

The Kingdom at Work Project



Bulletin 10 February 2017

Editorial

In this issue of the Kingdom at Work Project's *Bulletin* we continue our policy of inviting associations which have been prominent in the faith and work field to offer their contribution related to a theme which is of current importance to them.

In the last issue, MODEM explored the theme of servant leadership. This time we invited **Faith in Business** to gather material for the *Bulletin*. They have chosen the theme of the Christian entrepreneur. They have chosen to approach the subject through a series of interviews with those in business who are in touch with them. A number of book reviews are also included. Richard Higginson, their Director, has kindly assembled the material, some of which will be contained in a forthcoming publication *A Voice to be Heard: the Stories, Faith and Challenges of Christian Entrepreneurs*. London: IVP, due for publication in September.

We end this issue of the *Bulletin* with an article published recently in the *Church Times* which, though referring to a past era of Christian engagement with society, mirrors the theology and missiology underpinning the Kingdom at Work Project.

David Clark (Project Co-ordinator)

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Past issues of the *Bulletin* can be downloaded from -
www.saltleytrust.org.uk/faith-and-work-in-theological-education-and-training/

Faith in Business



Faith in Business [<http://www.faith-in-business.org>] is a feature of theological college life unique to Ridley Hall in Cambridge. Established in 1989, it is a project concerned with relating Christian faith to the world of work, notably that of business.

It developed out of a twin concern: the concept of lay ministry tends to be restricted to what laypeople can do for the church, rather than focusing on the work which occupies most of their time; and the church's attitude to business is all too often marked by indifference, suspicion or hostility.

Faith in Business seeks to address these concerns by its twofold mission:

- To affirm the role of business in God's purposes
- To explore the application of Christian faith and values in business

It seeks to encourage lay Christians to be faithful disciples in demanding working context and also equips ordinands training at Ridley for ministry with business people.

The focal point of our programme is a weekend conference at Ridley Hall. Every spring since 2000 we have run a conference, exploring a topical business theme from a Christian perspective. 50 or 60 businessmen and women converge on Ridley Hall for 48 hours of stimulating input and invigorating fellowship. Recent conference themes have included *Motivation in Business*, *Dilemmas in Business* and *The Life-Cycle of Business*. The 2017 conference, which will take place from March 31 to 2 April, is titled *Making a Difference: Christian Impact on the Business World*. For topics, speakers and booking details go to our website: www.ridley.cam.ac.uk/news?1173-fib-2017

In partnership with ICF (the Industrial Christian Fellowship), we have also co-published a quarterly journal, *Faith in Business*, for the last 20 years. This provides an opportunity for business people, academics and church leaders to write about business. It is no exaggeration to say that over a long period Ridley Hall has made a sustained and unique contribution to resourcing Christians in the business world.

Richard Higginson
Director

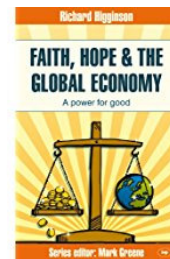


The Christian entrepreneur

In recent years **Faith in Business** has taken a particular interest in entrepreneurship.

In March 2009, when the country was in recession following the global financial crisis, we held a well-attended conference on entrepreneurship. Most of the participants were involved in entrepreneurial activity of some sort. They seemed undeterred by the traumatic events of the previous two years. Their faith in God gave them a confidence that it was still worth investing in exciting new ideas. Banks may have been lending less, but entrepreneurs have ways of finding the investment finance they need, and for small-scale ventures, family and friends often provide the initial outlay. The conference underlined the fact that entrepreneurship is an ongoing social necessity, even – indeed especially – during an economic downturn. Delegates gained encouragement from meeting kindred spirits and drew inspiration from the God who gives us our creative juices.

In 2012 IVP published my book *Faith, Hope & the Global Economy*. In it I argued that, rightly understood and applied, Christian faith can be an enormous power for good in the global economy, when it fulfils five criteria: stimulating enterprise, reducing poverty, promoting integrity, ensuring sustainability and fostering discipleship. Note the first of these. Enterprise is the mainspring of business. While entrepreneurs have sometimes been branded as dangerous and unscrupulous, luring others to an unpleasant fate like the pied piper of Hamelin, it is by undertaking new ventures, trying out new products, services and processes, and refining what already exists in search of something better, that progress is made. The church should encourage entrepreneurship as a noble vocation that requires qualities of vision, passion, risk-taking, persistence and decisiveness. In demonstrating these qualities, we emulate God's character. The book features a chapter linking creation and entrepreneurship together entitled 'Launched in Hope'.



Kina Robertshaw



Meanwhile, a new, refreshingly different student had come on the scene at Ridley, Kina Robertshaw. Kina grew up in Zambia, one of a large family of 12. At the age of 10, inspired by her instinctively entrepreneurial mother, Kina and her cousin sold peanuts at the gate of her father's house. Leaving school at 16, she developed an interest in fashion and worked in retail stores in Johannesburg and London. There she carefully observed the ingredients and working habits that support success in retail, hoping that one day she would have the opportunity to run her own fashion business.

