) … declared everlasting war with the mightiest animated mass that has survived the flood: (the whale).

Economically, Nantucket started very slowly in the 1600s, with inhabitants scratching out meager livings through farming, shore fishing, and sheepherding. Then they learned whaling, and things would never be the same. By the mid 1700s Nantucket had became a center of global commerce as the whaling capital of the world. The capture and processing of sperm whales produced the high-grade oil that lit the cities and greased the machines of the emerging Industrial Age (Byers, 1987). In the huge cavity of the sperm whale's head was found spermaceti—a white, wax-like substance with great value as an illuminant. Spermaceti oil, which burned brighter and cleaner than any other known fuel, became the gold standard for lighting. Additionally, oil from the blubber of the whale was a valuable lubricant, so effective that General Motors was using it in their transmissions as recently as 1972 (Whaling display, New Bedford Massachusetts Whaling Museum). Ambergris—from the intestines of some whales and used as a fixative in perfumes—was another highly valuable whale derivative. Finally, whalebone—the plastic of the day—was also in demand due to its many practical uses (Stackpole, 1953).

The sea was indeed the Nantucketers' plantation. Nantucket whalers took quite literally Genesis 1:26b: "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea." At its height the Nantucket whaling empire rivaled the British empire in terms of global reach (Byers, 1987). Obed Macy, in his 1835 *History of Nantucket* (pp. 109-110), described the islanders this way:

> The wide ocean is the source of their livelihood, and they breast its waves and grapple with its monsters in every latitude between the polar ices. The sun never sets on their industry; they *labor and worship*

> under the whole dome of the firmament. The objects of their affections are abroad on the deep, or buried for ever beneath its billows; their prayers are wafted on every wind, their tears are mingled with every surge (emphasis added).

The view that global business is a 21st century (or, even a 20th century) phenomenon would have puzzled 18th century Nantucket whale merchants. They were already conducting business across the Atlantic to Europe and across the Pacific to Japan and China (Byers, 1987). One hundred years before the American West was won, whalers had traveled so far beyond that "west" that they ended up in the Far East.

In the decades preceding the Revolutionary War, Nantucket whaling was so successful that the island was among the most prosperous economic communities in America (Byers, 1987). Nantucket whaling merchants were some of the most savvy businessmen of the colonial period. They eventually expanded their capabilities beyond whale hunting to ship building, whale oil refinement, candle making, and shipping and trading goods between Europe and America. It is not a stretch to say that Nantucket was the OPEC of its day. While the rest of the colonies engaged in primarily an agrarian economy, Nantucketers were literally lighting up the developed world through the production of clean burning and odorless candles. Between 1768 and 1772, whale oil accounted for 52.5% of all sterling earned by New England through export to Great Britain. Nantucket was responsible for producing the majority of this (Byers, 1987).

The influence of Nantucket on western capitalism endures to this day. The Table below lists some significant businesses and businesspeople that trace their roots directly to Nantucket. Some other well known Quaker businesses (without Nantucket roots) are also listed.

Table. Businesses with Nantucket and/or Quaker Roots

Macy's Department Store	Founded by Nantucket Quaker R.H. Macy.
Standard Oil Company	Josiah Macy II, of the Macy family of Nantucket, played a key role in this company's founding.
Folger's Coffee	Founded by James Folger, descended from Peter Folger, one of the first tradesmen to settle on Nantucket.
Benjamin Franklin	This philosopher and practitioner of commerce, among other skills, was the grandson of the same Peter Folger.
Starbuck's Coffee	This company is named after the first mate of the *Pequod*, the ship that pursued Moby Dick. Melville patterned first mate Starbuck after Nantucket Quaker whalers, many of whom were named Starbuck.
General Electric	Charles Coffin was the first CEO of what is often considered the most influential company in American history. Coffin has been recognized as the greatest CEO of all time for his role in designing what became the model of the modern corporation (Collins, 2003). Charles descended from Tristram Coffin, a shrewd businessman and one of the first settlers of Nantucket.
Nantucket Nectars	Founded in the same harbor where Nantucket whale ships docked.
Quaker Oats	Pennsylvania food manufacturer founded by Quakers.
Cadbury	British cocoa and chocolate company founded by Quakers.
Lloyds	British insurance and banking firm founded by Quakers.
Barclays	British banking firm founded by Quakers.

Sources: A&E, 1997; Company websites; Hunter, 2003; Stackpole, 1953; Surdyk, 2009; Surowiecki, 2002.

Nantucket Island obviously has a long history of both business success and religious engagement. Of her three and a half centuries of recorded history, the eighteenth century was the period when faith and finance commingled most directly. That period—organized around the five Quaker principles presented earlier—provides fascinating lessons for what the integration of faith and business can look like.

Work Is Ordained by God

In the early years of whaling most Nantucketers believed that their labor was willed by God and undertaken in His mercy (Gen. 2:15; Col. 3:23; 2 Thes. 3:10). Recall the earlier quote of Obed Macy (1972) where he described the ocean as where Nantucketers "labor and worship." "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the LORD, and his wonders in the deep" (Psalm 107:23-24) was not just some ancient psalm, but also a vivid reality to whalers. God's wonders were readily apparent to those who did business in the deep. In contrast, most twenty-first century Christian businesspeople have to deliberately work at integrating their faith with their business endeavors. Most Quakers of the 1700s achieved this integration naturally; not just because they lived in a pre-modern, Christian era, but also because of their Quaker understanding that every corner of life—including work—was subject to God's Truth. Starbuck, the Quaker first mate in Melville's whaling tale put it this way: "It is our task in life to kill whales and furnish up their oil for the lamps of the world. If we perform that task well and faithfully, we do a service to mankind that pleases almighty God" (Moby Dick, 1956). Later Starbuck refers to this work as holy.

