



Business as Mission and the Church

Unleashing the Power of the
Congregation in the Global
Marketplace

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Foreword

We often say that business as mission is a concept, practice and a global movement.

Business as mission (BAM) is an idea, a **concept**, that is deeply rooted in biblical principles and our Judeo-Christian tradition. We see in scripture that business is part of God's design for human flourishing. We can point to powerful impact through the intersection of business and mission throughout church history.

BAM is also a **practice**, a set of real-life daily operating procedures for companies around the globe. In every continent today there are business as mission practitioners intentionally demonstrating God's kingdom in daily business life. They are bringing the 'whole gospel' in word and deed, aiming to have a positive environmental, social, economic and spiritual impact.

Furthermore, BAM is a **global movement** of leaders in business, church, missions and academia. The idea and practice of business as mission does not belong to one organisation, company network, or region. It is a move of the Holy Spirit stirring among Christ-followers in the marketplace, in every corner of the world. And it is part of a much bigger picture of God establishing his kingdom on earth as it is in heaven.

BAM Global has been developing the concept of business as mission, and connecting people around it, since 2002. Through global conversations and meetings, we have gathered and shared social and intellectual capital. Over 500 people from around 50 nations have participated in BAM Global Think Tank groups that have reviewed and discussed BAM from theological, historical, practical, ecclesiological, missiological, ecological, economical and global perspectives.

This has resulted in about 30 ground-breaking reports, including the BAM Manifesto and the Wealth Creation Manifesto. These processes have also catalysed a growing global movement of national and international BAM networks. Today BAM is practiced on all continents and applied in thousands of companies, operating in over 20 languages.

We rejoice in the growth and thank God for the impact. But we have not arrived. We are on a journey and committed to being a learning movement. To that end we continue to organise consultations to deal with important and pressing issues related to BAM and the world.

Our sincere thanks goes to all those who have co-laboured with us to bring this next wave of Think Tank consultations to fruition. We pray that these papers, case studies, tools, recommendations and resources would go out widely, and encourage and equip you as well as invigorate the global BAM movement.

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. (Ephesians 3:20-21, NIV)

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September 2022
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Executive Summary

Business as Mission and the Church

We believe the local church can effectively disciple and equip their members to have a positive influence on the marketplace—and especially the spheres of business and economics—with the complete understanding that God said it is ‘very good’.

The BAM and the Church Consultation Group focused on the role of business as mission in and through the local church. While the modern business as mission movement has been growing and expanding globally for several decades, much of this growth has been outside of local church contexts.

Yet the BAM Manifesto, published twenty years ago, thoroughly grounded this movement in the Church when it ended with these recommendations:

We call upon the Church worldwide to identify, affirm, pray for, commission and release businesspeople and entrepreneurs to exercise their gifts and calling as businesspeople in the world—among all peoples and to the ends of the earth.

We call upon businesspeople globally to receive this affirmation and to consider how their gifts and experience might be used to help meet the world's most pressing spiritual and physical needs through Business as Mission.¹

Our goal in this paper is to build a bridge between the leaders of local churches and those Christians called to be ‘marketplace ministers’—and to help them reengage and find common ground. To this end, we chose four areas to focus on:

1. **Overcoming Theological Hindrances:** We examine some of the significant theological beliefs that have hindered the church from fulfilling its role as an equipper of disciples in the marketplace and we explore how to overcome them.
2. **Identifying Structural Obstacles:** How the local church is structured has significant impact on what it does or does not do and we examine the impact of structure on message and methods.
3. **Recognising Cultural Challenges:** We acknowledge the marvel of the Church in its international and ethnic variety and examine some of the unique cultural challenges that impact various national and ethnic environments.
4. **Sharing Case Studies:** We review case studies that illustrate the positive impact when the ‘church gathered’ in local church communities and the ‘church scattered’ in the marketplace in business reengage with one another.

At the end of the report, you will find recommendations and resources, including a self-assessment tool for both pastors or church leaders, and church members.

Our prayer is that disciples of Jesus in the marketplace will be committed to making him known to the nations by word and deed. May the local church and the Church globally grow in its capacity to equip these disciples to be a light to the world in their companies and communities.

¹ For the full wording of the BAM Manifesto, see Appendix 2 or <https://bamglobal.org/lop-manifesto/>.

Business as Mission and the Church

Unleashing the Power of the Congregation in the Global Marketplace

Introduction

The Church and the marketplace

God established the Church as Christ's body on earth to declare reconciliation and restoration to the nations, to creation, and to one another—and to do that every day of the week. For the purpose of this paper, 'the Church' (capital C) is defined as all believers who have placed their faith in the atoning work of Jesus on the cross. Local church (lowercase c) is understood as the gathering of God's people for the purpose of prayer, equipping, fellowship, worship, and undertaking 'good works' that address community needs.

We define marketplace as the arena for commercial dealings (trade, business, industry), that connects to systems of government and education, and draws on innovation in physical and social sciences. Thus, the *global Church* is made up of Christ-followers who represent God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit in every area of the marketplace and who come together regularly for worship and edification in *local church* congregations.

This paper aims to rediscover the power, potential and synergy that flows out of the relationship between the local 'church gathered' and the 'church scattered' in the marketplace.

We are using the phrase 'church gathered' to refer to the gathering of the saints in specific geographical areas, that is believers joined together in their local institutional church congregation or assembly, be it part of a denomination or an independent assembly. The phrase 'church scattered' refers to Christ's disciples spread throughout society, living out their faith within the home, neighbourhood, community or workplace.

We believe the local church can effectively disciple and equip their members to have a positive influence on the marketplace—and especially the spheres of business and economics—with the complete understanding that God said it is 'very good'.

Church growth and mission strategy

For the past two millennia, Christian communions worldwide have pursued many different strategies and plans to help the Church grow and fulfil the Great Commission given by Jesus in Matthew 28. As Christianity entered the 21st century, global strategies to achieve the Great Commission proliferated. Each missional approach added its unique contribution to see the global Church grow and complete the Great Commission.

These mission strategies, developed by passionate Christ-followers can claim some credit for the number of self-identified Christians growing from 520 million in 1900 to nearly 2.2 billion by 2022. That growth is significant, but we have to look more deeply at the numbers. In 1900, Christians made up 34.5% of the global population. By mid-2022, the percentage of Christians is estimated to be 32.2%, and by 2050, to once again be around 34% of the

global population (Johnson and Zurlo, 2022). While the overall number has grown, the percentage of Christians in the world population has remained relatively stable.

Strikingly, it is the Church in the 'Global South'^{2 3} that has seen unprecedented growth, with Asia, Latin America, and Africa witnessing the most significant increases. We can observe a new centre of gravity for world Christianity in the Global South.

The role of the marketplace in gospel expansion

The role of mission in the marketplace has been increasingly recognised and affirmed in recent decades, but we contend that this is a 'rediscovery' of what we see in the early Church. Jesus spent most of his public ministry in the marketplace. The apostles and disciples did the same, earning the right to share the Good News everywhere they went (Acts 8:1-4). Thus, the gospel followed the road of commerce into the great cities of the Roman Empire and along ancient trade routes.

Jesus declared to the apostles that the Church would expand from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the globe as the Holy Spirit empowered them (Acts 1:8). The zeal for sharing Christ was not dampened by persecution but instead pushed out beyond the bounds of Judea and Samaria (Acts 8:4). As the focus expanded through Paul's call and Peter's revelation, Gentiles were invited into the Church, affirming Christianity as a global faith that was not ethnically limited (Acts 9 and 10).

The importance of the marketplace in this gospel expansion is highlighted in the stories of Peter's visit to Cornelius and Dorcas in Acts 9, Lydia in Acts 16, Priscilla and Aquila in Acts 18. From a ranking soldier of Rome to the makers of tents, the gospel was spread through the lives of Christ's disciples, sharing with those from different nations as they went about their work.

The role of the Church in marketplace witness

The 'church gathered' and the 'church scattered' (or sent out) can be seen in action from its earliest days after Pentecost. As the Church disciples multiplied rapidly, they were supported and encouraged by meeting together for prayer and teaching, to be 'salt and light' (Matt 5:13-16) and 'leaven' (Matt 13:33) in and through their daily life and work. From places of gathering, believers were sent out into the world or scattered into every corner of human life, bearing witness to God's redemptive plan.

In the New Testament the scattered church relates to the Greek word 'diaspora' and implies the releasing of Christians as believer-priests, guided by the Holy Spirit. There are many passages that relate to the church being scattered when not gathered together, for example John 7:35, James 1:1 and Acts 8:1,4.

² For an introduction to the term 'Global South' in the context of Christianity and mission, see: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/2396939319880074>.

³ For an introduction to BAM from the 'Global South', see: Joao Mordomo's, "Dando um Jeito: An Integrated Theological, Historical, Cultural and Strategic Study of Missio Dei To, In and Through Brazil" (2014 pp. 144-151; 238-254): https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/sod_fac_pubs/32

While salvation is an individual decision, its outworking happens in community. The individual becomes part of the body of Christ, part of the community (priesthood) of believers.

Thus God has brilliantly designed the local church as an organic and institutional entity that would be a faithful presence in a local community and have multi-generational continuity over time (Bobo et al, 2018, p. 93). Indeed, the church as the body of believers is described as God's temple (1 Cor 3:16-17; 6:19; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21-22), beloved by Jesus (Eph 5:1-2,23; Rev 21:2), and part of God's plan for human flourishing (Eph 3:8-11).

We could view the local church, perhaps especially in denominations, as a vast distribution system strategically placed throughout the world. As Tom Nelson puts it in *Whatever You Do: Six Foundations for an Integrated Life*, 'The local church is Plan A. We simply do not see a Plan B in the inspired pages of Scripture' (Bobo et al, 2018, p. 94).

Therefore, the Church in itself is a strategic mission initiative, central to fulfilling '*missio Dei*'—the mission of God.⁴ In that role, a priority for church leaders is to 'equip the saints' (Eph 4:11-12), to be the Church as it scatters during the work week, to be light to the world and leaven to permeate communities.

Early mission expansion and Church growth through trade and business provides a template for us today to train and equip every disciple to be salt and light and leaven in every area of work and life—with the goal of fulfilling the Great Commission. *We call for a return to recognising, understanding, and unleashing this 'power in the pew'.*

We seek to remember that, 'Every priest has a parish, and the priests sitting in the pews are no different. Their parish, during the week, is their workplace. This is the place they have been called to live out their priestly calling.' (Kaemingk and Wilson, 2020, p55)

The Business as Mission⁵ (BAM) movement highlights the potential for every Christian in every marketplace to be ambassadors of the gospel—priests in their own parish—as they do their business as an act of worship, with the backing and covering of the local church.

Background to the Consultation

BAM Global⁶ is a network of networks engaged in business as mission, with a small core organisation that shares resources and creates connections across this global movement. BAM Global seeks to gather and disseminate fruitful business as mission practices through its 'BAM Global Think Tank' initiatives. To this end, it forms Consultation Groups to 'listen, learn, connect and share' on particular business as mission-related topics.

⁴ *Missio Dei* is a Latin Christian theological term that can be translated as the 'mission of God', or the 'sending of God'. It is a concept which has become increasingly important in missiology and in understanding the mission of the church since the second half of the 20th century.

⁵ Business as mission as a concept champions the role of business in God's missional plan for the world and affirms the missional role of business people globally. For a longer introduction, see: <https://businessasmission.com/get-started/>

⁶ See: <https://bamglobal.org/about/>

The genesis of BAM Global began with the discussion and research conducted under the auspices of the Lausanne Movement⁷ as part of its Lausanne Forum in 2004 focused on strategic mission issues—of which business as mission was recognised as one.

The Lausanne Forum enabled the first significant, globally representative consultation on BAM and produced the Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission⁸ and the BAM Manifesto. Along with many valuable outputs came the two concluding recommendations of the BAM Manifesto that thoroughly grounded this movement in the Church:

We call upon the Church worldwide to identify, affirm, pray for, commission and release businesspeople and entrepreneurs to exercise their gifts and calling as businesspeople in the world—among all peoples and to the ends of the earth.

We call upon businesspeople globally to receive this affirmation and to consider how their gifts and experience might be used to help meet the world's most pressing spiritual and physical needs through Business as Mission.⁹

In 2014, BAM Global further identified three major goals for the BAM movement. The third of these goals is 'Transform views of business in the church worldwide'. To this end, they are committed:

...to change the thinking of the global church on business. BAM Global will positively engage with leaders in business, church, missions, and academia to influence attitudes about business, wealth creation, work, and economics and affirm business as a God-given gift and calling. Business as mission is about realizing this new paradigm in the marketplace.¹⁰

These recommendations and goals are powerful reminders of the vital role played by both the church gathered and the church scattered in business as mission.

BAM Global's work involves disseminating these truths and helping Christians engage with the marketplace as representatives of the kingdom of God. While there are several thousand organisations committed to helping Christians do their business more fruitfully as followers of Jesus, there remains the significant challenge of affirming and releasing businesspeople—their experiences, gifts and skills—to be fully engaged in the mission of the church globally.

⁷ Founded by John Stott and Billy Graham in the 1970s, the Lausanne Movement connects influencers and ideas for global mission, see: <https://lausanne.org/>.

⁸ Download the Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission here: <https://bamglobal.org/lop-bam/>.

⁹ For the full wording of the BAM Manifesto, see Appendix 2 or <https://bamglobal.org/lop-manifesto/>.

¹⁰ For the BAM Global Goals and an introduction to 'Transforming views of business in the Church worldwide', see: <https://bamglobal.org/about/> and <https://businessasmission.com/transforming-views-of-business-in-the-church-worldwide/>.

The BAM and the Church Consultation

We are grateful to BAM Global for supporting a Consultation on the subject of BAM and the Church, continuing their call to the 'Church worldwide' regarding business as mission that began with the BAM Manifesto.

The BAM and the Church Consultation group met over a period of 14 months, with regular video calls to further discussion and work on this report. This paper was made possible by men and women from around the world committing their time and talents to meeting and sharing.

Our goal in this paper is to build a bridge between the leaders of local churches and those Christians called to be 'marketplace ministers'—and to help them reengage and find common ground. To this end, we chose four areas to focus on:

1. **Overcoming Theological Hindrances:** We examine some of the significant theological beliefs that have hindered the church from fulfilling its role as an equipper of disciples in the marketplace and we explore how to overcome them.
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4. **Sharing Case Studies:** We review case studies that illustrate the positive impact when the church gathered and the church scattered reengage with each other.

At the end of the report, you will find recommendations and resources, including a self-assessment tool for both pastors or church leaders, and church members. Our hope is that these questions will help you evaluate where both you and your church are in the process of erasing the sacred-secular divide that we will explore later on in this paper.

A note on the scope of this report

The focus of our consultation has been on exhorting the global Church and local church expressions to equip and disciple business people to do their business as unto the Lord, with the particular application to business as mission in mind. Church leaders are an important constituency within the BAM movement and we have focused on their unique role in equipping, mobilising and supporting those business people in their congregations who will start and run BAM companies.

We have not focused on examples where local churches have started a business as a main aspect of their own church ministry. Nor have we focused on companies that have planted an expression of local church from themselves. We intentionally limited our scope in this way because there are already many resources within the BAM movement on practicing business as mission (whether that is as an individual or group). We refer

readers who are interested in these areas to existing case studies¹¹ and to the earlier report on 'BAM and Church Planting'.¹²

The consultation group acknowledges that, at best, its work is an introduction to the areas discussed. The group recognises the contributions over the centuries from many religious groups and denominations relating to the integration of faith and work, however the viewpoint of this group was largely from the Protestant perspective.

A note on business as mission and marketplace ministries

In this paper we use phrases such as 'ministry in the marketplace' and 'workplace ministry' interchangeably with the advocacy for and activities of 'business as mission'. However, it is worth clarifying that while there is significant overlap between these terms, business as mission is a particular application of ministry in the marketplace with some distinctives. In other words, all BAM is ministry in the marketplace, but not all ministry in the marketplace has the same distinctive focus of BAM.

The Lausanne Occasional Paper puts it this way:

Business as mission is different from but related to... WORKPLACE MINISTRIES

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

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

There is no value judgment in saying business as mission is distinct from some other kinds of ministry in the marketplace, for example a nurse praying with a colleague at work, it is simply a particular application of the same theological foundations and biblical principles for work and business.

¹¹ Gea Gort and BAM Netherlands have produced and profiled case studies along these lines, refer to Gea Gort & Mats Tunehag's book "BAM Global Movement" and read one case as an excerpt here: <https://businessasmission.com/brick-lane-london-story/>. For general BAM case studies, see Steve Rundle and Tom Steffen, "Great Commission Companies" (2nd edition) which features six BAM business case studies.

¹² See "BAM and Church Planting: Fruitful Practices for Establishing Faith Communities" here: <https://bamglobal.org/report-cp/>

The definition of business as mission is:

- Profitable and sustainable businesses;
- Intentional about Kingdom of God purpose and impact on people and nations;
- Focused on holistic transformation and the multiple bottom lines of economic, social, environmental and spiritual outcomes;
- Concerned about the world's poorest and least evangelised peoples.

Business as mission focuses on the strategy of a *whole* company and harnesses the every aspect of the business model—products, location, company culture, vision, values, processes, etc.—very intentionally in mission to the least reached and the poorest of the poor. The type of business, location, and focus of mission is down to each individual and how God leads them.

For example, Michael Baer, in *Business As Mission: The Power of Business in the Kingdom of God* (2006), characterises the mission of the BAM company established by himself and his partners as, '...to further the expansion of the kingdom of God among the unreached through seamless integration of business and mission' (Baer, 2006, p. 139). This was achieved, among other things, by:

- Working with clients wholeheartedly as unto the Lord (Eph 6:5-7)
- Praying for clients and the kingdom impact of the business among those clients
- The business partners living lives that invite inquiry
- Seeking to provide ministry to everyone with whom they work, depending on where they are in their spiritual journey
- Exhibiting the integrity and character of Christ in the presence of unbelieving clients and taking every opportunity God provides to share God's truth with them
- Encouraging believing clients to live for Christ fully
- Seeking to operate continuously with excellence and godly ethics

The Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission quotes one of its contributors, Reverend Harry Goodhew, Retired Anglican Archbishop of Sydney, Australia with the following useful summary of business as mission:

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

Therefore, while the approach of business as mission has led to a distinct community of practice—and the adoption of the BAM label enables a common language and collaboration—there is in reality no hierarchy or hard boundary between different

expressions of ministry in the marketplace. In particular, there is a shared theological foundation and a mutual conviction that faith and work can, and should, be integrated. BAM is built on the foundation of faith-work integration.

When it comes to ‘BAM and the Church’ this area of significant overlap is key. This paper focuses on particular theological, structural and cultural hindrances to ‘BAM and the Church’ and these are common to all efforts towards integrating faith and work.

Our goal is to encourage local churches and church leaders to remove these common hindrances for *all* marketplace ministers—whatever their vocation or role. The hoped-for outcome is that business people in local churches around the world will be inspired and equipped to do ministry in the marketplace through their company or profession. That each business person would then enquire of the Lord, ‘If you are calling me to business, where and how shall I do business for the sake of your glory, the gospel and the common good?’

What compels us to advocate particularly for business as mission is the pressing need for social, economic, environmental, and spiritual transformation in communities around the world that for-profit business models are uniquely positioned to address. Our hope is that church leaders will also share these needs and opportunities, advocating for business as mission and mobilising their members to become engaged. The case studies and recommendations within this report are included with that goal in mind, but church leaders will also find the earlier report on ‘BAM Advocacy and Mobilisation’¹³ a helpful resource.

The culmination of our consultation work as presented in this report is far from exhaustive. The hope of the group is that Christians would once again experience the zeal and commitment of the early Church, where Christians were passionate disciples living out the call of God in their daily lives, work, and businesses—whatever He calls them to.

¹³ See Resource List and download “BAM Advocacy and Mobilisation” here: <https://bamglobal.org/report-mobilisation/>

Section 1: Overcoming Theological Hindrances

Introduction

Theological challenges associated with the integration between business as mission (BAM) and the local church abound. The focus of this section is on the practical theology of work and worship. This section explores stumbling blocks that hinder the affirmation of business within God's kingdom. Some of the topics overlap and will also be discussed in later sections of this paper. Out of many possible challenges we have chosen four topics to focus on:

- **Created to work: a positive theology of work**
- **Wealth creation: a biblical view**
- **The Church: gathered to be scattered**
- ***Missio Dei*: engaging all of God's people in God's mission**

As we discussed the theological barriers to the Church fully embracing BAM, we also came across promising practices that were shared by a number of churches that helped overcome these barriers in their local church settings. You will see these in the 'Promising Practice' side boxes. In this section we also include an encouraging case study from Ethiopia that highlights what can happen when a church denomination intentionally seeks to overcome theological barriers to business as mission and faith-work integration.

Created to work: a positive theology of work

The biblical basis for work is inclusive of the whole of scripture, moving from creation in Genesis to the new heaven and new earth at the end of Revelation.

As oxygen is to the body, so work is to human flourishing.

From the beginning of Genesis 1, God declares six times His creation to be 'good' (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). In Genesis 1:31, He declares it to be 'very good.' All creation works to proclaim God's glory (see Psa 19:1-6, 96:11-12, and Isa 55:12). In Genesis 1:26 and 27, God created human beings and gave them a special place in creation and in relationship with Himself. In Genesis 1:28 God adds His blessing to His mandate to humans to be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth (Psa 8:6-8 and Deut 28:1-3).

This mandate is sometimes referred to as the 'creation mandate' or 'cultural mandate', but in this paper we are using the term 'the Great Commitment'¹⁴. The Great Commitment called for the expansion of the population—and for human creativity, work, and productivity to make that expansion possible.

As God worked to create the universe, so then humanity is to imitate him and work at stewarding and filling the earth—to the glory of God. In Deuteronomy 28:1-14 God blesses His people—on 'everything you put your hand to' (v. 8)—giving them the capacity to flourish as they work to manage creation.

¹⁴ The cultural or creation mandate has lost some of its potency through the years. In an attempt to reenergise the original meaning of Genesis 1:28, we have elected to use phrase 'the Great Commitment' as there is an expectation both from God and towards God. It is action-oriented and is the foundational purpose for humanity's creation.

Human flourishing and work are closely connected, making possible the filling of the earth with God's image-bearers (Gen 1:28, 2:15). As oxygen is to the body, so work is to human flourishing. Work is not a necessary evil but central to the intent of God for humans and creation, and it is critical in glorifying God.

This idea is exemplified by the Hebrew word *avodah* which is translated as service, work or worship depending on the object of the sentence. *Avodah* appears in one form or another more than one thousand times in the Old Testament.

In Genesis 1 and 2 God's creation was perfect in essence but incomplete in scope. People were expected to take the world God created and add value to it for the flourishing of all. However, sin impacted every part of creation and the result was brokenness in our relationship with God, one another, and creation. From the resulting chaos and rebellion after the fall, God chose one man, Abraham, and his family, to begin the process that would eventually lead to the redemption, reconciliation, and restoration of humanity and the nations through Jesus (Gen 12:1-3).

For humanity's expansion to continue, economic growth and development were an essential part of God's plan for human society. God's blessing on Abraham did not replace the Great Commitment of Genesis 1:28 but expanded on it. It is noteworthy that the patriarchs and their descendants, from Abraham to Moses, were businesspeople (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), a government advisor (Joseph), and national leaders (Moses and Joshua).