In due course, Kina set up stores both in Lusaka and Johannesburg, including the first independent department store in Zambia. She rose to the challenge, and expanded

the business into complementary areas linking with the Zambian fashion and music industry

Relocating with her family to England in 2008, the reawakening of Kina's faith led to a desire to study theology; she enrolled at Ridley as an independent student in 2010 and was eventually ordained in 2016. During her studies she reflected on her past experience, writing a dissertation on Christian entrepreneurship under my supervision. She then wanted to take this work a stage further, to interview Christian entrepreneurs and discover what motivates them and makes them tick. What is it that inspires entrepreneurs, frustrates them, challenges them and brings them joy?

Richard Higginson

Research Project in entrepreneurship

With its existing interest in entrepreneurship, **Faith in Business** was happy to support Kina when she made her proposal to interview 50 entrepreneurs. We already had a solid pool of entrepreneurs with whom we were in touch. About 20 of these 50 entrepreneurs were existing contacts; people who have attended and spoken at **Faith in Business** events, or with whom we had a long-standing relationship.

However, we also wanted to branch out and make new contacts. So we set about finding more entrepreneurs. This did not prove difficult. Suggestions came from a wide variety of sources. One contact put us on to another. We came across a particularly strong network of Christian entrepreneurs in North-West England. We could have interviewed many more than 50, and apologise to anyone we weren't able to fit in who would like to have been included. The line had to be drawn somewhere! We feel that 50 is a good number in that it amounts to a statistically significant sample. We have been able to identify trends and patterns.

The people we interviewed were at varying stages in their careers, and certainly work in a wide range of businesses. They include architecture, cars, ceramics, construction, consultancy, engineering, fashion, finance, food and drink, hospitality, law, media, product design, property, recycling, retail and social enterprise. The age range of our interviewees spanned at least 50 years, from mid 20s to upper 70s. A clear majority were white males. But we also interviewed several female entrepreneurs and a few from ethnic minorities.

A book has grown out of this research, one we very much enjoyed writing together: *A Voice to be Heard: the Stories, Faith and Challenges of Christian Entrepreneurs*. It is due for publication by IVP in September. In this *Bulletin* I will report on some of our key findings, and Kina will introduce you to some of the entrepreneurs she interviewed.

Some definitions of the ‘Entrepreneur’

A person who starts, organises and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.

[Traditional definition]

A person who habitually creates and innovates to build something of recognised value around perceived opportunities.

[Bill Bolton and John Thompson, *Entrepreneurs: Talent, Temperament, Technique*]

An entrepreneur is able to commercialise innovation, blending science, art and practice in a reflective process of gathering resources and providing a good or service needed in the marketplace in a new or different way.

[Richard J. Goossen, co-author of *Entrepreneurial Leadership*, speaking at the **Faith in Business** conference on Entrepreneurship in 2009]

An entrepreneur pursues opportunities to commercialise innovation, taking the lead in marshalling resources and providing goods or services in the marketplace in a new and different way.

[Richard Higginson and Kina Robertshaw. As will be evident, our definition draws on and combines elements of the preceding two.]

Entrepreneurship and Ethics

Integrity

Without integrity, entrepreneurs can easily go haywire. Indeed, during the 1970s and 80s the suffered from a ‘dodgy’ image because several entrepreneurs – both real and fictional – lacked integrity. Some entrepreneurs are greedy; some have inflated egos; some are dangerous visionaries.

What is integrity? Essentially, a life that is well integrated, combining the elements of honesty, transparency and consistency. Many of the entrepreneurs we interviewed felt that they had earned a reputation for integrity that was deserved and held them in good stead. But they admitted that it wasn’t always straightforward: that there were significant challenges to their integrity. Issues that came up several times in conversation included:

- Paying taxes – and having a positive attitude about this
- Improper payments – prominent and complex in some areas of international business
- Honesty with customers when things go wrong, or with suppliers when cash-flow is tight
- ‘No go’ areas – gambling for one, pornography for another
- Sunday trading – three Christian retailers had made a principled decision to avoid this, for the sake of their employees’ welfare.

Marketing

An ethical conundrum mentioned by several entrepreneurs was honesty in sales and marketing. This is perhaps less clear-cut than many issues in business, but is real nonetheless.

One entrepreneur, Martin, summed the temptation up as exaggeration. Others might call it puffery. “You’re trying to show how successful you are. When you’re applying for funding you tend to put a positive spin. I think that’s probably normal and within the bounds of reasonable ethics. But when it gets to the point where you exaggerate, cover up failures and - even more - pretend that you’re more successful than you are, because you need to do so to win some funding, that’s a problem.”

Some entrepreneurs located the problem among staff:

- “You need to get Christian values into sales people. They’re on commission, so they will instigate some of the dodgy practices.”
- “Telling lies is an endemic problem. Often it’s tempting to say as a buyer your competitors come in at a pound, when in fact the competitor’s price is £1.10.”

Temptation, however, can afflict us all. We may be so keen to trumpet the virtues of our product that we play down its drawbacks or present a misleading picture. It might be pretending that a product is ready and waiting to be delivered before that is true: what one entrepreneur called “selling things that aren’t 100% there yet”.