Peleg Folger, a predecessor of the founder of Folger's Coffee, was a whaler, a Quaker leader on the island, and a contemplative writer. He celebrated the end of the sloop Grampus' voyage in the summer of 1751 with this journal entry: "We have killed two Spermaceties. Now for home Boys! We have 70 barrels full in our Hold—*ex beneficia divina*" (Bliss, 1902, p. 137). *Ex beneficia divia* means from the divine clemency, or from God's mercy and kindness. Folger's other writings reveal that his faith was most probably genuine and deep. His journals are full of philosophical and theological ruminations in addition to fascinating descriptions of life at sea. He was also so intellectual compared to the typical whaler that a contemporary called him a "Num Scull for writing in Latin" (Philbrick, 1994, p. 118). But his intellect and spiritual sensitivity provide a clear view of someone who saw his work as ordained by the Lord. This is evident in portions of his poem, *Dominum Collaudamus* (i.e. Praise the Lord) (Macy, 1972, p. 279):

Praise ye the Lord! O Celebrate his fame;
Praise the eternal God that dwells above:
His power will for ever be the same,
The same for ever his eternal love.

Ye sailors, speak, that plough the wat'ry main,
Where raging seas and foaming billows roar,
Praise ye the Lord, and in a lofty strain
Sing of his wonder-working love and power.

Thou didst, O Lord, create the mighty whale,
That wondrous monster of a mighty length;
Vast is his head and body, vast his tail,
Beyond conception his unmeasured strength.

When he the surface of the sea hath broke,
Arising from the dark abyss below,
His breath appears a lofty stream of smoke,
The circling waves like glitt'ring banks of snow.

But, everlasting God, thou dost ordain
That we, poor feeble mortals should engage
Ourselves, our wives and children to maintain,
This dreadful monster with a martial rage.

And though he furiously doth us assail,
Thou dost preserve us from all dangers free;
He cuts our boats in pieces with his tail,
And spills us all at once into the sea.

I twice into the dark abyss was cast,
Straining and struggling to retain my breath;

Thy waves and billows over me were past;
Thou didst, O Lord, deliver me from death.

Thou savedst me from the dangers of the sea,
That I might bless thy name for ever more.
Thy love and power the same will ever be;
Thy mercy is an inexhausted store.

Christian businesspeople of today can learn from Quaker whalers of old that the foundation for integrating faith and business is a mindset that understands the two to be inherently related. So related in fact that it is even appropriate to write a poem that seamlessly combines the two. As Peleg Folger reminds us, God offers work as a way to provide for our needs, He will protect us as we work, and the outcome of our labor will result from His mercy and kindness. We can sing along with Peleg Folger, "Praise ye the Lord" for fruitful and holy labor!

The Purpose of Business Is Service, not Wealth Accumulation

This second Quaker principle derives from an understanding that the talents God provides people are to be multiplied not for personal gain, but on behalf of the Master who provides them (St. Matt. 25:24-30). Although some aspects of Quaker theology diverged significantly from the ideas of the founders of the Reformation, on this issue they were in agreement with John Calvin (Hardy, 1990). God uses work as a way for people to provide for their own needs as well as the needs of others, and in so doing further God's work in this world. This is true for all occupations, including business. The ultimate motive to be in business for the Quaker was service to others, both individually and collectively. When Melville's Starbuck reflected on why he was a whaler, it was to produce whale oil to earn a living and to provide a very useful product to society.

Quakers were not opposed to money—Nantucket whalers generated a substantial amount of colonial wealth (Byers, 1987). But they were aware of its potential to corrupt people (I Tim. 6:9-10; St. Luke 8:14; St. Matt. 6:19-21). Thus they strove to keep money a means to ends other than self-indulgence. They plowed money back into their businesses making them even more profitable (Surowiecki, 2002) and they gave money away to a variety of causes, but especially to assist the poor and uneducated (Jones, 1901; Stackpole, undated). John Woolman (1845), the Quaker tailor and merchandiser introduced earlier, wrote this in his journal in the mid 1700s:

> In being crucified to the world, broken off from that friendship which is enmity with God, and dead to the customs and fashions which have not their foundation in the truth; the way is prepared for lowliness in outward living, and for a disentanglement from those snares which attend the love of money; and when faithful friends of Christ are so situated that merchandize appears to be their duty, they feel a restraint from proceeding farther than He owns their proceeding; being convinced that we are not our own, but are bought with a price, that none of us may live to ourselves, but to Him who died for us. Thus they are taught, not only to keep to moderation and uprightness in their dealings, but to consider the tendency of their proceedings; to do nothing which they know would operate against the cause of universal righteousness (p. 246).

Quakers were known for their modest lifestyles (Leach & Gow, 1997). To this day, Nantucket Island remains a living monument to Quaker moderation. The best evidence of this is the island's historical architecture. Nantucket has more antebellum homes still standing than anywhere else in the U.S. (Booker et al., 2003). Those built in the 1700s are noted for their plainness, being simple in design, bland in color, and small in stature. Despite amassing considerable wealth, Nantucketers of that time did not spend it on their homes. To do so would have been in violation of Truth.