In addition, the laws and directions God gave through Moses focused in large part on the execution of business and civil life. The nation of Israel was instructed to live out an integrative existence where work and worship were interlinked and mutually interdependent. Holiness in temple worship was to be worked out by displaying holiness in daily life (Kaemingk and Willson 2020).

When Solomon built the temple, he employed professionals (and forced labourers) from all over the kingdom (1 Kings 5-7 and 2 Chronicles 2-4) and it is clear that their work brought honour and glory to God. The first reference to the Holy Spirit filling a people are these professionals, specifically Bezalel. The Lord said to Moses, 'See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge, and with all kinds of skills to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver, and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts' (Exod 31:2-5).

Promising Practice #1

Teach against the sacred-secular divide

Through sermons, studies, testimonies, encouragement and more, advocate against the harmful concept that some aspects of our lives are sacred, while others are not. This includes the non-biblical idea that some Christians are serving God 'full-time' because they are compensated by other believers. Instead, teach that all Christians have an opportunity serve God wherever He has placed them. Holiness is a matter of the heart, not a title or a pay-check.

Against such a historical backdrop, Jesus came. The law that was given to prepare Israel for life and worship still left them surprised at this Messiah who appeared in humility and obscurity. Born to parents who were likely not wealthy and growing up in a small town in an unregarded part of Israel, Jesus was not very different to many others growing up in Israel. Klaus Issler makes a good case for Jesus becoming a builder-apprentice to his father at the age of 12 and assuming responsibility for the family after the death of Joseph¹⁵ (Issler 2014). Issler outlines how the parables Jesus taught were well-rooted in life lived in the workplace.

By the time of Jesus, the integration of work and worship had become somewhat distorted. The failure to be a light to the nations was challenged by Jesus who exclaimed that the temple courtyard of the Gentiles had been turned into a den of thieves when it should have been a house of prayer (Matt 21:12-13). Jesus condemned the unrighteous and unfair practices of exchanging outside currency for the temple currency (see Jer 7:11). The Court of the Gentiles was representative of the critical role that Israel was meant to play in being a light to the nations (Isa 56:7) and Jesus' criticism was targeted at those who were taking advantage of the visitors instead (Long, 2011).

In Ephesians 2:21, we see that in Christ we (Jews and Gentiles) are members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Christ himself as the chief cornerstone. A little earlier, we read that we are God's handiwork, created for good works (Eph 2:10). Whatever our work—be it unpaid as a parent or carer, paid employment, owning a business, or working for the institutional church—it is spiritual because we were created to worship and serve God as members of His household. All work done to the glory of God is ministry to Him. We do a disservice to those in every other vocation when we reserve the term 'full-time ministry' only for those in church work.

According to Ephesians 4:11-13, 'Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip His people for works [Greek *ergon*] of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.' The word 'service' in Ephesians 4:12 is the Greek *diakonia*, used 32 times in the New Testament and can be translated as 'ministry', 'service', 'relief' or 'support'. Its fundamental meaning is 'one who serves among others' or 'a servant in her/his activity or work.'

Understandably, these verses have been applied to the institutional church because a related noun, *diakonos* (servant), became a technical term, 'deacon,' which was the office of one who served the physical needs of the church as opposed to elders/pastors who attended to preaching the word (Acts 6:1-6). However, it is almost certainly incorrect to interpret 'works of service' in Ephesians 4 to refer only to the activities of the institutional church because this would have been an unknown concept at the time in which it was written and there were few paid church workers. Instead, the building

In many ways, the Israelites did not have a theology of work because they did not need one. They lived in a world in which the spiritual and material were understood to be constantly intermingled.

Kaemingk & Willson
(2020, p. 68)

¹⁵ Most scholars believe Joseph died sometime before the public ministry of Jesus.

up of the body produced individual disciples who were living out their faith in everyday life, including at work. While corporate gatherings were important, the focus is on equipping believers to do *everything* for God's glory (1 Cor 10:31, Col 3:17).

In this context, the modern institutional church with various professional ministry roles is only part of the picture of ministry through God's people. The picture is more complete when we consider the roles of church members in the family, neighbourhood, broader community, and marketplace. The role of business owners, managers or employees, as well as those providing professional services to business, is an important part of the complete picture of 'work as worship'.

To conclude, Genesis 2:15 tells us that God put people in the garden of Eden to work it and to watch over it. After the fall in Genesis 3, the Great Commitment was still crucial in God's strategy, but became tainted by sin. This set into action God's plan for a complete restoration of creation. God introduced His solution in Genesis 12:1-3 with His promise to Abraham, fulfilled through the death and resurrection of Jesus. However, the creation mandate to humanity remains and thus the Great Commitment is the foundation from which the the Great Commandment is lived out and the Great Commission is carried out.

The mandate to fill the earth with God's image-bearers, and care for creation through creativity, work and productivity, will be finally fulfilled in the presentation of offerings in gathered worship described in Revelation 21:24 and 22:1-3, where the nations will bring their treasures into the new Jerusalem, and the curse of sin will be broken. Until that day, we are to live lives of service, work, and worship—bound up together in our day-to-day acts of worship to God—developing an economy that will enable the flourishing of all human society and creation.

Wealth creation: a biblical view

Building on a solid theology of work, it is important to understand the particular role of wealth creation (business) and wealth creators (entrepreneurs, business professionals) in God's purposes. From a biblical perspective, business is designed to multiply wealth, provoke innovation, create dignified work, steward resources, and produce goods and services that contribute positively to human flourishing.¹⁶

Work can be a means of fulfilling the Great Commitment while carrying out the Great Commission and living out the Great Commandment.

God promised Israel that if the nation obeyed Him, 'The Lord will grant you abundant prosperity—in the fruit of your womb, the young of your livestock and the crops of your

¹⁶ For an introduction to this topic, see "Wealth Creation: Biblical Views and Perspectives" here: <https://bamglobal.org/wealth-creation-biblical/>

Promising Practice #2

Promote personal or group study

With more than 800 passages that apply to work, the Bible can help you connect to God's wisdom, encouragement, and guidance.

*One example: The **Public Reading of Scripture** is a series of online video Bible studies connecting God's word and your work. You can use the resource by yourself, with a small group from church, or even with a lunchtime Bible group. [PRS.work videos](#) are ready for you to use online, free of charge.*

ground—in the land he swore to your ancestors to give you. The Lord will open the heavens, the storehouse of His bounty, to send rain on your land in season and to bless all the work of your hands. You will lend to many nations but will borrow from none’ (Deut 28:11-12, and see also Deut 11:13-15).

God reminded Israel as they prepared to enter the promised land, ‘But remember the Lord your God, for *it is He who gives you the ability to produce wealth*, and so confirms His covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today’ (Deut 8:18, emphasis added).

The sketch of a business woman in Proverbs 31 shows us the positive impact of business activity for an individual, family, extended household, and community:

She gets up while it is still night; she provides food for her family and portions for her female servants. She considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard. She sets about her work vigorously; her arms are strong for her tasks. She sees that her trading is profitable, and her lamp does not go out at night. In her hand she holds the distaff and grasps the spindle with her fingers. She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy. When it snows, she has no fear for her household; for all of them are clothed in scarlet. (Prov 31:15-21).

Proverbs affirms business activities in many places elsewhere, for example, ‘People curse the one who hoards grain, but they pray a blessing on the one who is willing to sell it (Prov 11:26).

Although there is the promise of prosperity to Israel in Deuteronomy, there are prophetic descriptions of the economic system in negative terms, for example, Ezekiel 27 and 28. We find echoes of this in Revelation 18 with the destruction of the economically corrupt Babylon.

Money can certainly corrupt and as a result can be considered dangerous by Christians. Ecclesiastes warns, ‘Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income’ (Ecc 5:10). The apostle Paul unequivocally states, ‘For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs’ (1 Tim 6:10). We should note that money itself is not evil, but loving it is.

Jesus also warned of the evils of idolising money: ‘No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money’ (Matt 6:24). Creating wealth is not the problem, but we should be wary of the power money can have over us.

It could be argued that modern-day business is focused more on greedy profit-making than human flourishing. This is a significant stumbling block to the widespread acceptance in the global Church of business as a godly pursuit. We recognise that sin has corrupted *all*

Promising Practice #3

Feature workplace ministry in Bible teaching

Teach the stories behind the many Bible heroes who were in the workplace. Explain some of the temptations they might have faced and how they served God through them.

human endeavours, including business and wealth creation. But we should not ‘throw the baby out with the bathwater’, as the saying goes.

The Bible is clear that we *are* to create wealth, but we are to remember the Lord as we are doing it (Deut 8). Indeed, the Bible has much to say about economic justice and the right conduct of business. Jesus himself drew on many examples from the marketplace, even using the the creation of wealth as a metaphor for spiritual multiplication in the parables of the minas (Luke 19) and talents (Matt 25). It is unlikely that Jesus would have used these examples if He considered creating wealth evil in and of itself.

In conclusion, while the Bible has many positive things to say about profit, money, and riches, it also has plenty to say about our attitudes to each.

Wealth creation in a positive biblical sense is vital to the flourishing of humanity. It is our attitude and practice that needs to be addressed.

Jeff Van Duzer concluded his book, *Why Business Matters to God (And What Still Needs to Be Fixed)*, ‘The business of business is to serve the world. The world needs business and business matters to God. “Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field” (Luke 10:2).’ (Van Duzer, 2010, p. 201)

For further reading on biblical views of wealth creation, we recommend the Wealth Creation Report Series and Wealth Creation Manifesto.¹⁷

The Church: gathered to be scattered

Defining salvation in individual terms is biblical, but it is not all that the Bible teaches. The spirit of God is creating a new community as the body of Christ. While salvation is always individual in its effect, how it is to be offered and experienced is very corporate. To be converted to Christ is to be converted to his body, the church. (Van Gelder, 2020, p. 131)

Local church and universal church

Both the church gathered and the church scattered are part of God’s purpose. The local church is a particular assembly of believers gathered in a specific place. The universal Church is composed of all believers, no matter where they are in space or time.

The Bible refers to the Church as the body of Christ made up of many parts (1 Cor 12:12-27). A body needs to be in unity and harmony to function and flourish. The Holy

Promising Practice #4

Study ‘Bible on Business’ devotional plan

The Bible is full of statements and stories applicable to work and business. This 31 day devotional plan is designed by business leaders to highlight these passages and relate them to the marketplace context. These words can equip believers to live more faithfully in their work, while deepening their love of Scripture. Many of the leaders in the BAM movement wrote contributions to these devotions. Look for it on the YouVersion Bible App.

¹⁷ For the Wealth Creation series, see: <https://bamglobal.org/reports/special-reports/> and accompanying resource, the Lausanne Global Classroom on Wealth Creation video series, see: <https://lausanne.org/lausanne-global-classroom/wealth-creation>. Read the Wealth Creation Manifesto in Appendix 6.

Spirit works out the universal purpose of the Church through expressions of local church, spreading of the message of Jesus and equipping people to be his disciples. Author Luke Bobo reminds us that the local church is explicitly fashioned by God for time, place, and effect:

The church gathered is an essential part of the Christian experience. And as it relates to BAM and the Church, the equipping of the saints needs to happen when gathered, in order to have an impact when scattered. While the argument may be made that the Church is about the people and not the building, it is true that it is also about place. Tom Nelson writes this about the local church: 'Human souls matter, but so do brick buildings, brick and mortar.' The building and household metaphors remind us that the local church is an institution with a sense of place with enduring stability, aesthetic, beauty and functional purpose. The church is a gathering place for gospel transformed people to belong. It is a place to call home. When we understand the church as a family, we embrace a coherent faith, a beautiful tapestry of people and place woven together by the spirit into a new community. The local church is not merely a place we go, it is designed to be a place we call home and people we call family. (Bobo et al, 2018, p. 98)

The expansion of the gospel through the church

After the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the synagogue became the focus of Jewish life for those who had been scattered in the conflict. However, Jesus' ministry, and that of the apostles, had moved towards flattening the developing hierarchy of national religion and reenergising the base of ordinary believers with a new model based on a Greek form of city meeting called the *ekklesia* (Silvoso, 2017, p. 24). This became the centre of a new strategy that would radically impact the world. While Jesus only used the term *ekklesia* twice (Matt 16:18; 18:15-17), it was to become the vital model for gathering Christians together to prepare them to be the scattered 'body of Christ'—a new strategy alluded to by Jesus during His public ministry.

Jesus had been preparing the disciples and declared just before His departure that his disciples would, '...receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' (Acts 1:8). He indicated to the disciples that they would find help, solace, and encouragement from one another as they assembled.

Later Paul would give greater clarification as to the term *ekklesia*, noting that the church consists of all the followers of Jesus, as his body (Rom 12:5; Eph 1:13; 2:22). Thus the term *ekklesia* has been used to refer to the assembly of believers and also to the universal body of Jesus' disciples.

Acts 8:4 tells us that wherever the believers went, they shared the message about Jesus the Messiah. The disciples began by sharing with the Jews in and around the temple, but the gospel quickly expanded to other spheres and contexts, to other cities and then to the Gentiles, following Peter's vision that Gentiles were included in the new expanding Church (Acts 10). This opened a door for the Gentiles to know Christ and revealed the full strategy for the church. As Paul put it:

Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord (Eph 3:8-11).

The Roman empire at the time of the early Church was fuelled by unprecedented economic growth and the gospel spread throughout the world along the highways and byways of the Roman empire. The early Church integrated the vocations of most disciples as they took the good news to the marketplaces around the Mediterranean Sea and beyond; from Israel to the provinces of Asia and Europe, to Spain and the British Isles.

At no point in this missionary expansion did Paul, Barnabas, or other leaders tell the new converts that they were to leave their businesses or vocations to become leaders in an institutional church. Rather than seeing business or work as a hindrance to the gospel message about Jesus, they saw it as an opportunity. From Dorcas, Lydia, Priscilla and Aquila, and Paul, we can see that work and faith were integrated in the lives of early disciples. It was natural to the early Church and God used it to spread the good news of His kingdom.

In other words, the early Church continued to fulfil the Great Commitment, to work and fill the earth, alongside obeying Jesus' Great Commission and living out His Great Commandment.

The first-century church was known for its good works and simple structure. In Exodus, God tells Israel that they were to be a nation of priests and a holy nation (Exod 19:5,6). Peter echoes this promise and describes the church as:

...a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. (1 Pet 2:9-10)

Paul tells us that we are Christ's ambassadors, given the ministry of reconciliation so that God can reconcile the world to himself in Christ (2 Cor. 5:14-20). We are 'now a people who were not a people' because of God's mercy and we are to be His ambassadors amid the nations.

Promising Practice #5

Pastoring outside the box

Ray Bakke, a Baptist urban missiologist, employed a practice of pastoral visits for his urban church members whereby he would conduct spontaneous pastoral visits not to people's homes or a local restaurant but in their workplace. He would casually drop into their factories, offices, stores, schools, etc., to see how they are doing and bless them in their daily work. It was a concrete demonstration of the truth that faith and work intersect in his parishioners' world, while empowering workers and helping to hold employers accountable. His approach was courteous, and he would make it a practice to speak to the manager prior to approaching an employee. This model of pastoral care goes a long way in bridging the Sunday/Monday divide.

Missio Dei: engaging all of God's people in God's mission

As we have seen, churches should be missionary at the core, living as God's people, demonstrating God's restoration of people and creation through Jesus Christ. Mission is, therefore, not a program or project that some people in the church do from time to time, nor is it limited to only a few Christians being sent to foreign countries. Rather, it is to be the Church's very nature, part of God's divine purpose, intended for all believers.

Important voices in helping the church understand its missional nature are emerging from the Global South. One such thinker is the Sri Lankan author and theologian, Vinoth Ramachandra. In an article published by the Micah Network Integral Mission Initiative, he offers this insight:

A congregation with huge social welfare projects or many 'church-planting' teams may be far less effective in secular society than congregations which have none of these things but train their members to obey Christ in the different areas of civic life into which they are called. 'Integral mission' has to do with this basic issue of the integrity of the church's life, the consistency between what the church is and what it proclaims' (Ramachandra, n.d.).

Another critical voice in helping the church to understand its core mission purpose is found in the writings of the late Reverend Lesslie Newbigin, Bishop of South India. He wrote,

It will only be by movements that begin with the local congregation in which the reality of the new creation is present, known, and experienced, and from which men and women will go into every sector of public life to claim it for Christ, to unmask the illusions which have remained hidden and to expose all areas of public life to the illumination of the Gospel. But that will only happen as and when local congregations renounce an introverted concern for their own life and recognise that they exist for the sake of those who are not members as a sign, instrument, and foretaste of God's redeeming grace for the whole life of society (Newbigin, 1989 p. 232-233).

God's mission is for all of His people to bring their gifts, passion, talent, and vocations to bear—as they realise their work as God's mission, helping to heal a broken world. As the Lausanne Covenant asserts, 'World evangelisation requires the *whole* Church to take the *whole* gospel to the *whole* world' [emphasis added].¹⁸ The gulf between Sunday and Monday, between worship and work, between clergy and laity, will be bridged as all God's people see themselves on mission.

Promising Practice #6

Send them out

Consider having commissioning services for laypeople, where the congregation prays over and sends out those in the workplace. Some churches do this regularly for everyone with a job. Others might focus on one type of job at a particular season, such as everyone involved in education at the start of the school year, or accountants during tax season. They are asked to stand or come forward and are prayed over. See Appendix 4 for further ideas.

¹⁸ The Lausanne Covenant, section 6. The Church and Evangelism, accessed August 18, 2022, see: <https://lausanne.org/content/covenant/lausanne-covenant#cov>

Why are we so tempted to relegate 'mission' to a church program rather than a way of life? Perhaps as we began to organise our church activities, the scope of mission became limited to the activities of mission committees and the few chosen 'professional missionaries'. Thus, our challenge today is to move from a 'church with a mission program' to a 'missional church'. The activities of the mission committee are important, but we should also view the entire congregation as sent to make a difference beyond the doors of the church.

Case study: Ethiopia Kale Heywet Church, 2018-2021

Context

This case study showcases the process that one denomination took to implement a workplace ministry throughout the denomination, following key leaders embracing the need to overcome theological challenges inherent in the church's understanding of work.

Background

The Ethiopia Kale Heywet Church (EKHC), with 10,000 churches and 10 million members is Ethiopia's largest evangelical denomination. In 2017, Pastor Yoseph Bekele was appointed to be the 'Business as Mission Director' for the Kale Heywet Church. Yoseph had previously worked in youth ministries across the country, even while running several businesses of his own.

When he started, Yoseph shared that businesspeople were considered 'sinful people' in his setting. There was no understanding of the purpose of business from a godly or biblical perspective. He also shared that while Ethiopia has a rich heritage and culture, it is poor economically. Therefore, sharing about work as worship and business as mission would be critical for Ethiopian Christians to understand the biblical call to work and how to do business that honours God, which can allow them to grow economically and to flourish in God's way.

Outcomes to date

In the first three years, Yoseph and his team of BAM trainers have reached nine of the eleven regions of Ethiopia with the message of church-based business as mission. There are teams of trainers who help pastors understand the call of the local church to equip their members for the work of the ministry from Monday to Saturday. The leadership of the headquarters church of the Kale Heywet denomination has agreed that every local church should have a workplace ministry, just as they have a youth and women's ministry.

In addition to working through the local church leaders, BAM trainers are also bringing this message to youth leaders, women ministry leaders, children's ministries, prison ministries, mission departments, and the many Kale Heywet Bible schools, while also passing on the teaching and training to other denominations. As part of the training, everyone learns that there are one or

Promising Practice #7

Blessing the boats

Churches in fishing towns involve the whole community in a blessing of the boats once a year, recognizing the importance of this trade in the community and the need for God's help. How could this apply to other industries in your community?

more critical outcomes from the three Great Directives—the Great Commitment, the Great Commandment, and the Great Commission.

The Great Commandment outcome is social. Jesus tells us that the greatest commandment is about loving God whole-heartedly and loving our neighbour as ourselves. The Great Commission outcome is missional. Jesus tells us to go and make disciples, beginning in Jerusalem and reaching the whole world. But the outcomes of the Great Commitment, a universal call, is economic and ecological. For many Ethiopian Christians, this often comes as a surprise.

Yoseph reports the following:

- New practices or ministries are challenging, but the attitude of most pastors/elders is becoming positive toward BAM; pastors are now starting workplace ministries with their own budgets and assigning full-time coordinators at regional levels.
- Businesspeople gather in the local church and marketplace once per week, praying together, sharing, helping each other, and motivating other businesspeople. Their time spent in those gathered groups helps them practically work out how to be salt and light in the marketplace. They are working out their quadruple bottom line (missional, social, economic, and environmental goals) in their workplaces and understanding how to be marketplace ministers. They are paying taxes and contributing to the government, which is also allowing them to impact society. They are also getting more involved when the church gathers. In short, their attitude is ‘totally changing’.
- In a city called Wolaita, 500 businesspeople from various local Kale Heywet Churches have come together regularly to pray and encourage each other. They realised that most local churches send one missionary, but they decided to challenge themselves to *each* send one or two missionaries. They have already sent 150 missionaries, 140 within Ethiopia and 10 to Kenya and South Sudan.

Process

When the leaders of EKHC said yes to BAM, Yoseph knew that he would have to work hard to get all the regional leaders on board. He set up retreats for those leaders to go through a foundational workshop to understand the theological foundations of business. He then spent the next two years traveling throughout the country, preaching and teaching at local churches, regional meetings, and conferences to build awareness for this ministry and how it can be implemented. He recruited trainers in each region who resonated with the message and had the passion to help teach.

When a local church says yes to this ministry, it is expected to do a ‘business month’ every year, in which they preach four times on the call to ‘work as unto the Lord’ (Col 3:23). Trainers also offer members basic and advanced business classes.

Promising Practice #8

Thankful for the harvest

Churches might promote harvest festivals, giving thanks to God for the produce of the land and those who work the land. Or as a Thanksgiving focus, especially for a non-agricultural community, they celebrate the work of their hands in other ways of production of needed goods and services.

Yoseph is quick to say that this is not a fast process. You can train denominational leaders, and then there is a new election, the leaders change, and you have to train them all over again. But with several offices and a training centre at the headquarters, business as mission is firmly entrenched in the denomination, and the churches, regions, and denominations are seeing immense changes for the good. Glory to God!

Overcoming theological hindrances: conclusion

As noted above, God's mission is for all of His people; to bring their gifts, passion, talent, and vocations to bear. The gap between the church gathered and the church scattered, between pulpit pastor and marketplace minister, will be bridged as all God's people see themselves on mission in their work context. For those doing business as mission, that person's work context is the company and the mission is accomplished by fulfilling the Great Commitment, Great Commandment, and Great Commission in and through the business—with 'quadruple bottom line impact'.¹⁹

Our discussions highlighted the theological barriers above and we noted that in many local churches these are significant stumbling blocks to affirming business as mission. Our hope is that this section will provide impetus to overcome these barriers.

There are also many local churches that subscribe to a theology of work, but the application remains relatively passive in their church life. Other churches already have some level of active expression of this concept in their worship and mission practices, but there is much potential to develop. For these churches, our hope is that the case studies, promising practices, and further resources and recommendations toward the end of this report would provide 'fertiliser' for growth.

