



Economic Wisdom Project

Research Notes on the 12 EWP Elements

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to assist writers and scholars who wish to explore the connections between the 12 Economic Wisdom Project (EWP) Elements and theology, biblical studies, and church history. Like the Elements themselves, this is not a comprehensive overview or summary of everything the Bible has to say about economics, nor is it a work of systematic or constructive theology. Rather, this document takes the Elements as a starting point and explores where they intersect with some important works in the traditional theological disciplines.

Method

Soliciting input from leading seminary faculty in the Oikonomia Network, we compiled a list of books and resources where overlap with the Elements might be identified. Under the guidance of professor Scott Rae (Talbot School, Biola University) and professor Charlie Self (Assemblies of God Theological Seminary), researchers Kathryn Arumae, Danny Castro, Annalyssa Lee and Ken Valardi (Talbot) and Luke James (AGTS) reviewed the books and resources, identifying points of overlap with the Elements. The core methodological standard set for this research was: “For each resource, produce a set of notes organized into 12 sections (one for each Element) listing material in that resource that relates to each Element. The purpose is not to evaluate the strength or validity of any arguments made, nor is it to search only for material that supports the Element. The purpose is to inform the person reading the notes about what the resource contains.” The notes were then compiled into a single document.

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Abbreviations

BCG	Kenman Wong and Scott Rae, “Business for the Common Good”
BE	R.C. Sproul, Jr., “Biblical Economics”
BGG	Wayne Grudem, “Business for the Glory of God”
C	William Placher, ed., “Callings”
CC	David Hall and Matthew Burton, “Calvin and Commerce”
CIV	Benedict XVI, “Caritas in Veritate”
EE	Bruce Longenecker and Kelly Liebengood, eds., “Engaging Economics”
EP	David Cowan, “Economic Parables”
FCC	Charlie Self, “Flourishing Churches and Communities”
FF	Chad Brand, “Flourishing Faith”
FW	Justo Gonzalez, “Faith and Wealth”
GW	David Miller, “God at Work”
HGM	David Wright, et. al., “How God Makes the World a Better Place”
LE	John Paul II, “Laborem Exercens”
MFC	Peter Phan, ed., “Message of the Fathers of the Church: Social Thought”
NPR	Craig Blomberg, “Neither Poverty Nor Riches”
OMB	Max Stackhouse, et. al., “On Moral Business”
OTE	Chris Wright, “Old Testament Ethics for the People of God”
PC	Max Weber, “Protestantism and Capitalism: The Weber Thesis and Its Critics”
PP	Abraham Kuyper, “The Problem of Poverty”
RD	Herman Bavinck, “Reformed Dogmatics, Volume 2”
RE	John Mueller, “Redeeming Economics”
SDC	Michael Novak, “The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism”
SSB	Stephen Grabill, ed., “The Stewardship Study Bible”
TFO	David Baker, “Tight Fists or Open Hands?”
TOW	Theology of Work Project (various papers)
VC	Austin Hill and Scott Rae, “The Virtues of Capitalism”
WBM	Jeff Van Duzer, “Why Business Matters to God – and What Still Needs to Be Fixed”
WIL	“The Word in Life Study Bible”

Element 7

Households, businesses, communities, and nations should support themselves by producing more than they consume.

Individuals/households supporting themselves

Many parables of Jesus show us that honest value-creating work is positive. (FF, p. 6)

Paul wrote that people should work for their food but also those that were able should give to those in need (FF, 2 Thess. 3:10).

Medieval monks and monasteries provided a picture of faithful labor by treating the call to work and produce surplus for the benefit of others as their divine calling. (FF, p. 16-17)

The Decalogue affirms that it is not wrong to have wealth and possessions, but it does speak against coveting and thus taking things by immoral means. To take something away from someone without working for it is wrong, and conversely working for something is right. The Decalogue affirms wealth creation by forbidding wealth theft. (FF, p. 73)

Epiphanius and Ambrose taught that work is the true source of wealth and that Christians should work to produce surplus for the sake of charity. (MFC, p. 35)

Creating surplus enables sharing. (MFC, p. 73)

The drive to produce more should seek that personal needs may be met along with others' needs. (MFC, p. 89-90)

Work enables people to care for their households and all of humanity. (OMB, p. 443)

Scholastics knew that what promoted wealth was the production of resources that exceed the amount consumed. (RE, p. 34)

People have a responsibility to work and to share. (1 Cor. 9: 9-12) (SSB, p. 1499)

We can live a life above the bare minimum of survival if we produce more than we need. (BGG, p. 36)

1 Tim. 6:17-19 tells those that are rich that they are supposed to store up treasures to have a good foundation for the future. (BGG, p. 55)

There is no command to take away from the very affluent; there is no teaching that a large amount of wealth is wrong in itself. Rather, the warning is against being self-indulgent: James 5:1, 3, 5. (BGG, p. 59)

Powerful economic developments are often seen as devastating: “Manufacturing efficiency and specialization techniques were combined with mass-production methods”—this created low-cost labor. (GW, p. 27)

Christine de Pisan’s “The Treasure of the City of Ladies,” written in 1405, gives advice to women of various social standings. She exhorts the wives of the tradesmen to learn their husbands’ trades, so that they may assist in decision-making and running the business. She also says that they should give their children some trade training, which would be “a great possession.” (C, p. 186-187)

Pope Leo XIII’s “Rerum Novarum” argues that working is the proper and necessary way by which a man supports his life and his family’s. (C, p. 369)

Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* argues that Protestant asceticism’s emphasis on the limitation of consumption and the valuation of continuous work in a worldly calling led to the development of capitalism. Asceticism calls people to work and to save what they earn from their work, leading to increasing wealth and making investment in capital when possible. (C, p. 371-374) He also argues that Protestant asceticism sanctioned labor as a calling and therefore made the employer’s business a calling of God. (p. 376)

The *Pseudoclementine Homilies*, a document from Jewish Christian gnostic circles, argues that owning anything beyond the bare necessities is sinful. (*Clem. Hom.* 15.7, 9) Later Christian writers denied that possessions were inherently evil, but affirmed that greed for possessions is evil. (FW, p. 101-102)

The author cites Iranaeus as saying that all commercial activity (buying, selling, and trading), even that of Christians, is generally suspect of being unrighteous. Wealth itself is considered unrighteous by Iranaeus, regardless of the amount. Iranaeus does not give the reason for the

judgment, but he may be echoing views of the time, or a reading of Revelation 13:17, or “he may simply be rejecting the self-interest that inevitably accompanies trade.” (FW, p. 110) From the same passage, it appears that while Iranaeus views all property as suspicious, he does emphasize that Christians must use the unrighteous property for righteous purposes. The point of the passage is that whatever we have is not our own, but we should make use of them for the Lord. (p. 111)

The author cites Origen as interpreting Jesus’ command to sell one’s possessions and give to the poor very literally. Origen also believed that all property belonged to Caesar, so the less you owned, the better off you were because the less you owed to Caesar. (FW, p. 118-119)

The author cites Hippolytus as interpreting the Lord’s prayer as only asking God for the bare necessities for surviving—“not luxury, but food...and that, too, not for a great number of years, but what is sufficient for us to-day.” (FW, p. 123)