Further evidence that Quaker businesspeople lived what John Woolman preached is provided by William Rotch, Nantucket's most success-

ful and wealthiest 18th-century Quaker whaling merchant (Stackpole, 1950). Although he lived almost all of his life on Nantucket and could have built as impressive a home as eighteenth century America was capable of constructing, no such structure was ever built on the island. Indeed, the only physical remnant of his presence on Nantucket is his red brick counting house, which still stands on Main Street just yards from where his ships docked (Stackpole, undated). Rotch spent his retirement engaging in generous philanthropy (Ellis, 1892).

Quakers did not believe that the purpose of business was for the accumulation of personal wealth. They believed in helping others and because of this, they emphasized the service-producing aspect of business (Surdyk, 2009). Procuring, processing, and marketing whale oil and whale-derivative products were considered very valuable services in the 1700s. Clean burning oil and virtually smokeless and odorless candles were in high demand. Needless to say, the average person was incapable of acquiring whale products on their own. Doing so was not only impractical, but quite dangerous. Quaker whalers felt that their calling was a high one indeed.

The labor of committed Quaker businesspeople reflected both internal and external characteristics of spiritual businesses. These characteristics, which nurture spiritual businesses, have been identified by recent research (Neal & Vallejo, 2008). Internal characteristics of contemporary spiritual businesses that are also evident in historical Quaker businesses include viewing work as a calling, being virtues- and values-driven, and focusing on service. Further, external characteristics of today's spiritual businesses are evident in Quaker businesses as well, such as communication of spiritual values in relationships with external constituencies, involvement in the community, and a strong commitment to social responsibility. The applicability of these external characteristics to 18th-century Quaker whalers will be evident below. It should be clear that Christian businesspeople today can learn from their predecessors. It is wise to view money as a means to an end not as an end in itself, and to never lose sight of the fact that whatever money or other resources we have are to be stewarded on behalf of God's work, not confiscated for personal indulgence. Furthermore, aligning the purpose of business with service to others is useful for keeping the Christian's priorities in order.

The Dignity and Equality Before God of All Human Beings

The belief that everyone was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27) and that everyone had the potential to receive God's inner Spirit and Truth (St. Luke 17:20) was central to Quakerism. This led to additional beliefs that other Protestants considered unorthodox at the time, such as the notion that everyone had inherent worth and everyone should be treated equally. This egalitarianism of class, gender, and race flew in the face of the Congregational and Baptist theology and social norms of the American colonies of the 1700s. It also stimulated Quaker businesspeople to pursue social justice and engage in what today is referred to as social responsibility (Kotler & Lee, 2005) and even social entrepreneurship (Nicholls, 2006). Two areas involving labor relations in Quaker whaling were especially noteworthy on Nantucket: profit sharing and the abolition of slave labor. These provide additional examples of how Quaker ideals descended from contemplative Quaker Meetinghouses to the greasy decks of whale ships.

Profit Sharing—Egalitarianism in wages did not mean that everyone should be paid the same. It did mean that everyone who contributed to generating profit should enjoy a piece of that profit. The crew of a Nantucket whale ship was not paid wages as their counterparts in Europe were (Philbrick, 1994). Instead, in what became known as the American lay system, they received a share of the profits generated by the voyage. Most voyages were profitable because ships would continue to hunt until their holds were full of oil. Lays were predetermined and typically divided as follows: a

third went to the ship owners (who on Nantucket often included many small investors including women), a third went to expenses for refitting the ship for her next trip, and a third was distributed to the officers and crew according to rank (Whipple, 1979).

Captains received the highest lay among the crew, followed by the first and second mates, the harpooners, the sailors, and finally the cabin boy. Sailors did not get rich from whaling, but they could be assured decent compensation if their ship owner was fair. They were also virtually guaranteed to be paid based on qualifications since Quaker ship owners on Nantucket always paid men according to their rank. A sailor's religion, nationality, and race were not considered when it came to employment or pay (Philbrick, 2000). Thus free black sailors received the same pay as whites, an unusual arrangement in the 1700s. This was partly because it was not always easy to find crew members, but also because of Quakers' religious principles. These principles were tested repeatedly since the typical crew included sailors from different geographical places of origin and of different faiths and varying races.

Slave Labor—In the early years of whaling many black sailors were slaves (Bolster, 1997). Slaves could be sent on voyages to earn lays for their owners. Slaves were also compensated based on qualifications, but the earnings went to the slave owner not the slave. Quaker whalers initially followed this practice until one decided it was unfair. William Rotch, mentioned briefly above, was Nantucket's quintessential Quaker whaling merchant (Stackpole, 1950). He was instrumental in overturning the practice of slave labor on whaling ships. His life as a Quaker and a very successful businessman illustrates all five of the Quaker principles emphasized in this paper. Much historical information is available on William Rotch. Because he sought to live a life that integrated faith and finance, he will be the focus of the remainder of this paper.

William Rotch was a leading colonial-era merchant, whose business spanned continents and oceans, and brought him into contact with leading political figures of the 1700s as well. Drawing capital—both financial and intellectual—from family connections, Rotch realized that "unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required" (St. Luke 12:48b). The burden of responsibility Rotch felt throughout his life is readily apparent in the many letters he wrote (Nantucket Historical Association) as well as in his autobiography (published by Bullard, 1947). As a businessman, Rotch became involved in all levels of whaling, from capture through processing, and on to export and trade. Initially working with his father, Joseph, the Rotches owned more than one-fourth of Nantucket's vessels and served as agents for many others (Byers, 1987). They became a direct and chief supplier to many British manufacturers. They also expanded into candle making. In 1774, William began manufacturing candles on Nantucket, and was on his way to becoming the largest producer of spermaceti candles in the world (NHA, undated). The Rotches were even strong enough to ward off a direct attempt to corner the oil market by none other than John Hancock (Stackpole, 1950).

