

I'm Inspired By How God Is Using Business Leaders Worldwide

There's a greater reason for optimism than you may realize when it comes to business and the gospel

There's nothing new about Christian leaders meeting to discuss problems we are too familiar with: the rise of Islam, the increasing persecution of Christians, the onslaught of gay marriage and the declining influence of the church in the West. But leadership in confronting these problems in the name of Christ may come from a different arena—not pastors or televangelists, but from members of the business community.

That's if a meeting I attended recently in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, is any indication. A group of top business leaders from six continents concluded that business leaders must see themselves as ministers who may usher in a much-needed spiritual revival. They also concluded that political corruption is the No. 1 problem Christian businessmen face worldwide. And most attendees signed a pledge to be “unashamedly ethical” as part of a movement started in South Africa.

In spite of the problems discussed, there was a sense of optimism. We heard reports that the church is growing in many parts of the world, as well as stories of businesspeople—many of them very wealthy—who are heading up bold initiatives to spread the gospel, influence society and help the poor.

This was the second marketplace initiative brought together by Global Kingdom Partners Network, an informal group of about 100, which seeks to stay below the radar screen but networks leaders who, individually, are making a huge impact to see how they can work together to advance the cause of Christ.

There were stories, especially from developing countries, of how many of these very wealthy businesspeople see business as a ministry rather than the dichotomy between the two that we see in the West, where professional clergy do “ministry” while businesspeople do business and are merely seen as donors by ministry leaders.

Before the group ended, reports were given regarding the next steps for the church:

- Encourage Christians to proclaim their faith rather than retreat.
- Try to change the perception of Christians in culture as loving rather than judgmental.
- Form Christian “cartels” to work together to accomplish Christian goals.
- Develop better branding and PR for the Christian message in the worldwide media.
- Focus on restoring families globally.
- Usher in a revival through businesses and businessmen.
- Work to improve education and ease poverty in developing nations.
- Encourage the church to address social issues.
- Be more unified.

The network is the vision of Elias Dantas, a Brazilian who is now part of Nyack College in New York. The group began several years ago as an almost secretive meeting of megachurch pastors from around the world (including some from Muslim nations) to see how they could collaborate in spreading the gospel and encourage each other. The marketplace initiative is a spin-off of the pastor’s group and is less secretive because what businessmen do to fund the gospel and witness doesn’t get the same sort of persecution from governments who may be hostile to Christians.

During round-table discussions, the group identified that corruption in government is one of the most difficult problems

Christian businessmen face. Graham Power from South Africa is heading an initiative he calls “Unashamedly Ethical,” and most of the attendees signed a pledge not to give or accept bribes or other forms of corruption. He even read a list of the countries with the most and least corruption. New Zealand is rated least corrupt and Somalia is most corrupt—just behind North Korea. (The United States is rated the 24th least corrupt nation.

I was encouraged as I heard the stories of ministries and outreaches in countries where I had little idea what is happening. Even in Muslim nations, there were good reports. It proves once again that the body of Christ is alive and well in the earth.

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