

Business as Mission

is bigger than you think !

Mats Tunehag

***Mats Tunehag** explores how the entrepreneurial gift has the potential to bring social reform, model justice, combat human trafficking, reduce poverty and glorify God. Amid complex historic, ethnic, economic and social dynamics of communities, biblically shaped enterprise holds the capacity to serve God and the common good. Historic and contemporary vignettes highlight the importance of businesses as instruments for holistic transformation of people and societies.*

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Muslim village transformed through prayer, Christians business people and owls

It was a warm and humid day in June 2012. One may say almost too hot for a Swede. But the story that emerged was more than cool. I listened to the mayor of a small Muslim village. We sat outside his house, drank tea and nibbled on fruits, nuts and sweets. He was enthusiastic and composed. As a devout Muslim he had come to appreciate Christian business people in a way that surprised him. There is a long and sometimes violent history of severe distrust and tension between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia.

The village used to be quite poor. Rats ate 40 percent of the crops every year. These creatures also spread disease. Collaboration for irrigation was non-existent. There was a lack of entrepreneurial spirit and seemingly no-one thought about praying for a difference.

But some good friends and colleagues of mine visited the mayor and his village. They were Christian business people, who wanted to help and build bridges across a religious divide. At first the mayor declined.

Why did business people come, and not charity workers or government people? On top of that, these people were Christians—not Muslims. But one Christian businesswoman suggested that they at least could pray. She said that prayers make a difference; yes, God can make a difference. It was agreed. Something happened and it became a turning point. The mayor invited them to come back and they did.

The mayor could see me sweating profusely and he kindly turned on a fan and turned it towards me. But he didn't stop telling the story, a story of transformation. The team of Christian business people did research and explored ways to kill the rats in an environmentally friendly way. They also researched how one could increase the agricultural production and start profitable businesses. They found an owl called *Tyto alba* (Common Barn Owl) that eats rats, but is very hard to breed. Some told them it was impossible. But they prayed, researched and it worked. I could see birdhouses everywhere on the fields. The loss of crops has decreased from 40 to 2 percent per year. Through new wells and irrigation the annual yield of rice doubled.

I asked the mayor why they didn't dig wells and develop irrigation before the business people came. He said that the Christians changed their mindset regarding work and working together, and first and foremost taught them the importance of prayer. "Now we open to change and we are taking action. But we always start with prayer", said the mayor.

My Indonesian business friends have started business training courses in the village—based on Biblical principles. They have also helped to start small manufacturing businesses, marketing,

sales and local infrastructure. This small village with 2320 people has now become a model village in Indonesia. National television has portrayed this as a model to build bridges between Muslims and Christians and develop transformational businesses. The village is now a national learning center on how to breed owls that kill rats.

I heard several testimonies on how concrete prayers had led to concrete answers, related to rain, a paved road, a job, a motorcycle, and so forth. As we left the village I was encouraged and felt privileged. I had witnessed significant indicators of economic, social, environmental and spiritual transformation. The key contributing factors were: prayers, Christian business people and owls. One might say that this was an expression of Business as Mission.

Business as Mission

Did Christopher Columbus discover America? Not really. The Vikings were there many centuries earlier. So one might say that Columbus *rediscovered* America. Business as Mission is not a new discovery—it is a rediscovery of Biblical truths and practices. In one sense it is like the Reformation and its rallying cry: *ad fontes*—back to the sources.

Business as Mission, BAM, is a term widely used today. The term is new but the underpinning concept is nothing new. During the Reformation, old truths were highlighted and contemporary assumptions were challenged. We are revisiting Scripture, questioning jargon and traditions, and assessing the situation in the world. We are also revisiting history and highlighting untold stories of Christians who were instrumental in societal transformation as they engaged in business. Here's one example from Norway:

Hans Nielsen Hauge was born in the late 1700s in a poor, underdeveloped agricultural society in Norway. There was no democracy and limited religious freedom. When Hauge was 25 years old he had an encounter with God. Hauge's life motto became: Love God and fellow men. He travelled extensively throughout Norway and did what we in modern day terminology would call church planting and business as mission.