By the time Rotch was an adult, the Nantucket Quaker community had formally proclaimed the immorality of slavery (Leach & Gow, 1997). As a staunch abolitionist, Rotch would use his business influence and Quaker commitment to change the practice of slave labor on whale ships and also to promote economic development among Africans. In this arena, his faith directly impacted how he practiced business. As an employer of literally hundreds of sailors, many of whom were slaves, it troubled Rotch that slave owners confiscated the money their slaves earned on whaling voyages. How could Rotch reconcile God's requirement to pay laborers their wages (Jer. 22:13) and to pursue justice (Micah 6:8) with his own labor practices? Eventually he couldn't. So when Rotch's ship the *Friendship* returned from her voyage to the Pacific in the early 1770s, Rotch instructed her master to pay the share earned by a young black slave named Prince Boston directly to him,

rather than to his master (Stackpole, 1953). To no one's surprise, Prince Boston's owner protested. He brought action in court to recover the money earned by his slave, but the jury's verdict favored the slave. To add insult to injury for the slave owner, or more properly, to add integrity to justice, the court then manumitted Prince Boston. This judgment was immediately appealed to the Supreme Court in the city of Boston, whereupon Rotch announced that he would retain none other than John Adams as his counsel. The slave owner decided not to proceed with the appeal. The results spread far beyond Prince Boston and his master. Shortly after news of the verdict reached the island, slave labor on Nantucket whalers was discontinued and freedom for the rest of Nantucket's slaves soon followed (Stackpole, 1953). What started as a personal business practice for Rotch in time became the industry norm.

It seems providential then that, many years later when William Rotch's lengthy obituary would appear in a Nantucket newspaper (*The Nantucket Inquirer*, 5/24/1828), immediately next to the tribute to Rotch was the following advertisement:

SHIPPING OFFICE

The subscriber has opened a
Shipping Office at his store—
Masters and Owners of ships,
who may be in want of seamen,
for voyages in the Whaling or
Merchant service, are respectfully requested to give him a call.

The author of the help wanted ad was none other than Nantucket's first African-American whaling captain, Absalom Boston. Absalom was a nephew of Prince Boston, the slave whom Rotch had insisted be paid his just wage and then helped free (McKissack & McKissack, 1999). By the time of Rotch's death not only were Blacks serving freely and getting paid, but they were captaining ships. No doubt Rotch would have been pleased. And it all began with his willingness to take the case of Prince Boston to court. This is probably Rotch's greatest legacy with respect to integrating his faith with his business.

Apparently Captain Absalom Boston's help wanted ad worked. Two years after William Rotch's death in 1828, the ship *Loper* arrived at Nantucket with over 2,000 barrels of oil after one of the quickest whaling voyages ever. With an almost all black crew, her captain was none other than the same Absalom Boston (McKissack & McKissack, 1999).

William Rotch's concern over slave labor transcended his own business and the whaling industry. Throughout his life he worked tirelessly to abolish slavery throughout Massachusetts and beyond. He publically stated his opposition to the stance on slavery that the new U.S. Constitution took (Bullard, 1947, 11/2/1785 letter). He also worked on slaves' behalf with Paul Cuffe, a half-black, half-Algonquin Indian, who was a Quaker from New Bedford (Leach, 1976). Cuffe, who ran his own successful coastal trading business, was convinced that blacks would never reach full equality with whites in America. Consequently, he initiated the first black-led effort to populate the West African colony of Sierra Leone with resettled American Blacks (Grover, 2001). He probably first learned of the possibility of resettlement in Sierra Leone through Rotch and other abolitionists. The colony began in 1792 when British abolitionist Thomas Clarkson resettled some 1,100 former slaves there. In 1797 Rotch reported to Quaker merchant Samuel Rowland Fisher what he had learned about the colony's progress from a ship captain returning from Sierra Leone (Grover, 2001, pp. 35-36):

> They (the local blacks) have recently found spontaneous growth of a most excellent kind of coffee equal to the Moco which promise great advantage, but I find very little prospect of trade except in the article of rum which wholly prohibits us—Benson says great attention is paid to the education of the Black Children and that they make a great progress in their learning. … Thus we see the progress of

that desirable work which I hope will one day change the fertile country of Africa into a land of plenty and happiness.

As Quakers committed to the ideal that "there is neither slave nor free" (Gal. 3:28) before God, William Rotch and Paul Cuffe detested slavery. As businessmen, they understood the economics of slavery and thus the necessity of combating the evil on economic as well as moral grounds. They were interested in developing a free labor economy that could compete with slavery. The goal was for Africa, starting in Sierra Leone, to develop trade with America and England in coffee, sugar cane, cotton, indigo, and rice. If this could be done profitably, it could reduce and hopefully eliminate the slave trade. Rotch—fully supportive of Cuffe's efforts—wrote in another context: "I sometimes feel willing to spend and be spent if I could contribute to their (i.e. slaves') encouragement" (Grover, 2001, pp. 35-36).

Rotch and Cuffe can be considered forerunners of today's social entrepreneurs (Nichols, 2006), who see the institution of business as something that can not only generate profit but also be used to address pressing social problems. That is precisely what encouraging economic development in Sierra Leone was intended to do. They were also forerunners of the servant leadership movement, a concept first formally developed by a twentieth century Quaker businessman, Robert Greenleaf (1977).