Another entrepreneur, Mike, thinks that “the promotional aspects of marketing are potentially a shabby practice. That overstates it a bit but the purpose of a lot of advertising seems to be creating dissatisfaction. You’re wanting to make people less content with what they’ve got, in order to move them towards something you want them to have.”

The area of marketing, especially advertising, is replete with potential problems. These include exaggeration (inflated claims), manipulation (working on people’s unconscious associations) and promotion of superficial image (appealing to pride and status). Yet marketing can be practised in an ethical way. If the goods or services being sold by a company carry genuine merit, there is nothing wrong with telling the world about them. Marketing is an exercise in mass communications, making the public aware of the life-enhancing product than an entrepreneur has to offer.

The best sort of marketing consists of a sincere appreciation and affirmation of the product’s benefits. This need not be po-faced: there is a place for humour and colour in marketing. Exaggeration needs to be distinguished from hyperbole which no-one is in danger of believing, like Heineken’s claim that it reaches parts of the body other beers don’t. Nobody is in danger of taking that seriously. In contrast, claims that a car has passed safety checks or met environmental standards when they haven’t are seriously misleading, and therefore wrong.

Richard Higginson

Theological questions

Two questions which we asked our interviewees had a particular theological slant. They were concerned with the concepts of *calling* and *kingdom*.

Calling

The majority of the interviewees felt that God had called them to be entrepreneurs. They were unequivocal and enthusiastic about the idea. A second group were more hesitant about the notion of calling, but a calling to entrepreneurship had developed over a period of time. A third group, a small but significant minority, were totally resistant to the idea of calling. They preferred the notion of doing God's will. What united all three groups, however, was a sense of being guided by God, being true to the gifting they felt came from God, and a genuine passion that motivated their business activity.

Kingdom

The next question - about kingdom - asked 'Do you see your work in business as contributing to the advance of God's kingdom?' The response to this was different. The answer here was a resounding yes. Our entrepreneurs felt that they *were* contributing to the advance of God's kingdom. However, answers to the follow-up question, 'If so, how?', varied considerably.

- *First*, there are entrepreneurs who believe they are contributing to God's kingdom by providing an excellent product or service. They are making the world a better place. They are enhancing the quality of people's lives, in line with God's purpose for his world.
- A *second* group of entrepreneurs saw advancement of the Kingdom in terms of embodying Christian values. The emphasis here is less on the content of what is produced than the way the company is run, and how it 'feels' to work there. Many of these entrepreneurs had articulated these values in a corporate mission statement.
- The *third* group of entrepreneurs interpreted the kingdom primarily in terms of speaking about their faith to people in the workplace. Few if any saw themselves as direct evangelists; all were aware of the need to be sensitive about time and place. They know too that their words must have credibility, supported by the type of people they are and the things they do. But these entrepreneurs were definitely on the lookout for opportunities to talk about Jesus.
- The *fourth* group saw their contribution to the building of God's kingdom mainly in terms of giving to charitable and Christian causes. Running a successful business often leads to the accumulation of personal wealth. This gives entrepreneurs the opportunity to be generous. It recalls the heritage of distinguished nineteenth-century Christian entrepreneurs who were notable philanthropists.

Faith in Business believes that the kingdom of God is being advanced in each of these four ways: making the world a better place, embodying Christian values, witnessing by word, and charitable giving. All can be significant ways of bringing God's world more directly under his rule, of being a power for good and reversing the advance of evil. What we would like to see is more entrepreneurs having a holistic understanding that embraces all these categories.

Richard Higginson

Kina Robertshaw interviews...

In what follows, Kina Robertshaw introduces four entrepreneurs who represent people who reflect and build the kingdom of God in different ways.

David Ball (Chairman, David Ball Group: Construction)



Cement plays a vital role in construction as a substance that binds other materials together, notably in the making of concrete. However, it has many negative impacts on the environment, producing emissions of airborne pollution in the form of dust, gases, noise and vibration. About 6% of global man-made CO₂ emissions come from cement production.

But there is a new concrete designed with zero cement. Appropriately called Cemfree, it meets the demands of sustainable structural concrete, which are that it should drastically reduce concrete's CO₂ legacy, provide greater durability, require less steel reinforcement and demand less water. It is also waterproof and is white in colour, not grey.

The company that has invented and pioneered Cemfree is the David Ball Group, situated at Bourn, a small village a few miles west of Cambridge. It employs just over 60 people and has an annual turnover of £5.5m, currently growing at 20% a year. The company was founded in 1970 by David Ball, then a young engineering graduate from Northern Ireland. David started his career with another cement company but fell foul of the managing director because of his confidence in proposing solutions to technical problems. Finding himself out of a job, but continuing to experiment with ingredients and making product samples in his kitchen sink, David set up his own company and won a contract with Blue Circle. He has never really looked back.

Throughout its history, the company has been at the forefront of technological improvements. In the 1990s, the David Ball Group took the performance of integrally waterproof concrete to a new level as it reformulated PUDLO, the world's first commercial concrete waterproofing mixture. Re-engineering it around modern architectural needs, David Ball used PUDLO in projects like the Royal Albert Hall and the spectacular Dubai Fountains.

