

God and Mammon: Christian Thought About Enterprise in the 21st Century

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ABSTRACT: This article examines different perspectives within the Christian faith concerning enterprise activity, including the generation of profit, impact, and scale. It builds from the core assumption that Christians hold different schemas about enterprise, religious teachings, and the proper methods for integrating their faith and work. Schema theory is utilized in the article to suggest Christian enterprisers hold one of the four primary mental models concerning their enterprises. An integrated typology is developed and the ramifications for enterprise activity are explored.

KEYWORDS: enterprise, faith, schemas, nonprofits, business as mission, impact

INTRODUCTION

“You cannot serve both God and mammon” (Matthew 6:24). Those simple but powerful words spoken by Jesus during his Sermon on the Mount have reverberated across the business landscape of Christian enterprise for the past two millennia. Many Christians may struggle to reconcile certain marketplace activities (i.e., profit-seeking, profit-maximization) with such critical faith teachings. Those wishing to faithfully follow the Great Commandment of loving God and others find themselves immersed in technology-infused workplaces that in many ways have minimal resemblance to those featured in the Gospels. The Christian enterpriser today is left to ponder many questions related to loving her God and neighbor. How does automating work promote or hinder this love? When does the drive for efficiency turn into employee exploitation? In what ways are workers’ and customers’ dignity and character being enhanced through the production and sale of products or services having enigmatic properties or capabilities? What impact does being continuously “on call” in service to an expanding enterprise have on family and faith obligations? Satisfactory answers to these and other related questions remain elusive.

The primary aim of this article is to explore the diversity of thought concerning the business models that underpin Christian enterprise, in pursuit of developing an integrative typology. This manuscript builds from Goossen’s (2004) Christian Model of Enterprise and its

five tenants: (1) having a God-oriented worldview, (2) living in accordance to God’s laws, (3) understanding a call to business within the context of other life callings, including family and community obligations, (4) using gifts for the advancement of the kingdom instead of self-advantage, and (5) trusting in God’s providence. These tenants provide a useful framework for understanding how the idea of Christian enterprise diverges from more secular conceptualizations. Yet, these tenants do not directly address how Christian entrepreneurs conceptualize their business models and navigate the tensions arising from the demands of mammon and God. This manuscript builds from the presupposition that Christians hold different schemas about enterprise that are influenced by their religious traditions and personal preferences for work-faith integration.

Schemas are mental models, or prototypical abstractions, of complex concepts consisting of conceptually related components (Beck, 1967; Horowitz, 1988; Rousseau, 2001; Stein, 1992). Consider possible schemas associated with the work of the Christian enterpriser. The role generates certain thoughts related to proper modes of conduct. Some components of the schema are likely held in common by most Christians. For example, Christians may agree that the enterpriser is to “glorify God” by treating stakeholders in a just manner. Furthermore, it may be held in common that the Christian enterpriser behaves “biblically” by paying employees their due wages and by not stealing company assets. Yet there are other elements of the multifaceted

Christian enterpriser schema that may merit greater scrutiny. Some of these components include product and service offerings, target markets, enterprise scale, profit motives and retention, and stakeholder priority and impact. While diverse, these components constitute facets of a prototypical business model.

ENTERPRISE MODELS

There are four schematic “models” of Christian enterprise that will be examined in this article: (1) tithing model, (2) ministry model, (3) subsistence model, and (4) social enterprise model. These four approaches to enterprise document the diversity in Christians’ marketplace approaches to remain faithful in prioritizing God over money (Matthew 6:24). These views of enterprise diverge concerning the emphasis placed on profits and non-financial impact (e.g., social impact).

As will be explored in the section to follow, enterprisers’ ascribing to a subsistence or ministry view of enterprise may take a somewhat critical view of businesspersons’ ability to serve God faithfully while contemplating lucrative market opportunities. They may conclude such efforts result in doublemindedness and misplaced priorities. For these enterprisers, the pursuit of financial gain may be considered as a worldly activity that is merely a means for the fulfillment of higher goals (e.g., direct aid, family provision, engagement in other life vocations). Such a view of financial resources might best be captured by Jesus’ admonishment to render unto Caesar what is Caesar’s and to God what is God’s

(Luke 20:23-25). Alternatively, enterprisers possessing a stronger profit orientation—those individuals ascribing to the tithing or social enterprise model—are likely to find encouragement from scriptures that seemingly support financial growth (e.g., Jesus’ parable of the Bags of Gold, Matthew 25:14-28). For these enterprisers, faith and devotion are demonstrated through diligence in the financial returns of their operations. Money is viewed as a blessing that the operator will be held directly responsible for growing and nurturing, so it, in turn, can be used to bless worthwhile community stakeholders.