Today, Christians integrate their faith with business by working to eliminate sweat shops and other labor abuses (Rae & Wong, 2004). Over two hundred years ago, William Rotch integrated Biblical admonitions for justice with his personal business practices by insisting that his workers get their just wages. He went even further by using his business connections with people like Paul Cuffe to attempt to ameliorate the broader economic effects of the institution of slavery.

Peacemaking

The fourth Quaker principle considered here is non-violent conflict resolution. Quakers were pacifists (Worrall, 1980). The Revolutionary War brought great hardship to William Rotch, other Quaker whalers, and Nantucket. Susceptible to raids on land and at sea, the island would see her wealth erode as precipitously as a storm ravaged beach. The business of whaling was disrupted dramatically, resulting in lost investments and employment. Nantucket sunk into economic depression. Nearly 1,000 whale men died or disappeared during the course of the conflict (Stackpole, 1950). Eighty-five percent of her fleet was stolen or sunk (Byers, 1987). Widows and orphans came to dominate the local population.

Facing life or death, the island's options were found wanting. Were she to side with the Patriots on the mainland, essential supplies could be obtained, but there would be no money to pay for them since that decision would result in a British ban on her oil. Loyalty to Britain would keep the market for her oil open, but then mainland America would refuse to send her basic provisions. Groups of people who favored each option—loyalty or revolt—formed on the island. But the dominant position, one championed by William Rotch, was neutrality.

The specific Quaker principle relevant at this time was the Peace Testimony. The Nantucketer, a mighty whale slaughterer, was also a gentle pacifist. A stanza from "Musings," written in 1853 by islander G. H. Folger, describes them this way (Guba, 1951):

No brother's blood pollutes their hands,
No murders on their souls.
Their battlefield was on the deep,
Its monsters were their foes.

Whales could be legitimately killed to provide for the needs of people, but people—the one creature made in God's image—could never be intentionally killed regardless of circumstances (St. Matt. 5:44; Ex. 20:13). Responding to the seventeenth century religious civil war in England as well as to the teaching of Christ (St. Matt. 5:39), Friends believed that to support violence against humanity was fundamentally contrary to Truth.

For William Rotch and most Nantucket Quakers, neutrality was the moral, though difficult, response to the Revolutionary War. Neutrality came with costs. Neither the Patriots nor the British fully trusted Nantucket. The island and her whaling fleet were harassed by both sides' war ships. The natural response of non-combatant ships was to arm themselves to protect their vessel and its cargo (Raistrick, 1968). Rotch would do no such thing. He would not compromise his religious principles to protect even his most important business asset—his fleet of whaling ships. This conviction would cost Rotch dearly; no one on Nantucket lost more financially in absolute terms during the war than William Rotch, with losses put at 60,000 pounds sterling (Stackpole, 1953).

It was not just William Rotch's ships, captains, and crews that were threatened at this time. Rotch himself came under physical attack. One such time was when a British privateer captured one of his whaling ships en route to Cape Cod (Bullard, 1947). Rotch and eleven Quaker passengers were ordered to leave the ship. They refused and were threatened with death. Rotch would not fight, but neither would he back down. The privateers eventually relented, plundering the ship but sparing all lives. Extreme circumstances test commitment to principles. During the Revolution and its aftermath, Rotch's Quaker principles were tested repeatedly.

Another incident from this period reflects Rotch's unwillingness to sacrifice principle for business gain. In 1764 Rotch acquired a substantial number of muskets, many with bayonets, in a business transaction. He sold the muskets to hunters, after having removed the bayonets. Not only did Rotch lose revenue by not including the bayonets in the sale, but he would be forced to revisit the whole transaction about ten years later. Once the Revolutionary War began, word surfaced of the supply of bayonets Rotch had acquired a decade earlier. Rotch was ordered to hand them over to the Patriots' cause. Here is how Rotch described the encounter (Bullard, 1947, p. 176):

> The time was now come to endeavor to support our testimony against war, or abandon it, as this very instrument was a severe test. I could not hesitate which to choose, and therefore denied the applicant [who had requested the bayonets]. My reason for not furnishing them was demanded, to which I readily answered, "As the instrument is purposely made and used for the destruction of mankind, I can put no weapon into a man's hand to destroy another, that I cannot use myself in the same way." The person left me much dissatisfied. Others came and received the same denial. It made a great noise in the Country, and my life was threatened. I would gladly have beaten them into "pruning hooks," but I took an early opportunity of throwing them into the sea. A short time after I was called before a Committee appointed by the Court then held at Watertown near Boston, and questioned among other things respecting my bayonets. I gave a full account of my proceedings, and closed it with saying, "I sunk them in the bottom of the sea. I did it from principle. I have ever been glad that I had done it, and if I am wrong I am to be pitied." The chairman of the Committee, Major Hawley, a worthy character, then addressed the Committee and said, "I believe Mr. Rotch was given us a candid account, and every man has a right to act consistently with his religious principles, but I am sorry we could not have had the bayonets for we want them very much." The Major was desirous of knowing more of our principles, on which I informed him as far as he enquired. One of the Committee in a pert manner observed, "Then your principles are passive obedience and non-resistance." I replied, "No, my friend, our principles are active obedience, or passive suffering." I had passed this no small trial respecting my bayonets, but the clamor against me long continued.

The clamor against Rotch eventually rose to the level of charges of treason. He was exonerated at trial (Stackpole, 1950).