He started 30 businesses including shing industries, brickyards, spinning mills, shipping yards, salt and mineral mines, paper mills and printing plants. He was an entrepreneur and a catalyst. Many others were inspired to read the Bible, to meet with other believers for prayer and fellowship, and various businesses were started and developed.

Even secular historians today acknowledge Hauge's legacy and contribution to the development of modern Norway. He is sometimes called "the Father of democracy in Norway". He facilitated equality between men and women and his work led to a spiritual awakening and an entrepreneurial movement. Hauge's legacy is thus one of spiritual,

economic and social transformation. His life and work illustrates some of the BAM goals, principles and outcomes.

Three Biblical Mandates

Many Evangelicals often put an emphasis on the Great Commission, but sometimes make a great omission. This is only one of three mandates we have. The first one God gave us is the *creation mandate*, Genesis 1-3: we are to be creative and create good things, for ourselves and others, being good stewards of all things entrusted to us—even in the physical arena. This of course includes being creative in business—to create wealth. Wealth creation is a godly talent: “Remember the Lord & your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.” (Deuteronomy 8:18) As Christians we often focus more on wealth distribution, but there is no wealth to distribute unless it has been created.

The second mandate is the *great commandment* which includes loving your neighbor. This gives a basis for what modern day economists call Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). It is about creating wealth and producing products and services by being considerate of 'your neighbor'. CSR recognizes the importance of serving several constituencies through business— not just the owners, but also staff, suppliers, clients, community and the physical environment. CSR includes three bottom lines and looks at the impact businesses have economically, socially and environmentally for the various stakeholders.

BAM also recognizes the importance of the triple bottom line as it is based on the God given mandates about being a creative steward and serving people. But BAM goes beyond this, to CSR+, as we include the third mandate— the *Great Commission*. We are to glorify God and make Christ known among all people. This is the fourth bottom line. As we integrate the Great Commission into our business goals, we develop a global and a missional perspective. BAM is CSR+, where the + can also be seen as a cross— putting everything under the Lordship of Christ.

*“Remember the Lord
your God, for it is he
who gives you the ability
to produce wealth.”
(Deuteronomy:8:18)*

We need to re-discover our three Biblical mandates and review their implications on church, business and our global mission. But there are of course many other issues and aspects as well. During this much needed re-discovery process we need to ask ourselves:

- Why do we seem to value the calling to be a pastor and a missionary over the calling to be an entrepreneur or accounting executive?
- Why do we tend to focus on non-profit mechanisms to alleviate poverty, when for-profit businesses are a natural and biblical mechanism for creating wealth?
- Why do we tend to value wealth distribution and often neglect wealth creation?

- Why do we tend to limit the contribution of Christian business people to donating money to ministry programs?
- Why do we often settle for doing good business—triple bottom line—and forget the fourth bottom line: glorify God and make Christ known among all peoples as we do business.
- Why only few seminaries and Bible colleges provide courses on theology of work and business?

Can you mix God and business?

If business was only about maximizing profit, it would be acceptable to get involved in human trafficking, which is relatively low risk (few traffickers are caught and sentenced) and it has a relative high profit margin. If job creation was the only purpose of business, one could commend the Mafia for the jobs they create.

Businesses should serve various groups through its products, services, relationships and conduct: employees, owners, suppliers, customers, families, communities, and others.

Businesses should strive towards having a positive impact on individuals and societies, not only economically but also socially and environmentally.

Businesses should embrace a godly ethical framework to shape all aspects of the business. Good corporate values will also help building healthy societies.

Businesses need to make a profit to survive but they should also look beyond that. Pope John Paul II wrote: “The purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit, but is to be found in its very existence as a community of persons who in various ways are endeavouring to satisfy their basic needs, and who form a particular group at the service of the *whole of society*.”

This was even understood by a so-called capitalist like David Rockefeller:

“The old concept that the owner of a business had a right to use his property as he pleased to maximize profits has evolved into the belief that ownership carries certain binding social obligations. Today’s manager serves as trustee not only for the owners but for the workers and, indeed, for our entire society.”