Attention now turns to exploring each of the four enterprise models. Particular attention is devoted to better understanding how Scripture and personal preferences for work-faith integration better inform the primary understanding of each view of enterprise.

The Tithing Model

“A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD” (Leviticus 27:30).

The tithing model of marketplace activity presumes the main role of the Christian enterpriser is to serve as a steward of entrusted resources by maximizing financial returns through the execution of ordinary labor while setting aside a portion of resources (income, time, etc.) for church and charitable causes. This model of enterprise appears commonplace among Christians (Roels, 1997). This way of viewing Christian work pursuits has a considerable history dating back to the Protestant Reformation, and many theologians that would become the founders of mainline Protestant churches held an

Figure 1: Four Models of Christian Enterprise

		Impact Focus	
		Indirect	Direct
Profit Consideration	High	Tithing Model	Social Enterprise Model
	Low	Subsistence Model	Ministry Model

elevated view of wealth-generating work. John Wesley urged his followers to gain all they could through their everyday, ordinary work (Smaller, 2012). Several of his sermons, including Sermon 50 and Sermon 51, admonish Christians to fulfill their stewardship responsibilities by maximizing wealth through ethical work endeavors. Similarly, Martin Luther held a favorable view of ethical wealth generation (Foust, 2017). He considered money as an important economic resource to be leveraged in the course of proper Christian stewardship (Rossner, 2016).

The focus on wealth accumulation did not displace these prominent theologians' concern for the poor. Their attention remained on ensuring the less fortunate had their needs addressed. The prevailing view among these reformers considered poverty as a major social problem that required Christians' attention and efforts to eradicate. John Wesley urged his parishioners to save as much as possible and to give generously to those in need (Smaller, 2012). However, the pursuit of wealth and social aid were often viewed as disjointed activities. Luther sought to help the poor by raising funds and lobbying the state for relief and necessary social change (Pillay, 2017). He embraced the view that leveraged wealth could address the needs of individuals and worked with local city authorities to pool community resources to assist the needy (Foust, 2017). A primary measure of effective Christian stewardship in the marketplace became how much wealth one could generate through ethical activity and channel to worthy beneficiaries.

Christian enterprisers adhering to the tithing model of enterprise might gain inspiration from several stories in Scripture featuring financial stewardship. The parable of the ten bags of gold (Matthew 25:14-28; Luke 19:11-26) is perhaps the most well-known of these stories. This parable communicates the story of a nobleman who entrusts others with his money, charging them with putting it to use until his return. The nobleman demands a subsequent accounting of how his servants have been faithful in fulfilling his command and proceeds to reward and punish each individual according to their productivity. For tithing enterprisers, faithful stewardship includes enhancing the financial returns gained through the diligent and ethical leveraging of the resources placed under their authority, with a portion of excess returns earmarked for those in need.

Zigarelli (2019) documents many modern faith-based companies that adhere to practices that are in keeping with the tithing model of Christian enterprise. These companies include Altar'd State, Barnhart Crane

& Rigging, and Auntie Anne's. These companies have specific faith-informed causes they support with their profits. For example, Altar'd State has Mission Mondays, through which stores give away 10% of their net proceeds to a local charity. Barnhart Crane & Rigging earmarks millions of dollars of its excess revenue to various causes, including organizations focused on evangelism. Anne Beiler has been able to support her husband's counseling services through her dedicated efforts to scale Auntie Anne's. These enterprises embrace growth through hard work and see enterprise profits as a primary opportunity to give back and bless their communities through financial contributions.

Christians adhering to an ethics-based approach to work-faith integration are particularly likely to embrace the tithing model of enterprise and its embrace of profit justly derived from hard, diligent work. This mode of work-faith integration prioritizes the importance of moral behavior modeled on biblical principles (Miller, 2007). Miller et al. (2019) noted that some individuals having a community-oriented ethics approach to work-faith integration may develop a particular concern for corporate social responsibility programs and how business operations impact the broader community. The tithing model's emphasis on moral behavior and the use of profits to support worthy community initiatives may particularly resonate with such individuals.

