

Wealth Creation Manifesto



Background

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

Affirmations

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

Appeal

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

- We call the church to embrace wealth creation as central to our mission of holistic transformation of peoples and societies.
- We call for fresh, ongoing efforts to equip and launch wealth creators to that very end.
- We call wealth creators to perseverance, diligently using their God-given gifts to serve God and people.

Ad maiorem Dei gloriam - For the greater glory of God

Wealth Creation Manifesto with Bible References

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

1. God is Creator of all things: Gen 1:1-2:4; Neh 9:6; Ps 104; Rev 4:11
2. Earth belongs to God: Lev 25:23; 1 Chron 29:11; Ps 24:1; 1 Cor 10:26; Gen 2:15
3. God is the giver of wealth: 1 Chron 29:11-12; Prov 8:18-21
4. Our creation in God's image: Gen 1:26,27; Gen 9:6
5. Our work as people made in God's image: Gen 1:26,28; Gen 2:15; Eph 4:8; 1 Tim 5:8
6. The command to work (and rest): Gen 2:15; Ex 20:9-11; Deut 5:13-15
7. Bezalel and craftsmen for tabernacle enabled by God: Ex 36:1-2
8. Wealth creation is both a gift from God and a command: Deut 8:11-18; Deut 28:11,12; Eccl 5:19
9. Hard work leads to wealth: Prov 10:4; Prov 13:4; Prov 18:9 (condemnation of idleness); Prov 20:13
10. All useful work is to be done to God's glory: Col 3:23,24
11. Wise investors are commended: Matt 25:16-30; Luke 19:11-27
12. Examples of "righteous rich" include Abraham (Gen 13:2), Isaac (Gen 26:12,13), Boaz (Ruth 2), David (1 Chron 28-29), David's supporters while he was in exile, esp. Barzillai, 'a very rich man' (2 Sam 17:27-29, 19:32); Solomon (1 Kgs 3:9-14), Nehemiah (Neh 5), Job (Job 1,29,31,42)
13. Markers of a functioning and restored marketplace: Jer 32
14. A business woman, Lydia, who furthers the gospel: Acts 16:14-15
15. Call to equip God's people for service: Eph 4:11-16
16. Call to witness and make disciples in all nations: Matt 28:18-20; Acts 1:8
17. Perils of hoarding: Prov 11:26; Luke 12:16-21; James 5:3
18. Encouragement to sharing: Acts 2:44-45; Acts 4:32; 2 Cor 8:1-15; 2 Cor 9:6-15; 1 Tim 6:18; Heb 13:16
19. Call to generosity: Deut 15:10; Ps 37:21,26; Ps 112:5; Prov 11:25; 2 Cor 9:6; 1 Tim 6:18; Acts 20:35
20. Virtue of contentment: Phil 4:11-12; 1 Tim 6:6,8; Heb 13:5
21. Examples of different choices of how to handle wealth: Job 29:1-25; Luke 19:1-10; Acts 4:32-5:11; love of wealth does not satisfy (Eccl 5:10)
22. Calls to help the poor: Ex 23:11; Lev 19:10; Deut 15:7-11; Prov 19:17; Prov 28:27; Prov 31:20; Matt 19:21
23. Extrapolating from the microcosm of the family: how the noble woman's business ventures creates wealth for her family: Prov 31:10-21
24. Israel's wealth increased because God gave them the 'ability to produce wealth': Deut 8:7-18 - through productive agricultural work, through trade/selling & buying, and through mining; also through obedience (Deut 28:1,11-12; 2 Chron 26:4-5)
25. God's blessing on nations through material prosperity: Deut 30:9
26. God's blessing of material prosperity through pursuit of wisdom: Prov 3:16
27. The call to justice: Ps 106:3; Prov 29:7; Is 1:17; Amos 5:24; Zech 7:9, Micah 6:8
28. Sensitivity to context: 1 Cor 9:19-23
29. Power of trade to create wealth (and to corrupt the wealthy): Ezek ch 27-28 (ch 27:12-24 is the most complete and extensive list of trading communities in the Bible)
30. Dependency on agricultural production (equivalent of business in contemporary times): Eccl 5:9; King Uzziah understood this, see 2 Chron 26:10
31. Wealthy Christians in the early church known for generosity in helping the poor and/or building the church: Joseph called Barnabas (Acts 4:36-37); Dorcas (Acts 9:36); Cornelius (Acts 10:1); Lydia (Acts 16:13-15, 40); Jason (Acts 17:5-9); Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:2-3); Mnason of Cyprus (Acts 21:16); Phoebe (Rom 16:1); Erastus (Rom 16:23); Chloe (1 Cor 1:11)