Finally, we also celebrate the fact that in many local churches and denominations there is already a robust theology of work. We see evidence in the global Church that faith-work integration is a growing movement, part of the same paradigm shift in the Church as the business as mission movement.

However, for all the progress, the potential for mission impact through businesses and businesspeople is still relatively untapped in the global Church. Our hope and prayer is that this will change with encouragement and equipping; as theological barriers are broken down and the concept of BAM is more clearly expressed in churches.

¹⁹ For a more detailed introduction to business as mission and the concept of quadruple bottom line impact, we recommend the BAM Manifesto (Appendix 5) and the Wealth Creation Manifesto (Appendix 6). See also 'BAM and the Global Workplace': <https://businessasmission.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/BAM-and-the-Global-Workplace-GWF-Advance-Paper.pdf>.

Section 2: Identifying Structural Obstacles

Recognition of theological barriers also calls for a reassessment of the local church's priorities and programs. Organisational church structure determines, to a large degree, church outcomes and impact; we get what we structure for. This begs the question, what forms are needed for what outcomes?

It is worth noting that some of the theological challenges discussed in this paper are themselves deeply rooted in the organisation of the institutional church and its structure.

The church in the New Testament

At Pentecost, the coming of the Holy Spirit marked the beginning of a movement that would eventually encompass the world, 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

This movement includes all peoples, regardless of ethnicity. As we have seen, God's mystery concerning the universal Church was revealed to Peter through a vision (Acts 10:9-16) and clarified by Paul (Eph 3:1-12). All of humanity can enter into reconciliation with God through Christ, both Jew and Gentile. This is central to the teaching of the Christian denominations including Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant and it drives the 'mission' in business as mission.

The Church after Pentecost had one overarching goal: to spread the good news that reconciliation between God and humanity was now possible through Jesus. As disciples were made, they would gather for teaching, prayer, corporate worship, and to break bread together. The latter included a meal as part of communion. This helped them grow in the 'grace and knowledge of Jesus' (2 Pet 3:18).

We see this gathering in homes around the Mediterranean, such as Lydia's home (Acts 16:11-15) and in the house of Priscilla and Aquila (Rom 16:3). They gathered in order to be strengthened for their lives scattered throughout the community and marketplace. The point of the gathering was to be better prepared to carry out the mission of Jesus (White, 2019). This is critical to understanding the activities of the early Church and the purpose of the Church today. While there is value in gathering to fellowship, learn, worship, and pray, these eventually must lead to church members being better equipped for their mission to the marketplace—and, for some, to the nations.

In Acts 9:36, we hear about the good works of Dorcas in helping the poor widows out of her business. Her reputation as a Christian businesswoman was well known. Her death, a tragedy for the poor widows, turned into an opportunity to witness to the gospel when Peter prayed for her to come back to life, leading to many coming to faith.

Throughout the New Testament, we see the power of the gospel revealed through miracles and the testimony of the disciples, who were subsequently scattered around the Roman Empire (Acts 8:4). The life of Dorcas was lived out in the marketplace, where her business gave her the capacity to help others (the Great Commitment). Her service to others was

motivated by her call to love her neighbour (the Great Commandment), eventually leading to many coming to faith (the Great Commission).

Structural and organisational challenges

As the Church has grown over time, there has been a tendency to become more focused on buildings and institutions. The structure of the church has also changed a great deal in terms of organisation and hierarchy. When the Church becomes more complex, the danger is that it can focus on itself and lose focus on the mission of God in the community.

This section will focus on structural and organisational challenges in the relationship between BAM and the Church that hinder the God-given mission of the local church, highlighting three key areas:

- **The sacred-secular divide: a false hierarchy of holiness**
- **True discipleship: making disciples that make disciples**
- **The role of pastor and denomination: form and function**

We also include two short case studies from Burkina Faso and Tanzania that show what can happen when churches align structure and organisational priorities with their mission.

The sacred-secular divide: a false hierarchy of holiness

The sacred-secular divide—sometimes known as the sacred-secular dichotomy—describes the separation between church or family life (the private sphere where faith is freely expressed) and the secular world or marketplace (the public sphere where faith is repressed or ignored).

There is a common perception that business is inherently unethical and ‘secular’, with a chasm between Christian ethics and business ethics. To combat this view, Christian leadership writer John Maxwell, said he refused to write a book on business ethics because there was ‘no such thing’. Titling his book *‘There’s No Such Thing as “Business” Ethics: There’s Only One Rule for Making Decisions’*, his point was that godly ethics apply to every area of life, including business (Maxwell, 2007).

Others, for example Albert Carr in the Harvard Business Review more than 50 years ago, have asserted that the worlds of business and faith could never merge because their ethics are incompatible (Carr, 1968). According to Carr, anyone who tries will develop a ‘nervous twitch’.

The Bible does not separate the so-called ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’. Old Testament laws around tithing, first fruits and other offerings clearly brought (agricultural) work and worship together and the

Promising Practice #9

Encourage co-vocational pastors

Pastors who are co-vocational—those who have a job in the marketplace in addition to their pastoral role—may be in a stronger position to lead and to preach. Their words from the pulpit ring true as they have similar experiences to those in the congregation. They are able to lead from example on how to be salt and light in the workplace as well as how to interweave work, ministry, and family life.

Sabbath day, Sabbath year ensured that work did not dominate life. Instead we are exhorted, '*Whatever* you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. *It is the Lord Christ you are serving*' (Col 3:23-24, emphasis added). Work has spiritual consequences. We are told that, 'Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is *worse than an unbeliever*' (1 Tim 5:8, emphasis added).

As already noted, Paul's theology affirms that our whole lives are sacred, 'Consequently, you are... members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone... And in him, you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit' (Eph 2:19-22).

The early apostles taught integration between a life of faith and work and countered cultural philosophies that divided sacred and secular. However, attitudes towards business hardened within a few hundred years. Eusebius, Bishop of Caesarea (c.260–c.340), used the Aristotelian concept of separation between the contemplative life and practical life in his theology, creating a distinction between the 'perfect' (sacred) and the 'permitted' (secular). St Jerome (331–420) asserted, 'A merchant can seldom if ever, please God', and Augustine (354–430) wrote, 'Business is itself evil'. Although, the latter did not believe that business was intrinsically evil, but that most work had become corrupted by sin.

Much later, Aquinas (1225-1274) praised the work of merchants, farmers, and craftsmen, however, he also maintained a hierarchical relationship between the *vita contemplativa* (sacred) and *vita activa* (secular) (Blainey, 2013).

Business as mission is deeply rooted in Judeo-Christian thinking, especially thinking around work, money and the marketplace. Around the world today, there are BAM practitioners among all the branches of Christianity including Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant. While it is true that many of the recent seminal publications in these areas of faith and work integration are written by Protestants, it is noteworthy that the Catechism of the Catholic Church presents a theology of work and the marketplace in Part Three, Chapter 2, Article 7: The Seventh Commandment.²⁰

The importance of work to human flourishing was recognised by Saint Benedict (c.480 – c. 547) who is venerated in the Roman Catholic, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches, and Anglican Communion. He believed physical labour was necessary for the good of the soul.

In 1981, Pope John Paul II released *Laborem Exercens*²¹ an encyclical that elaborated on the Catechism (built upon Pope Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*, published 90 years before) and defined at least three aspects of the spirituality of work:

- Human work and rest are a sharing in the activity of God, the Creator.

²⁰ See: https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM, accessed August 2022.

²¹ See: https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html, accessed August 2022.

- Work is following in the footsteps of Jesus, a carpenter, and Paul, a tentmaker, and many others in both Testaments.
- 'By enduring the toil of work in union with Christ crucified for us, man in a way collaborates with the Son of God for the redemption of humanity.'²²

Throughout the centuries, numerous Roman Catholic orders and movements have emerged, celebrating and empowering what Catholics, and many Protestants, refer to as 'the laity', those people who stand outside of the orders of the clergy. Theirs is the place of mission in and to the world, their presence a sanctifying force. *Lumen Gentium*, one of the principal documents of the Second Vatican Council, teaches, 'worshipping everywhere by their holy actions, the laity consecrate the world itself to God' (Catechism, No. 901).

Two, very different 20th Century movements typify the engagement of the laity in the mission of the Catholic Church. The 'Prelature of the Holy Cross and Opus Dei', more commonly known simply as Opus Dei is committed to helping its members by offering guidance and support in the practice of holiness in their daily life and everyday work. *Opus Dei* is Latin for 'Work of God' and the order was founded by Catholic priest, St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer y Albás who was inspired by the teachings of Saint Benedict. It began in Spain in 1928 and was officially approved by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

The second movement is the Catholic Workers Movement, founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin in 1933. Their commitment was to live in local communities, primarily in urban centres, and, through their daily work, promote economic, social and compassionate justice.

The Protestant Reformation brought a shift in the theology of work and vocation, but also a radical departure from the dominating structure of the Catholic Church. The Church had grown and changed through the centuries from groups of disciples with a developing structure to eventually, by the time of the Reformation in the 16th Century, becoming one of the most powerful institutions in the western world, both politically and spiritually.

Therefore, the Reformation was a time of radical change in theological emphasis and church structure. The Catholic model was built around a hierarchy of professional clergy that extended from rural communities to urban Rome. Despite the later 'laity-led' movements described above, at the time of the Reformation church governance and the exclusive role of the 'professional clergy' was well established. The sacred-secular divide had produced a 'clergy-laity divide' that emphasised the special role of the clergy and limited the contribution to worship and ministry by the individuals who made up the bulk of the congregation. This divide did not cultivate the calling of the 'ordinary Christian' whose vocation was considered less holy than that of the priest or monk.

The Reformation altered the theological foundation on which this attitude towards the laity has been established. From the belief that no special role is needed to be justified

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

Colossians 3:23-24

²² *Laborem Exercens*, part 27. Human Work in the Light of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ

by faith, Martin Luther developed his theology of vocations. This affirmed that all Christians could serve God and neighbour, outworked through many vocations.

The early reformers maintained Luther's teaching to break down the sacred-secular divide. Calvin (1509-1564) developed a theology of calling, 'Every man's mode of life, therefore, is a kind of station assigned him by the Lord... in following your proper calling, no work will be so mean and sordid as not to have splendour and value in the eye of God' (Calvin, 2008, revised edition).

The Puritans emerged from the Church of England in the late 16th century, and the Quakers (Religious Society of Friends) from the Puritans in the middle of the 17th century. Benjamin Franklin was born to a Puritan family in 1706 and lived in Philadelphia, which developed as a Quaker centre. These new religious groups enthusiastically embraced capitalism which developed as an economic system around the same time in Great Britain, but their view of calling gradually changed, undoubtedly influenced by the Enlightenment.

Os Guinness, author and Christian philosopher, dubbed this the 'Protestant distortion'.

Slowly, words such as *work*, *trade*, *employment*, and *occupation* came to be used interchangeably with *calling* and *vocation*. As this happened, the guidelines for callings shifted; instead of being directed by the commands of God, they were seen as directed by duties and roles in society. The original demand that each Christian should have a calling was boiled down to the demand that each citizen should have a job (Guinness, 2003 p. 39).

John Knapp's *How the Church Fails Businesspeople: And What Can be Done About it?* argued that the church often adhered to a false hierarchy of vocation, with clergy or 'full-time ministers' at the top, the 'helping professions' in the middle, and business, government, and other work at the bottom. He proposed a redefinition of vocation to bring it back into alignment with the reformers 'an all-encompassing call to discipleship in every area of life' (Knapp, 2012 p. 94).

The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) similarly works to break down the sacred-secular divide. Mark Greene of LICC recounted in *The Great Divide*,

I'd been speaking at a weekend conference full of people dedicated to reading, studying, applying, and teaching the Bible. At the end of the conference, as we were all leaving, a man, probably in his 60s, his coat already buttoned, came up to me, looked me in the eye, and said, 'You just validated my whole life.' I was speechless. I was completely taken aback, confused, bewildered actually. I must have looked it because he then went on, 'You see I worked in insurance.' And before I could say anything at all, the man in the coat left.

But I understood. It wasn't because I'd offered the conference a robust biblical theology of insurance. In fact, I don't think I mentioned the word 'insurance' at all. I'd been speaking on Colossians 1 and 3, Genesis 1, Ruth 2 and Acts 27. And the man in the coat had probably read and perhaps studied all those passages before. But over that weekend the Spirit of God illuminating those passages had assured him that the God he had given his life to had been interested in his life's work all along.

All those years in insurance had counted for something in his heavenly Father's eyes. He hadn't wasted his life. (Greene, 2020, p. 3)

Christians who work in the marketplace, faithful members of the local church, are often not seen as working 'full-time' for God like their pastor. This misunderstanding is the very essence of the sacred-secular divide and is still strongly present in many local churches and denominations. Understanding that every believer is called to be 'on mission' full-time, just as the pastor or staff of the local church, brings equality of calling.

As discussed earlier, whether pastors in the pulpit or business leaders in the marketplace, all Christians are called to live for Christ 'full-time'. Indeed, we are all called to be 'full-time Christian workers' or 'full-time ministers' because we are all Christians who live to glorify our God in whatever we do, wherever we do it (1 Cor:10:31). These expectations should be especially true in our daily activities outside the church building and the norm for *all* believers.

Frequently, Christians embrace the non-biblical hierarchy described above, that Christians who are paid by other Christians are more holy or more acceptable to God, while believers involved in other types of labour, work, or careers are somehow lesser. We need to work to transform this unbiblical thinking in the global Church. While there will always be a need for missionaries, pastors, and other church staff, we are all ambassadors of Christ.

This is one of the advantages of business as mission strategies proliferating alongside traditional missionary-sending models. Whereas, the traditional missionaries naturally model church leadership activities (pastoring, Bible teaching, church leadership, etc.), business as mission leaders can actively model to new believers vibrant leadership in the marketplace. They can show what a life integrated between faith and work can look like. This in turn can help to break down the false hierarchy of vocation and help to perpetuate Christian leadership in the public square.

We can see a historical problem in places where an emerging church has only received traditional missionaries, that new believers will naturally come to think that to 'really serve God' they should leave their businesses or professions and become a pastor or missionary. This leads to a lack of Christian leaders in the marketplace and those who are able to mentor them. Making disciples and gospel transformation is then limited to the church sphere, in the context of church activities only. Gospel transformation in other spheres of society naturally remains shallow in this scenario. It is impossible to change a culture if you have not equipped ambassadors and priests to be culture changers. While we do need to affirm a genuine call to church leadership, we need to equally affirm the call to be Jesus-followers in the marketplace.

True discipleship: making disciples who make disciples

Over the years, churches have increasingly structured discipleship activities, in some cases reducing life-on-life impact to five-step programs or doctrinal studies taught by the pastoral team.

Christianity is like a football game. Twenty thousand spectators in desperate need of exercise, watching 22 players in desperate need of rest.

Silvoso (2009, p. 26)

As churches have drifted away from whole-life discipleship, this has had an impact on how individuals see (or fail to see) their call to daily live out God's mission. Too often, discipleship is a short course focused on specific doctrine instead of the biblical view of being a life-long learner, dependent on God, and making other disciples. Worse, some churches only encourage their church leaders to disciple others, rather than encouraging every member to engage in this privilege and responsibility. These organisational and structural emphases can cause church members to disqualify themselves, believing that they are not capable of discipleship, nor approved to do it.

When church members have a correct view of themselves as disciples on mission to make disciples, it changes their understanding of their role within their family, community, and work. Businesspeople who see themselves as disciples-making disciples will see their business environment as a mission field through which they can glorify God. A church that has a biblical view of discipleship, God's mission, and wealth creation will disciple business owners and professionals to daily live out God's mission within their company, and in connection with their church.

The role of pastor and denomination: form and function

While there are good examples of local churches and denominations that reach out to communities, nations, and the marketplace, too many have become too inward-looking, not intentionally making disciples in the marketplace. They do not see the importance of what is happening from Monday to Saturday and focus mainly on what is happening in the church building on a Sunday. Professional clergy can tend to see Sunday as 'the main thing' whereas, for most of their congregation, Monday to Saturday is 'the main thing.'

For many pastors, their ministry is done solely within the four walls of the church building, with ministry outside those four walls limited to projects like social action and monthly witnessing. This can create an atmosphere or attitude of 'holiness within' and 'worldliness without', perpetuating the sacred-secular dichotomy and sending a message that the lives of the congregation in the marketplace is merely 'worldly business'.

We have seen these attitudes worked out as follows:

- Pastors who have never worked outside the church structure often have challenges relating well to church members who have practical work issues.
- A businessperson in a church feels misunderstood (in their daily struggles), judged (for seeking profit), and used (for their financial giving potential).
- Some churches tell their young people to not go to university but to study to be evangelists, implying that professional work is less, or even evil.
- Instead of equipping the saints to disciple others, some church leaders believe that only the pastoral team are qualified for this work, thus limiting multiplication and discipleship and promoting the hierarchy.
- Pastors can feel threatened by a financially successful business owner, who has influence in the community and has a ministry outside the authority of the church.
- Businesspeople are often decisive and quick-acting and may find the church very bureaucratic and slow in taking tangible steps.

- Most Christians working in business have checks and balances (tools and norms) that many local churches could learn from to improve their management.

Both the structure of church and pastoral attitudes toward the marketplace have their roots in pastoral training and historical precedent. Many church denominations provide theological training for pastors who serve in local congregations, do church planting, or serve domestically and abroad. These training institutions are shaped by historical norms whose roots can be traced back to the Reformation.

Such schools and seminaries have a systematic approach to pastoral training built around Bible study, theology, ministry, and general education. Courses dealing with life-skill training, literacy, animal husbandry, agriculture, and other fields of study may be extracurricular, but not integral to theological training.

This shortcoming goes back to the vision of the church that divides sacred from secular and doesn't recognise the centrality of work and business to human flourishing in God's design. While change is coming to many theological institutions, it can be slow. Successfully integrating the sanctity of work and a biblical framework for business and economics into theological and pastoral training continues to be a challenge.

The process of selecting leadership for the church in the first century was a critical issue. Those selected to be leaders would be responsible as 'under shepherds' of Christ (1 Pet 5:1-7). We see Jesus spending the night praying before selecting the twelve disciples (Luke 6:12). We see Paul devoting considerable attention to leadership selection, assuming that the leaders are all very well-known to the congregation (1 Tim 3:1-13; Tit 1:5-9). Peter makes it clear that leaders must first and foremost be disciples themselves, serving as 'examples to the flock' (1 Pet 5:3). Yet this is a sharp contrast with how church leaders are selected in the 21st century.

Today, potential leaders typically decide to attend seminaries or schools of theological education after sensing a 'calling' to church work. Once selected for admission, they usually leave the daily context of the church they have known and spend three or more years focused on academic study. Growing and maturing as a disciple can be secondary to academic studies. As they approach graduation, prospective church leaders send out resumes and are eventually presented to a congregation who may know little about how they live their lives. In extreme cases, whether or not they are 'called' by the church might be based on their academic credentials and their ability to deliver a compelling sermon. With this approach and the intense pressure of leadership, it should not be surprising that church leaders occasionally lack in Christian maturity and godly character, with some not able to resist the temptations of the modern pulpit.

The emphasis on knowledge and structure has been partially responsible for the clergy-laity divide. Too often, church is seen as a place to go for programs, rather than to gather as a people to be equipped and disciplined.

For many pastors, ministry is done within the four walls of the church building with ministry outside those four walls limited to projects like outreach events and monthly witnessing. This can create an atmosphere of 'holiness within' and 'worldliness without,' resulting in the dichotomy wherein the lives of the congregation in the marketplace is merely worldly business.

Promising Practice #10

Consider new vocabulary for teaching on faith and work

Certain words or concepts need to be redefined or avoided as we teach against the sacred-secular divide. The following table contains some suggestions:

Someone says:	What it might imply (not biblical):	Better words or concepts to use:
Called	Only some Christians are called, sounds mysterious.	All Christians have a calling to serve in God's kingdom and be salt and light in their daily lives.
Full-time ministry	Ministry is within a certain time rather than a lifestyle	Use an adjective prior to 'ministry.' For example, 'pastoral
Clergy/laity	Some individuals have more important role than others.	'Pulpit pastor' and 'marketplace minister'. We are a kingdom of priests.
Go to church	The church building is the primary place to worship God.	'Church gathered' (when in the church building), 'church scattered' or 'church sent out' (when not in the building, but being the church every day).
Missionary	Special people while other Christians are exempt from God's mission.	We are all on mission, though some are "Cross-cultural gospel worker." Others go locally to their own workplace.
Worship	Often refers only to the songs we sing during the service when the church is gathered.	Worship is to be all of life. We do work as an act of worship, raising children as an act of worship, chores as an act of worship, etc.
'The ministry'	Only one and it is only within the church building.	Living a life on mission, ministry is a natural flow every day.
Evangelism	It is an event with a program.	Life-on-life evangelism in every place and space.
Discipleship	Program about doctrine for new Christians.	Lifetime learning to apply God's work and be obedient to Him.
Money as root of evil	Implies that money itself is evil but money is actually neutral.	We can worship God through how we use our money. Wealth creation is part of the covenant.
Commissioning	Sending out a few people who are selected to work for God.	All Christians are sent by God to be on mission every day.
'I'm not gifted in evangelism.'	Used as an excuse to not share Christ with others.	All Christians are called to share Christ with others, but we need to understand that there are different ways to do this.

Table 1: Alternative vocabulary for a biblical view of faith and work

Structural change in a denomination: Assemblies of God, Burkina Faso

Background

The Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso (AG-BF) is made up of 6000 churches spread throughout the country. Since the arrival of the gospel with American missionaries in 1921, the AG-BF has experienced different stages of growth over its lifetime.

Regarding the perception of work and the embracing of business as mission, we can say that the Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso, in the past, had not been able to convincingly integrate this issue into how it operates. At first, work was not seen as related to mission. The Christian who had his/her business did not understand this as an opportunity for mission in the marketplace. Church and marketplace were separate. There was a time to do your business or cultivate your field, for example, and a time to go to church.

The matters covered in church were not brought to the place of business. Of course, missionaries placed emphasis on formal and non-formal education by opening schools, but at the start this was mainly intended to enable people to be able to read and transcribe the Bible and to contribute to the expansion of the gospel in the country. In one of the mission stations, there was one missionary who encouraged some businesspeople to consider their business as their ministry, but generally, business owners were not considered to be doing ministry while doing business.

Outcomes to date

Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso have accepted workplace ministries as an effective tool that can transform and change the lives of Christians who will then impact their communities in Burkina Faso. The implementation of workplace ministries throughout the denomination began in 2021, according to the organisational structure of AG-BF, which is made up of 73 regions within the nation. The expansion of the workplace ministry throughout the territory will therefore be done through the establishment in each ecclesiastical region through its Bible schools and coordinated by the Association Évangélique d'Appui au Développement Burkina Faso (AEAD).

A first step has already been taken in the presentation of the need and opportunity to the leaders of the 73 regions. The other steps will consist in integrating workplace ministry courses into the training curricula in the Bible schools of Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso. These schools will serve as incubation centres for the expansion of a program called 'Discipling Marketplace Leaders' in Burkina Faso through the 73 regions. Ongoing periodic training will also be organised.

