

Twin Brothers Boost Business Through ‘Missioneering’

As business partners, David and Jason Benham couldn't be a better fit.

“We shared a womb. We shared a room. Now we share an office,” Jason told CBN News during an interview at their Charlotte office in North Carolina.

His brother, David, quickly interjected, “But that's all we share.” Jason laughingly agreed.

The truth is the identical twins share much more: a passion for athletics and healthy living, for their families, and for business. When it comes to business, they make no bones about their lack of training.

“We never studied any business,” David said, noting that their dad was a preacher. “We were trained to be biblical thinkers.”

David and Jason started a real estate company in 2003.

Today, Benham Companies provides tax planning, business consulting, and real estate services. The business' real estate division, Benham REO Group, has about 100 offices in 35 states, and they say that's just beginning.

Living the Dream

The brothers have been recognized as trailblazers in the industry, which makes their background all the more impressive.

After graduating from Liberty University on baseball scholarships, both were drafted by major league teams. David went to the Boston Red Sox and Jason played for the Baltimore Orioles.

But after several years on the field, their dream of playing professional baseball transformed into something more.

“God used three years in the minor leagues and four years for my brother to be able to reshape our dreams into something I would consider a little bit bigger,” Jason explained.

But their pro-ball careers were quickly followed by hard times.

“I went from swinging a wooden bat in front of thousands of people on the major league roster to pushing a broom in Charlotte, N.C., as a janitor,” David recalled.

David left baseball to focus on his family, and he moved to Charlotte to be closer to his brother. An injury led to Jason’s departure.

Low Point to Turning Point

Though they were together again, the brothers struggled to pay the bills and get their business off the ground.

“We wanted to do real estate,” Tori Benham, Jason’s wife said. “But to get to that point, he had to mow lawns and paint and do a lot of different things.”

Jason added that they once even stacked printing paper for \$10 an hour.

The Benhams said that low point also became a turning point.

“That was actually one of the milestones in [David’s] life, where he looks back and it’s a teaching point for him,” David’s wife, Lori, said.

“[It’s] like God took (him) to the bottom and showed [David] you be excellent at what you do no matter what it is,” she said.

Excellence is the mantra of their business model, and they use

the Bible as their guide. The Benhams' business philosophy falls on three core values:

- Produce more value than you take in pay,
- Breathe life into your employees and clients, and
- Be faithful in the little things.

Without enrolling in business courses or attending seminars, the twins started their company with little success but worked hard trying to drum up business.

"We started building out what we envisioned what a kingdom business should look like," David said. "Everything was fresh, and God exploded our business because we wanted to glorify Him."

Community 'Missioneering'

The brothers found a niche in foreclosed property just before the mortgage meltdown. Rather than attributing their success to good timing, they credit the belief that their business is their ministry.

They call it "missioneering."

"You've got pioneering," explained Jason, who coined the term. "You've got engineering – creating something with a missions mindset."

Their office is decorated with Christian motifs, Bible verses, and daily prayers.

One example of how the two brothers are making a mark in their community came during the Democratic National Convention.

They worked with area pastors to organize a citywide prayer event called Charlotte 714. The name is based on a scriptural passage in 2 Chronicles 7:14.

The event drew 9,000 people from more than 100 different

churches.

“God used an old broken-down business owner like me to put that call out,” David explained. “Churches flocked to the idea, because it wasn’t held by any one particular church.”

Producing ‘Missioneers’

The Benham brothers are now setting their sights overseas with the goal of starting indigenous companies that produce more “missioneers” through local profits.

They already founded a business outsourcing center that employs about 80 people in the Philippines. The center has two missions-staffed employees from the U.S., one who serves as the business manager and another who works as a chaplain.

“We’ll go over and create value in a city,” Jason explained. “We take those profits, and we’re able to reinvest those into the city and into the people and be able to reach out and minister to the unreached people groups through funds that are derived in the city.”

David and Jason believe their business philosophy extends to all people of faith, to see their career field as the mission field.

“Missioneering to us is the opportunity to take the distinction between business and ministry and to completely erase it and say you are simply completing your assignment,” David said.

“Whether that’s running a church or whether that’s running a business,” Jason added, “You are running an organization and God wants you to bring his kingdom in that.”