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John Paul II says that the Church “recognises the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as

free human creativity in the economic sector”. However, he adds that there must be a strong juridical framework, which at its core is ethical and religious.

But can ethically run businesses survive in a today’s tough global market? Can a business have Christian values and be profitable at the same time? Yes, and here is one example.

The R.W. Beckett Corporation, founded in 1937, is now a third generation family business which "endeavors to apply a biblically-based philosophy throughout every phase of its Operations". Its mission is: By God’s grace we will grow, relentlessly improve and passionately serve our customers and fellow employees.

Here are some of the values guiding the business:

- Our intention is to be a Christ-centered company
- We will conduct ourselves with dignity, adhering to the highest ethical and moral standards
- We desire to be known as honourable, reliable and trustworthy, always willing to go the extra mile for something we believe in
- Profits are important and necessary, but never at the expense of good, long-term business judgment
- Recognising that there are business cycles, we have a high priority to provide employment stability
- We want to be good “corporate citizens”—active in serving others, helping meet human needs in the community and beyond
- We realize we are not an end in ourselves, but a part of God’s larger purposes

As such, we are called upon to work as “unto Him,” to view our business as a trust and to be wise and able stewards of the trust He has placed with us.

So can a business have Christian values and be profitable at the same time? Yes! Beckett has more than 75 years of experience.

A God-Pleasing Capitalism

Some of us grew up during the cold war and in Sweden the dividing line was often described as two economic systems. But in actual fact the dividing line was rather about human rights and freedoms, and thus about human dignity. The centrally-planned command economy in communist countries was disastrous for people, societies and the environment. But does that mean that capitalism is the answer?

Pope John Paul II addressed that issue:

“Can it perhaps be said that, after the failure of Communism, Capitalism is the victorious social system, and that Capitalism should be the goal of the countries now making efforts to rebuild their economies and societies? Is this the model which ought to be proposed to the countries of the Third World which are searching for the path to true economic and civil progress?”

The answer is obviously complex. If by “capitalism” is meant an economic system which recognizes the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free human creativity in the economic sector, then the answer is certainly in the affirmative, even though it would perhaps be more appropriate to speak of a “business economy”, “market economy” or simply “free economy”.

But if by “Capitalism” is meant a system in which freedom in the economic sector is not circumscribed within a strong judicial framework which places it at the service of human freedom in its totality, and which sees it as a particular aspect of that freedom, the core of which is ethical and religious, then the reply is certainly negative.”¹

Godly wealth creation

Political processes and legislation often determine the framework for economic relations and business development. We may of course take issue with some policies of some politicians, but it is nevertheless good to note that the former UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher addressed these kinds of issues in a speech to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on 21 May 1988. Here are some excerpts:

“The Old Testament lays down in Exodus the Ten Commandments as given to Moses, the injunction in Leviticus to love our neighbour as ourselves and generally the importance of observing a strict code of law. The New Testament is a record of the Incarnation, the teachings of Christ and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Again we have the emphasis on loving our neighbour as ourselves and to “Do-as-you -would-be-done by”.

I believe that by taking together these key elements from the Old and New Testaments, we gain: a view of the universe, a proper attitude to work, and principles to shape economic and social life. We are told we must work and use our talents to create wealth. “If a man will not work he shall not eat,” wrote St. Paul to

the Thessalonians. Indeed, abundance rather than poverty has a legitimacy which derives from the very nature of Creation.

Nevertheless, the Tenth Commandment - “Thou shalt not covet” - recognises that making money and owning things could become selfish activities. But it is not the creation of wealth that is wrong but love of money for its own sake. The spiritual dimension comes in deciding what one does with the wealth. How could we respond to the many calls for help, or invest for the future, or support the wonderful artists and craftsmen whose work also glorifies God, unless we had first worked hard and used our talents to create the necessary wealth?”