The Ministry Model

For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I need clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me. (Matthew 25:35-36)

The ministry model of enterprise prioritizes the needs of the marginalized and vulnerable over profit considerations. While assistance to the less fortunate is a teaching that transcends most Christian traditions, there remains a diversity of viewpoints concerning how this assistance is best rendered. Tithers (i.e., those adhering to the tithing model) might consider churches (or other nonprofit organizations) and governmental institutions as the appropriate institutions to provide such assistance. Tithers' financial contributions, in the form of church offerings and public taxes or as direct aid, help to facilitate the needed relief. Alternatively, Christian enterprisers ascribing to the ministry model of enterprise consider the needs of marginalized populations completely within the purview of operational activities and central to the

enterprise's business model. Adherents of this enterprise model may endorse the belief that Jesus held a particular concern for the poor and vulnerable during his earthly ministry and that He calls his followers to develop similar priorities in their lives and work. Adherents are likely to possess a strong belief that genuine Christian faith requires love-in-action towards the less fortunate. The mission of the enterprise takes on critical importance as a means to effectively service vulnerable populations.

It is commonplace for those adhering to the ministry model of enterprise to channel their entrepreneurial activity through the creation or growth of not-for-profit operations. Profit-generating activities may be viewed as (1) necessary, but of secondary importance; (2) non-feasible; or (3) inappropriate and exploitive given the vulnerable populations being served. These enterprisers may be particularly suspicious of the simultaneous pursuit of profit and faithful service, pointing to Jesus' admonition in the Sermon on the Mount concerning man's inability to serve both God and money (Luke 6:24). Love for profits usurping love for neighbor is of chief concern. These individuals are likely to see connections between long-term profit pursuit and insidious mission drift that ensnares well-meaning Christian enterprises. Goteemoeller (2012) notes the particular advantage not-for-profit business models may have for providing mission clarity and accountability.

Ministry enterprisers are likely quick to note Jesus' admonishments against prioritizing wealth. For example, Luke 12:18 warns against greed and covetousness. Ministry enterprisers may see parallels between this verse and growth-oriented enterprises that prioritize profit-seeking at the risk of potentially exploiting stakeholders, understanding such admonishment reflects humans' lack of trust and reliance on God's provisional care. In pursuit of ever elusive profit, many enterprises inevitably extend their operating hours and fail to honor the Sabbath. Even the most well-intentioned Christian enterpriser may yield to this pressure out of a sense of FOMOP (fear of missing out on profit) or have such conviction impressed upon him from shareholders that demand ever-increasing returns on company capital. Snodgrass (2010) indicates wealth accumulation and possessions often interfere with Christian discipleship. The relationship between God and the enterpriser can become severely distorted as more and more hours are devoted to revenue generation. The fracturing of this relationship threatens to extend to workers and their spiritual and interpersonal relationships as they confront similar time demands and pressures to

endorse unfettered enterprise greed. Untethered from the diminishing salience of Scripture, for-profit enterprisers can easily descend into ethical scandals and come to trust in an elusive idol that never delivers on its deceitful claims. As Kennedy (2010) notes, "Jesus warned often of money's power and its potential to corrupt... Many of us would like to think that we can have mammon and serve God, but it is easy to overestimate our ability to resist wealth's seductive power to corrupt even the faithful" (p. 211).

Central to the ministry understanding of enterprise is a faith-driven, selfless love for the vulnerable. Rendering compassionate service and "helping those who cannot reciprocate is the true definition of the Christian ethic of neighbor love" (Ziglar, 2011, p. 456). Scripture emphasizes the Lord's identification with the poor (e.g., Matthew 25). The parable of the sheep and the goats (Matthew 25:31-46) underscores the direct connection between Christians' care for the less fortunate and their love for God. The missional enterpriser sees Christ reflected in the disadvantaged clientele being served, recalling whatever they did for the least of these they did unto Christ (Matthew 25:40). For these enterprisers, pure faith is "to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world" (James 1:27). The Epistle of James is particularly pointed in its warnings and admonishments concerning the practicing of faith that demonstrates a genuine care for the vulnerable and avoids practices that show favoritism for the affluent. To echo the words of James in 2:26, for the missional enterpriser, faith without deeds is dead.