Cyprian argues that someone cannot disregard almsgiving because he has to provide a sufficient patrimony and inheritance to his children. To do so would be to sin against your children by not modeling proper piety to them. (FW, p. 126)

The Egyptian monastics of the fourth century disparaged all wealth and material possessions, and valued the ideal of communal property. They believed that no one should own anything that they have to leave behind when they die. Poverty to the point of deprivation was a virtue. (FW, p. 163)

The Egyptian monastic Pachomius at first advised other monastics to become self-sufficient and contribute the needs of others. However, he changed this philosophy to follow a communal property philosophy, which became the foundation for cenobitic monasticism. All things belonged to the group, not to any individual. (FW, p. 164)

The monastic teachings of poverty and commonality of goods were softened as monastic practices filtered into the institutional church in the fourth century. Such teachings merely became options. Most people chose the “normal” option of keeping their possessions and limiting their sharing to almsgiving. This led to the distinction between the commandments of Jesus, which everyone must follow, and the “counsels of perfection,” which were only for the monastic life. The monastic community continued throughout the Middle Ages to call the church back to its “early call and ultimate vocation of *koinonía*.” (FW, p. 166)

Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus all decried greed as the ultimate cause of poverty: “the devil uses his wiles to convince the rich that they need all sorts of things that in truth are not necessary and by creating useless things to be desired.” (p. 177) The goal is equality among all people. Whatever is not necessary is superfluous, and must be given away to those who are in need. (p. 177). Gregory of Nazianzus’ theological basis for such sharing is our common humanity and dependence upon God’s grace. Gregory of Nyssa also cites our common humanity, and adds the doctrine of creation and the Fall as further reasons. There was no private property before the Fall; such concepts only came after the Fall. (p. 179-181) Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus were all from wealthy families, yet they were never criticized

as being hypocrites because the sharing that they advocated was not a dogmatic or legalistic approach. It was not motivated out of concern for easing the rich, but out of concern for helping the poor. The rich should wisely manage their money and give when there is actual need, not just arbitrarily give it away. (p. 183-184)

According to the author, Ambrose believed that the measure of a just wage is determined by what is necessary to sustain life, not the productivity of the labor or the worker's skill. (FW, p. 190)

Kuyper asserts that the Father "wills with divine generosity that an *abundance* of food grows from the ground." The "bounty" should help support those that might otherwise go hungry. (PP, p. 55)

Businesses supporting themselves

The author argues that profit produces surplus capital, which in turn can be used to purchase tools, which can then be used to increase production of goods that are in demand. (BE, p. 43-44) These conditions are necessary for material prosperity. But this process begins with profit, which exists when "income is greater than expenditure." (p. 43) He warns of the dangers of consuming more than we produce, reminding us of James 4:13-14 because plans of future profit may not pan out. (p. 125) Further, if the Lord is truly our shepherd, we should be content and not pursue living beyond our means. (p. 131)

The author uses the parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl of great price (Matt. 13:44-46) as background for an argument that profit is not equivalent to greed, and allows for reinvestment, job creation, an improved working environment, and especially increased wealth for employers, employees and investors. (EP, Chapter 10)

Jesus does not seem to view profits as immoral since in the parable of the talents, he praised the servants who turned a profit. (EP, p. 198) Jesus did not condemn usury or interest, but rather praises the servants who earned much from wise investments, while faulting the one who refused to at least earn some interest on the money. Jesus faulted the money-changers for *where* they conducted their business, and not for "the nature of the business itself." (p. 70)

Calvin draws a distinction between usury (an unfair or abusive charge of interest) and a legitimate charge on borrowing money. (EP, p. 70)

"With profit and ownership also comes responsibility for those in need. For Calvinists, charity became a widespread activity. It did not necessarily begin with and follow the same patterns of charity that one may associate with giving to the poor or downcast today. Charity in the spirit of Calvin is wide-ranging and begins with personal responsibility and giving to the church." (CC, p. 107) "For Calvin, the next rung of charity was, surprising to some, personal security. In other words, Calvin upheld the view that one is responsible to provide for himself and his dependents. Calvin and other Reformers broke with the medieval pattern of almsgiving. Instead, they endorsed an ethic based on personal responsibility... Calvin, thus, through his teachings on



vocation and through the work ethic he cultivated, expected that a charitable outlook would lead individuals to eschew being drains on the resources of others.” (p. 110)

When businesses generate economic capital, “that allows the rest of society to flourish.” (WBM, p. 13)

The author argues for the legitimacy of profit: “One of the central theses of this entire book is that being on the front lines of a for-profit business (or a professional firm) allows us to engage in kingdom work every bit as much as if we were working in the church, on a mission field or in a university.” (WBM, p. 102) Profitability is necessary for a business to survive, and therefore allows it to accomplish its God-ordained purposes. (p. 171-172)

Communities/nations supporting themselves

The work of a small business owner who understands his business as his calling and does not separate his “work” from his “ministry” positively impacts the community in numerous ways like providing for his family, helping others do their work, and creating value. (FCC, p. xv-xvii)

The economic success of people and communities comes from their value creating work. (FCC, p. 65)

Solomon, the Queen of Sheba, and Rehoboam are examples of taxation and policies taking wealth from their people. The economies of their people had less to operate with because of their policies. (FF, p. 49-51)

Productivity and thrift must be oriented towards the well-being of society. In this way, Christian compassion motivates Wesleyan involvement in the economy. (HGM, p. 115)

Savings and loans help sustain value creation. (OMB, p. 624)

“Society’s purpose for business is to contribute to economic well-being by producing and distributing goods and services.” Profit is required for business. (OMB, p. 702)

“Every economy that intends to progress must have as its motive the ability to get more out of the economic process that it puts in.” (OMB, p. 781)

The concept that money is owned by those who use it and not by the authorities who issue it means that governments do not create wealth and must flourish through enabling the production of more than it consumes. (RE, p. 41)

Worldwide inflation has resulted from increasing consumption through equating value with printed dollars and increasing that value over the real wealth created through production. (RE, p. 345-346)

Borrowing allows for a higher total of goods and services. (BGG, p. 73)

“How many goods of a certain kind ought to be produced? The answer is best left to the contingency plans of actual buyers and sellers. The reason is not simply that individuals are the best judges of their own real needs. It is also that the pattern of their choices plays an important informational role. When the number of economic agents willing to expend resources upon certain goods is great, inadequate supply is likely to force prices up until some buyers, at least, change their minds.” (SDC, p. 105)

Element 8

A productive economy lifts people out of poverty and generally helps people flourish.