A businesswoman from the Middle East as a role model

John Paul II and Margaret Thatcher have made some valuable observations, but the Business as Mission concept and praxis is much older. The Bible portrays a businesswoman as a godly example of how to serve others and meet various needs. Let’s briefly look at a few verses of Proverbs chapter 31 and translate these into modern day business language:

*She sees that her trading is profitable
(Proverbs:31:18)*

<i>Proverbs chapter 31</i>	<i>What does that mean?</i>
<i>16 She considers a field and buys it</i>	She does a market assessment and invests
<i>Out of her earnings, she buys a vineyard</i>	She makes a profit and reinvests
<i>18 She sees that her trading is profitable</i>	She keeps books and manages cash flow
<i>24 She makes linen garments and sells them</i>	She is involved in manufacturing and Retail
<i>and supplies the merchant with sashes</i>	She has set up a supply chain
<i>20 She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy</i>	She uses part of the profit for charitable Work
<i>15 She provides food for her family and portions for her servant girls</i>	She is the breadwinner of the family She provides employment
<i>31 Give her the reward she has earned and let her works bring her praise at the city gate</i>	Her work in business should be recognised and is certainly commendable

Moose hunting and Business as Mission

Nine million people live in Sweden. Approximately 300,000 Swedes go hunting every year and shoot 100,000 moose. Moose hunters need to know what a moose looks like. If they do not know, you certainly do not want to be around during hunting season. Your success as a hunter depends on knowing your target. One can only succeed - or fail - in relationship to a target, a defined purpose, and specific objectives.

The same applies to Business as Mission, BAM. We can only determine success or failure based on our purpose. So what is the purpose of BAM? The key word is *transformation*.

From church planting success to genocide

In just 100 years, this country went from 'unreached' to 'churched', with approximately 90 percent of the population attending church as members. It is the ultimate success story in the history of Christian mission— if the success criteria are church planting and church growth.

In just over 100 days, nearly one million citizens (and church members) were killed - by other citizens and church members - in a brutal genocide in the spring of 1994. The country? Rwanda. It had seen tremendous success in Evangelism and church planting but little penetration of the Gospel in ethnic relationships - it had people in church, but not church in people.

How we define our mission has both short and long term implications. Church planting and growth is not wrong, but clearly insufficient as a success criterion.

As we look at sub-Saharan Africa today, it has some of the most Christian countries in the world (percentage of Christians), some of the poorest countries in the world, and some of the most corrupt countries in the world. What is wrong with this picture? Is this success? Is this in line with our mission as Christians? Is this what God wants?

Our mission and success criteria must include *transformation*. We want people and societies to be transformed - holistically. The global Business as Mission (BAM) movement is aiming at *transformed lives around the world through ethical business with integrity*. This sounds grand, but what does it mean?

Transformation: It is about a good and lasting change. And that takes time; we need to have an inter-generational perspective. BAM is an intentional praxis of faith at work in all relationships in and through business. BAM is about practicing business based on ethical principles. It is about following Jesus in the market place to see people and societies transformed.

We also need to give priority to small and medium size businesses (SME's). They are strong *transformational* agents—not only economically. They are, in many ways, the backbone of developed economies. SME's are often missing to a large extent in the poor countries and regions.

Lives: We are all people with physical, social, spiritual, emotional, economical and other needs, operating in a political and cultural context. So transformation must be holistic - for people and societies. This is also what the word 'integrity' means - something whole and complete. Our mission is and must be more than evangelism and church planting - we do not want to create another Rwanda!

Around the World: The BAM movement can never be true to God and our mission if we limit ourselves to a local outlook. We must be a part of God's centrifugal force, moving out and beyond our immediate comfort zones. To all people and nations.

BAM and the challenge before us

A focus for the global BAM movement is the Arab world & Asia. Why?

There is a concentration of many needs in this region.

- a) The name of Jesus is rarely heard in the Muslim, Hindu, and Buddhist worlds
- b) This is where you find up to 80% of the world's poorest
- c) Unemployment and underemployment in many of these countries ranges from 30% - 80%
- d) These nations have the fastest population growth as well, hundreds of millions of young people coming into the labor market looking for jobs
- e) These are also often high-risk areas for trafficking and prostitution. Unemployment makes people vulnerable.