Sacrificing income from refusing to sell bayonets and losing ships because he would not arm them were not the only way Rotch's Quaker be-

liefs affected his business prior to and during the Revolution. Rotch believed not only in passive non-resistance, but also in active yet non-violent peacemaking. For Quakers, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God" (St. Matt. 5:9) was not a theoretical beatitude, but a practical principle by which to live. As a leader in the Quaker Meeting (i.e. church) on Nantucket, Rotch had honed his mediation skills while helping resolve many disputes that arose between Friends (Stackpole, 1950). As a result of this experience and the Quaker principle of peacemaking, Rotch sought to solve many problems the whaling business faced during the Revolutionary War via negotiation rather than violent confrontation.

During this tumultuous period much of William Rotch's time was spent lobbying on behalf of the whaling industry. In 1779, '81, and '82 he was a member of small teams of islanders who presented memorials (written petitions) to British and Continental authorities (Stackpole, 1953). The case was made to both parties of the importance of the whale fishery, especially its economic impact and its role in training sailors. Rotch pleaded with the authorities to allow whaling ships to function free from capture or plunder. He also sought the release of Nantucket's captured seamen.

As the war dragged on and Nantucket's once proud whaling fleet dwindled, the island petitioned the Continental Congress again in 1783 for whaling permits for her few remaining vessels. Rotch and Samuel Starbuck traveled to Philadelphia where Rotch used his diplomatic skills to lay groundwork with key individuals before a presentation was made to the full assembly. Rotch gave the following account of this experience (Bullard, 1947, p. 171):

> We set off in midwinter and arrived in Philadelphia where Congress was sitting. We opened our business first to General Lincoln, Samuel Osgood, Nathaniel Gorham and Thomas Fitzsimmons. The first was Minister of War, the others were Members of Congress; the last a great commercial man. To them we opened our whole business. We drew up a Memorial but did not present it until we had an opportunity of stating our case to the most influential members. Among them was President Madison [then a delegate from Virginia], who, as well as others, treated us with great civility, and seemed to take an interest in our sufferings.
>
> We went to one of the Massachusetts members, who resided in Boston. He was extremely prejudiced against us. I fell in with him alone, and conversed about two hours with him endeavoring to impress him with our situation, and the necessity of our having the aid of Congress, but apparently with little effect. At last I asked him these questions, which were—"Is the Whale Fishery worth preserving in the country?" "Yes." "Can it be preserved in the present state of things by any place except Nantucket?" "No." "Can we preserve it unless you and the British will both give us Permits?" "No." "Then pray where is the difficulty?" Thus we parted.
>
> We reported this conversation to our before mentioned friends. We had now drawn our Memorial, and desired them to look it over. They approved it, and advised us to get the same person to present it. Accordingly we repaired to his Apartments, requested him to examine it and give us his judgment whether our statement appeared correct. He approved it. We then requested him to present it to Congress if it was agreeable to him to do so. He accepted and presented it accordingly. It was deliberated upon in Congress, and a disposition appeared to give their aid in its accomplishment. They eventually granted us Permits for Thirty Five vessels for the Whale Fishery.

After additional deliberations by the Continental Congress, Nantucket ships were granted permission to sail under both American and British permits.

The end of the Revolutionary War brought Nantucketers relief from conflict but not from suffering. A mere two dozen whaling ships remained (Stackpole, 1953). With so many men lost or now too old to whale, labor was unavailable even if vessels could sail. Alternative sources of employment were unavailable on the island. Nantucket's economic depression continued. But through it all, most Nantucket Quakers had held fast to their beliefs, even at the cost of their economic livelihood. Tough times reveal true convictions. This is as true today as it was centuries ago (Maxwell, 2003). Hopefully Christians today would be as uncompromising of their faith if the armed conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan came to directly threaten their businesses.

What little whaling remained at the end of the Revolutionary War was largely due to William Rotch's efforts. But even he could not produce demand for whale oil. After the war, Britain imposed a duty on imported oil, making it impossible for American-based whalers to earn a profit in the British market (Stackpole, 1953). Since Britain was the largest market for whale-related products, this proved devastating. Had whaling on Nantucket been preserved through the war only to be drowned in its aftermath?

Steadfast Convictions

Integrity—as it denotes wholeness and completeness—was central to the life of the committed Quaker. Hypocrisy was despised. Spiritual Truth was expressed in daily living. Thus Friends strove hard to behave in ways befitting a friend of Christ. They held fast to their convictions, even to the point of being described by some as repressed and intransigent (Philbrick, 1994). This Quaker principle has been illustrated in many of the examples described above. It is also illustrated in one last experience in William Rotch's business life.

The response of many Nantucketers in the aftermath of the Revolutionary War was to leave the island in search of more favorable economic climates (Leach & Gow, 1997). For two years after the war, Rotch tried to make a go of it from Nantucket, but his business bled money like a lanced sperm whale. In 1785 Rotch traveled to England to try to get Nantucket declared an independent port by pointing out her neutrality during the Revolution. The prospects of that looked bleak. He considered establishing a whaling base in England, and encouraged other islanders to join him. Negotiations with the British government dragged on for months. As Rotch grew increasingly frustrated with the Brit's tactics, his mind turned to France (Stackpole, 1950).

France, no friend of Britain, jumped at the opportunity to establish a major whaling base across the Channel from her rival. Groundwork had already been laid in France by Nantucket Captain Francis Coffin, who had moved to France during the Revolution. In Coffins' words, coming to France would be hard, but "of two evils the least must be preferred" (Macy, 1972, p. 248). French officials agreed to establish a base at Dunkirk for Rotch and forty whaling captains. In meetings with several ministers of the French government, Rotch made a point of keeping his distinctive Quaker hat perched atop his head. Rotch explained that Quakers believed all people to be of equal status so formal demonstrations of respect such as removing one's hat were given, not to positions of men, but only to God. Again, Rotch would not compromise his convictions even if they might hamper a business deal. But Calone, the Comptroller of France, was not offended. He responded, "I care nothing about your hats, if your hearts are right" (Bullard, 1947, p. 192).