Faith and work

David inherited his faith from his parents and has always sought to apply it to his work. He believes that his business contributes to the building of God's kingdom. He is driven by three key concerns. David says "The first is a passion for quality, making sure the product is right first time, every time. The second is training and education of our staff, along with the training of our customers into the way things work properly. The third is service, service above self. You put the interest of your customer and your client first". He believes that commitment to these high standards enhances the quality of life and brings glory to God.

The company is accredited with ISO 9001 and 14001, international manufacturing standards which regulate the industry. As a young man David was initially sceptical about these systems. He was influenced by his mother who regarded such bureaucracy as 'the mark of the beast', mentioned in the book of Revelation. But David came to appreciate the value of ISO. It helped to increase production, reduced defects to zero, won the company government contracts, and inspired customer confidence.

David is now in his early 70s. He is less hands-on within the company, but still has significant ownership and an advisory role. He has become a highly respected figure within the industrial sands, cements and concrete industry. For many years he chaired the Christian organization Chaplaincy to People at Work, which has provided pastoral care for employees in the Cambridge area.

Simon Lawson

(Chairman, Lawsons: Timber, Fencing and Builders Merchants)



Lawsons' is a family business, founded in 1921. It is the largest independent timber, building materials and fencing merchant in the South East. In 1990 Simon joined the business, succeeding his father John who is son and grandson of the founders. Simon Lawson is now chairman. He has modernised the branches and developed a speciality in the loft conversion market.

Lawsons' strapline is 'Family values – professional service', and its mission statement is 'to make work as interesting and satisfying as possible'. This indicates a strong focus on employee welfare. The benefits they offer exceed most in their industry sector:

- An income protection scheme for five years in the case of illness
- A death-in-service benefit
- A contributory pension scheme and profit share scheme
- Financial, legal and relationship counselling and support
- Child care vouchers
- A scheme to enable the purchase of a bike to travel to work
- Store vouchers and gifts on significant life occasions such as a wedding or the birth of a child.

Faith and work

Simon, whose Christian background is Quaker, is keenly aware that for many people genuine community is in short supply. In his workplace he seeks to provide the sense of stability, security and belonging that he sees as largely lacking in society.

When asked what characterises him as a Christian entrepreneur, Simon says it is “an acknowledgement that all his success is due to God”. This echoes Deuteronomy 8:18: “Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth”. He is a humble man, believing that meekness (Matt 5:5) is an important quality to avoid the trap of *hubris* that often comes with business success. He expresses his role in terms of servant leadership, a model of leadership strongly associated with the US author Robert Greenleaf, but which is vividly portrayed in the earthly ministry of Jesus, particularly the washing of his disciples’ feet. Consider John 13:14-17: “So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.”

Simon connects very much with this story and seeks to follow it through. His servant heart is particularly evident in the most unusual and distinctive way he exercises leadership, the ‘values lunches’ that he hosts on a regular basis – four times a year over the last five years. These are not given on company premises, but at Simon’s own home; the catering is not outsourced, but Simon himself cooks and serves the food. He invites different employees each time and asks them what they would like to eat. Not only that; he asks them what they’d like to talk about. “I have no agenda, it’s their agenda”. They talk about anything they want: football, life experiences, how the business and its values can improve the common good, what makes the employees feel valued, and what it feels like working on the front line.

It is difficult to be vulnerable in the workplace, especially when you’re the boss, but Simon makes a conscious effort to be vulnerable. During the values lunches he talks about some of the life challenges he has faced himself, including his experience of divorce and what it’s like to be a single father. The problems he discusses are things that many of his employees wrestle with as well. Putting himself on the spot enables Simon and his employees to build relationships of mutual trust. It is clear that these values lunches are enormously appreciated.

When lunches are permeated by this degree of openness, when people are truly authentic, they are very special events indeed. Less like a lunch and more like a banquet!

Mark Mitchell
(Group Managing Director, Mitchell Group: Car Dealership)



Mark Mitchell is a born salesman. At the age of seven, he discovered that if you put two hamsters together in a cage, they multiply quickly. He then took the baby hamsters to school and sold them for 10p each. By the age of 14 he had secured a loan of £50 from a bank to start a motorcycle business, initially selling them at the gates of his senior school. Mark says “I was too young to ride them, but I bought them from the local paper, and my Dad brought them up to school for me. That was when I first became a dealer.”

Mark came from a Christian home, attending St Mary’s Upton on the Wirral in Cheshire. As a young boy he and his brothers gave the Sunday School teachers “so much grief. We were inattentive and I guess quite obnoxious. Most weeks we were bringing various items of livestock – some alive, some dead – anything to take the focus off the week’s Bible story!” But at the age of 11, Mark went away on a children’s camp, and embarked on a personal relationship with Jesus Christ: “June 1, 1973, was an evening I clearly remember as the day I decided to follow Jesus Christ and live as his disciple.”

For Mark the urge to sell things, especially objects on wheels, remained strong. While studying economics at Leeds University, he and his friends sold 200 motorbikes in an academic year from their student accommodation. After graduating he worked for Austin Rover and then Ford for several years, harbouring ambitions to run his own company while building up the experience that would equip him to do so.