Process

Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso has used two business areas to bring discipleship ministry to the workplace, in the education sector and the health sector.

As mentioned above, AG-BF's involvement in the formal and non-formal education sector has facilitated the ability to embrace a workplace discipleship ministry. Many evangelical schools have been built across the country in the education sector and these constitute ministries of discipleship in the marketplace. AG-BF is also involved in the health sector

Promising Practice #11

Move from a 'pastoral care contract' to a 'pastoral equipping contract'

Neil Hudson describes in his book Imagine Church, that many churches operate on a pastoral care model—an unspoken 'contract' that the pastor cares for the members, and in return, the members support the pastor's vision, tithe, volunteer, etc. Instead, the model should make clear that the role of the leaders is to equip the congregation for service, both for when they are the gathered church, as well as when they are the scattered church.

through the creation of health centres offering healthcare services to populations.

Beyond that Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso has many members who are entrepreneurs in different economic sectors of Burkina Faso. This provides a fertile ground on which a workplace ministry is being based. AEAD, serving the vision of the Assemblies of God, will advocate that a 'Workers Ministry' be set up in every local church, alongside the youth, women's, men's, and children's departments. AEAD will contact other denominations to share the possibility of building partnerships relating to workplace ministries, such as the Christian Missionary Alliance (CMA).

AEAD Burkina Faso has translated the Wealth Creation Manifesto into French and is using it in churches, Bible schools, and pastors' meetings. This offers a unique opportunity for BAM to serve the church with such tools that will equip them to fulfil the Great Commission and address the shortcomings in the theology of work and of wealth creation that are not always valued in the local church.

Structural change in a local church: Full Victory Gospel Ministry, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

Pastor Anthony is a pastor with the Full Victory Gospel Ministries in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. When he attended a 'BAM and the Church' workshop in 2019, it resonated deeply in his soul, and he began to teach and preach about it to his congregation. He helped the youth group identify business opportunities that they could do independently, and they started a successful spice business.

Pastor Anthony's wife, Leticiah, is a lawyer who has been working on women's rights cases for many years. She said that the day that they heard the message about the role of the church in BAM being one that equips people 'to go' rather than bringing people into the church 'to receive' was the 'best day ever'.

Leticiah had been working at the Women's Legal Aid Shelter, and it was very discouraging work. She wanted to leave the work of being a lawyer and 'work for God' (meaning work at a church). But the message of BAM and the Church changed her perspective on her work.

Since then, Pastor Anthony and Leticiah have poured themselves into their work with new energy. An opportunity came to work with 80 women in their community, which comprises many poor, many Muslims, and many people with AIDS. Many of these individuals have access to antiretroviral medication, but they have not the money for the food that must be taken with the medicine for it to be effective.

Leticiah shared that many have told themselves that they are dying, so why do business? Leticiah was asked to offer counsel to these individuals in different forms, including spiritual counselling and vocational counselling. This was an excellent shift for her, and her testimony then began to pour out about how she is doing her work as an act of worship, as well as teaching others to do the same. Leticiah and Pastor



Image 1: Bible Study group with Muslim women

Anthony do this through their church, which has now doubled in membership. The stories they share are amazing as they have poured themselves into these individuals. They have developed 25 different businesses concepts that can be successful in their area and they are training individuals in these business ideas.

Outcomes

Here are several other stories from their church (names changed for confidentiality):

Aleema is a Muslim woman with AIDS. She became a Muslim when she married her husband. He passed away from AIDS not too long ago and since then Aleema has become a Christian and has learned from Leticiah how to make liquid soap and doormats. For the first time in her life, she now owns a phone and can pay her own health insurance. Her children are amazed that they no longer need to send money to take care of their mother!



Image 2: Doormat by Aleema

Danah was a Muslim and married to a Muslim man, both are HIV positive. Danah's husband Ahmed is a habitual offender and has served 26 years over five different sentences for armed robbery. Even while he was in prison, he continued to do illegal business. But by going through the counselling with Pastor Anthony and Leticiah, Ahmed first discovered with great surprise that Christians are loving. Then he learned, with his wife, to do business. They are now raising rabbits, ducks, chickens and doing shoemaking. He is also harvesting a milk-like substance from cockroaches as an additional business. He comes early to the church (this group meets at the church four times per week) and sweeps, mops, and cleans the place voluntarily. He is successful, and people trust him for the first time in his life. Danah has given her life to Christ, but Ahmed has not yet.

Pastor Anthony and Leticiah have also started three savings and loan groups through their church, where the people save, lend money to themselves as a group, and receive any interest paid as dividends. They can't seem to open enough of these before they are full and need to start another one. One woman doing business now because of this program has saved \$450 and has bought a plot of land. She is amazed by this!

Pastor Anthony and Leticiah continue to share the good news that work is a good thing and that we have been put on this earth for a short period of time to give our time, talent, and treasure to bring the kingdom of God on earth a little more each day. They have been invited to speak on TV and radio throughout Tanzania.

Taking the Assemblies of God in Burkina Faso as an example, AG-BF has ten Bible schools including a Faculty of Theology (cf 2021). One particular school 'Ecole de Formation Biblique et Agricole de Banakeledaga' offers both theology and agricultural training within the curriculum in partnership with the government's Agricultural Training Institute and international NGOs working in that area. During graduation the students will both receive the Diploma of Theology and a certificate in agriculture.

Identifying structural obstacles: conclusion

The lived experience of many Christians in business is that their regular 'church gathered' experience is not well-integrated with their marketplace roles. For them, the sacred-secular divide means their worship experience does not integrate with their work and their work does not contribute to their faith. There is a false spiritual hierarchy, a clergy-laity divide, where professional clergy are considered 'superior' to business owners, managers or employees and those who provide professional services to businesses.

As Matthew Kaemingk and Cory Willson exhort in *Work and Worship: Reconnecting Labour and Liturgy*, what is needed is an understanding that the professional clergy minister to congregations that include 'marketplace ministers' whose own 'congregations' are found in the marketplace (Kaemingk and Willson, 2020). In the case of a BAM companies, the 'congregation' includes employees, suppliers, clients/customers, competitors, regulatory authorities, and the local community. A challenge for the institutional church is to include this understanding in seminary programs.

Some Christians who work in the marketplace (in such places as business, government, and education) do not feel valued by their church, while others feel a need to improve their relationships with church leaders. In any case, as members of the church, all Christians, regardless of their workplace, should be integrated into the church structures and ministries, be it in the youth ministry, the women's ministry, or children's ministry, for example. Given such concerns to integrate believers, we could call the effort to reach out and integrate those in the workplace the 'workers ministry' of the local church. In churches that have deployed such a ministry, Christians in business tend to report back to the church that they are now an extension of the church's ministry in the marketplace and are being valued as they are commissioned by the local church.

Christian businesspeople also have a part to play in fostering healthy relationships with their church. They can help the church understand the role of business in God's kingdom and accept accountability to the church in their lives. As the church takes ministering to them seriously, they will need to move past wounds or misunderstandings that may have occurred and become advocates for change in the church culture.

Church structures matter. If you want to build cars, you need a structure to build cars. If you want to build hydro-electric dams, you structure for the building of dams. Understanding the vision and purpose of the church gathering precedes the structure and defines its desired outcome. When the Church gathered ceases to develop passionate disciples, it is a warning that the structure needs to be modified or changed.

The church in the Book of Acts was structured to empower every believer to be light and leaven through their lives. As described in Acts, this 'integrated view' was often expressed in their businesses and occupations. God intends that His mission in the world be undertaken by all His people wherever the Spirit leads them.

Promising Practice #12

Show me your budget!

Show me your church budget and I'll tell you what you value. As you look for leaders to lead this ministry, don't forget to make it part of the church budget. Implementing a new ministry will take time, treasure, and talent.

The following table shows a summary of the theological and structural challenges that have been covered in this paper thus far:

Integrated view	Dualistic view
Our whole life matters to God and we should give Him glory in all we do.	Sacred-secular divide. Only some activities or days are holy. The rest is not important to God.
Leaders should equip all the saints for service in all aspects of society.	Pastors and full-time missionaries are more holy than others.
Discipleship is a life-long practice of learning how to follow Jesus Christ in every aspect of life.	Discipleship is a six-week study on church doctrines.
Ministry is an outcome of using our skills in service to God.	Ministry happens within the four walls of the church or in a church-sanctioned outreach.
We worship God throughout the week through our work as well as our daily activities. We worship God on Sundays in every aspect of the service (prayer, singing, giving, etc).	Worship is singing on Sunday mornings.
Purpose of church is to equip and send. What happens on Sunday impacts what happens Monday through Saturday.	Purpose of church is to meet together, worship and learn once or twice a week.
All Christians have a role in God's mission. We are all called to belong to Christ and to serve Him in our daily lives.	Only 'professional' missionaries are doing God's work.
Work is respected and business can honor God.	Making money is a sin.

Table 2: A summary of theological and structural challenges to BAM and the Church

Section 3: Cultural Challenges to the Integration of BAM and the Church

Our roots: cultural attitudes to work in biblical times

The Bible teaches that humanity was created by a working God to glorify Him through our work. From biblical times through pre-industrial communities, work was primarily done to meet basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, and security. Work has always required cooperation. What work is required in such communities is not unique to those of different faiths. While, work is an everyday reality among all cultures and traditions, the division of labour, systems for work, and attitudes to work have varied widely across time and place.

In biblical times, acquiring a trade was the duty of every Jewish boy to learn from his parents, or at least within the tight-knit community. Failing to teach your son a trade was equivalent to teaching him robbery. This was true even for the Levites and religious teachers, as any 'advanced study of the law that was unaccompanied by a trade would end in nothing and lead to sin.' (Lai, 2021 p.46)

After the Levites, those skilled in trade were among the most respected people in the Jewish community, as we can see in many scripture references throughout the Old Testament (Exod 31:2-6, Job 1, Prov 31:10-31). The same was true of the Pharisees, as each worked a trade to earn a living. This included Paul as a tentmaker, a trade he learned prior to becoming an apostle. Paul used his work as a means for spreading the good news and, as we have seen, this pattern continued as people gave their lives to Jesus, often while doing their work (for example, Lydia, Dorcas, Priscilla, and Aquila).

First Century Jewish Rabbi Zadok said, 'Do not make the Torah a crown with which to aggrandise yourself, nor use it as a spade with which to dig.'²³ In other words, in the Jewish tradition religious knowledge or preaching abilities should not be used for financial profit or gaining fame and personal material wealth, but rather as a complementary talent to other valuable and respected trades which would provide a livelihood.

In contrast to the Hebrews, the Greeks had a very different view of work. Greek philosophers separated the world into two parts: the material or physical world and the transcendent or mental, non-material world. The Greeks honoured educated thinkers, while the Jews honoured those with calloused hands.

Aristotle saw that enslaved people were indispensable for creating a situation where citizens could enjoy leisure. He attempted to prove that the slave, though a human being, is designed by nature to be a beast of burden. One view prevalent among Greek thinkers suggest that work was innately shameful and dishonourable, it was something done by slaves and had no implicit dignity (Stevens, 2021). This line of Greek thought has had widespread influence on global culture and views of work.

In the remainder of this portion of the paper, we will look at specific cultural barriers to implementing business as mission in the Church in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, and Europe. These views have been gathered through research and interviews with ministry leaders in the various regions. The contributors to these sub-sections recognise that they are unable to speak for an entire culture, let alone an entire continent.

²³ From Pirkei Avot 4:5 or 'Ethics of the Fathers' in Jackson (2008)

We therefore acknowledge that what is described in each sub-section is somewhat limited, since individual perspectives and experiences are, by nature, narrow. However, these are valid perspectives from each region that highlight some unique culture implications for 'BAM and the Church'. They also reveal themes that occur across regions and even globally.

Cultural obstacles to BAM and church collaboration in Africa and the Middle East

Historical cultural challenges in sub-Saharan Africa

To dare to speak of all sub-Saharan Africa with one voice is dangerous and presumptuous, given that it includes 46 countries and many people groups, faiths, and cultures. However, the authors of this paper have tried to extract some common themes that can be found in many places throughout the church gathered in sub-Saharan Africa.

We can certainly agree that almost all of sub-Saharan Africa was influenced by western missionaries. In addition, almost all sub-Saharan Africa suffered from the slave trade, colonisation, extreme poverty, and exploitation. In this section, we want to address how this impacted denominations, culture, and the gathered church as it relates to the integration of faith and work.

Traditional African religions can be described as animistic (the belief that objects, places, and creatures have a distinct spiritual essence) with various polytheistic and pantheistic expressions. The role of humanity from this perspective is to harmonise nature with the supernatural.²⁴ The heavy emphasis on the spiritual world often led to a lack of personal responsibility or ability to impact the present or the future, as it was the spirits or ancestors who would bestow blessings or misfortune on the living descendants. This, in turn, impacts internal motivation or personal responsibility as it relates to work and productivity.

The transatlantic slave trade between the 15th and 19th centuries was conducted mainly by European and American nations for economic wealth. While the oppression and enslavement of people was not a new practice (and can be found throughout history and Scripture), it did impact the view of work in sub-Saharan Africa. The slave trade fomented an understanding that work was for others, work was slavery, and work was drudgery. In Kenya, during colonisation, people were forced to live in camps and were only allowed out to work for the colonists. The notion of the beauty and joy of work as a God-given calling was crushed.

Western missionaries began their work in Africa in the early 1800s parallel to the economic and political colonisation that was taking place.²⁵ Missionary models since then have, for the most part, created a profound dichotomy between faith and work, as many missionaries have encouraged new Christians to leave the marketplace and train as pastors or missionaries. Work outside the church has been considered worldly, to be abandoned, while pastors and missionaries have been elevated as being more spiritual and holy.

²⁴ See: "Traditional African Religions," in *Wikipedia*, accessed December 9, 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Traditional_African_religions&oldid=1059473954.

²⁵ See: "CRL Resources on 19th-Century Christian Missionary Work in Africa" accessed December 15, 2021, <https://www.crl.edu/focus/article/6696>.

Modern day cultural challenges in sub-Saharan Africa

There are three cultural challenges in sub-Saharan Africa that we have identified in the modern church today, and these can be seen across denominations.

The first cultural challenge results from the extreme poverty faced in many parts of Africa. The church has been refuge for people in times of trouble. Historically, there has been a well-meant but unhealthy charity given over centuries and this has contributed to an unhealthy view of work and even a damaging view of self. The poor are encouraged to rely on prayer, the idea that God's heart is close to the poor, and by extension that the wealthy are evil. There has not been any teaching on creating wealth or managing wealth from the Bible. Rather, a complacency and victimhood mentality has taken hold of many believers.

The second cultural challenge is the elevation of the pastor and church leader as a professional class, relegating the rest of the members to be passive consumers. There is an unhealthy, unbiblical 'hierarchy of holiness' that tends to place businesspeople at the bottom. Businesspeople are seen as secular and lovers of money, and if successful they are often seen as corrupt. Pastors and church leaders are usually placed at the top of this hierarchy and can then demand to be treated, as some have described, as kings or 'next to God'. There is an even more damaging dependency on pastors for all spiritual questions and answers and the disqualification of members to be part of the priesthood of believers and ministers of the gospel in their spheres of influence.

Lastly, the 'prosperity gospel' has thrived in Africa, mainly through the Pentecostal churches, in large part again because of the high levels of poverty. In his book, *The Prosperity Gospel in Africa*, author Marius Nel says that prosperity theology teaches that wealth is not achieved through hard work and a strict moral code but 'rather through God's desire to bless people with miraculous wealth, either through their faith or by vanquishing the spiritual powers of evil that continually want to thwart God's miracles' (Nel, 2020 p. 9).

Pew Research reports that when Pentecostal Christians were asked this question, 'Will God grant material prosperity to all believers who have enough faith?' 85% of Kenyan Pentecostals, 90% of South African Pentecostals, and 95% of Nigerian Pentecostals said yes (Nel, 2020 p. 3). This perspective emphasises faith and miracles, not on personal responsibility and the capacity of each person to *be* the miracle for which they are praying.

In contrast, the book edited by Dena Freeman, *Pentecostalism and Development: Churches, NGOs and Social Change in Africa* uses numerous case studies to demonstrate that many Pentecostal churches have been proactive in promoting economic and moral development that addresses both personal and structural obstacles to human flourishing. Pentecostals are engaging in economic development, social justice, environmental issues, race, class and gender issues in ways that connect individual liberation through empowerment by the Holy Spirit to the lived experience of economic development and social justice.

Cultural challenges in North Africa and the Middle East

At the outset of this sub-section, it is important to clarify the difference between Christianity in the Middle East and North Africa. The Evangelical Church in North Africa is young and is not as well developed as churches we see elsewhere. Therefore, many would not consider

it as a church but as a movement. There are many western Christian organisations compared to the limited number of believers and many local churches are dependent on the West for their financial needs. Therefore, the foreign influence on believers in North Africa is strong and many foreign organisations have inevitably shaped the Christian minority after their own beliefs.

As for the Middle East, there is historic Christianity. The highest percentage of Christians in the Middle East are in Egypt. The Coptic Orthodox Church (with 10 million followers) is still the most prominent, and most influential, Church in the Middle East. The Coptic Church is like the Roman Catholic Church in many aspects, including having seven sacraments, mass, priests, and other rituals.

Evangelical churches in Egypt represent less than one million (1% of the country's total population). Most evangelicals are generally not wealthy, while in the Coptic Orthodox Church, there is a huge gap between the very rich and the extremely poor. However, giving is better in the Coptic Church, even if it is due to a feeling of obligation and guilt.

The first obstacle to business as mission across this region is the sacred-secular divide. There isn't enough teaching and preaching in churches on a proper theology of calling or the theology of work. Business is not viewed as a place of mission. All ministry happens within the confines of the four walls of the church.

Highly linked to the sacred-secular divide is the clergy-laity divide. Coptic theology has not traditionally expressed every member's work as a calling or vocation. This tends to get carried over in other denominations in the region as well. The clergy are the actors in God's mission, and the laity are the beneficiaries. It is particularly challenging in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region to think of flattening this hierarchy. These societies revere religious leaders and naturally give them a place of honour. This sets high expectations for local church communities. Without an obvious, formal religious leader, a church community can lose its legitimacy in the eyes of society. This also presents a challenge to the leaders. When they are put up on a pedestal, many church leaders tend to like it up there so their behaviour can lead to reinforcing the divide.

There is also a challenge in the understanding of mission. Churches in the region have either been planted by or have benefitted from western mission work since the 19th century. So, the understanding of mission among many church-goers is that they are the beneficiaries of the work of mission, rather than the instigators of it. The work of mission is cross-cultural, from 'the West to the rest', and is exclusively the work of the commissioned professionals. It is only now that this thinking is starting to change. Many churches are just starting to realise that they, the local congregation, are responsible for doing mission work in their contexts. The implications of this shift have not yet filtered down enough to the businesspeople in the congregations. Often, churches see their businesspeople only as a source of money. In the evangelical churches, there is some mistrust between the church and businesspeople.

Corruption in this region is rampant. The culture of the world and the majority Islamic religion has infiltrated the church. There is a great need for deeper discipleship in the church in this region, including teaching and practicing biblical integrity, and teaching on

the value of work as ordained by God for the benefit of the individual, the community, and for the glory of God.

Finally, there is a minority complex among Christians in the region. Christians feel that MENA is an Islamic region with limited Christian presence and impact. This can lead to the view that it is a bad strategy to invest in the region. Young Christians tend to pursue emigration and want to establish their lives elsewhere. Those with financial means frequently want to make their investments in a place that they feel is more secure for them and their families.

Cultural obstacles to BAM and church collaboration in Asia

Cultural challenges in South Asia

Attitudes to work in South Asia vary and include some work that is respected and affirmed and some that is not. In India, for example, the caste system has kept 'low level' work for low caste people who are mostly involved in cleaning, domestic help, manual labour, scavengers, and work similar to this. These people are often not respected. However, professions like nurses, teachers, government jobs, and jobs in the private sectors are respected. People receive treatment based on their work and position.

In South Asia, especially in India, the Church is battling the dichotomy of sacred and secular. This is mainly because of the myopic understanding and teaching that is received every Sunday. Mainline denominations are often in 'maintenance mode' when it comes to mission. Hence, there are not enough efforts to encourage congregants to see the different sectors of society as their own mission fields.

The Church in South Asia views businesspeople primarily as a source of tithes and offerings, rather than having a contribution as effective leaders in the marketplace. At times, the Church is negligent towards businesspeople. Businesspeople might be given positions in the churches because of the money they bring, rather than for their gifts or talents. This makes some businesspeople happy because of the respectable positions they are given, while others feel demeaned to be only seen as donors, their skills and gifts under-utilised. A view of business among Christians in South Asia is that many businesspeople are not honest with their business practices and indulge in wrongful practices. This extends to church-going businesspeople who might be considered corrupt by the local church, but nevertheless churches will still accept their money.

Often the prosperity gospel shapes the worldview of money among South Asian Christians. Some churches focus on storing the money in the bank, and treasurers may ensure they have a good bank balance by closing their eyes to the needs around them.

Most independent churches operate freely without any committees which has both pros and cons. It gives them a lot of freedom to do creative programs; however, some lack accountability due to the 'one-man show' approach. In contrast, the mainline churches do well in terms of accountability because they have different committees; however, it restricts them from operating freely and making necessary decisions.

Most denominations have a uniform pattern of thinking regarding 'marketplace missions' in that they have no plans to educate their members in this regard. While there is a growing

understanding and awareness of the business as mission movement in South Asia, much of this has operated outside of the institutional or gathered church.

The Church in South Asia is ready to understand that the gospel of Jesus is indeed good news to address both the spiritual and socioeconomic poverty of the people. There needs to be a multiplication of believers in business offering their lives for the cause of God's kingdom and living as whole-life disciples in their business environment. The Church in South Asia has the potential to disciple these businesspeople if they can change their approach to integrating faith with work-life and business. A robust plan of action and training with churches in South Asia is needed.

Cultural challenges in East Asia

East Asia also has cultural factors that could be problematic as it relates to the Church embracing BAM. One such belief is that certain races or people are born with the entrepreneurial business drive. This observation may be because of Confucianism's strong influence on Chinese, Korean, and Japanese cultures.

The four occupations (士農工商) or 'four categories of the people' was an occupation classification used in ancient China by either Confucian or Legalist scholars as far back as the late Zhou dynasty and is considered a central part of the social structure (c. 1046–256 BC).²⁶ These were the 士 (gentry scholars), the 農 (peasant farmers), the 工 (artisans and craftsmen), and the 商 (merchants and traders). All East Asian countries shared a similar social structure for thousands of years before Christianity came. Business has always been a dominant part of society in this region.

Confucianism also advocates that if anyone wants to contribute to peace and order in the world, one must start by disciplining himself, establishing his family, and then governing the country and world (修身齊家治國平天下). Most Christian businesspeople in East Asia explain that they run a business mainly to take care of the family's financial needs. The governments see the need for solid economic strength, and lots of resources are poured into the business schools and training businesspeople. Entrepreneurs exist in churches as well as wider society.