Flourishing and moral character

God's will is for people to flourish and grow in character. (FF, 2 Peter 1:3) (p. 33)

“Development is impossible without upright men and women, without financiers and politicians whose consciences are finely attuned to the requirements of the common good.” (CIV, p. 45)

Wesleyan principles for good work include 1) being motivated by a serving compassionate spirit to benefit the world by carefully stewarding Creation and doing no harm to others, 2) pursuing work that creatively addresses the needs of society and finds ways to create value and make it accessible to as many as possible, and 3) pursuing work that promotes the creation of healthy communities which reflect the creative aspect of work bringing about justice, value, order, justice, and abundance. (HGM, p. 60-61)

Societies must approach development in ways that recognize the personal aspect of progress, enable access of others to progress, and ensure “just development for all.” (LE, p. 5)

Russell Conwell: “I say you ought to be rich; you have no right to be poor.” (GW, p. 35)

The “Institutes” of John Cassian (360-435) notes that monks embrace poverty. Anyone entering the monastery is forced to relinquish all money and possessions. (C, p. 115-117) “The Rule of St. Benedict” also states that poverty is required of monks. Benedict (480-550) argues from Acts 4:32 that common property is the necessary rule and the ownership of any private property is a vice. (C, p. 130)

Christine de Pisan’s “The Treasure of the City of Ladies,” written in 1405, gives advice to women of various social standings. She exhorts the wives of the tradesmen to learn their husbands’ trades, so that they may assist in decision-making and running the business. She also says that they should give their children some trade training, which would be “a great possession.” (C, p. 186-187)

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God created work and created man to do work well. When we are not performing our work well, it is an indicator that our relationship with God is diminished. God created us to be productive and profitable in our work and when we are not, we have ceased work excellently unto the Lord and let his lordship be over every area of our lives. (TOW, “Goodness and Defilement of Work (Jeremiah 2)”)

“The joy of creation, of conceptualizing, planning, forming, and launching something—the pride of authorship—is an undeniable high point in human existence.” (CC, p. 14)

Matt. 25:14-30 – it is good to be productive and invest (WIL)

The author suggests that if the specific slavery laws of the Old Testament were followed, “it is arguable that fixed-term slavery and bonded labor in ancient Israel would be comparable to paid employment today, whereas freedom would be equivalent to self-employment and involve considerably more risk.” (TFO, p. 174)

The economy and concern for the poor

Caring for widows, orphans, and the poor were chief concerns of the Fathers. They based this on Scripture (Ex. 22:21-22; Dt. 14:29; Jer. 22:13, 15-16, 22: 3-4; Mk 12:40; Lk. 7:11-16) (MFC, p. 18)

Central to understanding the role of wealth and economy is helping the poor. (MFC, p. 39-40)

The Holy Spirit leads people to work hard to provide structures and systems to care for those in need. (FCC, p. 46)

Christians must engage in an economy which affirms the humanity and importance of the poor by helping them flourish. (Ruth 1-4) (FCC, p. 18)

The Lord's Supper is instructive for God's provision and the fellowship of His community. It points to God as the source of life as poverty is alleviated, and people are adopted as children in the Kingdom of God. (FCC, p. 38)

The extent to which the poor were treated well in Israel reflected the health of the nation and economy. (OTE, p. 42)

The most fundamental considerations for economic decisions include caring of the poor, enabling those excluded from economic activity, investing in the development of the vulnerable, and increasing the stability and health of family life. (OMB, p. 441-442)

A just economy provides basic human needs and lifts people out of poverty. (OMB, p. 457)

God is concerned with the poor and lifting them out of their circumstances. (Isaiah 61: 1-11) (SSB, p. 942-943)

Just and righteous societies care for the poor. (Jer. 21:11-23:8) (SSB, p. 982)

Care for the poor is a priority. (1 Cor. 16: 1-4) (SSB, p. 1511-1512)

Some new developments in mass production have actually been seen as increasing poverty: "increasing levels of poverty, crime, alcoholism, hunger, and spiritual thirst." (GW, p. 27)

The author cites Iranaeus as saying that all commercial activity (buying, selling, and trading), even that of Christians, is generally suspect of being unrighteous. Wealth itself is considered unrighteous by Iranaeus, regardless of the amount. Iranaeus does not give the reason for the judgment, but he may be echoing views of the time, or a reading of Revelation 13:17, or "he may simply be rejecting the self-interest that inevitably accompanies trade." (FW, p. 110) From the same passage, it appears that while Iranaeus views all property as suspicious, he does emphasize that Christians must use the unrighteous property for righteous purposes. The point of the passage is that whatever we have is not our own, but we should make use of them for the Lord. (p. 111)

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Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus all decried greed as the ultimate cause of poverty: “the devil uses his wiles to convince the rich that they need all sorts of things that in truth are not necessary and by creating useless things to be desired.” (p. 177) The goal is equality among all people. Whatever is not necessary is superfluous, and must be given away to those who are in need. (p. 177). Gregory of Nazianzus’ theological basis for such sharing is our common humanity and dependence upon God’s grace. Gregory of Nyssa also cites our common humanity, and adds the doctrine of creation and the Fall as further reasons. There was no private property before the Fall; such concepts only came after the Fall. (p. 179-181) Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus were all from wealthy families, yet they were never criticized as being hypocrites because the sharing that they advocated was not a dogmatic or legalistic approach. It was not motivated out of concern for easing the rich, but out of concern for helping the poor. The rich should wisely manage their money and give when there is actual need, not just arbitrarily give it away. (p. 183-184)

Ambrose believed that nearly all ways of acquiring wealth are unjust except agriculture. He thought trade was especially suspect because it involves deceit. (FW, p. 189)

According to the author, Ambrose believed that the measure of a just wage is determined by what is necessary to sustain life, not the productivity of the labor or the worker’s skill. (FW, p. 190)

Citing James 5:1-6, the author argues Christians should be conscientious as to which products they buy because they may be tacitly endorsing economic injustices by the companies, such as failing to pay workers decent wages (James 5:4). He also suggests they should be cautious of politicians who support tax cuts for the upper and middle classes while programs supporting the needy are reduced. (NPR, p. 156-158)

Economic systems and concern for the poor

Affording poor people equal access through structural development is a key to creating a successful society. (CIV, p. 13)

Biblical themes about proper stewardship include duty to provide for families and the poor. Societies must provide just structures that allow access to economic flourishing and freedom, and care for resources so as to provide for future generations. (OMB, p. 41)

Economies operate within societies and as such definitions concerning “poor” and “productive” change. The idea is that a society’s success is determined on how they positively deal with “their” poor. (OMB, p. 91)

It is the duty of justice and truth to provide means whereby the poor may access ways to progress. (OMB, p. 489)

The Four Little Dragons (Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore) are examples of capitalism lifting people out of poverty. (OMB, p. 925)

Israelite law favored people of property and possessions. Thus, seeing to the needs of the poor was of paramount importance. (OTE, p. 148)

The socio-economic ethics of the OT speaks of inclusion of the needy present in society by ensuring they are cared for, helped, and given shares in the economy. (OTE, p. 195)

The prohibition against usury to fellow Israelites was to prevent people from taking advantage of those in need. (Deut. 23: 19-20) (SSB, p. 243-244)

Government welfare programs often treat the poor more like animals than people. (SSB, p. 285)

Nehemiah highlights the contrast between good economic practice and bad. Any economy that persecutes is evil. (Neh. 5: 1-9) (SSB, p. 585-586)

Christians are to imitate God’s concern for the poor. This should direct Christians to establishing economic policies with that aim in mind. (SSB, p. 1237)

Oppressive governments stifle productivity for the poor and thus keep them poor; the poor cannot own property or business. The author mentions Communist countries and says that such systems are evil. (BGG, p. 23-24)

Borrowing allows the poorest communities to be much more productive, and that this will get them out of poverty, or at least give them a better chance. (BGG, p. 73)

Business creates productivity, so the more you can get business to the poorest areas, the more you will be able to get people out of poverty. (BGG, p. 81)

The free market system has lifted more people out of poverty than any other system. (EP, p. 18-23)

Many Asian nations have lifted themselves out of poverty through sound economic policies and management combined with a “supportive political will” (EP, p. 124), without debt relief or large amounts of foreign aid; other developing nations must do the same if they desire to overcome poverty (p. 124-126).