Rotch was an able negotiator in discussions with the French and with American Ambassador Thomas Jefferson. He obtained very favorable business conditions for himself and for any Nantucketers relocating to Dunkirk. These were summarized as a list of twelve "advantages granted to the people of the Island of Nantucket,

who may wish to settle at Dunkirk, and establish the whale fishery" (Macy, 1972, p. 249). The *first* of these business conditions was: "An entire free exercise of their religion or worship within themselves" (p. 249). As a Quaker whose faith and work were cut from the same cloth, Rotch was glad to conduct business from France, but *only* if it could be done in ways consistent with the Society of Friends. In this way Rotch was adhering to a directive from Meeting two years earlier that Quakers conduct business with an eye toward "preservation of our testimony" (Leach & Gow, 1997, p. 133). In other words, Rotch did not put a favorable business environment in France ahead of his religious convictions. If he could not be a Quaker businessman in France, then he could not be a businessman in France. To do so would be as unthinkable as today's ServiceMaster agreeing to conduct business in a country where it would have to deny its first corporate objective: To honor God in all we do (Pollard, 2010).

In 1791 Rotch appeared before King Louis XVI, demonstrating the truth of Proverbs 22:29a: "Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings." His speech about Dunkirk whaling operations was well received and his polite refusal to wear the tricolor cockade of the French Revolution on his hat was accepted (Leach & Gow, 1997). At the reception which followed, King Louis XVI went so far as to dress as one of his own courtiers to avoid raising the issue of whether Rotch would remove his hat in the presence of the King. Rotch was accompanied by his wife Elizabeth, whose plain Quaker attire also turned heads. In their gentle but firm way, these unusual Nantucket Quakers made an impression. Christians are often considered a "peculiar people" (1 Pet. 2:9). Quakers, with their plain dress and unconventional manners, certainly were. But Rotch would not compromise his convictions even before a king who had the power to shut down his business and confiscate his assets with but a word. Many Christians in business today are equally considered peculiar in their own way by, for example, refraining from cursing and socializing with co-workers at strip clubs.

Also while in France, a petition concerning the practice of Quaker principles was presented before France's National Assembly by William Rotch, John Marsillac—the petition's primary author—and Brissot De Warville. The petition was in support of local French Friends as well as the fifteen (of a total of forty) transplanted Nantucket whaling captains who were Quakers. Excerpts of the petition, titled "The Respectful Petition of the Christian Society of Friends Called Quakers" (Bullard, 1947, pp. 201-205), follow:

> You know that in several States of Europe and North America, there are a great number of Christians known by the name of Quakers, who profess to serve God according to the ancient simplicity of the primitive Christian Church. Several Towns and villages of Languedoc contain a number of families attached to this primitive Christianity. Many other families, which came from America, have settled at Dunkirk, under the auspices of the late Government, in consequences of the invitation given to the inhabitants of Nantucket, for the purpose of extending the French Fisheries. These islanders have proved themselves worthy of your kindness by their success, and the same motive will induce them to continue to deserve it.
>
> We are come to implore [your] spirit of Justice, that we may be suffered, without molestation, to conform to some principles.
>
> Great persecutions have been inflicted on us, on account of one of these principles, but to no purpose. Providence hath enabled us to surmount them, without using violence. We mean the principle which forbids us to take arms, and kill men on any pretense; a principle consistent with the holy scriptures; "render not" said Christ "evil for evil, but do good to your enemies." We

> submit to your laws, and only desire the privilege of being here, as in other Countries, the Brethren of all men—never to take up arms against any.
>
> We esteem employment a duty enjoined on all: and this persuasion rends us active and industrious. In this respect therefore our Society may prove useful to France. By favoring us you encourage Industry. Industry now seeks those Countries where the honest industrious man will be under no apprehensions of seeing the produce of a Century of labor snatched away, in an instant, by the hand of persecution.
>
> Such is the respectful Petition we present to you, for the relief of our Brethren in France, and for the good of a Country which we love.

The full petition includes other topics such as oath taking and temperance in lifestyle. Essentially, the authors were reminding the French officials of the economic benefits of Quakers and they were seeking further guarantees that Quaker whalers could live and conduct business in a manner consistent with their faith. The response to the petition by President Mirabeau was generally positive and he agreed to submit it to the deliberations of the full Assembly. In his Memorandum (Bullard, 1947), William Rotch reflected with satisfaction on the occasion of the presentation of the Quaker petition. He was pleased that it was well received, but he was even more excited about having the opportunity to spread knowledge of Quaker principles. He enjoyed discussions of religious issues over the ensuing evenings with several people who expressed genuine interest in the beliefs of the Society of Friends. It is unknown, however, whether Rotch led any of these Frenchmen to the Quaker faith as a result of these discussions.

It is no easier today than it was in the 1700s to stand for Christian convictions when doing so could offend others or hinder business dealmaking. ServiceMaster is regularly questioned about its first business objective (To honor God in all we do). Sometimes that leads to people taking offense. It can also lead to opportunities to share the Christian founding and values that define the company (Pollard, 1996). Either way, the principle of steadfast convictions is crucial to integrating faith and business practice.