Dr. Sunki Bang of the Business Ministry Institute of Korea teaches that there are five ways of combining business and mission:

1. Business and mission are separate activities.
2. Business to support mission (donation and resources)
3. Business as a platform for mission
4. Mission within a business
5. Business as mission (as part of God's Mission)

The general observation is that most churches take the view of 1., 2. or 3. in East Asia thus far. Due to the new paradigms of the business societies and educational institutes

²⁶ See: "Four Occupations," in *Wikipedia*, November 21, 2021, https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Four_occupations&oldid=1056331119.

concerning concepts such as impact investment, triple bottom line impact, and the recent drive for corporate responsibility in the areas of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG), the churches are now catching up. Churches are beginning to respond to the faith and work integration—and mission and business integration—movement and initiatives.

Cultural obstacles to BAM and church collaboration in the Americas

Cultural challenges in Latin America

Latin America comprises the countries from Mexico to Argentina and nearly all were colonised by Romance-European nations. With them, the colonisers brought their governments, businesses, and Christianity, introducing many of their cultural and religious practices. Over the last five centuries, combined with other events, these practices have transformed Latin America into a unique part of the world.

One cannot begin to appreciate the current state of BAM and the Church in Latin America without considering the role that the Roman Catholic Church played in creating a 'Latinised' America. From the earliest discovery and pioneering days, the Catholic priests were a part of the colonisation process. From the creation of towns with the town square built in front of the Catholic church to the founding of schools and other institutions by the priests, the Church infused religion into all parts of society. The Church had controlling power over the State in most places well into the 19th century.

There was an explicit difference between the clergy and laity in attire, prestige, standard of living, and marital status. An enormous gulf existed between the clergy and laity. Even as the newly independent nations created and re-created their constitutions and tried to minimise the role of the Church in government, the clergy maintained its hierarchical status in both the Latin American Church and society.

As the Protestant and Evangelical Churches began to make inroads into Latin America and those churches began to grow, there was still a tendency for these newer church leaders to aspire to hierarchical leadership. So from the very earliest stages of evangelical life in Latin America, a separation existed between the so-called 'laity' and 'clergy.'

Marxist philosophy influenced the development of liberation theology in the Catholic Church, which included revolutionary action on behalf of the poor and oppressed. Within this theology, sin is understood from a socioeconomic perspective, and salvation is the process of enforcing God's kingdom as a new social order in which there is justice for all. The mission of the church under liberation theology is to protest injustice rather than save individual souls. Even today, in many universities (as well as secondary schools), Marxist thought is prevalent, especially in teacher training schools. This strong 'class struggle' theme casts business on the side of the rich, and the rich and those in business become almost inseparable in conversations about the evils of capitalism.

Thus, in a conversation with a Christian in Latin America where one begins to explain business as mission, the initial response is usually negative due to the vilification of business and profit. However, the apparent 'fairness' Latin Americans see in social enterprise does make it much more palatable and attractive than other more traditional forms of capitalism.

Added to this class struggle is a scarcity mindset that creates a sense of 'I need to get mine while I can', which leads to corruption in both private and public enterprises. Despite the richness of natural resources in most of Latin America, the scarcity mindset dominates the thinking. In the Latin American Protestant Church, this scarcity mindset might even be amplified by the perception of being the minority religion and of appealing to the lower income classes more than to the wealthy. And the scarcity mindset in the Church is not only seen in financial terms but also human resources. Why send missionaries when there is so much work to be done here? Why give up leaders and tithes to other cultures when we need them here?

Latin Americans have a mix of Latin and American. The Latin side brings spiciness, passion, and spontaneity, while the American side features an openness to new ideas. However, there is also a strong honour for tradition. For Latin American church leaders, it would be a sign of disrespect to change the doctrines and traditions that were handed down by those that came before. Change in the church can be a very difficult and time-consuming process that considers the honour and reputations of those who have passed down the doctrines, traditions, and practices.

Newer churches and denominations seem to change much more easily, perhaps because they do not have such a long history of receiving traditions from others. This tendency can pose both an opportunity and a threat. The opportunity for BAM is to reach into these newer churches and denominations and see a quicker embrace of the role of the Church in the workplace and in global missions through business as mission. The threat, however, is that the purity of the message might be misunderstood or diluted from extending God's kingdom to a materialistic, self-focused view or 'prosperity gospel'.

Much of the political change in Latin America historically has come through difficult and sometimes violent transitions. Religious change has been even slower and more difficult, though not usually including violence except in small, isolated cases. Existing entities always feel the need to defend their territory and resist any threat to their survival or dominance. Successfully transitioning churches to a more BAM-friendly attitude will need to consider the threat that these ideas pose to gatekeepers and other stakeholders.

Promising Practice #13

My church loves business people

'I am a business owner and my church has helped guide me to see how my business should glorify God.'

'My pastor calls me often to ask how he can pray for me and my business.'

'My church understands that business is challenging and I need their support, with sales as well as helping me spiritually stay focused on God.'

'The true owner of my business is God. I learned this at church and I had the privilege of being mentored by a seasoned businessman at my church.'

'The missions committee at my church formed a business consultation group to support businesspeople in our city as well as guide those called to serve in business globally.'

'I plan to take my business into the Middle East. My church understands that I will need prayer covering and encouragement even if I don't need their finances. They consider me their worker and they have commissioned me.'

'My church discipled us all into a healthy understanding of finances, business and kingdom-building.'

Wouldn't it be great to be part of one of these churches?

What is your role in helping your church to be as affirming of business?

Cultural challenges in North America

When the United States and Canada were founded, the major cultural influence regarding the nature of work was that of Puritan thought. Puritans brought a work ethic that emphasised diligence, discipline, and frugality, which they believed was an expression of faith. Aside from the indigenous people already in North America, many people came to North America from Europe to escape religious persecution. Therefore, religion was a very prominent force in setting up what came to be the dominant culture. This Puritan work ethic eventually became known more commonly as the Protestant work ethic.

This work ethic was one of the strong implementing forces of the market-based economy, which emphasised personal responsibility, hard work, and personal property and ownership. Biblical texts in both the Old and New Testaments show concern for honesty and fairness in matters of exchange. The Reformers themselves were in support of a market-based economy. The Puritans inherited this and built businesses accordingly. This form of exchange led to the rapid growth in the American economy, often at the pain and suffering of certain people groups. Christians found proof texts in the Bible to justify this behaviour and, unfortunately, to overlook the suffering caused.

The Church in North America continues to uphold work as important. Over the years, as there have been long periods with a growing economy, and most members have worked, most are committed to giving; therefore, the church has moved along smoothly without too many financial hardships. This has often led to no immediate need to shift or change the way church is conducted or perceived. However, we may be facing new challenges to the status quo. The fallout of COVID-19 with the closures of many churches and the decline of membership returning may undermine the current norm. Even apart from the Covid pandemic, the younger generation of those growing up in the church has been demanding that the church be much more relevant to daily life and the surrounding culture.

Testimony from a Christian Professional in the USA

*Not once in my 40-year career as a professional service provider, and as an active member within three congregations over that same period, was my work ever acknowledged as a form of worship, let alone prayed over and sent out by the church. Rather the implicit message was, 'That is great what you do out there. Now, can you lead a group or teach a class in the church where God's real work is done?' And I did that in each of the churches where I was a member. **Over the years, church participation was something more for me to do, over and beyond the service I provided in the community, especially for families who would otherwise not financially afford the professional help.***

Sadly, my connection with other church members was often peppered with requests for free advice or expectations that my professional privilege should be brought into the church life to enhance God's kingdom work inside the church walls. I often experienced both a deeply felt fatigue and isolation in my church participation. Church was another drain on my personal resources of time and energy. I never experienced church as a resource or support for the work I did outside the church walls.

*It is not that the theology of sacred work was not preached. **But it was not put into practice because neither I nor the church leaders knew the practical implementation of supporting and commissioning a professional knowledge-holder's work outside of the church walls.***

Despite a reformation heritage mediated by the Puritans, work in the marketplace is often not affirmed as a holy vocation. Church members indicate that while their gifts and talents from their work world are in demand in their church world, there is little to no affirmation of their work itself. In other words, their work lives are not recognised as a vocational calling. For example, an accountant might be asked to be the church bookkeeper or treasurer, a business CEO might be asked to be the chair of the council, a chef might be asked to organise or prepare church dinners, and so on (see side bar 'Testimony from a Christian Professional in the USA'). While this may be appropriate at times, they should also be commissioned as chefs, business people or bookkeepers to bring glory to God beyond times of gathered worship.

While many churches give lip service to a positive theology of work, there is often little application of that theology and minimal impact or transformation in the lives of businesspeople and others in the workplace. The sacred-secular divide maintains its subtle hold on our faith communities when it comes to work and especially what we deem 'sacred work'.

Churches may not overtly look down on businesspeople, however, many businesspeople attest that they experience being at the bottom of a 'vocational holiness hierarchy', demonstrating that the sacred-secular divide and clergy-laity divide are alive and well in churches.

Currently, the dominant North American culture prizes individual success above all else, and many Christians reflect these values as their own. Many who find themselves in so-called 'white collar' professions resonate with these values. A challenge relating to mobilising for business as mission is that business and financial success has become an end in itself in the culture. When the goal in business becomes building our own financial kingdom, then indeed, business becomes an idol. By contrast, the concept of business as mission presupposes that there is a higher calling for business, beyond individual financial security, that answers to a higher authority. The challenge of BAM to the prevailing culture is that individuals are called to serve others within the mission of God, even in and through business.

At the same time, there is an almost contrary yet powerful cultural value that holds that many forms of work are drudgery to be avoided or at least minimised. In this view, the good life is to be found by seeking to escape the demands of business. Many of those in so-called 'blue collar' professions resonate with this view. The challenge for BAM in this perspective is that work is seen as a necessary evil at best, and the goal is not to serve God but instead to liberate oneself from the demands of work.

There have been many different approaches to relating the Bible to work and vocation. Various Bible study programs have been developed for the local church exploring work and vocation from various theological and psychological perspectives. This has brought both positive and negative impacts: positive as some of these have helped foster a better understanding of people's unique gifting and purposes; negative as not everyone can find work that is a perfect match to their passion and gifts, and therefore many are left feeling left out or left behind. These approaches can therefore reinforce either a 'work-as-idol' or 'work-as drudgery' mentality, which both fail to put work in its proper place, which is 'work as worship'.

Some cultural approaches emphasise self-actualisation and the ability to shape one's reality, moving the Church further away from looking to God and instead looking more to self. Additionally, since the most recent faith and work integration emerged, and along with it BAM as a growing mission strategy, in the early 2000s, there are now more than 1200 faith-based NGOs that focus on the integration of faith and work. Still, almost all of them operate outside the local church, working instead with individual businessmen and women. This arrangement does not allow for ongoing discipleship on these topics within church life and creates an outside parallel path for business people that is not integrated with churches.

Another cultural barrier in many churches is that the average member is rarely given the opportunity to speak during the time of worship and liturgy in the 'church gathered'. North American denominations take great pride in the academic formation of their pastors. While pastors are not as revered in the broader culture as in other parts of the world, they are seldom questioned about theology and the Bible. This can lead to a lack of openness to being led and taught by members who are the 'church scattered' seven days of the week. These members, including businesspeople, have theologically rich experiences they could share in the worship and liturgy of the church, but are rarely given an opportunity to do so.

Most North American pastors are not co-vocational and have not spent much time in the marketplace and are therefore can be out of touch with the challenges of the average member. However, one recent phenomenon is the fast-growing churches in North America run by former businesspeople-turned-pastors, many of whom can relate to the majority of members who spend their time in the marketplace.

When it comes to the church, pastors and church leaders must push against the prevailing cultural messages of the sacred-secular divide, that they and their congregants are bombarded with daily, and present a biblical vision that puts business and work in their proper place under the lordship of Christ.

Cultural obstacles to BAM and church collaboration in Europe

In an article entitled *Why Evangelical Churches Struggle in Europe*, Patrick Nachtigall acknowledges that Christianity is in decline in Europe and that many churches are barely surviving. There are churches that are thriving but these can be often made up of immigrants, persecuted or marginalised people, or people who have parents that were active Christians, even if it is in the State Church (Nachtigall, 2018).

There are a wide variety of reasons for this overall decline, but a challenge that relates to BAM and the Church is the rich and long history of the European Church, which can lead to legalism and protectiveness of the way church is conducted. This can then lead to an inflexibility with regard to church forms or a judgementalism toward outsiders or new members who do not assimilate quickly.

Nachtigall writes,

The younger generations of the families in the church wrestle with a European, pluralistic world that the church does not even engage. The answers that work inside the small evangelical church, don't work for them at the university,

playground or pub. Too often, churches value their traditions more than they do becoming accessible to the very different culture outside of their doors (Nachtigall, 2018).

These observations highlight two issues that face BAM when it comes to the European Church. First of all simply the declining numbers (translating to fewer businesspeople and professionals overall) and secondly, a relative lack of engagement in what is considered 'secular culture', including the marketplace.

There are of course many exceptions to this, with churches actively engaging in the marketplace throughout history. For example, in the 1940s, the Roman Catholic Church instituted the 'worker-priest' initiative in France for priests to take up work in such places as car factories to experience the everyday life of the working class. The goal was to 'rediscover the masses' of industrial class workers who had become largely disaffected within the church. This movement spread to other countries such as Belgium and Italy but it fell out of favour with the Vatican in the 1950s.²⁷

Going further back in history, we should also consider how the industrial revolution affected church thinking in Europe. The industrial revolution made possible specialisation on a grand scale. Therefore, why not specialise in other spheres of life, including church? It is noteworthy that many missionary societies began at that time.

Cultural challenges in Scandinavia

The history of Christianity in Scandinavia dates back more than a thousand years and starts in the Viking age. By the Reformation, this part of Europe had developed a strong Lutheran worldview. However, for Norwegians, as an example, the church was meant to be on Sundays at least once a month when the land workers would walk a long journey to get to church, often changing into their church clothes in houses on the way. Those houses played an important part in their history as they are the origin of the prayer houses, freestanding meeting houses for religious and social activities run by laypeople.

Following the many revivals during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century, more than two thousand prayer houses were built throughout Norway (Norseth, 2021). These local churches were not exclusive to Norway but spread all over Scandinavia. They are a good example of lay people integrating their daily life with the church. An excellent individual example of this is the life of Hans Nielsen Hauge, a Norwegian preacher and businessman who had a transformative effect on society at the advent of its independence, sharing a message of spiritual liberation alongside the

Promising Practice #14

Share Stories

Share stories from the scattered church when you are the gathered church. *The stories we share when the church is gathered are critical for creating imagination for how to live as believers when we are scattered. These stories can be positive, as when someone comes to faith, a prayer has been answered in our workplace, etc. They can also be difficult, such as when an evangelistic conversation didn't go as hoped, or when we make a mistake at work and need to apologise.*

²⁷ "Worker-priest" in *Wikipedia*, accessed December 2021, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Worker-priest>

establishment of new businesses and industries across the nation (Ravnåsen, 2004).

Work continues to be given high importance in Scandinavian society, but unfortunately, that has not spilled over into the Church. The Scandinavian countries have a strong sense of ethnic Christianity and most of the churches were State churches until this century. The history of the Church supported by the State is extensive and very common in Northern Europe. However, like many parts of the Scandinavian church have shifted to a more liberal theology. When the doctrines of Bible becomes less important, a robust theology of work tends to lose its anchor, weakening understanding and application.

Cultural challenges in the United Kingdom

‘We are convinced that England will never be converted until the laity use the opportunities daily afforded by their various professions, crafts, and occupations,’ the Anglican Church said in a report published in 1945 (Church of England Commission on Evangelism, 1945). At that time, the average church attendance in the UK was approximately 30%. It is now 7%.

In a more recent report *Setting God’s People Free* published in 2017, the Archbishop’s Council of the Church of England, referencing the earlier 1945 report, identified the continuing need for two shifts in culture and practice critical to the flourishing of the Church and the evangelisation of the nation:

1. Until, together, ordained and lay, we form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God’s people free to evangelise the nation.
2. Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation. (Church of England Archbishops’ Council, 2017)

These points highlight that the sacred-secular divide and the clergy-laity divide remain major challenges to overcome in reaching the nation—and especially to mobilising and equipping professionals and businesspeople to fully engage in this task.

It is not only the Anglican Church that has identified a need for greater integration of faith and work, and mission with vocation. Networks, organisations, and initiatives designed to foster such integration have sprung up in the past few decades, both from within denominations and alongside them.²⁸

One of the best known of these is the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC), founded by John Stott in 1982. Stott and friends, ‘...saw how difficult it was for Christians to make the connection between the living Word of God and the challenges they

²⁸ Denominational examples include *Setting God’s People Free* and *Growing Vocations*, under the ‘Reform and Renewal’ programme of the Church of England, HTB Entrepreneurs and Business Network at Holy Trinity Brompton, and Business Link, rooted in the Newfrontiers network of churches. Para-church and institutionally-based examples include the Salt Business Network from Christian Aid, Work + Go from OMF in partnership with Climate Stewards and LICC, and Faith in Business, among others.

faced out in his world. They recognised how drastically this shrivelled the church's mission to the nation. And they were determined to tackle it head-on.²⁹

LICC and others have sought to address a related cultural challenge, that is the relative lack of time and resources focused on 'whole-life discipleship' in many churches. With relatively small congregations,³⁰ resources are limited and since there is no culture of adult Sunday school classes in the UK, discipleship is often confined to the one-hour weekly service. While some churches do offer small groups, the application of the Bible to everyday work and vocation is not often covered in small group settings or indeed preached on Sundays. LICC has aimed to address this by raising awareness of this issue and providing resources to local churches.³¹

The United Kingdom has a tradition of pioneering social reformers and entrepreneurs through the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries that were motivated by faith (many of them Quakers) to have a social, spiritual and economic impact. These companies include still well-known families and brands such as Barclays, Lloyds, Rowntree's, Cadbury, and Boots. Although not perfect and often paternalistic in execution (reflecting social norms of the time) these historical examples reinforce the British cultural idea that it is possible to 'do good' through business. These historical cases provide a touchpoint for modern day social entrepreneurs and help people grasp the potential impact of business as mission today, both at home and overseas.

This view forms a contrast to other attitudes to business in British culture associated with self-interest, greed or harm. In addition, many British Christians are culturally predisposed to be embarrassed about wealth and talking about money. Some see business as 'seedy' by association, or at least not as noble an occupation as compared to medics, church ministers, teachers, and the like. Many businesspeople in the UK church would not feel affirmed in their vocation, nor see the value of business to God's mission.

Despite this cultural barrier, there has been a resurgence in social entrepreneurship in wider UK society in recent decades, including many faith-motivated examples started by Christians. This has overlapped significantly with a growing emphasis on faith and work integration and, in the past two decades, business as mission-focused networking, resource development and mobilisation.

Like the historical examples, these modern-day models of social enterprise³² help raise the profile of faith-driven enterprise and mission-motivated business incubation within the UK Church. They boost understanding and engagement towards seeing greater spiritual, social, environmental and economic impact through social enterprise and BAM, within and from this country.

²⁹ From "About LICC", see: <https://licc.org.uk/about/>

³⁰ One study found recent average church attendance to be 60-80 people for a sample of evangelical churches, see "Changing Church Research Report" at <https://www.eauk.org/assets/files/downloads/Changing-Church-Autumn-2021-Research-Report.pdf>

³¹ For a case study, see: "Making Disciples for Every Day Life, Chapter 1: Why Does Whole-Life Disciplemaking Really, Really Matter?" LICC, accessed January 22, 2020, <https://licc.org.uk/resources/chapter-1-making-disciples-for-everyday-life/>.

³² For example, the Genesis Centre, Alfreton; Bridge2, Liverpool; Kahaila, London; The Message, Manchester; among others.

Cultural obstacles to BAM and church collaboration in Eurasia

For the purposes of this paper, Eurasia means the countries of the ex-Soviet Union, encompassing Russia and parts of Central Asia.

Most Eurasian churches (especially Orthodox ones, but evangelical as well) believe that there is a strict separation between work and ministry. Ministry is considered as some activity either within the church or at least in some Christian organisations. Usually, it is unpaid. Everything else is not considered as ministry. Indeed, it is believed that 'too much' enthusiasm about professional growth and career can lead to the decline of spiritual life, an unhealthy fascination with 'the world', and lessened participation in church life.

The attitude towards businesspeople differs depending on the denomination. In some churches (more often in charismatic ones), they are set apart as a group receiving special pastoral attention. But for the most part that is because businesspeople give good donations to the church, support church projects, and in some cases, help the church through their wider influence. Additionally, they are encouraged to evangelise and bring other businesspeople to church.

Eurasia does have several communities and organisations that promote the idea of ministry through one's profession and business. There has been some research and publications on this topic, training programs, and conferences. However, for now, these initiatives have had little effect on the general situation.

On the one hand, such an attitude to labour and business is determined by the Orthodox 'cultural code', which implies that poverty is a sign of sanctity. This idea was entrenched even further during the Soviet Union, when entrepreneurship was banned and it was impossible to earn much with honest labour. This led to a cultural notion that wealth (or even abundance) can be obtained only by illegal or dishonest ways.

On the other hand, in the past, especially in 19th century Russia, there were quite a few Christian entrepreneurs (mostly Orthodox and especially old believers) who served the community through their businesses. Nevertheless, it is often highlighted that these people had mostly participated in charity and support of various social projects. The business itself is only mentioned as a means to create wealth. The true value of their activities was considered to be sharing this wealth with others.

Promising Practice #15

Culture change

What is needed, first and foremost, is not a program but a change in culture.

From 'Setting God's People Free' by the Church of England:

There's a need for two shifts in culture and practice that we see as critical to the flourishing of the Church and the evangelisation of the nation.

1. Until, together, ordained and lay, we form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God's people free to evangelise the nation.

2. Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation.

Archbishops' Council (2017)

To dig a bit deeper, there are two denominations that hold the majority of Protestant, evangelical Christians in Eurasia, the Baptists and the Pentecostals (including charismatic churches). Some Pentecostal charismatic churches lay a special emphasis on ministry to the businesspeople. They create business-clubs, and pastors hold special meetings with entrepreneurs. But as already mentioned, these meetings have two main purposes, 1) to engage the entrepreneurs to support church projects and 2) to evangelise other businesspeople. Baptist churches seldom talk about ministering to businesspeople despite most church members having their own small businesses. However, they are largely viewed as a way to earn one's living and not as ministry or mission.

Cultural challenges to BAM and church collaboration in Australia

According to a recent survey, although about 45 per cent of Australia's population self-identifies as Christian, only about 15 per cent attends a local church at least monthly and only about seven per cent of the population engages actively in a local church (McCrindle, 2017, p. 8). Average church size is less than 130 people and 75 per cent of churches have average weekly attendance of less than 100 people (NCLS Research, 2021). Relatively low church attendance and even lower active engagement by Christians combined with small churches militates against the development of networks of like-minded church attenders and local church priests/ministers/pastors. Like-minded Christians, including those involved in BAM, simply do not 'bump into' one another very often. They are socially dispersed and this, no doubt, the most important cultural barrier to BAM and church collaboration. Social media can, in principle, mitigate this effect but there is no presence of BAM social media networks in Australia.

It is arguable that the sacred-secular divide is not as much a barrier BAM-church collaboration in Australia as it is elsewhere. The idea of strict separation between the sacred (church and family life) and secular (marketplace activity) has waned during the past decade with advocates for 'whole life discipleship' active and influential in most denominations. Many priests/ministers/pastors are also bi-vocational and face the challenge of juggling church responsibilities and paid employment outside the church.