Just because some people abuse economic tools, this is not a good argument to abandon the free market system in favor of one that does not work as well. (EP, p. 190-191)

“The World Council of Churches, blinded by its own theological ideology, failed to see any co-creative possibilities, contributions, or potential for moral or societal good coming from the marketplace.” (GW, p. 89)

“In addition to ignoring the issues faced by businesspeople, seminaries offer little analysis of or appreciation for the moral roots of the modern corporation, the concept of business as a calling, or the multiple tasks that business performs for society and the common good.” (GW, p. 96-97)

“For some in the academy, this may require a theological paradigm shift to recognize that business, even operating under a marketplace system of democratic capitalism, can be a source of social justice.” (GW, p. 144)

Those who make things create jobs, as well as holding jobs themselves. (GW, p. 133)

Pope Leo XIII’s “*Rerum Novarum*” argues against socialism as the answer to the economic problems of the time. First, the dissolution of private property would prevent members of the working class from being able to utilize wages for their own betterment. Second, socialism violates the natural right to private property, by which people are meant to provide for themselves and their families. Third, socialism distorts the role of the state by exercising excessive control over the family and paternal authority in provision for the family. Fourth, socialism would create confusion, disorder, and envy within society. The inviolability of private property is the most fundamental principle for alleviating the conditions of the working class because it allows them to properly utilize wages for their own betterment and to give away any excess when appropriate (360-365).

“Business also mirrors God’s provisional activity by creating wealth and opportunities for employment. While we will comment further on this point in chapter five, market-based economies (and the critical role that business plays within it) represent the only known system that can actually create new financial wealth to lift people out of economic poverty.” (BCG, p. 82)

“Beyond just providing the opportunity to earn wages, business is also responsible for creating many ‘good jobs’ that offer challenge, opportunities for personal development and at least partially fulfill the human needs for achievement and community by providing the opportunity to use ingenuity, creativity and collaborate with others on tasks.” (BCG, p. 83)

“In applying these ideals to globalization there is nothing in Scripture that would indicate these concerns should end at national or ethnic boundaries. We are simply commanded to love our neighbors. However, the interdependencies created by globalization have caused the neighborhood to expand in size and scope. In the Old Testament tradition sojourners were to be treated like the native born under the law (Lev 19:34). Jesus arrived on the scene to clarify that

God's mercy should be extended to all. The kingdom properly seen is inclusive. Thus our neighborhood, and thereby our neighbors, has become global." (BCG, p. 152)

"Furthermore, Calvin and his followers seemed to understand that private property could help individuals and families climb out of impoverished conditions. He seemed to understand how private property could benefit the poor—a theme echoed by Thomas Sowell when he notes: 'Where property rights prevail in a free market, housing circulates regularly among different classes of people.'" (CC, p. 64)

Calvin took a stance against usury but was not against proper charging of interest, because he realized that creditors could be victims too and if they were unable to charge interest, there would be a loss on their side. (CC, p. 74-75)

"This intervention of human management has brought us, generally speaking, out of barbarism into an orderly society." (PP, p. 25)

Disagreeing with Tawney, the author believes that "far from impoverishing the mass of humankind, [democratic capitalism] has intended to generate a greater improvement in the material conditions of every portion of humankind." (SDC, p. 83-84)

The author debunks the idea that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer ("a dictum of Barbara Ward's"). This idea does not seem "to match the historical record. Under market economics, the historical record shows unprecedented gains in real incomes for the poor." (SDC, p. 109)

Responding to the argument that developed nations cause poverty in undeveloped nations, the author counters that "two hundred years ago, Latin America was poorer than it is today; but so was North America." Democratic capitalism brought growth to both these regions. (SDC, p. 273-274)

The author describes the improvement of conditions in Latin America since the introduction of democratic capitalism. (SDC, p. 308) "In thirty years, infant mortality was reduced significantly." (p. 309)

"The United States is not stricken weak with poverty. Its system has been productive beyond compare." (SDC, p. 358)



Growth/productivity and concern for the poor

Productivity, viewed spiritually, enables giving to the poor. (MFC, p. 86-87)

The early church experienced success in helping the poor through the success of their economy. (MFC, p. 145)

Plagues represented the struggle of Israel to flourish. Egypt's economy was not productive because it held people in slavery and poverty. (Ex 7:14-29) (SSB, p. 77)

The gleaning law of Leviticus 19:9 shows concern for the provision of the poor through work. (SSB, p. 145)

Boaz allowed Ruth to work in his productive fields. (Ruth 2:1-23) (SSB, p. 324)

Care for the needy, be diligent in business so as to be profitable, and help others. (Prov. 31) (SSB, p. 831)

Caring for others and working to provide for their needs is an aspect of a Christian life. (1 Tim. 5: 1-20) (SSB, p. 1587)

Helping the poor and helping them flourish involves understanding the economy in terms of value creation and its connection with all spheres of what it means to be human, e.g. the artistic and cultural. (FCC, p. 16-17)

Wealth must not be hoarded. It must be utilized for the purpose of helping those in need. (Proverbs 11:24-25; 14:21; 31; 22:9; 28:27) (FCC, p. 24)

Governments do not create wealth but should provide the infrastructure to do so. When policies take money from people to fund political agendas, wealth is taken from the wealth-creating sectors of the economy. This inherently leads to less help for the poor and less freedom for people. (FF, p. 80-81)

Henry Ford's success in producing wealth through manufacturing cars opened up the means for him to pay his workers more and create competition for the better workers. This productivity is an example of people being lifted out of poverty and flourishing based on economic principles aimed at wealth and value creation. (FF, p. 105)

Wealth redistribution is not a matter of self-improvement but about being honorable in fulfilling God's ordained social responsibility. (OMB, p. 93)

Preoccupation with monetary wealth is evil. But poverty is not a mark of holiness. Poverty is to be overcome with hard work and establishment of structures which help alleviate economic need. (OMB, p. 111)

Redistribution of the American economy to the world's poor would lead to more poor people. Productivity is the means by which poor people are helped out of poverty. (RE, p. 195)

Sproul notes that the acquisition and proper use of tools lead to increased production, which in turn lifts people out of poverty (BE, p. 49-54).