Ministry enterprisers will often establish their ventures as nonprofit organizations to safeguard the purity of their missions. (501(c)(3) organizations are legally required to pursue action consistent with their tax-exempt purposes.) Such an approach is not immune from mission drift, and there are certainly additional reasons (e.g., tax advantages) enterprisers may elect to structure their ventures as nonprofit organizations. Nevertheless, the legal framework of the nonprofit venture is aligned with the ministry enterpriser's conviction that service must supersede profit considerations. This choice in venture formation also provides reasonable assurance that leaders succeeding the founder will also commit themselves to the enterprise's service-oriented mission. Other enterprisers may be quick to note how many nonprofits fail to generate wealth and have difficulty raising the capital required to grow or remain operational. Related to this concern is the issue of sustainability. Yet, ministry enterprisers may dismiss such concerns by

reminding their skeptics that God sustains His works apart from human effort and ingenuity. Furthermore, many nonprofits have (often out of necessity) developed diversified revenue streams that include various sources of earned income. The Salvation Army is one example of a ministry-based enterprise that has helped millions of Americans overcome personal hardships. The thrift stores the organization operates directly support its mission while providing necessary revenue to remain operational. Other examples include faith-based nonprofit hospitals and clinics that generate significant earned income from medical services. Although the faith-informed mission is central to these organizations, revenue from the sale of goods and services is still an important aspect of their business models.

While the ministry model of enterprise is not exclusive to any particular Christian denomination, many of its core precepts are found in Catholic teachings and traditions. Central to Catholic social teaching is the preferential “option for the poor” (Paprocki, 1995). This principle recognizes the particular importance vulnerable populations have in society and the responsibilities Christians have to look after their well-being. Popes since the 1960s have officially endorsed this position and have instructed parishioners to live integrated lifestyles that demonstrate commitment to the poor and vulnerable (McKinney et al., 2013). Pope Francis has prioritized the needs of the poor during his papacy (Yardley & Romero, 2015). In *The Name of God Is Mercy* (2016), he reiterates the need for Christians to “serve Christ the Crucified through every marginalized person” (p. 98).

The ministry model of enterprise likely resonates with individuals taking an experience approach to work-faith integration. Miller (2007) indicates, “[Q]uestions of vocation, calling, meaning, and purpose,” and by extension the type of work performed, are particularly important for these individuals (p. 135). He indicates individuals with this mode of work-faith integration are naturally motivated to consider the significant role work has for serving societal needs. Enterprisers conceptualizing their operations via this perspective are likely to prioritize the alleviation of human suffering and consider earned revenue generation only in so far as it is necessary to sustain operations.

The Subsistence Model

“By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return” (Genesis 3:19).

The subsistence view of enterprise takes a countercultural viewpoint on many cherished attributes about marketplace activity, including the desirability of scale, profits, and worldly impact. The cultivation of personal virtues and avoidance of deforming character vices is of particular importance in this mode of entrepreneurial activity. It presumes profit-maximization and the desire for impact often result in conceit, greed, egotism, and other vices that lead to character deformation, in addition to creating social conditions (e.g., work-family conflict, hyper-competition, status differences) that fragment families and the local community. Humility, egalitarianism, and dependence on God are cherished work virtues in this understanding of enterprise. The work is kept laborious and small-scale by design, the tasks significantly undifferentiated, and profit and resource “safety nets” minimal, all having the singular aim of perfecting the sanctification of the believer. Furthermore, the distinctive small-scale nature of the subsistence model of enterprise provides the enterpriser with the opportunity to fulfill other life vocations. Veith (2002) notes that Christians can hold multiple, simultaneous vocations. These vocations include work, but also include vocations to family, church, and citizenship. The all-consuming time demands of work threaten to interfere with one’s ability or motivation, *vis-à-vis* role burnout, to engage with these other important life callings. Subsistence enterprisers recognize that work must be crafted in a way to allow for engagement in religious and family life. Some of these enterprisers might go so far as to suggest work takes a distant third priority, as of the three vocations it is the only one where a married enterpriser has not professed a vow to uphold.

A distinctive Christian tradition that retains such an understanding of enterprise is the Amish. Kraybill and Nolt (1995) provide one of the most comprehensive overviews of the Amish orientation toward work. Early in their examination of Amish enterprises the researchers assert, [T]he divine injunction to Adam to till the ground from which he came provides a religious mandate for (Amish) farming. The Amish believe that the Bible instructs them to earn their living by the sweat of their brow” (p. 25). This way of viewing work transcends the agricultural lifestyle with which the religious group is most famously associated. Many Amish work as carpenters, craftsmen, and as laborers in other allied fields. Whereas a confluence of forces has contributed to the Amish holding a diversified set of occupations, there is still considerable intentionality in the work that is chosen. Kraybill and

Nolt (1995) discuss how most Amish businesses are often kept small, make limited use of technology, and involve the production of only useful (i.e., utilitarian) goods needed by the larger Amish community. Kraybill et al. (2010) provide examples of traditional Amish-based micro-enterprises, including cabinet shops, small retail stores, and quilt stores.