A few Bible colleges and Christian universities have developed curricula in whole life discipleship too, mostly in the guise of theology of work. However, when local churches have established business groups or when Christian business networks have developed the former have tended to focus on fellowship and financial support for the local church and the latter have tended to focus on fellowship and peer-to-peer business deals and/or referrals. Business as mission has been largely ignored. This is more the result of ignorance than rejection and is apparently not the result of the sacred-secular divide.

There are few seminaries ('Bible colleges') or Christian universities in Australia that offer business degrees and only one that teaches BAM. 'Business *and* mission' appears in curricula occasionally but 'business as mission' is rare. Therefore, neither priests/ministers/pastors nor actual or potential Christian entrepreneurs are exposed to the concept and effectiveness of BAM during their formal education.

This is not to say that BAM is unknown in Australia. Indeed, two of the participants in the Lausanne Issue Group on Business As Mission in 2004 were Australian, both from the

Anglican Diocese of Sydney, one a former Archbishop of that diocese (see Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2005 and the BAM Manifesto, Appendix 5). Through the Australian connections a global mission agency and BAM financier have supported BAM businesses in low-income, Christian minority countries for over 25 years. Based on anecdotal evidence, these have been concentrated in one country in Asia where the Christian minority faces persecution, and the government restricts religious activity despite religious freedom being guaranteed in the constitution. A few social enterprises, mostly focused on rescuing woman and children from sexual exploitation in low-income countries, have been developed too. These are mostly located in countries in Asia.

From 2019, interest in establishing 'BAM Australia' has grown. This followed promotional visits to Australia by Mats Tunehag (a global ambassador for BAM and Co-Chair of BAM Global) which themselves built on earlier visits by Mike Baer, author of the seminal *Business As Mission: The Power of Business in the Kingdom of God*, the first of which was in 2010. Since then, an embryonic, informal network or collective of like-minded Christians (businesspeople, academics and church leaders) has emerged. An innovation in thinking about the relationship between BAM and mission agencies is also beginning to emerge. One mission agency that has been closely associated with BAM for over two decades is developing a model whereby missionaries 'pastor' BAM owners in the field. The idea is that mission happens in and through BAM businesses and missionaries provide pastoral care to the BAM owner. Towards the end of 2022 a part-time coordinator for 'BAM Australia' was appointed. The process of addressing BAM-church integration and many other challenges for BAM in Australia has begun.

Cultural challenges: conclusion

The findings of this 'Cultural Obstacles' section reinforces that of Sections 1 and 2 of this report, that the sacred-secular divide and clergy-laity divide remain significant barriers for BAM-church collaboration worldwide, and that a stronger theology of work is needed.

While there are many unique cultural challenges to be understood and addressed, common themes across the globe include, a suspicion towards business and/or association with corruption, a lack of affirmation of business as a vocation by the church, lack of resources, teaching time, and discipleship-focus for ministry in the marketplace. Several regions battle with the prosperity gospel when it comes to articulating a clear message about business as mission and in many cultures businesspeople are mostly valued for their financial contributions to the church.

Cultures develop over long periods of time and their roots grow deep. It is not easy or quick to change a culture. But rooted in Scripture, and with a deep understanding of a biblical worldview, it is possible to see cultures shift in a positive direction.

The changing of a culture cannot be done by one person or one church or even one denomination. It is going to take many, which is why it is critical that the integration of faith and work crosses denominational barriers and engages all parts of the culture.

It is already possible to see the change in culture in some contexts based on the work of the BAM movement (and related faith and work movements) over the past twenty years.

The sheer number of published books and resources on these topics are an indication of that change. But unless this movement is grounded in the institutional church and a new cultural understanding, it may pass like chaff in the wind.

While the changing of the culture cannot be accomplished by one person, it can be *started* by one person or a small group, making small shifts toward bringing the kingdom of heaven to earth, a little at a time, every day. Engaging in the recommendations and promising practices shared throughout this report can begin those small but important shifts.

Section 4: BAM and the Church Case Studies

Introduction

While there are many stories of people doing businesses with a BAM perspective, there are far fewer stories of churches and/or denominations who have intentionally integrated BAM into the structure of the church. While we did find a church here or there that has added workplace ministries as a key component of their mission, they were few and far between. Through this paper so far, we have shared a few of those stories to you.

In this next section, we want to present three case studies that demonstrate an intentional, structured change to a denomination or a geographic area, seeking to weave an understanding of mission in and through work and business into the church. Some of those efforts have been successful, some are still in progress, and some were less successful. But each is worth examining for the opportunity to learn what to do or not to do. We hope these case studies provide practical insights for creating a road map for faith and work and business and mission integration in more churches.

Case Study 1: Discipling Marketplace Leaders, 2013 to present

Context

This case study features ‘Discipling Marketplace Leaders’, a ministry working in twelve countries in Africa in various denominations. The goal has been for every local church to have a workplace discipleship ministry to equip members for where they spend most of their time. This case study highlights research conducted over two years to chart the impact of this ministry on the church, business, and the community.

Discipling Marketplace Leaders (DML) is a ministry that began in 2013 in Kenya and has grown to be in twelve African countries, plus initiatives in Central America and Asia. The vision of DML is for every local church to disciple every member to be the church in every marketplace, so that all may flourish. This is accomplished by educating, equipping, and empowering the local church to establish a ministry that disciples every believer to live out work as worship and mission.

The first research study was done in Kenya, tracking the impact of this ministry in six churches and 260 businesses. The second study was much larger, with 25 participating churches and 608 businesses. Through a series of surveys these churches and businesses were tracked in Northern Ghana (an area that is 90% Muslim) over two years, from December 2017 to December 2019. This was done with the participation of the DML Ghana partner, Hopeline Institute. Half of the businesses were part of churches implementing the DML ministry and half formed a comparison group that was not part of a church implementing the DML ministry.



Image 3: Region of DML study in Ghana

Those churches who implemented the DML ministry conducted trainings for the pastors in leading a workplace ministry, a department set up for ongoing discipleship for those in the workplace. Those in the workplace received training, mentoring, and advocacy through the church to do their work as an act of worship, focused on improving workplace skills.³³



Image 4: A Participant Church

The research question was, 'What impact, if any, does the DML ministry make on local churches, businesses, and the community?'

Impact on churches

The study produced the following findings for impact on the local churches:

- **Finding #1: Increase in membership** – Churches that implemented the DML ministry saw an increase in membership of 19%.
- **Finding #2: Increase in tithes** – Monthly tithes/offerings increased by 35% for the churches implementing the DML ministry, while comparison churches saw a decrease of 28% in tithes and offerings.
- **Finding #3: Increase in pastor's income** – The income of pastors who implemented the DML ministry increased by 50% while the income for the pastors of comparison churches remained the same.
- **Finding #4: Decrease in dependence on pastor** – At the start of the study, pastors said that their members rely on them too much (93%). By the end of the study, those pastors who implemented the DML ministry, said that 80% of the members now rely on them 'just the right amount.'

Impact on businesses

The research tracked five activities of business owners: training in basic business skills, mentoring, participation in a business association, access to capital, and discipleship from the church:

- **Finding #1: Monthly profit** – Businesses participating in DML saw an increase in monthly profit of 62%, while comparison businesses saw a decrease in profit by 16%.
- **Finding #2: Job creation** – Businesses who went through the DML ministry with their local church created 276 new positions, full-time, part-time, or apprentice. Comparison businesses saw a net loss of 85 jobs during that same period.
- **Finding #3: Increased family income** – Family income increased by 51%, while comparison businesses increased 6%. This moved many out of extreme poverty.
- **Finding #4: Increased job satisfaction** – DML business owners reported an improved perception of success in their business by 26% and the number of DML

³³ For more information on Discipling Marketplace Leaders, see: <https://disciplingmarketplaceleaders.org/>, including the process of launching Discipling Marketplace Leaders Ministry in a church or church network, described here: <https://disciplingmarketplaceleaders.org/dml-flow-chart-for-ministry/>

businesses who perceived themselves as unsuccessful at the start decreased by 90% by the end of the study. This impacts happiness, better physical and mental health and healthier relationships.

Impact on communities

The study also found the following for impact on communities:

- **Finding #1: Integration of faith and work** – When first asked about integrating faith most said they prayed for their business. Two years later they viewed themselves as the church in the marketplace and were discipling others.
- **Finding #2: Giving to the poor** – DML business owners reported an increase in giving to the poor from 75% to 99%. The comparison businesses increased from 76% to 85%.
- **Finding #3: Mentoring** – DML business owners increased the number of people they mentored from 2.6 to 7.5. The comparison group decreased from 2.5 to 1.6.
- **Finding #4: Volunteering (social bottom line)** – DML business owners increased volunteering from 48% to 98% and increased their hours per month from 1.53 to 2.54.

Overall, we see from the research a win-win-win when the local church begins a marketplace or workplace ministry. The local church grows, business grows, and the community does better. It is time for every church to have a marketplace ministry, just like they have a women's ministry or youth ministry! Helping businesspeople see the their business and the marketplace as their sphere of mission is foundational to multiplying BAM in practice.

Case Study 2: The Foursquare BAM Network³⁴

Globally Foursquare denomination has around 100,000 churches, with 8 to 10 million church members. Jonathan Hall leads the Foursquare BAM Network³⁵, championing business as mission within his church denomination. In 2010 its leadership affirmed the BAM concept and gave the green light to introduce the concept within her circles. Through a relational and informal approach, there is now growing denominational interest while principles and concepts are spread. A BAM focused business major has emerged at Life Pacific Bible College and BAM is discussed at global leadership gatherings.

Jonathan got the first 'go ahead' from Glenn Burris, President of the Foursquare church, and probably could have asked for a title, office, staff and budget to introduce BAM to Foursquare, yet he chose another route. Jonathan began finding colleagues and leaders within the church family who were engaged or interested in BAM and began an informal network. 'BAM is about a paradigm change and that takes time,' explains Jonathan. 'We found other champions who are involved in BAM out of passion and calling and we initiated a learning community. Our network attempts an imbedding at the ground level. That takes longer, but is fruitful in the long run. At the same time we value the approval and affirmation of our top leadership for guidance and legitimacy.'

³⁴ Case study excerpts from Gea Gort and Mats Tunehag, *BAM Global Movement: Business as Mission Concept and Stories*, Hendrickson, 2018.

³⁵ See: <http://foursquarebam.com>

BAM is counter-cultural

While Jonathan emphasises that he feels privileged to serve his church family, he also realises that BAM and Theology of Work can be counter-cultural within established religious organisations. Jonathan explains, 'In Latin America for example there is a strong Catholic heritage which includes the tradition of the professional "full-time" church clergy. This common and traditional model tends to elevate credentialed ministers, devalue talent in the pew, and promote a sacred-secular divide. A common underlying message heard in many congregations is that your "secular" work is not that important, and just a necessary evil to be able to eat and tithe.'

A renewed view of work is needed, continues Jonathan. 'Work and business are biblical and all about stewardship, human dignity and sustainability. When we teach a Biblical perspective on work, it will also help pastors in a many places in the world, as they need to work "secularly" for their income, which is often viewed negatively. The number of full-time professional ministers tends to increase in prosperous western churches, but is an unattainable goal in other parts of the world. Yet in the biblical narratives the notion of "full-time professional church ministry" was the exception, not the rule. Besides this issue for pastors, there is also an incredible wealth of talent and calling in the pew, hopefully we'll increasingly release and empower it for Kingdom alignment and advancement. I think that a biblical understanding of vocation, calling and work can enrich the Church, especially in urban environments where we desire to see greater church multiplication.'

BAM affirmed

Meanwhile the Business as Mission concept is increasingly understood and accepted in the Foursquare church. Jonathan shares the example of a Foursquare pastor in a closed country who had tried to be a 'full-time pastor' yet after being exposed to the BAM conversation reopened his small shoe repair shop and is amazed at how much more engaged he is with the neighbourhood, with people stopping by to have their shoes tended to, and are asking for prayer.

Since 2012 the Foursquare BAM Network has presented training at denominational conventions where they have had booths, given workshops and networked with leaders. Jonathan shares, 'There is a growing sense that "BAM is a part of us". The Foursquare church family has innovation, flexibility and creativity in its original and founding DNA. These values have and will serve us well as entrepreneurship and innovation are increasingly a necessity in this increasingly urban global reality.'

BAM in Foursquare globally

'The perspective on being church is shifting,' says Piet Brinksma, Foursquare pastor in Amsterdam. 'Business as mission fits right into that shift.' Piet is globally involved and witnessed blessing when church planters pursue peace and justice in their host countries. Also in his own Western setting Piet sees the value of involvement with economic and social activities. It demands a holistic perspective, including entrepreneurship.

'Leslie Keegel is an example of a holistic approach in Sri Lanka, his country of birth,' continues Piet. 'As a national leader of Foursquare, Leslie developed a vision that prioritises the transformation of the island. Their vision went further than church planting,

the amount of churches or the development of a Church organisation. They prioritised transformation; they wanted to address the needs they were confronted with. Think of ethnical disparity, poverty, traumas caused by civil war, spiritual darkness and a corrupt and incompetent government. As a result they gave consultations to government leaders, built houses and started companies like chicken farms. At the moment there are more than 1500 Foursquare (home) churches in this country. In addition, we see a lot of signs and miracles in this Buddhist and spiritually sensitive country.'

Piet was board member of the Foursquare Foundation and knows the stories mentioned above well, as he was involved in supporting mission projects of the Foursquare denomination around the globe... 'We noticed the importance of a holistic approach in projects: the pursuit of shalom — peace and justice—in all relevant areas of life... Those church planters did it intuitively,' continues Piet. 'Business as Mission was not a well known term at the time, but its principles were part of their approach. BAM fits with the DNA of Foursquare, and we now incorporated it explicitly as part of our international strategy.'

'There is no need for church leaders to become entrepreneurs themselves,' continues Piet. 'But we can help spread the vision, and view the church as a breeding place where entrepreneurs connect and where they receive support and inspiration. It is essential to encourage and develop talents like business and innovation within our churches, besides pastoral and teaching talents.'

Changing perspectives on mission and being church

Besides his international involvement, Piet is active in the city of Amsterdam, as pastor and missional pioneer, as well as a leader in city wide movements focusing on the shalom of the city. 'Both in our own missional activities as well as overall in the city, I see that Christ inspired business activities, like social businesses, business consultants and civic organisations become a more intentional part in the Kingdom mission. It is a great way to connect Christ followers with the needs and assets of the city, but even more to engage in serving relationships with those who have no connection with Church or the gospel. Finally business is a way to create financial sustainability.'

Piet sees Business as Mission related activities as a part of a bigger picture: the church as a transforming power in neighbourhoods and society: 'As a church denomination we used to give much attention to growth and wholeness of our individual members and their destiny. That's a good thing: knowing who we are in Christ. But our focus is shifting towards including the wholeness of all aspects of life; we are discovering what we, as a group and as a community of Christ, can mean for the area where we are planted. It requires that we get to know and love our neighbourhoods, and find out what's going on. It requires looking for connections with others who are already pursuing the good. God is already at work all around us — Calvin called this common grace — recognise and connect with what's already there. In our case we have a good collaboration with the building manager, housing association and with other influencers in the area.'

Piet views Business as Mission as one of the components of a shift in the perspective on Church and being-Church: 'Generally speaking the Church was regarded as the focal point in missionary thinking, but we see now a theological shift with at its core Christ and the

mission of God in this world. From this core Jesus' followers engage in mission, resulting in a group of people who put discipleship into practice, resulting in a "church". But it is much more a fluid church. In China I know of a church which functions within a factory, while in other places groups of people intermingle; on route inviting others while shaping God's Kingdom.'

BAM curriculum at Bible College

Meanwhile pastors, missionaries and young entrepreneurs are also introduced to Business as Mission concepts at Life Pacific College, the Foursquare College in California with several hundred students from around the globe. Life Pacific used to focus on training for traditional pastoral roles, yet is now expanding into other spheres. 'We emphasize the importance of God's desire to transform and renew all areas: economic, social and spiritual,' explains Dr. Michael Bates, who developed a missional Business Administration Degree with the BAM worldview as a basis at Life Pacific, 'Not every student is entrepreneurially oriented and starts a business, but a Kingdom mindset is developed. We teach a holistic paradigm and encourage students to seek societal transformation to glorify God.'

Sovereign river of God

BAM themes are becoming a part of conversations in global working groups, shares Jonathan Hall, for example in the discussion of urban strategies or how to serve refugee camps, 'The impact of basic training in entrepreneurship can be significant in areas of poverty and displacement. While helping with basic necessities, why not also teach entrepreneurship from a Christian perspective?'

'I see biblical BAM principles being helpful everywhere,' concludes Jonathan, 'I see this movement cutting across denominational lines. In wealthy environments or in slums, people are growing in these truths, and while they might not call it BAM we can clearly see a sovereign river of God in our day and time.'

Case Study 3: The Vere Institute

Context

This case study highlights a nonprofit seeking to equip the church with a ministry of whole-life discipleship in the USA. As you read, you will see the opportunities and challenges of such an endeavour.

The Vere Institute was established in Boston, USA with a mission to envision, equip, encourage, and empower God's people to live as fruitful whole-life disciples on their daily 'frontlines'—the everyday places where God sends His people for mission, such as workplaces, schools, and neighbourhoods. The Vere Institute was inspired by the work of the London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC), which, as referenced earlier, has a similar mission in the UK. The Vere Institute's strategy was to build a relationship with pastors and church leaders to empower them to create a 'culture' of whole-life discipleship in their congregations.

These relationships typically began at a vision-casting event at a seminary, denominational conference, or a church event. Leaders were introduced to the core theological challenge

of the sacred-secular divide, and a framework for addressing it in their churches, including practical suggestions for becoming a whole-life disciple-making church. Leaders were given real-life examples of what other churches had done to begin to make 'one-degree shifts' towards the whole-life discipleship vision.

For example, they were made aware of how other pastors had established a habit of visiting their congregants in their everyday places, such as an office or factory, to better understand the unique challenges and opportunities of living as a Christ-follower in these places. Leaders also learned about gathered church practices that empowered the scattered church, such as expanding commissioning to include people in everyday life in addition to overseas missionaries. Other practices were also introduced, including the Richard Halverson's Benediction, which is offered at the conclusion of a worship service to remind the congregation that, 'You go nowhere by accident. Wherever you go, God is sending you. Wherever you are, God has put you there. God has a purpose in your being there.'

Each of the recommendations aimed to help the pastor and the congregation begin and sustain a long-term transformation, moving from a 'program and building-centric congregation' to a discipleship-centric community.

Throughout its tenure from 2014 to 2021, God used the Vere Institute in at least two primary capacities. The first was in an apostolic/prophetic capacity, reminding churches that 'making whole-life missionary disciples is the core vocation of the church' (Hudson, 2012 p. 38). The second was in a shepherding/teaching capacity, empowering church leaders with resources to move their congregations towards the vision of whole-life discipleship. When a pastor or church leader indicated an interest in going deeper, they began a relationship with the Vere Institute. They were invited to join a learning community or pastors' roundtable with other like-minded leaders, which met periodically over several months. Several of these leaders also began a one-on-one coaching/mentoring relationship with the Vere Institute's executive director. A subset of this group, who had over time demonstrated they were putting whole-life discipleship principles into practice in their

Promising Practice #16

Simple Starts

The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) found that pastors understand the need to keep in mind the context of all members. Because the time the pastor is with the congregation is so limited, there is few opportunities to get into the specifics of everyone's lives. However, simple changes could bring workplace matters the worship space.

From Neil Hudson, in 'Imagine Church', we hear of simple ways you can start now:

- 1. You do not need to begin a series on work. You just need to recognize that many of your listeners do work.*
 - 2. You do not need to present a whole new vision for the church that will take years to be adopted. You simply have to ask people what is happening in their places where they spend most of their time, who is there and what they think God might be doing.*
 - 3. You do not need to stop pastoral visits, but you can engage in them with a wider purpose. Recognizing that you are self-consciously trying to encourage people. To grow as disciples.*
 - 4. You do not need to spend lots of time explaining why you have changed. You could just invite people to come to a workshop to explore what would help them live more fruitfully for Christ.*
-

congregations, would be invited to become speakers at future events alongside the executive director.

For example, one of the churches in this last category was Free Christian Church (FCC) in Andover in Massachusetts, USA. Led by senior pastor Jon Paul, the congregation has deployed various methods to embed whole-life discipleship in their congregation. For example, the pastor periodically invites people from a particular sphere of society to stand up during a gathered worship service to be commissioned to their everyday work. He also conducts visits to people's workplaces and delivers sermon series on whole-life discipleship topics, such as 'Faith on the Frontlines', 'Whole Life Worship', and 'Discipleship'.

Promising Practice #17

Hold a Commissioning Service

Commissioning service suggestions from the book, *Work and Worship*, by Matthew Kaemingk and Cory Willson (p. 247)

Corporate worship can ordain and Commission worshippers toward their work in the world. The commissioning of a specific industry should reflect the culture of the local community and industry in question. That said, it might be helpful to consider a paradigmatic structure. Some combination of these five elements might prove useful in designing a commissioning service.

Testimony: Identify a representative from the industry and ask them to give a short testimony. Ask them to speak about the unique opportunities and challenges facing Christians serving in the industry. Ask them to testify, to give witness to, the ways the living God is actively working in their field.

Affirmation: Affirm those being commissioned for responding to God's leading in their lives. Affirm that God is with them, that God delights in the aroma of their work. Affirm their priestly calling to their industrial parish.

Framing: Frame their work within the creative, sustaining, and redemptive work of God. Frame their work as integral to both the mission of God and the witness of the local church.

Vows: Invite workers to vow, God helping them, that they will:

- Work according to the patterns of God's good work in the world.
 - Avoid unjust, evil, and idolatrous patterns of work.
 - Prayerfully intercede for their industry, clients and co-workers.
 - Support other disciples serving in the industry.
 - Offer their work as worship to God.
-

Blessing and Charge: At the end, invite the congregation or elders to stand and surround the workers. Bless both the workers and their work in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Charge them to go out and work in ways that are honouring and responsive to God's work in the world.

A congregant named Norbert who leads a robotics department at a medical device company was impacted by this approach. Norbert has shared that he believes God gave him his creative capabilities, and he gives God credit for that. He also believes that God sends him to people who don't know Christ, including his co-workers, and some of the leading scientists in the world. When asked what it meant to him that Christ also worked as a builder, Norbert said, 'That means a lot to me. He has definitely given me the ability to create, and I feel really fortunate in doing that.'

In the final analysis, the kingdom impact of the Vere Institute is difficult to measure, both in terms of its breadth and depth. In its apostolic/prophetic capacity, the whole-life discipleship message was spread broadly across the USA using a variety of mediums, including events, books, DVDs, and online media. In its shepherding/teaching capacity, the depth is also difficult to quantify, as it involves personal transformation. Ultimately, the kingdom impact is measured in the stories of fruitfulness in the lives of both the pastors and the churches they lead.