Luke 10:7 is useful when talking about how work is a good thing for all workers—not a negative thing as Marxist theory suggests. (BGG, p. 31)

Luke 19:13 – being productive with what the Lord has given you not only helps you make profit, but God will further bless you, when you are productive, beyond what you do for yourself. (BGG, p. 42)

Because the rich are productive they are able to help those in need, so the verses referred to in Acts illustrate that those who can be productive help those in poverty (Acts 4:32-35). Those who are rich (who have the opportunity to be, and are, productive) have more obligations to give generously to the poor (1 Tim. 6:17-19, Luke 12:48, 1 Cor. 4:2, 14:12b). (BGG, p. 54-57)

“It follows from our comments above that a Calvinistic work ethic does not reward or tolerate non-productivity. In fact, a depravity-sensitive work ethic will recognize sloth as a symptom of sin and will seek to ward it off wherever possible. Of course, one way to do this is to withhold

rewards form those who do not work or who do not work well. Regarding only those who are productive seeks to nullify where possible one of the effects of the fall. Any business system that recognizes the realities of the fall and human sin, therefore, will strive to motivate workers toward productivity.” (CC, p. 54)

The Jubilee

The Jubilee of Leviticus 25 provided a way out for destitute people and relied on the stewardship faithfulness of others. (OTE, p. 202-205)

The Jubilee centered around two aspects: release/liberty and return/restoration. (OTE, p. 210)

The economic limits of the Jubilee ensured the poor would not remain in slavery and families would always have access to self-sustaining means. (OMB, p. 39-49)

The Jubilee (Deut. 15:1-23) is an example of an economy being productive while helping the poor flourish. (OMB, p. 64)

The Year of Jubilee ensured the poor never remained such. It also restored the destitute families to a position of stewardship. (Lev. 25: 8-54) (SSB, p. 155)

Jubilee ensures poor are given the opportunity to flourish. (Deut. 15: 1-18) (SSB, p. 233-235)

Element 9

The most effective way to turn around poverty, economic distress and injustice is expanding opportunity for people to develop and deploy their God-given productive potential in communities of exchange, especially through entrepreneurship.

Cultivating productive potential in communities of exchange

God's creative empowerment is for the benefit of all humanity, believers and unbelievers. (FCC, p. xxx)

Adam Smith promoted the development of technology, free trade, limited government control, and freedom of people to choose their own pursuits were the means to productive economy. (FF, p. 98-99)

Societies which encourage value creation bring about the well-being of their communities. Societies benefit from the creative work of individuals and should promote it accordingly. (HGM, p. 105)

Proper execution and fostering of human work will promote industriousness because in affirming this creative aspect, humanity is dignified and progress achieved. (LE, p. 19)

John Wesley taught that Christians are to 1. Gain all you can through honest industry and ingenuity 2. Save all you can and do not waste 3. Give all you can. These precepts are oriented around wise stewardship, generosity, responsibility, and love for neighbor. (OMB, p. 195-197)

Wealthy people are to be concerned with modest living, provision for others, and active involvement in community development through use of their resources and talents. (OMB, p. 295)

Pope John Paul II believed that human work is the key to the “whole social question.” Work includes entrepreneurship, industry, agriculture, family life, politics, etc. (OMB, p. 442-443)

Common good requires business to grow. (OMB, p. 675)

The modernization thesis encourages economic growth through increased production. (OMB, p. 820-821)

Churches must contribute to ending poverty by encouraging habits which lead to job creation and sharing. (OMB, p. 824)

Increasing production is not evil, but rather it can serve to help others. (BGG, p. 28)

Hindering and decreasing the earth’s productivity is detrimental to the state of mankind; Genesis 3 illustrates this. (BGG, p. 29)

One of the best ways to help people is to assist them with capital and the right tools so they can help themselves and then help others. (EP, p. 171-173)

West Germany was an example of a superior marketplace. “Banks, corporations, and labor unions seemed to create the conditions for its postwar economic miracle (getting the country out of dismal conditions).” The U.S. economy was improved by emphasizing on technology, and other corporate strategies.” (GW, p. 69)

Many people have a general sense that “business people are greedy...and insensitive to the plight of the poor.” (GW, p. 91)

Clement of Alexandria’s “Who Is the Rich Man That Shall Be Saved?” argues that the story of Jesus and the rich young ruler should not be interpreted literally. Jesus is not demanding that the man literally sell everything he owns. Instead, Jesus is demanding that he rid himself of his idolatrous desires for material things. According to Clement, it is right to retain wealth if you have the proper attitude and can put it to good use for those who are in need. (C, p. 47-51)

In a letter, Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) advises a young man to leave his ailing mother in order to go into the monastery. Bernard argues that the monastic life is the best kind of Christian life and the way to salvation, and if the man’s mother keeps him from entering it, then she will lose her own salvation. He refers to Matthew 10:37 as justification for this view. (C, p. 133-135)

In the “Summa Theologiae,” Q. 184, a.1, Thomas Aquinas defends the position that charity (i.e. love) is the perfection and goal of the Christian life, referring to Col. 3:14 and 1 John 4:16. In Q. 186, a.3, he then defends the notion that voluntary poverty is the foundation for achieving charity. He refers to the story of Jesus and the rich young ruler (Matt. 19:21) and quotes Augustine and Chrysostom to argue that possessions increase greed. (C, p. 160-167)

In “Cherished Instructions on Sin, Excommunication, and the Community of Goods,” Ulrich Stadler argues that common property is the proper rule, rather than private property. He argues on the basis of creation (all things were equally given in creation) and anthropology (people are all equal in the sight of God). Accordingly, Stadler insists that business transactions are sinful. (C, p. 228-229)

In “A Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England,” Gerrard Winstanley (1609-1676) argues that Christians should not engage in “buying and selling” because it is sinful and makes people robbers and thieves. (C, p. 301-302)

Pope Leo XIII’s “Rerum Novarum” argues against socialism as the answer to the economic problems of the time. First, the dissolution of private property would prevent members of the working class from being able to utilize wages for their own betterment. Second, socialism violates the natural right to private property, by which people are meant to provide for themselves and their families. Third, socialism distorts the role of the state by exercising excessive control over the family and paternal authority in provision for the family. Fourth, socialism would create confusion, disorder, and envy within society. The inviolability of private property is the most fundamental principle for alleviating the conditions of the working class because it allows them to properly utilize wages for their own betterment and to give away any excess when appropriate (360-365).

Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* argues that Protestant asceticism’s emphasis on the limitation of consumption and the valuation of continuous work in a worldly calling led to the development of capitalism. Asceticism calls people to work and to save what they earn from their work, leading to increasing wealth and making investment in capital when possible. (C, p. 371-374) He also argues that Protestant asceticism sanctioned labor as a calling and therefore made the employer’s business a calling of God. (p. 376)

The author argues that the core of Jesus’ and his early followers’ preaching was on the Kingdom of God, and the Kingdom has a strong economic and socioeconomic component. The Kingdom included a need for economic justice, and the “great reversal” statements (Matt. 19:30; 20:16; Mark 10:31; and Luke 6:20b-21, 24-25; 13:30) are evidence that those who are poor and oppressed will be first in the Kingdom. The story of the rich young ruler from the synoptic gospels (Matt. 19:16-29; Mark 10:17-30; Luke 18:18-30) depicts the need for “radical renunciation,” which demands that the rich and powerful join the ranks of the least and actually become poor with them (FW, p. 75-77).