We can take a closer look at a couple of these points: unemployment and human trafficking.

1.8 billion jobs needed

There is a global shortfall of about 1.8 billion good formal jobs, according to Jim Clifton, CEO of Gallup.² That is nearly a quarter of the world's population.

Many people live and work in the insecure, informal job sector, which is often filled with survival activities in the form of subsistence businesses. Most people hope for a formal job, but many have little or no prospect of finding one. And the problem is increasing.

50 million new jobs need to be created in the Arab world alone by 2020 and there is no indication of that happening. According to the Economist, unemployment rates are 24% in Egypt, 27% in Jordan, 30% in Tunisia, 39% in Saudi Arabia and 46% in Gaza.³

44 million people in the so-called rich world are unemployed and another 11 million are underemployed. The human costs are enormous, for joblessness increases depression, divorce, substance abuse, etc.

Youth are disproportionately affected and this goes for both rich and poor countries. In Spain, for example, 46 percent of young people under the age of 25 are out of work. In South Africa it is over 50 percent.

The challenge is huge and global. What must be done?

Handouts do not give dignity - jobs do. To illustrate: In May 2012 I met a former soldier in Cambodia, a landmine took his arm and killed his friend, and he also lost every family member in the war. He told me: “After the war the church became my family, and a job gave me dignity.” I warmly recommend the encyclical letter by John Paul II, which deals with work and human dignity.⁴

Aid can ease problems temporarily but cannot create 1.8 billion new jobs. We know, for example, that aid has not lifted Africa out of poverty, as the international economist Dambisa Moyo has clearly demonstrated in her book *Dead Aid*.

Micro-loan programmes can help, but tend to build the informal economy and thus run the risk of cementing people and nations in poverty. More than 80 per cent of African jobs are created by small and medium businesses, according to World Bank surveys, yet those businesses are neglected by traditional aid agencies.

Jim Clifton writes: “The demands of leadership have changed. The highest levels of leadership require mastery of a new task: job creation.”

The demands of leadership have changed. The highest levels of leadership require mastery of a new task: job creation

But as we stress again and again in the global business as mission movement: We don't want just any kind of jobs. The Mafia also creates jobs. The traffickers put people to work in the sex industry. No, we want to create jobs with dignity that add value to life, which bring good and holistic transformation to people and societies.

To this end we need innovators, entrepreneurs and mentors. One study referred to in The Economist (10 Sep 2011) “shows that between 1980 and 2005 all net new private-sector jobs in America were created by companies less than five years old”.

As stated in the Business as Mission Manifesto, from the Lausanne paper on BAM 2004:

“We call upon the Church worldwide to identify, affirm, pray for, commission and release business people and entrepreneurs to exercise their gifts and calling as business people in the world - among all peoples and to the ends of the earth.

We call upon business people globally to receive this affirmation and to consider how their gifts and experience might be used to help meet the world’s most pressing spiritual and physical needs through Business as Mission.”

Human Trafficking

One can make two observations about big, organised crime: Firstly, it is big. Secondly, it is organised. Human trafficking, modern day slavery, is the second biggest organised crime in the world. It is worth many billions of dollars and involves very sophisticated transnational operations. Some estimates indicate that about 27 million people have been tricked, shipped, deployed to slave-like work and are held against their will. This is happening all over the world. It is big business. It is organised. The trafficking operations involve all kinds of professions and skills and they are very interconnected; think of it as a multi-national company with all levels, from janitors to high flying CEOs.

Unfortunately, anti-human-trafficking initiatives can be labeled as small and disorganised in comparison. To adequately address and combat human trafficking we need to build critical mass (become big) and build strategic alliances (become organised).

I see two major challenges for anti-trafficking initiatives. One problem is that it is mainly two categories of people and groups who are involved: Firstly, legislators, policy makers, and government agencies. Secondly, NGOs, nonprofit and volunteer based organisations. These people and groups are good and needed. They are not the problem. The problem is the people and groups who are *not* involved or not even invited to combat this evil.