The Vere Institute offers the following ideas for churches to integrate into their services:

1. Where is the church every day? Map your local city with two sets of coloured pins for each member. Green pin to be placed where they live and yellow pin to be placed where they work.
2. Put a mirror in your entrance way with a sign above it, 'Here are the missionaries we support.'
3. This Time Tomorrow – During each service, members will spend no more than five minutes sharing with at least two people what they will be doing at 'this time tomorrow.' This helps to get people to understand the various spheres of influence and ministry that the church is already reaching.
4. Each Sunday, during the offering, have a way for people to share how it is they earn the money for the offering. Often we focus on what will come from the offering and not on where it came from.
5. Use the song, *We Seek Your Kingdom*³⁶ during the service.
6. Provide an opportunity for 'commissioning' of those in business or employed at the end of a service.
7. Many churches today use projected backdrops for the song lyrics with pastoral scenes of mountains and streams which tells us that this is where worship happens. In such cases, churches could change those backdrops to be workplace settings instead.

Here is an additional idea for a church prayer meeting that is shared from Neil Hudson's *Imagine Church*:

Have four signs displayed around the room saying, 'I love my job', 'I'd like a new job', 'I wish I still worked', and 'I need to know what to do next'. Allow people to talk

³⁶ We Seek Your Kingdom is a worship resource from LICC, see: <https://licc.org.uk/resources/we-seek-your-kingdom/>

together, listen to issues being faced, and pray for each other. The agenda ends up being shaped by the everyday experiences of the church members out of their everyday world rather than simply praying for the activities of our gathered church. (Hudson, 2012)

The Vere Institute also encourages church leaders to do the following during the week:

- Take a day to travel into work with a church member, learning to appreciate the wearying aspects of their daily commute.
- Have each staff member at a church have lunch with one church member per week at their workplace.
- Or go even further and shadow a person at their work to see what they face every day. Every person who has done this testifies that it changes their understanding of their congregation and alters their understanding of their ministry as church leaders.

By doing some of these activities, pastors are encouraged not just to see people in crisis, but to choose to see other members in their own parishes. What might be the impact if those visited are visited at their place of work, where they live their lives, and what are those members discovering about God? Pastors and others can go to workplaces to listen and learn what God is doing there rather than merely seek to give advice.

Conclusion

The book of Acts is quite an action thriller. Jesus declared to the apostles that the Church would expand from Jerusalem to the uttermost parts of the globe as the Holy Spirit empowered them. Those early followers of 'the way' were persecuted and many were martyred but their dedication to the cause of evangelism and mission never wavered. The Church soon expanded beyond Judea and Samaria (Acts 8) and then began penetration of the Gentile world (Acts 10).

The early Christians did not have much in the way of institutional structures and took on individual responsibility witness in their spheres of influence. Most were not 'professional missionaries' and had roles in the marketplace. Wherever they were and whatever they did, they shared the good news. The synergy between faith and work was instrumental in spreading the gospel in the early Church.

The book of Acts and the Epistles also shows us the dynamic between the 'church gathered' and the 'church scattered'. Christians met together for fellowship, teaching, prayer, and communion, being 'equipped for the works of service' (Eph. 4:12) These 'works of service' occurred as they went out into their communities the marketplace as Christ's ambassadors (2 Cor 5:20).

This paper has looked back to the early Church to propose a way forward, respectfully and tentatively, for the 21st century. The writer of Hebrews was emphatic about the importance of the 'church gathered'—'let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing' (Heb 10:24-25a). This is for the effective ministry of the 'church scattered'—'always prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have' (1 Pet. 3:15).

The local church is a vast distribution system of discipleship strategically placed throughout the world. It is an organic and institutional entity, a faithful presence in the community with multigenerational continuity. It is uniquely positioned to disciple businesspeople, helping to unleash the power of business in God's mission to the world.

This potential of the congregation in the global marketplace is, as yet, relatively untapped. This has much to do with the divide between the sacred (church and family life where faith is freely expressed) and the secular (marketplace life where faith is repressed or irrelevant). This divide continues significantly hinder engagement in business as mission.

How can we better affirm the value of work and the strategic role of business in God's mission—and equip business people and entrepreneurs to work this out wherever God has called them?

This paper has sought to address this by first analysing barriers to this affirmation and equipping, and then highlighting cases, resources and practices that can be adapted by churches to help them take their place mobilising for marketplace ministry and business as mission. Although there are many challenges to the integration of BAM and the local church, we hope the resources in this paper may be adapted by churches seeking to kick-start their efforts at building BAM understanding and engagement.

In turn, we have sought to encourage church members to have a correct view of themselves as disciples 'on mission' to make disciples. We want to exhort business owners as 'disciples making disciples', who see their business environment as their mission field. Our hope is that they will ask God how their company might be used strategically as a witness in their own 'Jerusalem'—or perhaps the equivalent of 'Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth' (Acts 1:8). And that those with an entrepreneurial or business-building gift will no longer see a conflict between their profession and their desire to be engaged in mission, wherever God puts them.

As well as the promising practices and the case study examples already provided throughout this report, there follows a number of further suggestions and resources:

- Recommendations and Action Plans addressed to the global Church, to church denominations and to local church leaders
- A Resource List
- A recap of Promising Practices (Appendix 1)
- An Action Plan Template to help Church Leaders think about practical next steps (Appendix 2)
- Self-assessment tools (Appendix 3)
- A sample 'Commissioning Service for Marketplace Ministers' (Appendix 4)
- The BAM Manifesto and Wealth Creation Manifesto (Appendices 5 and 6) to be used as foundational documents for churches bring alignment and a biblical underpinning to their BAM efforts

We humbly offer this paper as a resource to the Church gathered and scattered—for the edification and encouragement of those for whom Sunday is the 'main thing' *and* those for whom Monday to Saturday is the 'main thing'.

We do not pretend to have all the answers. Indeed, we do not claim to have diagnosed all the problems. Nevertheless, we agree with Billy Graham when he said 'I believe that one of the next great moves of God will be through believers in the workplace' (quoted in Hillman, 2018).

Our prayer is that disciples of Jesus in the marketplace will be committed to making him known to the nations by word and deed. May the local church and the Church globally grow in its capacity to equip these disciples to be a light to the world in their companies and communities.

Recommendations and Action Plans

Recommendations to the global Church

To the global body of Christ and the members of it that are gifted for business, we reiterate the concluding recommendations of the BAM Manifesto:

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

We call upon businesspeople globally to receive this affirmation and to consider how their gifts and experience might be used to help meet the world's most pressing spiritual and physical needs through business as mission.³⁷

Recommendations to Church denominations

As can be seen through some of the case studies shared in this report, denominational networks can provide a powerful platform to foster church collaboration in marketplace mission and BAM. Here are ideas for a church denomination or network to consider:

- **Develop a theology of work and business:** Develop a robust theology of work and business as a denomination, drawing on excellent resources developed by other networks and organisations (see Resource List)
- **Develop and disseminate discipleship materials:** Provide teaching materials and resources for pastors to use that are focused on discipling church members for ministry in the marketplace and/or mission through business. Again there are many existing resources that could be developed for denominational use.
- **Develop theological and practical training:** Integrate the theology of work/business and discipleship materials and methods into seminary training and other pastoral training programs. Material from this paper and the BAM Global Reports on the 'Biblical Foundations for Business as Mission' and the Wealth Creation Report Series might be included (and see the Resource List for links to these and further ideas).
- **Develop a template for ministry to businesspeople:** Consider providing a template and resources for 'business ministry' or 'workplace ministry' to member churches, just as there might be for 'children's ministry'.
- **Develop a business-focused entity within the denomination:** Consider creating a denomination-wide resource hub or structure within your church network specifically tasked with encouraging and equipping businesspeople directly (as well as indirectly through their church leaders).

Recommendations to local church leaders

Below are some specific recommendations of steps church leaders can take towards the integration of faith and work, mission and business, in their local church. However, there are two observations first:

³⁷ See Appendix 5 for the full BAM Manifesto.

1. An integrated approach – Just as a mission department in a church should not be a club for those passionate about missions, a workplace or BAM ministry should not focus only on those who become part of the group. It should instead advocate for workplace discipleship and mission through business throughout the *whole* congregation and be fully integrated into the wider ministry of the church.

2. Resource allocation – Resources to support such initiatives will be needed and should include time, talent, and treasure on the part of the local church. There needs to be an investment of time by church leaders, encouraging the development of talent as it relates to whole-life discipleship and BAM equipping, and also treasure as reflected in the local church budget. As this ministry will grow over time, so the budgetary needs to help fulfil this important area of discipleship will also grow.

In terms of specific practices and recommendations, first of all church leaders can select ideas from the menu of ‘promising practices’ shared throughout this report and collated into one list in Appendix 1.

Secondly, we recommend pastors and church leaders use the ‘Action Plan Template’ offered as a potential path forward toward the vision described in this paper. The template is provided in full in Appendix 2 and summarised here:

- **Share:** What do other leaders think? Discuss this paper and gather input on opportunities in your congregation.
- **Survey:** What do members of the church think? Gather input from church members through surveys and interviews.
- **Synthesise:** What are we learning? Based on what is heard, discuss and brainstorm further.
- **Start:** What is our next step? Identify some concrete practices and action steps to implement that fit your situation.

Thirdly, in the Self-Assessment Tools (Appendix 3), we ask questions about the emphasis of the local church on restoring our relationships to work and creation, the emphasis that is being placed on the church when scattered in the marketplace (versus when gathered in the building), and the equipping the saints for the work of ministry outside the church building or programs. We encourage you to undertake this assessment individually but then discuss it with others from your church, both leaders and members.

Lastly, Matt Rusten of Made to Flourish³⁸ has presented four practices that Jeff Haanen of the Denver Institute of for Faith & Work suggested could provided a common starting point for integrating faith and work in local congregations (Haanen, 2019).

As presented by Rusten, the four practices intersect with four distinct areas of congregational life: corporate worship, pastoral practice, discipleship/spiritual formation,

³⁸ Made to Flourish is a network for pastors that seeks to ‘empower pastors and their churches to integrate faith, work, and economic wisdom for the flourishing of their communities’, see: <https://madetoflourish.org/>

and mission/outreach. We have added extra suggestions for local churches under the corporate worship practice:

1. Corporate Worship:

- **Pastoral Prayers** for workers. Pray specifically for congregants' working lives:
 - General liturgical prayers
 - Vocation-specific prayers
 - Commissioning prayers
- **Offerings** – Give thanks to God for the work that provided this money by asking one or two givers to share a testimony of where the money for their tithe or offering came from and thanking God for their place of work.
- **Testimonies** – Ask a member to share about the struggles and joys of ministering in their workplace from the front, or have a 'This Time Tomorrow' section and during the service ask members to turn to their neighbour and share where they will be and what they will be doing at this time tomorrow.
- **Sung Worship** – Choose worship songs geared toward the workplace and if possible have the background of worship slides showing workplaces from the members rather than nature scenes (which reinforces the idea that we can only meet God in quiet places of beautiful nature rather than in our every-day workplaces).
- **Benedictions** – Use blessings like the Halverson blessing, reminding members that as they leave the church gathered, they are now entering their own mission field.

2. Pastoral Practice:

- **Workplace Visitation** – Visit parishioner's workplaces asking, "believing that God is sovereign, what is He already doing in this place?" Visit workplaces:
 - Onsite – non-participatory
 - Onsite – participatory
 - Offsite
 - Meetings
 - Sermon preparation

3. Discipleship/Spiritual Formation:

- **Vocational Interviews in Small Groups** – Interview congregants about their daily work, using the following sample questions:
 - Give us a picture of a day in the life of your work.
 - What unique opportunities do you have to love your neighbor through your work?
 - Where do you experience the brokenness of the world in your work?
 - How can we pray for you?

4. Mission/Outreach:

- **Asset Mapping Exercise** – Conduct a congregational survey³⁹ about the varying assets a congregation has that can be deployed for community benefit:
 - Physical/space assets
 - Financial assets
 - Networks
 - Human capital
 - Community

We can think of each of these ideas as ‘one-degree shifts’ that can move us in the direction of eradicating the sacred/secular divide and helping the local church refocus on the empowerment of the priesthood of believers.

³⁹ See: <https://denverinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Asset-Mapping-Exercise.pdf>

Resource List

Resources for Pastors

Made to Flourish

madetoflourish.org

Made to Flourish has resources and training for a network of pastors seeking to connect Sunday faith to Monday work for their churches.

Theology of Work Project

theologyofwork.org

Provides Bible commentary, devotionals and other resources centred around the theology of work. Prayer resources include:

[Opening prayers for Work in Worship](#)

[Thanksgiving Prayers about Work](#)

[Confessional Prayers about Work](#)

Discipling Marketplace Leaders

dmleaders.org

Discipling Marketplace Leaders works with churches and denominations to establish workplace ministries in the local church.

BAM Global Reports

bamglobal.org

See especially the report on [BAM Advocacy and Mobilisation](#) for ideas on how to share the needs and opportunities that BAM can address, and also the [Biblical Foundations for Business as Mission](#) report. In collaboration with the Lausanne Movement, BAM Global have published the [Wealth Creation Report Series](#), developed by a group of thirty people drawn from twenty nations with backgrounds covering business, church, missions and academia. From this the Wealth Creation Manifesto (Appendix 6) summarises the biblical framework for business and the [Wealth Creation Global Classroom](#) video series provides video overviews and study materials based on the report series.

Resources for Businesspeople and Marketplace Ministers

Nehemiah Project

nehemiahproject.org

Nehemiah Project trains and supports kingdom companies in 22 countries through biblical entrepreneurship training, coaching and access to capital.

Repurposing Business

repurposing.biz

Repurposing Business helps leaders and corporations to discover and implementing personal and corporate callings, thereby transforming communities and nations.

SfK Missional Business Academy

sfkministries.org

The Academy is part of SfK (Synergy for the Kingdom) Ministries.

Discipling Marketplace Leaders

dmleaders.org

Discipling Marketplace Leaders trains, mentors, and provides advocacy for small businesses through local churches.

BAM A-Z Booklet

matstunehag.com

A BAM resource by Mats Tunehag, can be downloaded from here for free as a pdf.

Journal of Biblical Integration in Business

Available at cbfa-jbib.org/index.php/jbib/issue/archive. Vol 15, No 1 and No 2, 2012 are probably the most relevant to this group.

Faith and Economics

Available at christianeconomists.org/faith-economics/faith-economics-archives. This journal has occasional articles of relevance to BAM and the church.

Websites and Blogs on Business as Mission

- **BAM Global** – bamglobal.org
- **Business as Mission** – businessasmission.com
- **Business 4 Blessing Alliance** – b4blessing.com
- **IBEC Ventures Blog** – ibecventures.com/blog
- **Gospel Coalition channel on Faith and Work** – thegospelcoalition.org/sections/faith-work
- **Greg Forster's Blog on Gospel Coalition** site on '[Faith and Work: What Needs to be Read and What Needs to be Written](#)'
- **Mats Tunehag's web site** offers BAM material in 23 languages – matstunehag.com/bam-material-in-different-languages/

Small Group Curriculum

- **Make Mondays Meaningful** – free six-week curriculum: centerforfaithandwork.com/article/make-mondays-meaningful-freecurriculum
- **Theology of Work Small Group Resources** – theologyofwork.org/small-group-studies
- **LifeWork** – developing a biblical theology of vocation: disciplenations.org/resources
- **IFWE Genesis Bible Study** – [Institute for Faith, Work & Economics Bookstore](#)
- **Discipling Marketplace Leaders Small Groups Bible Study** – [Contact DML](#)

Audio and Video Materials

- **BAM Resource Library Video page** – businessasmission.com/resources
- **Mats Tunehag's website** has links to 14 BAM videos – matstunehag.com/videos
- **Mark Greene at Lausanne Congress 2010** – [YouTube Video](#)

This short address by Mark Greene from LICC at the Lausanne Congress in Cape Town powerfully argues that the sacred-secular divide has effectively sidelined 98% of the church for 95% of their waking lives. He describes two mission strategies for the church: 1. "To recruit the people of God to use some of their leisure time to join the missionary initiatives of church-paid workers" or 2. "To equip the people of God for fruitful mission in all of *their* life." Recognizing that the first strategy is the dominant one around the world, he makes the biblical case for the church to adopt the second strategy going forward.

Recommended Books

While there are many excellent books on business as mission, these recommended books are focused on the relationship of the local church to business as mission. The books listed below include their ISBN numbers.

Workshop: Recalibrate Work and Worship: Lai, Patrick: 9781734729528

The workplace needs the good news, yet the church has done little to equip professionals on how to be salt and light in the workplace. Much of this disconnect is based on a misinterpretation of Scripture. Patrick Lai brings us back to the original Hebrew and Greek languages to gain a fuller understanding of God's view of work and worship.

Work and Worship: Matthew Kaemingk, Cory B. Willson, Nicholas Wolterstorff: 9781540961983

The authors do a masterful job of bringing our work into our Sunday worship and liturgy. While many of us have been focused on teaching about work as an act of worship, they have reminded us that Sunday liturgy is an opportunity to bring our work into the liturgy. They give practical examples of how this can be done and should be done.

Imagine Church: Releasing Dynamic Everyday Disciples, Hudson, Neil: 9781844745661

Experiencing this book has literally been a life-changing experience for individuals who have never imagined how the gathered church can equip believers to live as disciples of Christ when they are the scattered church. It goes beyond diagnosing the problem of the sacred-secular divide, and provides a clear pathway for leaders to establish a disciple-making culture within their churches. Written by pastor Neil Hudson from LICC after conducting a 3-year pilot project of 16 churches across the UK, it is both deeply theological but also very practical.

Scattered and Gathered: Equipping Disciples for the Frontline, Hudson, Neil: 9781783599929

How can the local church empower people to live faithful and fruitfully for Christ in their Monday-to-Saturday lives? How can what happens on Sundays and in midweek groups equip and sustain God's people for the opportunities and challenges that present themselves in the places where they are each day? These are the challenges that LICC has been successfully helping churches address.

Fruitfulness on the Frontline: Making A Difference Where You Are: Greene, Mark: 9781783591251

In this book, Mark Greene serves up a liberating view of how God can and does work in and through our daily lives. Brimming with true stories, the combination of fresh biblical insight, humour, and practical steps will not only spark your imagination; it will enrich your sense of wonder at the greatness and grace of the God who not only gave his life for us but invites us to join him in his glorious transforming work.

How the Church Fails Businesspeople (And What Can Be Done About It): Knapp, John C.: 9780802863690

Why do so many Christians struggle to relate their faith to their daily work? In this book, John C. Knapp argues that the church's ambiguous teachings about vocation, money, and business have long contributed to Christians' uncertainty about discipleship in the workplace. Drawing on his own expertise in business ethics and numerous interviews with Christians in diverse occupations, Knapp offers a new theological framework for Christian life in the world of business.

Work Matters: Connecting Sunday Worship to Monday Work: Nelson, Tom: 9781433526671

Work. For some this word represents drudgery and the mundane. For others work is an idol to be served. If you find yourself anywhere on the spectrum from workaholic to weekend warrior, it's time to bridge the gap between Sunday worship and Monday work. Striking a balance between theological depth and practical counsel, Tom Nelson outlines god's purposes for work in a way that helps us to make the most of our vocation and to join God in his work in the world.

Whatever You Do: Six Foundations for an Integrated Life (FWE Foundational Series): Bobo, Luke, Sherman, Amy, Goheen, Michael, Black, Gary, Bacote, Vincent, Forster, Greg, Nelson, Tom, Rusten, Matt: 9781093754254

We all long for our lives to have meaning and purpose, yet we live in a segmented way – our faith is separate from our work, home is separate from church, and more. *Whatever You Do* explores how we can pursue a more integrated faith and life through six important theological areas that provide a scaffolding to help us live meaningful lives, which is a fundamental human longing.

Is the Institutional Church Really the Church?, Kahle, Dave: 9781631226946

Over the last twenty years, the institutional church has spent \$530 billion, but the percentage of Christians in the country has not increased one percentage point. Additionally, in the last two generations, we have seen the culture go from Christian to anti-Christian, and we have turned off and lost half our children. We have fostered incomprehensible division. Can this really be the church for which Christ died? Join Dave Kahle as he asks and answers a number of questions that will provide a new perspective about the church.

The Church and Work: Sweeden, Joshua R., Cartwright, Michael: 9781498267229

Work is one of the most dominant and unavoidable realities of life. Though experiences of work vary tremendously, many Christians share a common struggle of having to live in seemingly bifurcated spheres of work and faith. Joshua Sweeden demonstrates how the

church can be understood as generative for both theology and practice of good work. The church is not simply the recipient or dispensary of the theology of work, but the locus of its development.

Business as a Holy Calling?: A Workbook for Christians in Business and Their Pastors: Dearborn, Tim A.: 9781505570984

Business can be as much about Christian ministry as preaching, teaching Sunday School, or volunteering in a food bank. Tragically the Church has tended to value businessperson's volunteer time more than their professional life. This workbook guides a discussion between businesspeople and their pastors to explore God's purpose for business.

Anointed for Business, Silvos, Ed, Jones, Laurie: 9780830741960

The notion that labour for profit and worship of God are worlds apart is patently false. The early Church founders were mostly community leaders and highly successful businesspeople. Silvos shows Christians how to know down that wall and participate in an unparalleled marketplace transformation.

Transformation: Change The Marketplace and You Change the World: Silvos, Ed: 9780800797171

Silvos shares five critical paradigms for transformation that are pivotal for change: Discipling Nations, Reclaiming the Marketplace, Looking at Work as Worship, Becoming Salt and Light, and Eliminating Poverty. Silvos shows how God intervenes in human affairs today to transform people and nations.

Shepherding Horses (Understanding God's Plan for Transforming Leaders): Kent Humphreys: 9780984357512

Shepherding Horses, Volume II (A Pastor's Guide to Equipping Workplace Leaders, Humphreys, Kent: 9780980087789

These guides are a must-read for any pastor and the strong and driven business leaders that he/she shepherds, helping to build bridges of acceptance and understanding.

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Appendix 1 – Promising Practices

Throughout this paper, we have introduced ‘promising practices’ as steps that could be taken to begin implementing an integration of faith and work in the local faith community. Those promising practices are captured all together in the table below.

Please see also the Recommendations and Action Plans and the Resource List in this BAM and the Church Report.