The book of Luke is the “Gospel to the prosperous” and that it emphasizes the importance of voluntarily-chosen poverty and renunciation as virtues. (FW, p. 78-79)

The author argues that Acts 2:44-45 and 4:32-35 show that the early church operated on a principle of commonality, by which the rich and fortunate voluntarily relinquished their property – for the sake of the needy, not for the sake of some abstract notion of unity nor a principle of purity and renunciation. The sharing depended both on the needs of the poor and on the free will of the fortunate (FW, p. 82), but it was governed by the needs of the poor. (p. 84) The early Christians’ sharing also challenged the traditional understanding of private property. (p. 82-84) The Roman view of property placed utmost importance upon protecting private property; “for Romans, ownership in the full sense included the right to use, to enjoy, and even to abuse one’s property...the right to leave one’s property to one’s heirs was also fundamental.” (p. 15) The main function of the Roman state, according to Cicero, was to protect private property. But Gonzalez argues that Cicero was not primarily concerned about the principle of private property as such, but instead about protecting the rich from losing their money (p. 16). He argues that the primary definition of *koinonía* (Acts 2:42) is a partnership, as in a common business venture, or sharing. It is more than just good spiritual feelings of fellowship; it is also a sharing of material goods. (p. 83) This principle of sharing is easily seen through Paul’s emphasis on his collection for the poor in Jerusalem (Gal. 2:10 and I Cor. 16:1-4). II Cor. 8:20 shows that Paul expected this collection to be “liberal, abundant, or even lavish.” (p. 85) II Cor. 8-9 shows that the goal of the giving was equality (cf. II Cor. 8:13-15, which quotes Exodus 16:16-18). “The Corinthians are to give because those in Jerusalem are in need. Thus, as in the case of the original commonality of goods in Acts 2 and 4, what controls the giving is the need of the poor.” (p. 85-86) The book of I John adds additional support for the theme of *koinonía* (I John 1:3, 6-7) and concludes that passage with an exhortation to share (3:17-18). (p. 87) The author argues that the Christian church primarily flourishes economically when there is a sharing of material goods that meets all of the needs of the poor and creates a material equality amongst believers.

Many early Christian writers affirmed that *koinonía* meant sharing. The Didache, written around 70-140, affirms the commonality of goods and sharing based upon the needs of the poor. (FW, p. 93-94) “As in Acts, what is envisioned here is not the abolition of property, but its subordination to the claims of those in need.” (p. 94) The Epistle of Barnabas, written around 135 and frequently quoted in antiquity, provides further evidence for this concept of *koinonía*, closely paralleling early chapters in the Didache about the commonality of goods. (p. 95) The Epistle to Diognetus, written around 117-138, also deals with *koinonía* and asserts that Christians are to imitate God’s love and giving, contrasting these qualities with seeking to be powerful and rich. (p. 95-96) Justin, in his First Apology, also affirms the idea of sharing amongst Christians. (p. 102)

Tertullian described Christian sharing as “communicating,” which is a literal translation of the Greek *koinonein* (FW, p. 121). He also adhered to the commonality of goods among believers; giving was voluntary but they are of a single mind so that they do not hesitate when sharing. (p. 120)

The author cites Origen as interpreting Jesus’ command to sell one’s possessions and give to the poor very literally. Origen also believed that all property belonged to Caesar, so the less you owned, the better off you were because the less you owed to Caesar. (FW, p. 118-119)

The author cites Tertullian making three main points to the rich: (1) nothing one has is one's own, and being overly attached to it is covetousness; (2) God has shown preference for the poor and we should do the same; and (3) excessive ease and comfort weakens Christians' ability to withstand trials. (FW, p. 119-122) Tertullian insists that giving within the Christian church is completely voluntary, but he "would not ease the conscience of those who retained for themselves more than was necessary." (p. 122)

The more radical of the Donatists of fourth century North Africa believed that poverty was a virtue and practiced it by abandoning or giving to the poor whatever wealth they had. (FW, p. 160)

The Egyptian monastics of the fourth century disparaged all wealth and material possessions, and valued the ideal of communal property. They believed that no one should own anything that they have to leave behind when they die. Poverty to the point of deprivation was a virtue. (FW, p. 163)

The Egyptian monastic Pachomius at first advised other monastics to become self-sufficient and contribute the needs of others. However, he changed this philosophy to follow a communal property philosophy, which became the foundation for cenobitic monasticism. All things belonged to the group, not to any individual. (FW, p. 164)

The monastic teachings of poverty and commonality of goods were softened as monastic practices filtered into the institutional church in the fourth century. Such teachings merely became options. Most people chose the "normal" option of keeping their possessions and limiting their sharing to almsgiving. This led to the distinction between the commandments of Jesus, which everyone must follow, and the "counsels of perfection," which were only for the monastic life. The monastic community continued throughout the Middle Ages to call the church back to its "early call and ultimate vocation of *koinonía*." (FW, p. 166)

Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus all decried greed as the ultimate cause of poverty: "the devil uses his wiles to convince the rich that they need all sorts of things that in truth are not necessary and by creating useless things to be desired." (p. 177) The goal is equality among all people. Whatever is not necessary is superfluous, and must be given away to those who are in need. (p. 177). Gregory of Nazianzus' theological basis for such sharing is our common humanity and dependence upon God's grace. Gregory of Nyssa also cites our common humanity, and adds the doctrine of creation and the Fall as further reasons. There was no private property before the Fall; such concepts only came after the Fall. (p. 179-181) Basil, Gregory of Nyssa, and Gregory of Nazianzus were all from wealthy families, yet they were never criticized as being hypocrites because the sharing that they advocated was not a dogmatic or legalistic approach. It was not motivated out of concern for easing the rich, but out of concern for helping the poor. The rich should wisely manage their money and give when there is actual need, not just arbitrarily give it away. (p. 183-184)

Basil of Caesarea founded a charitable institution called Basiliad. It was a separate complex, and gave food, medical care, clothing, and other necessities to the poor. Hundreds of other charitable institutions were later based on it. (FW, p. 182-183)

Early ideas of common property, sharing, and *koinonía* continued through the time of Ambrose and Jerome in the late fourth and early fifth centuries. (FW, p. 187-198) Ambrose believed nearly all ways of acquiring wealth were unjust except agriculture. He thought trade was especially suspect because it involves deceit. (p. 189) Ambrose believed greed is the cause of poverty because it takes wealth away from its intended purpose of sharing. He believed the measure of a just wage is determined by what is necessary to sustain life, not the productivity of the labor or the worker's skill (p. 188-190) He believed common property was preferable to private property. He was not dogmatically opposed to private property, but believed that it would be preferable for all property to be held in common since all of creation is available to all people. (p. 190-193) The author argues that Jerome's lack of originality regarding economic issues indicates how engrained the ideas of communal property and sharing were in the Christian teaching. (p. 193) Jerome holds that we do not actually own the things we have since death sets a limit to our ownership. Also, Jerome emphasized the distinction between the commandments of Jesus and the counsels of perfection more than any previous theologian. (p. 193-196)

According to the author, John Chrysostom offers the most developed and cohesive theology of wealth from the first four centuries of the church. Chrysostom based his theology of wealth on the belief that God's purpose through creation and redemption is human solidarity and communication (i.e., sharing). Because of this, Chrysostom believes that common property should be the rule along with a strictly limited form of private property. Since the wealthy, according to Chrysostom, do not actually own what they have, but are only using it, they should dedicate what they have to sharing with the needy. (p. 201-211) At the same time, Chrysostom seems to validate the division of society between the rich and the poor on a principle similar to the division of labor – each has their proper function. (p. 204)