We know that unemployment makes people vulnerable to traffickers. It is also a fact that we cannot talk about restoration of victims of human trafficking unless we can offer them jobs with dignity. Thus adequate prevention and restoration must include job creation. This means that business people must be a part of anti-trafficking networks as we try to get big and organised.

The second problem is disconnectedness. Local and national disconnected anti-trafficking measures are not sufficient to tackle big, organized crime, to initiate preventative steps and to plan and effect rescue and restoration of the victims of these criminal gangs.

In short: we need to get more professions and skills involved and we need to build international strategic alliances. Is that a pipe dream? No!

Let me briefly mention two significant initiatives, one regional and one global.

The European Freedom Network, EFN, facilitates information sharing, coordination and cooperation among over one hundred partners in over 30 countries. They are working together to prevent human trafficking and provide restorative processes for its victims. EFN is an important step in the right direction of building critical mass and getting organised transnationally.⁵

The global think tank on Business as Mission has a working group dealing with these issues, and pro-actively inviting business people to be a part of the solution.⁶

Think beyond micro⁷

Why is Bangladesh poor and Taiwan rich? This admittedly provocative question is intended to help us drill down into important questions: how and where we might most effectively apply resources for the extension of the Kingdom of God through business?

The definition of Medium Sized Businesses (SME) varies, but most would accept that a business of moderate capitalisation requirements, employing perhaps 20-250 employees or so, would be a typically acceptable description; such is the case here.

It is a fact that SMEs are the backbone of economically healthy countries, be they so-called “developed” or “developing”. It is beyond dispute, and true anywhere in the world, across a long historical timeline, that countries with vibrant and numerous SMEs tend to experience a number of positive socio-economic changes. Apart from the relatively large number of jobs created, SMEs also help bring larger segments of the economy into the formal sector. This in turn contributes to the creation and growth of an essential tax base from which other socially desirable outcomes can be supported, such as hospitals, schools, roads and other infrastructure. There is generally a desirable association between a robust taxpayer base and the development of participatory (“democratic”) institutions associated with justice and good government. Conversely, any failed or failing state (economically, socially, politically) will show unmistakable signs of the SME sector being under attack or largely absent.

SMEs also seem to fare better even in times of economic crisis, as the *The Economist* reports:⁸

In contrast to the doom and gloom coming from Europe's biggest "firms, many SMEs are cautiously optimistic. The main umbrella organization for Germany's more than 4m SMEs predicts that its members' sales will contract by only 2% this year. The country's renowned 'Mittelstand' will therefore outperform the economy as a whole, which the government expects to shrink by 6%. A survey last month of 804 French SMEs found that just over half of them expected revenues to either stay at or increase in 2009.

Europe's SMEs, defined as firms with fewer than 250 employees, collectively employ 88m people and account for two-thirds of private sector employment. As big companies send jobs out of the country in an effort to reduce costs, smaller firms are becoming increasingly important as domestic employers. And although most SMEs are tiny mom-and-pop operations, with little capacity or desire to grow, their number also includes fast-growing, innovative firms which, if properly nourished, could become tomorrow's champions.

These perspectives need to be put alongside the pervasive, increasingly popular, and often unquestioning effort to promote micro-enterprise, both through NGOs and even commercial interests. Will micro-enterprise really help poor nations in the long term? How is it that Bangladesh (famous as a microenterprise country) is still endemically poor and Taiwan (a country of SMEs) is rich?

Professor Milford Bateman wrote in *The Financial Times* about the danger of micro-enterprise as a big picture strategy, over the long term.⁹

Put simply, to the extent that local savings are intermediated through microfinance institutions, the more that country or region or locality will be left behind in a state of poverty and under-development. This is an "iron law of microfinance". Focusing on isolated cases of micro-enterprise success simply does not add up to economic development. The reason microfinance is supported is overwhelmingly political/ideological - the economic rationale is simply not there.