In 1988 Mark met his future wife and business partner Anita at St Michael-le-Belfrey Church in York. In 1991 the couple invested £50 each to buy a dormant company ‘off the shelf’ and then raised a bank loan of £10,000 to invest in their first petrol service station in Warrington. Soon they had four petrol stations. By 1996 Mark had enough capital to buy a car dealership franchise from Mitsubishi Motors, operating from Eastham in Cheshire. A franchise with Lexus followed.

Mark has taken a stand on Sunday trading. In the entrance to their main Mitchell Group complex, a sign says the opening times are Monday to Saturday, but this is followed by “Sunday. At home with the family”. This led to a parting of the ways with Mitsubishi in 2004. The Japanese company stipulated that Sunday trading was mandatory in an area in which the majority of surrounding car dealers were open for business. Mark felt that “Given the circumstances, I had no choice. I couldn’t keep Lexus closed while opening Mitsubishi”. At the same time “I had no wish to run Mitsubishi down, nor would I ever want to legislate about the Sunday-shopping habits of others.” He received 150 letters of support from customers for his principled stance.

Mark also planned for the future. He sought and obtained new franchises with Mazda and Skoda. The Mitchell Group’s five-acre complex at Cheshire Oaks is now the home of Lexus Chester, Mitchell Mazda and Mitchell Skoda. The Group has a turnover approaching £50m and a dedicated staff of 100 people.

Faith and work

Mark is not reticent about sharing his Christian faith. Each Christmas the Mitchell Group celebrates a carol service with about 1200 of their customers in Chester Cathedral. Mark says “customers are invited to sing carols and hear the Gospel presented gently and sensitively”. Men’s groups from across the region visit for a ‘Men and Motors’ evening. After driving a range of flagship models and a ‘behind the scenes’ tour of the premises, a Chinese banquet and drinks are served in the boardroom. The scene turns into an open forum and Mark has “the opportunity to reflect on some of life’s challenges and the joys of being a Christian. I’m constantly amazed at how these ‘no-holds-barred’ times prompt immense openness from so many of these guys, who would struggle to raise issues in other settings”. This is effective Christian witness.

LingLing Parnin

(Co-founder and Managing Director, Regalstar Catering Ltd: Restaurants)



LingLing Parnin runs no less than five restaurant outlets in Cambridge, all within the busy area near the railway station. The biggest one is La Maison du Steak. She works alongside her husband Franck, who gives his name to another of the restaurants, Le Gros Franck. They run two food vans close to the station, attracting many customers from the huge amount of construction work currently taking place there. She is Taiwanese and he is French, which amounts to a powerful culinary combination! She is a keen member of St Paul’s Church; all her food outlets are contained within the parish. LingLing loves her work – she is always delighted to see customers enjoying their food, especially as part of a family or social celebration. But she is especially enthusiastic about the charity that she wholeheartedly supports, The Saints Project Trust.

The trust supports churches, orphanages, schools and relief work in Africa and India, with a strong emphasis on prayer and spiritual support. It spends money on very practical projects like bicycles for African clergy serving rural parishes, rebuilding of a church building burnt by militants, and equipping schools with new classrooms or toilets. LingLing puts a lot of her own money, time and energy into raising finances for the trust, often providing the food at fund-raising events. She has also visited several Saints Project Trust projects. She has even had a school in south-west Kenya delightfully named after her: the LingLing Beautiful International Guild Academy. Support for the Trust is the main way she sees herself advancing the kingdom of God.

Books on Christians and enterprise

Report on a Book Launch

Edward Carter (2016) *God and Enterprise, Towards a Theology of the Entrepreneur*, Oxford: The Centre for Enterprise, Markets and Ethics



Edward Carter is Canon Theologian at Chelmsford Cathedral. He introduced his book, at the London Stock Exchange, in front of an audience drawn from across the commercial and third sector and the Church, and I chaired a panel discussion with contributions from Lord Griffiths of Fforestfach, who brings a wealth of experience in politics, academia and banking, Lord Glasman, academic and social thinker, and Trevor Willmott, Bishop of Dover. The event was organised by CEME (the Centre for Enterprise, Markets and Ethics), and made possible by the generous support of CCLA.

Edward Carter aims to reclaim the spiritual dimension of enterprise, to see it as carrying a positive value, which challenges the vague sense of distaste around the economic activity that is part of the lives of perhaps most Christians. His thinking is rooted in his own experience, running and working for SMEs, parish and diocesan life, and in his academic background in theology and economics. He brings a light touch to equipping the reader to handle key concepts from each discipline, and makes the sometimes complex ideas which underpin his thinking fully accessible.

Canon Carter identifies the key characteristics of the entrepreneur – creativity, energy, attentiveness to others – as also characteristic of the Holy Spirit, and suggests that a world-view which takes God seriously resonates with the way entrepreneurs see the world – the sense that there are opportunities out there, and that economic activity is not a zero-sum game. Entrepreneurs form an effective bridge between the worlds of faith and economics, helping us think more laterally about the reality of economic activity, and that enterprise is part of the process by which the world becomes better aligned with God's kingdom.