The author argues that there is a great deal of agreement among early theologians that property should be held in common, and that private property should be very limited. All the theologians he cites agree that wealth is to be shared. (FW, p. 226-228) The idea of almsgiving changed over the centuries. Among the earliest theologians it meant sharing with the poor all that was superfluous to you – all that was not necessary for life. It gradually changed into giving food or smaller amounts of money to the needy. (p. 229-231)

The author argues that, in general, throughout the Old Testament there is support for aspects of both capitalism and socialism. “The industriousness promoted by capitalism finds parallels, but the poor are no means seen as generally lazy. The relative equality promoted by socialism appears, too, but via individual and familial ties to property, not via state ownership.” (NPR, p. 82)

In the story of the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-31), Jesus is commanding the man to sell his possessions as an act of discipleship of Christ; that is the only kind of charity that matters. When Jesus assures his disciples that they will receive back a hundredfold what they sacrifice for God (“homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields...”) the new family members they receive are the family of God, and the homes and fields are the provision that will be provided for them by the family of God. Believers are to give all they have, knowing that fellow believers will care for them in their time of need. (NPR, p. 138-140)

Citing James 5:1-6, the author argues Christians should be conscientious as to which products they buy because they may be tacitly endorsing economic injustices by the companies, such as failing to pay workers decent wages (James 5:4). He also suggests they should be cautious of politicians who support tax cuts for the upper and middle classes while programs supporting the needy are reduced. (NPR, p. 156-158)

Acts 2:42-47 and 4:32-5:11 do not refer to an involuntary communism but to voluntary, periodic acts of charity as needs arose. People retained their private property but considered it available whenever need arose within the church. The author argues this is fully normative for the church. He also notes that “it is only consumption and not also production that is shared in Acts’ model.” (NPR, p. 162) The communality described does not include any statement of complete equality among believers. (p. 165) Christians retained their private property but they voluntarily gave so that there would not be any poor among them. (p. 161-167)

In I and II Thessalonians, Paul clearly intends for all believers to earn their food through work, and to not become inappropriately dependent upon the charity of others. All who could work should work. I Thess. 4:12 shows Paul’s goals for this command: (1) to not be a burden to the Christian community; and (2) to win the respect of non-believers as they “see previous recipients of ‘welfare’ turning into industrious and productive citizens.” (NPR, p. 181) Christians today must ensure the genuinely needy do not suffer, and should ensure that as many people as possible work for their living. (NPR, 179-182)

The author argues that there should be a balance between the wealthy and the poor. Paul is not speaking about state intervention in II Corinthians 8:13-15, so this does not justify a socialist government. Christians should help alleviate the needs of the poor, whether Christian or non-Christian. (TOW, “Sharing the Wealth (2 Corinthians 8:13-15)”)

“The idea that business can be a calling is becoming more widely appreciated and accepted. Yet the question of what exactly business is a calling to needs much more exploration. This is the central topic of this book. Based on the contours of a Christian worldview, we hope to address this question by developing a faithful understanding of business at the individual, organizational and systematic/structural levels. In sum, we will be employing wisdom from an ancient tradition in order to contribute to the development of a ‘new story’ of business. Business, we will argue, is a calling to serve the common good through transformational service.” (BCG, p. 33)

“Business also mirrors God’s provisional activity by creating wealth and opportunities for employment. While we will comment further on this point in chapter five, market-based economies (and the critical role that business plays within it) represent the only known system that can actually create new financial wealth to lift people out of economic poverty.” (BCG, p. 82)

“Beyond just providing the opportunity to earn wages, business is also responsible for creating many ‘good jobs’ that offer challenge, opportunities for personal development and at least partially fulfill the human needs for achievement and community by providing the opportunity to use ingenuity, creativity and collaborate with others on tasks.” (BCG, p. 83)

“Additionally, the role that business plays in community building and peace and civility should not be underestimated. Countries and regions of the world that engage in trade with one another have more incentives to peacefully resolve conflicts rather than for to war.” (BCG, p. 83)

Regarding Globalization: “We will then develop a framework for approaching and understanding globalization. In particular, we will argue that globalization should be approached as an unprecedented opportunity to positively influence and transform lives, especially those of the poor. At the same time, however, we will argue that some aspects of globalization itself need to be transformed in order to properly reflect God’s designs.” (BCG, p. 139)

“Developing a fair and informed evaluation of globalization is a challenging task. Such an evaluation is dependent on factual items such as whether well-paying jobs are lost, the rampancy of abuses in factories and the root causes of cultural change. These issues are not easy to settle. Moreover, the facts may well change with time and circumstances. Underlying the facts, and often shaping their interpretation, however, are important values that are often unstated but must be examined. Recall from chapter two that a key part of God’s mission Christ came to proclaim, as characterized by the full meaning of *shalom* and the *kingdom*, is a deep concern for human flourishing and transformation across multiple dimensions: spiritual, physical, emotional, social. Moreover, justice for the poor, vulnerable and voiceless are of special concern to God.” (BCG, p. 152)

“In applying these ideals to globalization there is nothing in Scripture that would indicate these concerns should end at national or ethnic boundaries. We are simply commanded to love our neighbors. However, the interdependencies created by globalization have caused the neighborhood to expand in size and scope. In the Old Testament tradition sojourners were to be treated like the native born under the law (Lev 19:34). Jesus arrived on the scene to clarify that God’s mercy should be extended to all. The kingdom properly seen is inclusive. Thus out neighborhood, and thereby our neighbors, has become global.” (BCG, p. 152)

“Capitalism, thus, presupposes certain conditions that will make it work. Its invisible glue is of a different sort than the imperceptible glue of statism, environmentalism, and other macroeconomic systems. Capitalism will often provide more explanatory power and more ability for productivity. If those are underlying values, then one should not be surprised if capitalism is viewed as more of a success than a failure. While Calvin himself did not write a formal economic treatise, we suggest that the worldview encased in his writings and interpretations has more lasting value than many short-lived economic fads. A five-century test of his ideas against other business or economic systems is worthwhile.” (CC, p. xxv)

“We are cautious to avoid making a stealthy endorsement of all types and expressions of capitalism, for we are aware of its various shortcomings...Still, socialism does not make a man more righteous or capable of resisting temptation. Nor does communism, libertarianism, or environmentalism make man less of a sinner. Human sinfulness is a macro issue that persists throughout all systems and all of history. If the sinfulness of man is an inescapable axiom, then all economic or business systems can aptly be referred to as iron cages. It is only a question of knowing which cages confine and which idols are being worshipped. Capitalism abused is rooted

in the idols of materialism and greed. Socialism abused is devoted to the idol of self-righteousness or communalism. Honest assessments of presuppositions must also equitably address idolatry where it occurs.” (CC, p. xxvi)

Matt. 25:14-30 – it is good to be productive and invest (WIL)

Entrepreneurship

Faithful entrepreneurial stewardship can impact more than the corporate world. The empowerment to engage and transform can permeate all areas of social life. (FCC, p. 125)