The small scale of Amish enterprises allows Amish businesspersons the time to focus on family, church, and community relationships that facilitate spiritual growth. Martinez et al. (2011) observe,

Because human relationships take center stage in the Amish understanding of life and love, Amish business enterprises are structured and operated in such a way as to foster healthy interactions between owners, workers, customers, suppliers, and other human stakeholders... The size, structure, and simplicity of technology in Amish firms ensures that all participants are kept busy with the work that is a vital part of the redemptive process. (p. 176)

Kraybill and Nolt (1995) suggest Amish work reflects and reinforces the important values of social equality, humility, and diffidence. The nature of Amish work also helps the Amish to depend on God for daily provision and to resist worldly temptation toward developing ways of acquiring economic security. As Nolt (2015) indicates, “[A] broad acceptance of limits means that Amish people are less concerned with maximizing efficiency and productivity” (28). The relative shunning and refutation of these mundane objectives stands in stark contrast to the thinking of tithing model enterprisers. Wesner (2010) observes the Amish have a “contentment mentality” that is reflected in their enterprises’ small-scale operations and growth strategies. Such a mentality is likely informed by Scripture extolling such virtue. In 1 Timothy 6:6, the apostle Paul emphasizes “godliness with contentment is great gain” while warning “those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap” (1 Timothy 6:9). The Amish are quick to note the push for profits can damage relationships (Wesner, 2010). Customer relationships may weaken due to poor product quality control or family relationships may suffer due to general neglect as the business owner remains preoccupied with growing the enterprise. The Amish contemplate these possibilities and take a cautious approach related to enterprise growth. Gratitude, family focus, and the welfare of others inform the Amish’s understanding of business success and influence enterprise decisions, including growth (Wesner, 2010).

The subsistence (contentment) view of enterprise is not exclusive to the Amish community. Individuals enacting a primarily enrichment approach to work-faith integration are likely to think about enterprise from a subsistence perspective. Miller (2007) suggests individuals pursuing this approach to work-faith integration view work as “often dialectical, seeing it in black or white terms, as good or bad” (p. 137). Enrichment-focused enterprisers are likely to be particularly oriented towards retaining small scale operations, understanding the vices that entrap enterprisers focused on growth and scale. These enterprisers have a strong suspicion of the worldliness around them that threatens to unduly influence them and their operations.

The Social Enterprise Model

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you” (Matthew 28: 19-20).

The social enterprise model is inclusive of enterprisers establishing ventures seeking to address major societal, and environmental issues through marketplace activity, in addition to business-as-mission (BAM) enterprises committed to providing cross-cultural spiritual impact (Gillespie & Lucas, 2012). By definition, these types of enterprises are income-producing and attempt to generate profits (Rundle & Steffen, 2003). This model of enterprise emphasizes stewardship through the concurrent pursuit of profits and impact. While the simultaneous pursuit of profit and Kingdom-impact may invite skepticism concerning the inability to serve both God and mammon (Mark 6:24), Lucas and Gillespie (2012) assert “social entrepreneurship provides a path for Christians gifted in business to follow the Word despite the accumulation of wealth through the generation of profit” (p. 52). Christian enterprisers endorsing this model of enterprise consider profit as the means for addressing systematic social issues and furthering evangelism efforts. They may structure their enterprises as benefit corporations or pursue other legal structures for their organizations that compel consideration of multiple bottom lines (i.e., financial and non-financial) and position the company for sustainable success in rectifying the identified social problem(s).

In his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), Pope Benedict XVI expresses concern related to the widespread lack of corporate stakeholder responsibility reflected in global economic activity and calls for a “profoundly new way of understanding business enterprise” (p. 40). He

asserts “that shape and structure be given to those types of economic initiative which, without rejecting profit, aim at a higher goal than the mere logic of the exchange of equivalents, of profit as an end in itself” (p. 38). The pontiff urges that this hybrid form of enterprise should be practiced in marginalized countries “to improve the actual living conditions of the people in a given region, thus enabling them to carry out those which their poverty does not presently allow them to fulfill” (p. 47). Likewise, he asserts, “[T]he dignity of the individual and the demands of justice require...that we continue to prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone” (p. 32).