Ultimately the Quaker whaling settlement in France was unsuccessful, falling victim to another revolution, the French (Bullard, 1947). William Rotch moved briefly to England then to Nantucket, but within a year had moved permanently to New Bedford, Massachusetts, where he would soon retire. Rotch sought to preserve the whaling industry abroad in the hope of having it eventually return to Nantucket, which it would ultimately do with great success (Stackpole, 1953). Called "America's pioneer in international industry" (Stackpole, 1953, p. 142), William Rotch was a key player, if not *the* key player, in helping American maintain its leadership in one of its most vital early industries—whaling. This he did not just through keen business acumen, but also through an unswerving belief that he was "working unto the Lord" (Col. 3:23).

Integrating Faith and Business: Reflecting on Earlier Attempts and Suggesting Challenges for Today

Scripture admonishes us to learn from those who have preceded us: "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding" (Proverbs 4:1). Many connections between eighteenth century Quaker whalers and twenty-first century Christian business people have already been made here. All of the principles discussed above are relevant to evangelical business people today (even peacemaking, which is a goal of all Christians even if it does not lead to pacifism for most). Early Quakers provide an admirable model of believers who desired to live holistically, where faith permeates every aspect of life, including work. Five Quaker principles that were evident in the whaling industry of the 1700s were described above. This paper will conclude with a brief consideration of three ideas Quakers

embraced that enabled them to translate principles into practice. These happen to be three ideas to which Christians who seek to integrate faith and business today could be more committed.

First, 18th-century Quakers had a very clear understanding that those whom Jesus called his friends (St. John 15:15) were called to be in, but not of, the world (St. John 17:13-18). A significant impetus for Quakerism's founding in England by George Fox was his confusion and frustration with the bloody religious conflicts and civil war of his country (Abbott et al., 2003). Fox believed that the Christianity of his day was deeply flawed. What was needed was a return to the simple and radical ways of the first-century Church. This required a lifestyle that was distinctively set apart from the broader society, and explained many of the peculiarities of the Quakers. At the same time, "true godliness does not turn men out of the world, but … excites their endeavor to mend it," preached American Quaker William Penn (Byers, 1987, p. 107). In a variety of ways, Quakers like William Rotch worked tirelessly to mend the world, yet without being co-opted by it.

Many Quaker behaviors, including their dress and egalitarian treatment of workers, were different if not outright odd. These outer manifestations, which all had scriptural basis, made it clear that Quakers were not of this world. Yet Quaker whalers did anything but retreat from the world. They embraced their work as well as social causes like slave labor with high energy. Some questions follow to challenge today's Christian business people who are clearly in the world: How do they demonstrate that they are not of the world? Does anything set them apart in meaningful ways as different, and perhaps even odd? Are they sensitive to current social issues that intersect the world of business? Contemporary research on successful Christians in business indicates that most do not look noticeably different than their non-Christian counterparts (Lindsay, 2007). Should that be the case? Christians should not look different for difference sake. But would we not expect Christ-followers in the market place to exhibit some distinctiveness? If so, what would that look like in the 21st century marketplace?

Second, Nantucket whalers understood that to be a Quaker meant that one would suffer, for suffering was the normal lot of the early Christians and friends of Jesus (St. John 15:20; Matt. 16:24). Quakers of the 1700s knew that their views were often unpopular, even with many fellow Christians. They were prepared for, and often accepted as inevitable, ridicule, rejection, and persecution. William Rotch's life was spared on more than one occasion (Bullard, 1947); other Quakers were not so fortunate. Nantucket Quakers suffered severely during the Revolutionary War due to their pacifism. Surely they were horrified to see their ships—the very means of their subsistence—stolen or sunk. Yet they did not retaliate, nor did they try to preserve their business assets by means of force. We do not hear much about suffering in relation to Christian business people of the 2000s, at least not of those in the developed world. Few evangelicals are pacifists, so few would be called to suffer for that conviction. But might they be called to suffer in other ways? Are contemporary marketplace ministers willing to suffer for their faith? Are they truly living their faith if they are never confronted by suffering? Is a lack of suffering an indictment on Christian business people or on the churches to which they belong?

Third, once again seeking to model the life of the earliest church, the Society of Friends promoted a very strong sense of community (Cooper, 1991). This also assisted them in living their faith in the marketplace. Quaker principles were not something the individual believer defined. Instead, they flowed from the mutual understandings of like-minded believers who were part of something bigger than themselves: the body of Christ (Ephs. 4:3-4; Hebs. 10:24-25). This body provided both encouragement (1 Thess. 5:11) and mutual accountability (Gal. 6:1-2). Quaker discipline was well defined and strictly enforced (Leach & Gow, 1997). Designed to be restorative rather than punitive, this was the primary way

that Quakers held one another to high standards of daily conduct. Quaker community provided the clear accountability and abundant support needed to take one's faith beyond Meeting and out into the world. Some final questions for today's marketplace Christians: To what extent is community alive in today's business people's lives and churches? Do people have adequate accountability and encouragement? Unfortunately, some research (Nash & McLennan, 2001) reveals that most churches provide little support to members who work in the marketplace. What could the body of Christ do to help business believers more effectively live with integrity at work?

Today's Christian business people have much to learn from the faith of their spiritual fathers. The mid 1700s on Nantucket Island were a special time when faith and finance comingled in a profound and instructive way. It is useful to know that we are not the first generation to wrestle with integrating Christianity and business. Before we reinvent the wheel we ought to take to heart the lessons of those who have preceded us.

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