After the fall of Rome, the European peoples had to rely on inventions to forge ahead economically. While these examples do not necessarily lend themselves as primary proof that entrepreneurship is the best way to lift economies, they are examples of how inventions help society. (FF, p. 14)

Entrepreneurs seek to provide better services for their customers and this facilitates wealth creation and efficiency. (FF, p. 116-117)

The author gives an example of a professor helping others through his success. The example points to the Wesleyan principle that people should be hardworking and entrepreneurial. (HGM, p. 31)



Wesley challenged people to be entrepreneurial and hard-working. He taught living this way would lead to the accumulation of wealth which could in turn be used to help others. Wealth was not to be accumulated for its own sake and hoarded. (HGM, p. 58)

Wesleyans encourage entrepreneurial businesses and nonprofits in order to creatively meet the needs of the world. (HGM, p. 95)

The Puritan willingness to explore alternative means of increasing wealth exhibited a commitment to continually follow God in new ventures. (OMB, p. 250)

Alleviating poverty in the future will probably involve more entrepreneurial approaches from NGOs and churches. (OMB, p. 482)

Example of a church engaging in entrepreneurial enterprise to transform a community. (OMB, p. 877)

Three examples of different churches engaging in entrepreneurial approaches to community transformation from real estate to microloans. (OMB, p. 879-890)

Authentic business people and entrepreneurs are being called to help spread the Gospel and turn around poverty. (SSB, p. 419)

Profits and entrepreneurial risk-taking are on the whole just and beneficial to people and an economy (BE, 77-81).

Where it is easier to get micro-loans out to the poorest areas, there will be opportunity to get people and communities out of poverty; these kinds of loans have had great impact around the world in poor countries. (BGG, p. 73)

Business can often be entrepreneurial; laws and regulations can effectively prevent entrepreneurs from legally owning property or businesses, such that economic growth is stopped before it can begin. This is evil and sinful, and it prevents people from growing out of poverty. (BGG, p. 81-82)

Productive entrepreneurship and innovation by individuals and small businesses can improve the lives of everyone in society. (EP, p. 33)

Through self-reliance, innovation and entrepreneurship, we can “make the best use of resources given to us by God.” (EP, p. 135)

Sometimes innovation (like the Internet revolution) can cause significant negative economic and social costs, such as layoffs, plant closures, elimination of middle-management layers, career uncertainty, longer work hours, skill- and job-retraining needs, and general insecurity. (GW, p. 71)

Capitalism (and the entrepreneurship it entails) is rejected by Christian socialism. (GW, p. 90)

“The impulse to acquisition, pursuit of gain, of money, of the greatest possible amount of money, has in itself nothing to do with capitalism. This impulse exists and has existed among waiters, physicians, coachmen, artists, prostitutes, dishonest officials, soldiers, nobles, crusaders, gamblers, and beggars. One may say that it has been common to all sorts and conditions of men at all time and in all countries of the earth, wherever the objective possibility of it is or has been given. It should be taught in the kindergarten of cultural history that this naïve idea of capitalism should be given up once and for all. Unlimited greed for gain is not in the least identical with capitalism and is still less its spirit... Unlimited greed for gain is not in the least identical with capitalism, and is still less its spirit. Capitalism may even be identical with the restraint, or at least a rational tempering, of this irrational impulse. But capitalism is identical with the pursuit of profit, and forever *renewed* profit, by means of continuous, rational, capitalistic enterprise. For it must be so: in a wholly capitalistic order of society, an individual capitalistic enterprise which did not take advantage of its opportunities for profit-making would be doomed to extinction.” (PC, p. 2)

“This kind of entrepreneur, the capitalistic adventurer, has existed everywhere. With the exception of trade and credit and banking transactions, their activities were predominantly of an irrational and speculative character, or directed to acquisition by force, above all the acquisition of booty, whether directly in war or in the form of continuous fiscal booty by exploitation of subjects... But in modern times the Occident has developed, in addition to this, a very different form of capitalism which has appeared nowhere else: the rational capitalistic organization or (formally) free labor. Only suggestions of it are found elsewhere.” (PC, p. 3)

“Hence in a universal history of culture the central problem for us is not, in the last analysis, even from a purely economic viewpoint, the development of capitalistic activity as such, differing in different cultures only in form: the adventurer type, or capitalism in trade, war, politics, or administration as sources of gain. It is rather the origin of this sober bourgeois capitalism with its rational organization of free labor, but is not quite the same thing.” (PC, p. 4)

The West has provided a place for capitalism to rise out of. This form of rational systematized capitalism depends on technical science for its calculations, and in turn science benefits from the outworkings of capitalism in society. The West cannot take all of the credit for mathematics but they are the ones who developed arithmetic into economics and book keeping. We must also pay attention to the legal system and how law was developed in the West and the civilized society that made economics possible. The law was formed not just by rationality and the sciences, but rather the spiritual and ethical influences of the time, which developed man’s rationality. (PC, p. 4)

The authors make a strong case for entrepreneurship and productive innovation. They argue that it can only be found to be widespread and successful in a capitalistic market system, which is the most effective way to bring billions out of poverty and injustice. Inequality is not necessarily wrong; rather it can be evidence of people’s different gifting, talents, opportunities and choices.

Injustice can also bring about unfair inequality, and capitalism is the most effective in eliminating that evil and creating opportunity instead. (VC)

Investment takes place over long periods of time; the invention of corporate law was especially significant as a facilitator of investment. (SDC, p. 44)

The fortunes of others are of value to one who is trying to succeed. Democratic capitalism was founded on a “way of producing wealth in which the good fortune of others multiplied their own...They actually felt it to be true that an enlightened self-interest promoted the common good.” (SDC, p. 100)

The author debunks the idea that the rich get richer and the poor get poorer (“a dictum of Barbara Ward’s”). This idea does not seem “to match the historical record. Under market economics, the historical record shows unprecedented gains in real incomes for the poor.” (SDC, p. 109)

Responding to the argument that developed nations cause poverty in undeveloped nations, the author counters that “two hundred years ago, Latin America was poorer than it is today; but so was North America.” Democratic capitalism brought growth to both these regions. (SDC, p. 273-274)

The author describes the improvement of conditions in Latin America since the introduction of democratic capitalism. (SDC, p. 308) “In thirty years, infant mortality was reduced significantly.” (p. 309)

“The United States is not stricken weak with poverty. Its system has been productive beyond compare.” (SDC, p. 358)

Global capitalism and business can be a “powerful tool for good in the hands of God,” and is “one of the best hopes for addressing the problems of the world.” (WBM, p. 9)

Businesses have the capability to, and often do, improve the lives of people, generate economic security, provide new opportunities for prosperity, education and independence, pursue “systems and structures designed to better protect human rights,” and generally improve human flourishing. (WBM, p. 12-13)

The wealth that economically enables and improves every institution in human society is generated through creative innovation and businesses. (WBM, p. 47-48)

By seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit to fulfill what sometimes appear to be contradictory obligations (to obey God and succeed in business), Christians in business ought to be the most creative and innovative. (WBM, p. 119-123)

Creative, productive innovation can contribute to human flourishing and help redeem and restore broken relationships, oppression and injustice. (WBM, p. 152)