Traditional economic thinking is challenged by the sense of generosity and abundance offered by God's promises for the world, and Canon Carter makes this vivid with a fascinating thought-experiment. Rooting his thinking within the Old and New Testaments, Canon Carter offers a fresh reading of those parables which are generally interrogated for evidence of Jesus' attitude to wealth, including the parable of the talents, offering an analysis which is more thoughtful than the standard read-across to a positive view of risk and investment. He moves beyond the more obvious connection between enterprise and creation to explore enterprise as bearing the hallmarks of the resurrection promise.

The panel discussion covered a range of ground – the growing interest in social enterprise and investment, the impact of Catholic Social Teaching in this field, the impact of business structure, the role that scale and rootedness in the community play in creating

social justice, and the caveat that enterprise does not *per se* create a fair and just society in which people who work in organisations are treated well and not exploited.

The topic clearly sparked strong interest in its audience, and made a vital contribution to the continuing challenge to place spiritual value on the activity of our working lives.

Report by
Joanna Moriart



Ridley Hall seeks to encourage an entrepreneurial attitude in all areas of life. So it is fitting that the final contribution from **Faith and Business** to this *Bulletin* comes from our new Principal, Michael Volland. He is an enthusiast for imaginative ways of conceiving church and innovative forms of ministry, and has written:

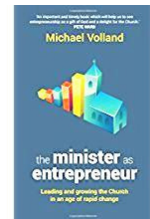
The Minister as Entrepreneur: Leading and Growing the Church in an Age of Rapid Change (2015) London: SPCK.

Richard Higginson

Michael Volland writes:



I am a Christian minister. I am also an entrepreneur. Being an entrepreneur has rarely made me any money and in the context of my book, *The Minister as Entrepreneur*, this is precisely the point. I use the term ‘entrepreneur’ to refer to a way of being in the world that is characterised by a relentless and energetic pursuit of opportunities to do things in new ways in order to bring about improvements for everyone involved. In the book I acknowledge that not everyone is comfortable with the word entrepreneur. However, I argue that many of the characteristics associated with entrepreneurship are in fact displayed by Christians who help bring about imaginative change in communities and churches. I believe that entrepreneurship is a gift of God to his Church and that the Church and the communities she seeks to serve would gain a great deal if this gift were better understood and indeed encouraged.



What I noticed as I conducted my initial research into entrepreneurial ministers was the recurrence of words such as ‘creative’, ‘innovative’, ‘energetic’, ‘focused’, ‘visionary’, ‘opportunity’, ‘partnership’ and ‘collaboration’ – in short, all the things that we might hope to see in those involved in Christian mission. With these concepts in mind, I offer the following definition of the entrepreneur:

a visionary who, in partnership with God and others, challenges the status quo by energetically creating and innovating in order to shape something of kingdom value.

Visionaries are often able to see what *might* be, as well as what *is* and, if they have wisdom and the ability to build trust and to communicate effectively, they may be

able to share this vision with others and work in partnership to see it realised. The energy of entrepreneurs is often directed at moving beyond the status quo, or the apparent limits of the way things appear to be. This can make them quite annoying to the rest of us! But for Christians, Jesus provides an example of someone who was prepared to disturb individuals and institutions where apathy and the love of comfort had crept in.

The book aims to make a contribution to the emergence of a culture in all streams of the church in which entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship are properly *understood* and *recognised* as gifts of God to his Church. As such a culture emerges, my hope is that more Christians will feel more confident about acting out of their God-given entrepreneurial potential and try out a whole range of experiments and innovations in local churches and communities.

Entrepreneurs have always been found among the people of God. Men and women with entrepreneurial gifts are present in the Bible and throughout church history. In a challenging and unpredictable age such as our own, it is important that the entrepreneurs among the people of God are given every encouragement to minister out of their God-given gifts. Part of the fruit of this will be that the rest of us are helped to step towards all that God intends and the unchanging message of the coming kingdom will be faithfully proclaimed in ways that allow it to be heard afresh in our generation.

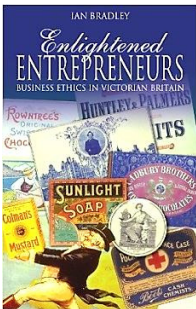
The Kingdom at Work Project adds below a third book review on a similar theme and an important article from the *Church Times* on missiology and society.

‘Enlightened Entrepreneurs’

(Book review)

Ian Bradley (2007 edition)

Enlightened Entrepreneurs - Business Ethics in Victorian Britain
Oxford: Lion



For those reflecting on the character of the Christian entrepreneur, this book is a *tour de force*. Beautifully and clearly written, Ian Bradley describes the lives of ten nineteenth century ‘enlightened entrepreneurs’, representative of many more, as case-studies for his theme - Thomas Holloway (medicines), Titus Salt (alpaca wool), Samuel Morley (stockings and underwear), George Palmer (biscuits), Jeremiah Coleman (mustard), Andrew Carnegie (iron and steel), George Cadbury (chocolate), Joseph Rowntree (chocolate), Jesse Boot (chemist) and William Lever (soap).

Like so many of their fellow entrepreneurs, these figures were driven by two powerful motivational forces - Victorian Liberalism and Protestant Christianity.