Professor Bateman contrasts Bangladesh with other relatively rich countries, also in Asia:

The East Asian countries managed to develop brilliantly through channeling much, if not most, of their savings into serious growth oriented sustainable business projects. This is the reason many East Asian countries may have started at similar GDP levels as Bangladesh in the 1970s, but have since then massively outpaced Bangladesh in terms of growth and development. Economics 101 shows conclusively how critical

savings are to development, but only if intermediated into growth- and productivity-enhancing projects. If it all goes into rickshaws, kiosks, 30 chicken farms, traders, and so on, then that country simply will not develop and sustainably reduce poverty.

Dr. Peter Heslam, at Cambridge University comments further on the issue:

Some may wonder whether entrepreneurship has biblical warrant. But if entrepreneurship is about innovation, judgment and risk-taking, archetypal figures such as Abraham, Jacob and David reflect, despite their faults, strong entrepreneurial traits. Yet the primary model of entrepreneurship occurs at the very start of the Hebrew Scriptures, where the curtains open on a God who overflows with innovation, wise judgment and the willingness to take risks - especially the risk of creating human beings and inviting them to join his start-up as stewards of the earth.

On the basis of these reasons, we call the church and the global BAM movement to place greater emphasis on cultivating and enabling entrepreneurs and the SMEs of which they have been made stewards.

Business as Mission is bigger than you think

Business as Mission is sometimes a tricky term, but it is an important concept and an essential praxis. But BAM it is not a silver bullet; it is not the ultimate strategy. It is, however, a growing global movement of Christians in the market place asking: How can we shape business to serve *people*, align with God's *purposes*, be good stewards of the *planet* and make a *profit*?

Business as Mission is not trying to replace traditional means of serving God and people among all nations. Business as Mission is not a fundraising method. Nor is it about attaching some church-like activities to a business. It recognises the importance of and embraces Corporate Social Responsibility, CSR. But it goes beyond as well: BAM is CSR+.

*People, purpose,
planet, profit*

We are on a mission in and through business. It is for example a mission of justice. One could even say 'Business as Justice'. This and other terms may help us understand the holistic and transformational nature of Business as Mission. Let me give 12 brief examples. The list could be made longer, but these 12 will hopefully show that Business as Mission is not just doing business with a touch of "*churchianity*".

1. Business as Justice

God loves justice and hates injustice. God sent prophets again and again, to speak out against injustice and demand change and correction. Injustice often manifested itself in the market place: it was corruption, labor exploitation and abuse of vulnerable people like immigrants.

To pursue honest business and care for staff is *Business as Justice*. To treat customers and suppliers well is also a part of this God-honoring pursuit. *Business as Justice* includes fighting corruption and bribery.

2. Business as True Religion

True worship is to take care of widows and orphans (James 1:27). These are two vulnerable groups, who often are exploited in the market place today. Human traffickers often target lonely children. Circumstances and cunning people may force widows into prostitution.

These are realities in many parts of the world. Who will offer orphans and widows a future; give them jobs with dignity, so they can support themselves and others? That would be *Business as True Religion*.

3. Business as Shalom

Shalom is a Biblical concept of good and harmonious relationships. But relationships were damaged and broken through the fall as described in Genesis chapter 3. Through Christ there is a way to restored relationship with God, with one another, and with creation.

Business is so much about relationships, with staff, colleagues, peers, customers, clients, suppliers, family, community, tax authorities, and so forth. How can we as Christians in business strive towards *Shalom*; *Business as Shalom*?

4. Business as Stewardship

Every human being has been entrusted with gifts and talents. In business we also talk about assets. Stewardship is another important Biblical concept. How can we use what we have to serve? What does stewardship mean when we own and / or run a business?

God has given some people strong entrepreneurial gifts. They can be used for God and for the common good through business. It is the same with managerial gifts or gifts of bookkeeping or sales. We should encourage people with business skills to be good stewards - *Business as Stewardship*.

5. Business as Servant Leadership

Jesus came to serve. He was an example of good and godly leadership. Many books are written on this topic and it indicates the importance of the very concept of servant leadership.

Doing business as unto the Lord means that we also explore what servant leadership means in the business context. It is not a simple formula or a cookie cutter approach. It may look differently in different industries and cultures. But the key underlying principle is to serve people, communities, nations, and God. We are too often reminded about the lack of good leadership in the business world. *Business as Servant Leadership* is more than needed.