Sampson (2022) notes the sustainable inclusion of disadvantaged populations in modern economic activity is difficult. He observes,

[P]articipation in a capitalist market economy, whether as a consumer/producer or employee/employer, is based on the congruity of your value, which through the price system can be expressed financially. Do you have the money or credit to participate as a consumer? Do you have the skills or capabilities to participate as an employee? Do you have the support, confidence, and network to enter the marketplace as a producer? Do you have the experience and people skills to be an employer? If the answer to all of the questions is no, within the modernist separation of state, market, and civil society, you would then be dependent either on the state, if there is a welfare state of some description, or on family or charity.... [B]y contrast, Benedict XVI provides a theological account of why we need gift and reciprocity within the economic sphere, not simply as a response to its deficiencies. Social enterprise is the incongruous gift to those who are not congruous with the market. Social enterprise does this by acting differently—“incongruously”—within the market. (p. 132)

Jesus’ sacrifice and gift of salvation is given without consideration of the recipients’ worth; it is incongruous (Sampson, 2022). Christian social enterprise activity reflects this reality. This form of enterprise reflects a “community of persons” practicing the mutual giving and receiving of incongruous gifts (Sampson, 2022). Such gift exchange occurs in a variety of ways, such as through the employment and training of individuals with disabilities that provide the enterprise with valuable labor, community health clinics that treat individuals without insurance and encourage donations or volunteering for services rendered, or community housing social enterprises

that provide shelter for at-risk individuals while involving them in the collection and distribution of resources. While the activities vary, these enterprises share the belief that all individuals are worthy of dignity and community through sustainable employment and provision of goods and services that directly improve stakeholders’ lives and elevate their sense of worth.

Sunshine Nut Company is an exemplar of this way of conducting a faith-informed enterprise. The company’s founder, Don Larson, explains on the company’s website how his faith influenced the business model developed for his Mozambique-based cashew business. The company is focused on transforming the lives of its economically disadvantaged African stakeholders. It intentionally employs local adult orphans and most of the company’s profits are used to support local community initiatives focused on addressing the needs of vulnerable children and women. Local farmers are supported through the planting of cashew trees and educational initiatives. These stakeholders come to understand the genuine, faith-informed love the company has for them. Through these efforts, the company is intentional with providing direct social and spiritual impact that is facilitated via the profit that is generated from the sale of its primary products.

BAM enterprises are a special form of social enterprise and tend to be intentional at addressing both the physical and spiritual needs of the communities within which they operate. Many are focused on doing business in the least evangelized and least developed areas of the world (Johnson & Rundle, 2006; Rundle & Steffen, 2003). Nearly half of the world’s distinct language and cultural groups do not have any Christian representation (Lai, 2005). Many areas throughout the world have prohibitions or limitations on Christian evangelism, particularly involving foreigners. Lai (2005) indicates over 80 percent of individuals without exposure to the Gospels live in countries that prohibit missionary visas. Jesus’ evangelism instructions in Matthew 28:19-20 serve as a general command for BAM enterprisers. God has placed them in their positions of influence to radiate light in the darkest corners of the marketplace and provide salt through the spiritual care for others that are in desperate need of hope and eternal salvation that can only be achieved through exposure to the gospel. BAM enterprises provide missionaries with the opportunity to minister to unreached and underserved foreign populations through the creation of legitimate businesses that employ local peoples and generate sustainable income.

Individuals integrating their faith and work through evangelistic behaviors may be particularly predisposed towards conceptualizing enterprise according to the social enterprise model. Miller (2007) describes the evangelism type of work-faith integration as viewing “work and the workplace primarily as a mission field” for witnessing to coworkers and other organizational stakeholders (p. 132). The emphasis placed on sharing the gospel through for-profit enterprise work is likely to appeal to this type of enterpriser desiring opportunities to engage in soul-saving conversations with individuals. The enterprise model’s focus on profit generation provides such enterprisers with opportunities to establish operations in regions of the globe that are not accessible utilizing other alternative enterprise models (e.g., the ministry model).