Victorian Liberalism, with W. E. Gladstone as its symbolic father figure, stood for 'free trade, self-help, minimal government interference and inter-nationalism'. But it also stood 'for generosity and tolerance, for democracy and popular representation and for radical social reform, carried out by public authorities if necessary but preferably by the spontaneous voluntary actions of individuals and communities... It was pre-eminently an anti-class movement, drawing its support from across the social spectrum... and based on its ideas and principles rather than... any particular sectional interest.' Four of the ten entrepreneurs mentioned by Bradley became, for a time at least, Liberal members of parliament. All the others were very active in local government.

However, an even more powerful force than their political commitment, these Victorian entrepreneurs were driven by their Nonconformist principles. Of particular note here were Quakers and Congregationalists. George Palmer, George Cadbury and Joseph Rowntree were Quakers. But so were many other entrepreneurs not described in this book - including Joseph Fry (chocolate), William Jacob and John Carr (biscuits), John Horniman (tea packer), Cyrus and James Clark (shoe manufacturers) and famous Quaker banking dynasties like the Lloyds, the Barclays and the Gurneys. Titus Salt, Samuel Morley and William Lever were Congregationalists. Other Congregationalist entrepreneurs not mentioned here include Thomas Beecham (medicines), Francis Crossley (carpets) and the Wills brothers (cigarettes). Representative of another branch of Nonconformity was Jesse Boot, originally a Methodist. Other Methodist entrepreneurs not included were W. H. Smith (newsagent), William Hartley (jam) and George Chubb (locks). Also not included in this book were a number of Baptist and Unitarian entrepreneurs.

Bradley's service to the theme of this *Bulletin* is that he draws attention to a phenomenon which remains extremely important as so much of modern business loses touch with the ethical principles which drove its founders. Their Liberalism and their Nonconformist principles motivated these entrepreneurs in different though complementary ways. In the first place, they saw it as their duty to hone their skills and energies through a commitment to what they regarded as the personal self-discipline required by the Christian way of life. Thus they were 'methodical, regular and thrifty in their habits, relentless in their capacity for hard work and self-improvement, and models of self-discipline and temperance.' Seven of Bradley's ten entrepreneurs were teetotallers. They kept regular hours for sleep and many pursued bracing exercise.

At the same time, these men were not puritanical killjoys who condemned their workers to slave labour. Though often displaying a paternalistic, if not autocratic character, most were deeply concerned about the conditions of the work, welfare and quality of life of their employees. As Bradley puts it, they were motivated not just by the parable of the talents but by that of the Good Samaritan. Six of these ten entrepreneurs moved their workforce from cramped and unhealthy conditions to 'green field' sites. In the process, they provided medical, educational and social facilities for their employees, often lasting throughout the latter's lives. Four of them built model residential communities for their workers - at Saltaire, Bournville, New Earswick and Port Sunlight.

In addition, many of these ‘enlightened entrepreneurs’ used their wealth to benefit society at large. Thomas Holloway built a sanatorium and a college. George Palmer built parks and public recreation grounds in Reading. Carnegie gave a massive amount of his wealth to fund educational facilities and projects for international peace in the UK and the United States. The Cadbury and Rowntree Trusts continue to fund initiatives in the fields of social and educational reform.

It is true that entrepreneurs in Victorian times did not face some of the constraints of later decades. They could exploit niche markets in a way no longer possible. Canals and railways assisted the movement of goods and workers. The lack of a strong trade union movement gave them a free hand in the management of their workforces. The economic boom of the times gave impetus to their endeavours. The scope for personal philanthropy was greater than today.

Nevertheless, these men used the gifts and opportunities given them not just for their own fulfilment but for the good of thousands of their workers and of wider society. They saw wealth creation not as an end in itself, but as a means towards the creation of a healthier and more fulfilling life for all concerned. They practised what they preached - politically and socially.

Their example has not entirely faded away. In *The Kingdom at Work Project*¹, I document not only the work of such Victorian entrepreneurs but some of the numerous ‘social responsibility’ initiatives of business which have emerged within the UK and beyond since then. These remain a source of encouragement. However, as globalization increasingly dominates scene, with its inevitable take-overs (witness Kraft swallowing up Cadbury’s in recent years), and the world of business moves away from the powerful ethical stance of many of its founders, the challenge of ensuring that the business entrepreneur takes to heart the nature of the ‘Lordship’ which inspired the parable of the talents, as well as the collective meaning of the parable of the Good Samaritan, remains a very demanding one.



David Clark

¹ David Clark. (2014) *The Kingdom at Work Project*. Also in e-book format. Peterborough: Upfront Publishing. (pp. 142-153).

‘Seeking the kingdom’

At the beginning of February **an article appeared in the *Church Times*** which so accords with the theological and missiology of the Kingdom at Work Project that, with permission, we reproduce it here. It may appear to echo the constructs of an age long gone. However, we believe that it is high time we reclaimed the perspective and passion of those such as Bishop John Taylor.