Promising Practices
<i>Promising Practice #1: Teach against the sacred-secular divide</i> Through sermons, studies, testimonies, encouragement and more, advocate against the harmful concept that some aspects of our lives are sacred, while others are not. This includes the non-biblical idea that some Christians are serving God ‘full-time’ because they are compensated by other believers. Instead, teach that all Christians have an opportunity serve God wherever He has placed them. Holiness is a matter of the heart, not a title or a pay-check.
<i>Promising Practice #2: Promote personal or group study</i> With more than 800 passages that apply to work, the Bible can help you connect to God's wisdom, encouragement, and guidance. One example: The Public Reading of Scripture is a series of online video Bible studies connecting God's word and your work. You can use the resource by yourself, with a small group from church, or even with a lunchtime Bible group. PRS.work videos are ready for you to use online, free of charge.
<i>Promising Practice #3: Feature workplace ministry in Bible teaching</i> Teach the stories behind the many Bible heroes who were in the workplace. Explain some of the temptations they might have faced and how they served God through them.
<i>Promising Practice #4: Study ‘Bible on Business’ devotional plan</i> The Bible is full of statements and stories applicable to work and business. This 31 day devotional plan is designed by business leaders to highlight these passages and relate them to the marketplace context. These words can equip believers to live more faithfully in their work, while deepening their love of Scripture. Many of the leaders in the BAM movement wrote contributions to these devotions. Look for it on the YouVersion Bible App.
<i>Promising Practice 5: Pastoring outside the box</i> Ray Bakke, a Baptist urban missiologist, employed a practice of pastoral visits for his urban church members whereby he would conduct spontaneous pastoral visits not to people's homes or a local restaurant but in their workplace. He would casually drop into their factories, offices, stores, schools, etc., to see how they are doing and bless them in their daily work. It was a concrete demonstration of the truth that faith and work intersect in his parishioners' world, while empowering workers and helping to hold employers accountable. His approach was courteous, and he would make it a practice to speak to the manager prior to approaching an employee. This model of pastoral care goes a long way in bridging the Sunday/Monday divide.
<i>Promising Practice #6: Send them out</i> Consider having commissioning services for laypeople, where the congregation prays over and sends out those in the workplace. Some churches do this regularly for everyone with a job. Others might focus on one type of job at a particular season, such as everyone involved in education at the start of the school year, or accountants during tax season. They are asked to stand or come forward and are prayed over. See Appendix 4 for further ideas.

Promising Practice #7: Blessing the boats

Churches in fishing towns involve the whole community in a blessing of the boats once a year, recognizing the importance of this trade in the community and the need for God's help. How could this apply to other industries in your community?

Promising Practice #8: Thankful for the Harvest

Churches might promote harvest festivals, giving thanks to God for the produce of the land and those who work the land. Or as a Thanksgiving focus, especially for a non-agricultural community, they celebrate the work of their hands in other ways of production of needed goods and services.

Promising Practice #9: Encourage Co-Vocational Pastors

Pastors who are co-vocational—those who have a job in the marketplace in addition to their pastoral role—may be in a stronger position to lead and to preach. Their words from the pulpit ring true as they have similar experiences to those in the congregation. They are able to lead from example on how to be salt and light in the workplace as well as how to interweave work, ministry, and family life.

Promising Practice #10: Consider new vocabulary for teaching on faith and work

Certain words or concepts need to be redefined or avoided as we teach against the sacred-secular divide. The following table contains some suggestions:

Someone says:	What it might imply (not biblical):	Better words or concepts to use:
Called	Only some Christians are called, sounds mysterious.	All Christians have a calling to serve in God's kingdom and be salt and light in their daily lives.
Full-time ministry	Ministry is within a certain time rather than a lifestyle	Use an adjective prior to 'ministry.' For example, 'pastoral ministry.'
Clergy/laity	Some individuals have more important role than others.	'Pulpit pastor' and 'marketplace minister'. We are a kingdom of priests.
Go to church	The church building is the primary place to worship God.	'Church gathered' (when in the church building), 'church scattered' or 'church sent out' (when not in the building, but being the church every day).
Missionary	Special people while other Christians are exempt from God's mission.	We are all on mission, though some are "Cross-cultural gospel worker." Others go locally to their own workplace.
Worship	Often refers only to the songs we sing during the service when the church is gathered.	Worship is to be all of life. We do work as an act of worship, raising children as an act of worship, chores as an act of worship, etc.
'The ministry'	Only one and it is only within the church building.	Living a life on mission, ministry is a natural flow every day.
Evangelism	It is an event with a program.	Life-on-life evangelism in every place and space.
Discipleship	Program about doctrine for new Christians.	Lifetime learning to apply God's work and be obedient to Him.
Money as root of evil	Implies that money itself is evil but money is actually neutral.	We can worship God through how we use our money. Wealth creation is part of the covenant.
Commissioning	Sending out a few people who are selected to work for God.	All Christians are sent by God to be on mission every day.
'I'm not gifted in evangelism.'	Used as an excuse to not share Christ with others.	All Christians are called to share Christ with others, but we need to understand that there are different ways to do this.

Promising Practice #11: Move from a 'pastoral care contract' to a 'pastoral equipping contract'

Neil Hudson describes in his book *Imagine Church*, that many churches operate on a pastoral care model—an unspoken 'contract' that the pastor cares for the members, and in return, the members support the pastor's vision, tithe, volunteer, etc. Instead, the model should make clear that the role of the leaders is to equip the congregation for service, both for when they are the gathered church, as well as when they are the scattered church.

Promising Practice #12: Show me your budget!

Show me your church budget and I'll tell you what you value. As you look for leaders to lead this ministry, don't forget to make it part of the church budget. Implementing a new ministry will take time, treasure, and talent.

Promising Practice #13: My church loves businesspeople.

'I am a business owner and my church has helped guide me to see how my business should glorify God.'

'My pastor calls me often to ask how he can pray for me and my business.'

'My church understands that business is challenging and I need their support, with sales as well as helping me spiritually stay focused on God.'

'The true owner of my business is God. I learned this at church and I had the privilege of being mentored by a seasoned businessman at my church.'

'The missions committee at my church formed a business consultation group to support businesspeople in our city as well as guide those called to serve in business globally.'

'I plan to take my business into the Middle East. My church understands that I will need prayer covering and encouragement even if I don't need their finances. They consider me their worker and they have commissioned me.'

'My church disciples us all into a healthy understanding of finances, business and kingdom-building.'

Wouldn't it be great to be part of one of these churches?

What is your role in helping your church to be as affirming of business?

Promising Practice #14: Share Stories

Share stories from the scattered church when you are the gathered church. The stories we share when the church is gathered are critical for creating imagination for how to live as believers when we are scattered. These stories can be positive, as when someone comes to faith, a prayer has been answered in our workplace, etc. They can also be difficult, such as when an evangelistic conversation didn't go as hoped, or when we make a mistake at work and need to apologise.

Promising Practice #15: Culture of the church needs to change

What is needed, first and foremost, is not a program but a change in culture.

From 'Setting God's People Free' by the Church of England:

There's a need for two shifts in culture and practice that we see as critical to the flourishing of the Church and the evangelisation of the nation.

1. Until, together, ordained and lay, we form and equip lay people to follow Jesus confidently in every sphere of life in ways that demonstrate the Gospel we will never set God's people free to evangelise the nation.

2. Until laity and clergy are convinced, based on their baptismal mutuality, that they are equal in worth and status, complementary in gifting and vocation, mutually accountable in discipleship, and equal partners in mission, we will never form Christian communities that can evangelise the nation.

Archbishops' Council (2017)

Promising Practice #16: Simple Starts

The London Institute for Contemporary Christianity (LICC) found that pastors understand the need to keep in mind the context of all members. Because the time the pastor is with the congregation is so limited, there are few opportunities to get into the specifics of everyone's lives. However, simple changes could bring workplace matters into the worship space.

From Neil Hudson, in 'Imagine Church', we hear of simple ways you can start now:

1. You do not need to begin a series on work. You just need to recognize that many of your listeners do work.
2. You do not need to present a whole new vision for the church that will take years to be adopted. You simply have to ask people what is happening in their places where they spend most of their time, who is there and what they think God might be doing.
3. You do not need to stop pastoral visits, but you can engage in them with a wider purpose. Recognizing that you are self-consciously trying to encourage people. To grow as disciples.
4. You do not need to spend lots of time explaining why you have changed. You could just invite people to come to a workshop to explore what would help them live more fruitfully for Christ.

Promising Practice # 17: Hold a Commissioning Service

Commissioning service suggestions from the book, *Work and Worship*, by Matthew Kaemingk and Cory Willson (p. 247)

Corporate worship can ordain and Commission worshippers toward their work in the world. The commissioning of a specific industry should reflect the culture of the local community and industry in question. That said, it might be helpful to consider a paradigmatic structure. Some combination of these five elements might prove useful in designing a commissioning service.

Testimony: Identify a representative from the industry and ask them to give a short testimony. Ask them to speak about the unique opportunities and challenges facing Christians serving in the industry. Ask them to testify, to give witness to, the ways the living God is actively working in their field.

Affirmation: Affirm those being commissioned for responding to God's leading in their lives. Affirm that God is with them, that God delights in the aroma of their work. Affirm their priestly calling to their industrial parish.

Framing: Frame their work within the creative, sustaining, and redemptive work of God. Frame their work as integral to both the mission of God and the witness of the local church.

Vows: Invite workers to vow, God helping them, that they will:

- Work according to the patterns of God's good work in the world.
- Avoid unjust, evil, and idolatrous patterns of work.
- Prayerfully intercede for their industry, clients and co-workers.
- Support other disciples serving in the industry.
- Offer their work as worship to God.

Blessing and Charge: At the end, invite the congregation or elders to stand and surround the workers. Bless both the workers and their work in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Charge them to go out and work in ways that are honouring and responsive to God's work in the world.

Appendix 2 – Action Plan Template for Church Leaders

Throughout Scripture, we see God continually calling His people to deeper relationship Him, as well as a greater commitment to His mission. His people pray every day that His kingdom would be demonstrated ‘on earth, as it is in heaven’. The Church, as God’s chosen vessel for delivering His mission to the world, must therefore be continually asking itself how to better steward this incredible responsibility. In light of this, the steps below are offered as a potential path forward toward the vision described in this paper:

SHARE: What do other leaders think?

- Share this paper with other leaders in your church as a catalyst for discussion.
- Ask them whether they see opportunities for the gathered church to better equip God’s people for their lives as the scattered church.

SURVEY: What do members of the church think?

- Ask members of the church for their input by conducting a survey, such as the one included in this paper (Appendix 3).
- Conduct one-on-one interviews with a select group of individuals (include church leaders as well as those working in the marketplace) about their experience and/or desire to learn useful insights regarding erasing the sacred/secular divide.

SYNTHESIZE: What are we learning?

- Based on what is heard during the survey process, organize a further discussion with the leaders to process the initial findings.
- If multiple members have expressed a desire to be better equipped for everyday life, including integrating BAM and the church, brainstorm feasible ways that this can be done. Given that most churches have very limited time gathered together per week, ask God and one another how to best use that gathered time to empower the church’s mission in the world, when scattered.

START: What is our next step?

- While every local church is unique, many churches have undertaken similar journeys in the past, and have discovered useful techniques. For example, the ‘promising practices’ scattered throughout this paper and listed in Appendix 1 offer some practical suggestions of ways in which a church could move forward towards better integration. Review through those and identify which might be appropriate for your context and situation.
- Some churches may come to the conclusion that they would benefit from bringing in outside resources to assist them with the change process, such as a consultant or someone from their denomination. For connections, email info@dmleaders.org.
- Access the resources shared in the Resource List.
- Get connected to the global business as mission community through BAM Global. Learn more about the opportunities and resources of BAM Global at <https://bamglobal.org/> and <https://businessasmission.com/>.

Appendix 3 – Self-Assessment Tools

Self-Assessment for Pastors and Church Leaders

1. How many times per year is the Great Commitment / Cultural Mandate (Genesis 1-2), relating to a theology of work, preached at our church?

0 1 - 2 3 - 6 7 - 10 11+

2. A pastor/church leader regularly visits our members at their workplace to learn about their ministry where God has placed them throughout the week.

Never Weekly Monthly Annually

3. We have allocated enough in our church budget to discipleship in the workplace or marketplace.

Not in budget Some but not enough Sufficient

On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being high), rate your church:

4. My church understands that the purpose of the Church when gathered is to equip the saints for the work of the ministry outside of the church building.

1 2 3 4 5

5. Our members understand that their work is as holy of a calling as the pastor's work.

1 2 3 4 5

6. Our members understand that work is an act of worship and know how to be salt and light in the marketplace.

1 2 3 4 5

7. Our members understand that work is a gift from God and should be done as an act of worship.

1 2 3 4 5

8. During Sunday services, we share (in sermons, testimonies, and stories) how God is working in and through our members throughout the week.

Yes No

9. Our church regularly preaches on the "three directives": (the Great Commitment, the Great Commandment, and the Great Commission).

Yes No

10. We commission all people for their work, not only those on church staff, volunteers, or cross-cultural gospel workers.

Yes No

Action Steps

Self-Assessment for Church Members

On a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being high), rate your church:

1. My church leaders believe that their primary role is to equip whole-life disciples to live as mission agents in the places God sends us every day of the week.
1 2 3 4 5
2. The leaders in my church show that they care about the life and ministry of its members every day of the week.
1 2 3 4 5
3. When people in my church talk about 'mission,' it is understood that everyone has a part to play in advancing God's Kingdom, no matter where they live and work.
1 2 3 4 5
4. My pastor/church leaders regularly visit me so that they can learn about or pray for my ministry in my workplace.
1 2 3 4 5
5. The people in my church understand that discipleship is about continually learning to become more like Jesus in word and deed, while inviting others to do the same.
1 2 3 4 5
6. After Sunday service, I feel like I have been equipped to follow and serve God more wholeheartedly throughout the week.
1 2 3 4 5
7. After Sunday service, I am more committed to following and serving God more wholeheartedly in my workplace.
1 2 3 4 5
8. The people in my church believe that every Christian is called to ministry, which includes ministry in the workplace from the moment they become a believer.
1 2 3 4 5
9. People in my church feel like their work can be just as spiritual as that of the pastor.
1 2 3 4 5
10. When someone expresses interest in serving God, my church shows them opportunities within their workplace and community, not only becoming a pastor or missionary.
1 2 3 4 5

What I would like to see:

Appendix 4 – Commissioning Service Sample for Marketplace Ministers

Faith & Work: Workplace Commissioning Liturgy

This liturgy has been adapted from several sources including the graduate ministry of InterVarsity Christian Fellowship at Harvard and Church of the Savior in Washington, DC. Please feel free to adapt it to your tradition, culture, and situation.

Leader: The Lord appeared to Moses in a burning bush and called to him saying, “Put off your shoes from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” Now, by virtue of the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit, every place we tread becomes holy.

Today, we come to affirm that the work you do each day takes place on holy ground, and as your spiritual leaders, to offer our support and prayers for you and the work to which God has called you.

(Those who wish to be commissioned move forward or stand.)

Leader: From the beginning of creation, we see God at work, labouring over His creation. Jesus Himself dignified the workplace by spending the larger part of His earthly life working as a carpenter. Paul affirmed work when he commanded it to be done “reverently, as unto the Lord.” He saw doing your work as an act of worship, as much as singing a hymn.

The Commissioning Questions (People respond *I do*.)

Leader: Brothers and sisters, are you, so far as you know your own heart, called by God to serve Him in the workplace?

Do you trust in Jesus Christ as your Saviour, acknowledge Him as Lord of your daily work?

Do you accept the authority of the Scripture, and commit to do your daily work according to God’s commands, as you are enabled by the Holy Spirit?

Do you affirm that every ability, resource, opportunity, and success come from God’s hand, to be used for His glory?

Will you seek to serve as a faithful servant in your daily work, putting the interests of others before your own?

Do you accept the responsibility as God’s ambassador to your workplace, and hold yourself accountable to God and the body of Christ for your witness?

People Wishing to be Commissioned (Kneel together and speak as follows.)

Enabled by Christ’s indwelling strength, I will endeavour to make each day’s work an act of worship. I pray that servanthood, grace, and humility will replace any greed, selfishness, and pride that would taint my work and make it an unworthy offering to You. I pray that my work will be a fragrant aroma of Your presence and that those with whom I work will be attracted to You. And, when I fail, help me to receive Your grace, make restitution as I am able, and accept the forgiveness that is mine in Christ. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen

Leader: It is fitting that the dedication of your work to God be sealed with the support of your brothers and sisters in Christ. By placing our hands on your shoulders, we affirm your

calling and pledge our support, encouragement, and affirmation in your work. Let us pray together.

Congregation: Lord Jesus, as these Your servants go out to do Your will, we pray that You will empower them, affirm them, and use them for Your glory. As the Body of Christ, we pledge our support, encouragement, and affirmation to these brothers and sister in Christ, in their successes and in their failures. We recognize them as Christ's ambassadors and name as holy ground every place they tread. In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Appendix 5 – Business as Mission Manifesto

Introduction

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

Affirmations

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

Recommendation

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

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

Conclusion

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

Business as Mission Issue Group

October 2004

Convening Team: Mats Tunehag, Wayne McGee and Jo Plummer

The Business as Mission Manifesto was originally published as Chapter 9 of the Lausanne Occasional Paper on Business as Mission and can be downloaded from BAM Global.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ See: <https://bamglobal.org/lop-manifesto/>

Appendix 6 – Wealth Creation Manifesto

Background

The Lausanne Movement and BAM Global organized a Global Consultation on The Role of Wealth Creation for Holistic Transformation, in Chiang Mai, Thailand, in March 2017. About 30 people from 20 nations participated, primarily from the business world, and also from church, missions and academia. The findings will be published in several papers and a book, as well as an educational video. This Manifesto conveys the essentials of our deliberations before and during the Consultation.

Affirmations

1. Wealth creation is rooted in God the Creator, who created a world that flourishes with abundance and diversity.
2. We are created in God's image, to co-create with him and for him, to create products and services for the common good.
3. Wealth creation is a holy calling, and a God-given gift, which is commended in the Bible.
4. Wealth creators should be affirmed by the Church, and equipped and deployed to serve in the marketplace among all peoples and nations.
5. Wealth hoarding is wrong, and wealth sharing should be encouraged, but there is no wealth to be shared unless it has been created.
6. There is a universal call to generosity, and contentment is a virtue, but material simplicity is a personal choice, and involuntary poverty should be alleviated.
7. The purpose of wealth creation through business goes beyond giving generously, although that is to be commended; good business has intrinsic value as a means of material provision and can be an agent of positive transformation in society.
8. Business has a special capacity to create financial wealth, but also has the potential to create different kinds of wealth for many stakeholders, including social, intellectual, physical and spiritual wealth.
9. Wealth creation through business has proven power to lift people and nations out of poverty.
10. Wealth creation must always be pursued with justice and a concern for the poor, and should be sensitive to each unique cultural context.
11. Creation care is not optional. Stewardship of creation and business solutions to environmental challenges should be an integral part of wealth creation through business.

Appeal

We present these affirmations to the Church worldwide, and especially to leaders in business, church, government, and academia.

- We call the church to embrace wealth creation as central to our mission of holistic transformation of peoples and societies.

- We call for fresh, ongoing efforts to equip and launch wealth creators to that very end.
- We call wealth creators to perseverance, diligently using their God-given gifts to serve God and people.

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam – For the greater glory of God

Bible References

The Manifesto is based on, among other things, lessons learned from Holy Scriptures. Listed below are some initial Scripture references regarding issues dealt with by the Consultation and expressed in the Manifesto. The list is not exhaustive, but is intended to spur further studies and conversations.

1. God is Creator of all things: Gen 1:1-2:4; Neh 9:6; Ps 104; Rev 4:11
2. Earth belongs to God: Lev 25:23; 1 Chron 29:11; Ps 24:1; 1 Cor 10:26; Gen 2:15
3. God is the giver of wealth: 1 Chron 29:11-12; Prov 8:18-21
4. Our creation in God's image: Gen 1:26,27; Gen 9:6
5. Our work as people made in God's image: Gen 1:26,28; Gen 2:15; Eph 4:8; 1 Tim 5:8
6. The command to work (and rest): Gen 2:15; Ex 20:9-11; Deut 5:13-15
7. Bezalel and craftsmen for tabernacle enabled by God: Ex 36:1-2
8. Wealth creation is both a gift from God and a command: Deut 8:11-18; Deut 28:11,12; Eccl 5:19
9. Hard work leads to wealth: Prov 10:4; Prov 13:4; Prov 18:9 (condemnation of idleness); Prov 20:13
10. All useful work is to be done to God's glory: Col 3:23,24
11. Wise investors are commended: Matt 25:16-30; Luke 19:11-27
12. Examples of "righteous rich" include Abraham (Gen 13:2), Isaac (Gen 26:12,13), Boaz (Ruth 2), David (1 Chron 28-29), David's supporters while he was in exile, esp. Barzillai, 'a very rich man' (2 Sam 17:27-29, 19:32); Solomon (1 Kgs 3:9-14), Nehemiah (Neh 5), Job (Job 1,29,31,42)
13. Markers of a functioning and restored marketplace: Jer 32
14. A business woman, Lydia, who furthers the gospel: Acts 16:14-15
15. Call to equip God's people for service: Eph 4:11-16
16. Call to witness and make disciples in all nations: Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8
17. Perils of hoarding: Prov 11:26; Luke 12:16-21; James 5:3
18. Encouragement to sharing: Acts 2:44-45; Acts 4:32; 2 Cor 8:1-15; 2 Cor 9:6-15; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 13:16
19. Call to generosity: Deut 15:10; Ps 37:21,26; Ps 112:5; Prov 11:25; 2 Cor 9:6; 1 Tim 6:18; Acts 20:35
20. Virtue of contentment: Phil 4:11-12; 1 Tim 6:6,8; Heb 13:5
21. Examples of different choices of how to handle wealth: Job 29:1-25; Luke 19:1-10; Acts 4:32-5:11; love of wealth does not satisfy (Eccl 5:10)

22. Calls to help the poor: Ex 23:11; Lev 19:10; Deut 15:7-11; Prov 19:17; Prov 28:27; Prov 31:20; Matt 19:21
23. Extrapolating from the microcosm of the family: how the noble woman's business ventures creates wealth for her family: Prov 31:10-21
24. Israel's wealth increased because God gave them the 'ability to produce wealth': Deut 8:7-18 – through productive agricultural work, through trade/selling & buying, and through mining; also through obedience (Deut 28:1,11-12; 2 Chron 26:4-5)
25. God's blessing on nations through material prosperity: Deut 30:9
26. God's blessing of material prosperity through pursuit of wisdom: Prov 3:16
27. The call to justice: Ps 106:3; Prov 29:7; Is 1:17; Amos 5:24; Zech 7:9, Micah 6:8
28. Sensitivity to context: 1 Cor 9:19-23
29. Power of trade to create wealth (and to corrupt the wealthy): Ezek ch 27-28 (ch 27:12-24 is the most complete and extensive list of trading communities in the Bible)
30. Dependency on agricultural production (equivalent of business in contemporary times): Eccl 5:9; King Uzziah understood this, see 2 Chron 26:10
31. Wealthy Christians in the early Church known for generosity in helping the poor and/or building the church: Joseph called Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37); Dorcas (Acts 9:36); Cornelius (Acts 10:1); Lydia (Acts 16:13-15, 40); Jason (Acts 17:5-9); Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2-3); Mnason of Cyprus (Acts 21:16); Phoebe (Rom 16:1); Erastus (Rom 16:23); Chloe (1 Cor 1:11)

A downloadable version of this document in English is available from BAM Global⁴¹ and from MatsTunehag.com in 20 other languages⁴².

For a short introduction to the work of the Global Consultation on Wealth Creation and the background to the Manifesto, please read *Calling the Church to Affirm Wealth Creators*⁴³, and also Mats Tunehag's introductory blog *Wealth Creation Manifesto*.⁴⁴

⁴¹ See: <https://bamglobal.org/wealth-creation-manifesto-references/>

⁴² See: <http://matstunehag.com/bam-material-in-different-languages/>

⁴³ See: <http://businessasmission.com/affirm-wealth-creators/>

⁴⁴ See: <http://matstunehag.com/2017/05/10/wealth-creation-manifesto/>