DISCUSSION

This article has presented a typology concerning faith-based enterprise schemas. While the discussion of the enterprise models in this article refutes any one particular schema as being universally preferential, it aims to challenge all enterprisers to consider how their products and services, work processes, and extracurricular production activities (e.g., evangelism) are providing for human flourishing. Each enterprise model has distinctive aspects that, when considered collectively, provide for a more comprehensive vision of Christian enterprise and its promotion of human flourishing for (1) customers, (2) employees, (3) enterprisers (i.e., owners), and (4) community stakeholders.

Customers

The ministry model of enterprise recognizes the paramount importance of directly serving the needs of vulnerable populations through the delivery of appropriate provisions. Traditional thought concerning enterprise focuses on exploiting market opportunities to maximize profit, whereas the ministry model’s emphasis on service supersedes profit consideration by identifying unmet, legitimate human needs in the marketplace and prioritizing the production of products and services that can alleviate human suffering.

Employees

The social enterprise model recognizes there are critical unmet spiritual and social needs around the globe. It embraces the need to simultaneously address

the temporal and spiritual needs of individuals through the blessing of employment opportunities that provide exposure to the message of salvation. Profit generation is a means to sustainably provide for communities’ pressing spiritual and social needs.

Enterprisers

The subsistence model provides significant value in gaining a better appreciation for the formative aspects of work and helps place the enterprise into proper perspective when considering workers’ alternative role obligations, including those related to the family and church. The Christian enterpriser would do well to remember these vocational responsibilities when considering the real tradeoffs involved with growing an enterprise.

Community

Finally, the tithing model emphasizes the importance of productive enterprise in generating wealth, which is instrumental in supporting the broader community. It challenges individuals to think anew about the financial stewardship of their operations and make productive use of their resources in order that they may reap the rewards of their diligence and share the blessings of the harvest with those having the greatest need. This view of enterprise also underscores the importance of collaborating with community stakeholders (e.g., government, churches, peer organizations) when helping “the least among us.”

Limitations

The preceding discussion is not intended to be comprehensive concerning the contributions of each enterprise model. Unfortunately, space limitations prevent a more robust discussion here. Future research may explore how each enterprise model promotes (or otherwise impacts) human flourishing in unique ways. Furthermore, there are likely Christian enterprises that conceptually do not fit well into any of the four enterprise models presented in this article. Subsequent work can expand on this model in pursuit of a more comprehensive typology that adequately captures the considerable diversity in thought concerning Christian enterprise.

CONCLUSION

A Christian vision for enterprise starts with a fundamental understanding that the enterprise is not about the enterpriser. It subordinates any claims of

ownership or creation to the one who created mankind from the dust of the earth. It recognizes that there is a kingdom to be embraced and an enemy to be vanquished. Yet the enterpriser is not king, and the enemy is not the competition. It recognizes the abundance of God's resources in a world that fears scarcity. Such an enterprise seeks first the kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33). From this comes a genuine concern for glorifying the Creator and those He has created by providing goods and services in collaboration with others that promote human flourishing in body, mind, and spirit.

In the midst of thinking about enterprise and human flourishing, we might do well to reflect on the Christian vision of *business as transformational service* put forward by Wong and Rae (2011):

Simply put, becoming an active and intentional partner in God's mission, business (as both an institution and a profession) must continually act in ways that contribute to human flourishing. Products and services should primarily improve the lives of users and the broader community. Humans are to be treated with dignity (and not as economic units or simply as laborers) because we are made in God's image and have eternal value. Creation should be responsibly stewarded because God made nature and desires that humans live in harmony with it, and because it affects our well-being. Because God cares for the marginalized, global economic structures and more immediate business decisions must be scrutinized to make sure we don't "trample on the heads" of the voiceless. (p. 76)

The narrative concerning modern enterprise remains largely shaped by secular thought. Many Christians remain influenced by popular culture's obsession to evaluate success by numbers, such as followers, profit, or growth. Enterprisers of faith are encouraged to think anew about their enterprises and operational success. Too often this is measured by the aforementioned metrics while the greater responsibility for addressing the physical, social, and spiritual needs of stakeholders remains largely ignored and unmonitored. The danger for the faithful enterpriser is not found in the financial viability of a business model but instead in misplaced priorities and assumptions that underpin it. When opportunity recognition prioritizes profit over service, when business models prioritize greed over generosity, and when strategy prioritizes competition over collaboration, Christian enterprisers remain at real risk of diminishing human flourishing in self and others.

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