We asked Philip Lockley, who wrote the article, to let us have a note as to why he offered the article to the *Church Times*. It appeared on 10th February 2010. He writes as follows:

My research interests centre on Christian responses to the personal and social effects of free-market economics in modernity. I wrote the article because I suspect John V. Taylor may be becoming a forgotten prophet of the modern Church. On a single day in 2010, I sat down and read Taylor's meditation on consumerism, *Enough is Enough* (1975). It was one of those books that changed the way I look at the world. And like many others, *The Go-Between God* (1972) has also been a deeply formative book in my walk with God. Writing a reflection on this prayer by John V. Taylor was an opportunity to distill elements of that influence in my own theology.

Christ, alive and at large in the world

Philip Lockley on a prayer by John V. Taylor, Bishop of Winchester (1914 - 2001), a person deeply concerned about life at ‘both ends of the line’.



Lord Jesus Christ,
alive and at large in the world,
help me to follow and find you there today,
in the places where I work,
meet people,
spend money,
and make plans.
Take me as a disciple of your Kingdom,
to see through your eyes,
and hear the questions you are asking,
to welcome all with your trust and truth,
and to change the things that contradict God's love
by the power of your cross
and the freedom of your spirit.

Amen.

THIS is a worldly prayer. It names the ordinary world of our every day, and prays within it, for it, and through it. The prayer acknowledges the world to be the location where God in Christ is found and followed. And it identifies Christ's Kingdom as a way of seeing,

questioning, welcoming, and changing things in this very world. The Kingdom may not be of this world, but it is very much in it - just as we are, and just as God is.

John V. Taylor composed this prayer for his enthronement as Bishop of Winchester in 1975. Those present in the cathedral were invited to pray these words each day, before going to work, 'or while you are travelling there'.

Taylor's instructions were tied to his sermon 'Christ at both ends of the line', which recognised the reality of commuter life in modern Winchester. Christ might easily be brought to mind in the quiet cathedral city, when at home, or in church at the weekend. But Taylor's hearers were also Christ's disciples on the other days of the week. They were to serve Christ even in the daily grind to London, Reading, or Southampton.

This, then, is a prayer of preparation before work. Our work need not necessarily involve a commute, as Taylor imagined, or even be paid employment. Many kinds of work take us out of the house: raising children, maintaining home, sustaining community.

The prayer itself acknowledges that the purpose of the day ahead might be meetings, shopping, making plans. In all these cases, the day's journey is no less about seeking Christ, following Christ, and finding Christ.

Several arresting phrases here exhibit the same poetic touch as Taylor's much loved books, *The Go-Between God* (SCM Press, 1972, 2004) supreme among them. That Christ is 'alive and at large in the world' is the first such expression. Despite the alliteration, the colloquial 'at large' jolts slightly. It is not typical prayer language. To talk about Christ's 'presence' would be more expected.

And yet the appropriation of this idiom gives multiple meanings to the affirmation of presence. On the one hand, 'at-largeness' fits the implied city setting; on the other, it is prisoners who are 'at large' when they have escaped and are on the run.

With this, the mind conjures a vision of Christ once captive to death, now broken free and running, free-wheeling, through the world. It is we who seek the fugitive - asking 'to find you there' - not to recapture Christ, but to join him in his freedom.

The middle line of the prayer offers the pivotal petition: 'Take me as a disciple of your Kingdom.' This request to 'Take me' stands out by virtue of its not being 'Make me' - a familiar bidding in other Christian prayers, and the verb in keeping with the Gospel imperative to make disciples'.

Instead, 'take me' asks to be accepted, allowed in, or on to the team. I aspire to submit to the discipline of your Kingdom, Jesus; now take me on, show me the ropes, and train me up.

That taking and training rolls through the remainder of the prayer in an apparent continuation of the worldly journey begun in the opening lines. Christ 'at large' is

moving in the places where we ourselves move. But he sees certain things, and asks certain questions - which we want to be trained to see and hear.

What it is that Christ sees, and the critical questions that he asks of our world, will surely be consistent with the Christ of the Gospels. Then, Christ saw faith and hypocrisy, joy and injustice. He asked questions of the powerful, and enquired after the true motivations of his followers.

Now, our learning to see and question like Christ links to the contrasting lines that follow, concerning welcome and change; for welcome is about acceptance, and seeking change is not. That Christ's Kingdom is known in trusting and truthful welcome means that it is about receiving at face value - the trust part; and acknowledging things that have been hidden, disguised, or past - the truth part. An accepting welcome requires both trust and truth.

Even so, being disciples of the Kingdom also involves not accepting, but seeking 'to change the things that contradict God's love'. As God's love is the measure of rightness in the world, we can assume that change is brought only in love.

And yet the lack of punctuation in the final lines confirms this more fully: the power and freedom for us to effect change come through the cross and spirit respectively.

The cross has power by being the worst the world could throw at the Kingdom; and still it lost, and God's reign of love won. The spirit is freedom because it is release from the world's restriction, control, demand, and servitude.

So this is a daily prayer with depth and dynamism. Its theology enables us to venture forth from home into our day - into the world - with truthful assurance. Christ awaits. Christ invites. Christ's freedom and power are ours. This prayer makes this no ordinary day, but a day for the Kingdom.

[In this version of the prayer, the word 'men' has been omitted: line 11 originally read 'to welcome all men'.]



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[For a free sample copy of the *Church Times*, go to www.churchtimes.co.uk or email subs@churchtimes.co.uk]