6. Business as Human Dignity

Every person on this planet is created in God's image. We all have value and dignity linked to the Creator. He created us to be creative, and to create good things for others and ourselves. It is deeply human and divine to create; it is an intrinsic part of human dignity. This creativity process, and thus human dignity, has been partly broken, but there is restoration power through Jesus Christ.

*Putting people to work is a
Godly act*

It is not a sin to be unemployed, but unemployment and the inability to work and support oneself and family, is a consequence of the fall. It is a loss of human dignity. Putting people to work, providing jobs with dignity, is a godly act - it is *Business as Human Dignity*.

7. Business as Reconciliation

The Apostle Paul writes that we are agents of reconciliation. Broken relationships and conflicts are common, even in the market place. We also witness tension and violence between ethnic and religious groups. Can businesses provide a forum for reconciliation? Can business people bridge ethnic and religious divides?

There is a long and sometimes violent history of severe distrust and tension between Muslims and Christians in Indonesia. But I have seen first-hand how Chinese Christian business people in Indonesia have changed interethnic dynamics and transformed interreligious relationships by intentionally doing business as justice, stewardship, *shalom*, servant leadership,

and so forth. This chapter started with such a story or case study. As God's ambassadors, we can be business people on a mission to do *Business as Reconciliation*.

8. Business as Creation Care

During the creation days, God did a daily evaluation; he exercised quality control on the products he produced. His verdict was "these are good". He has entrusted us to be stewards also of creation. Like God we can rejoice in being creative in the physical arena and produce goods and services that are good for people and the creation. This is the first Biblical mandate we have—to be creative and to work, also in the business world.

The importance of environmentally friendly businesses is included in the triple bottom line, striving to have a positive impact economically, socially and environmentally. Profit, people, planet.

On a visit to south Asia 2012 I met a couple who are working as management consultants to major manufacturing companies. This couple had a clear BAM mission, and was able to help these companies to become more profitable, improve working condition, save energy and clean up huge amounts of water. Access to and preservation of clean water is one of the biggest challenges we face globally. *Business as Creation Care* is essential.

9. Business as Loving Your Neighbor

The second scriptural mandate is the great commandment and includes to "love your neighbor as yourself". We know that business can and should serve people and meet various needs. For example: unemployment is a major underlying cause of malnourishment and starvation, homelessness, human trafficking, disease and limited access to medical treatment, as well as to debt and crime. Providing people with jobs is alleviating and preventing these dire conditions.

Human resource management (a term which sounds too impersonal and technical to me) should be an expression of loving your neighbor. Taking our neighbors' physical environment into consideration as we run businesses is also a part of this responsibility. CSR is thus not a new thing; it is based on Biblical principles.

We can also study and learn from history. For example, the Quakers in England and Hans Nielsen Hauge in Norway were agents of holistic transformation through business already a few hundred years ago. They did *Business as Loving Your Neighbour*.

10. Business as Great Commission

The third Biblical mandate is the global centrifugal thrust: to all peoples, to all nations. This is a major theme in the global BAM movement. How can we serve in and through business, empowered by the Holy Spirit, “in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”?

Business as Mission is about being a follower of Jesus, in business and to the whole world, especially in areas with dire economic, social and spiritual needs.

This is CSR+ and this dimension is not an elective. We want to see the Kingdom of God demonstrated among all peoples. It is *Business as Great Commission*.

11. Business as Body of Christ

God calls and equips some people to business. We need to affirm and encourage business people to exercise their calling with professionalism, excellence and integrity. Martin Luther puts it this way:

“A cobbler, a smith, a farmer, each has the work and the office of his trade, and they are all alike consecrated priests and bishops, and every one by means of his own work or office must benefit and serve every other, that in this way many kinds of work may be done for the bodily and spiritual welfare of the community, even as all the members of the body serve one Another.”¹⁰

12. Business as Glorifying God

BAM is the acronym for Business as Mission. Another relevant acronym is AMDG. The ultimate bottom line of Business as Mission is AMDG—*ad maiorem Dei gloriam*—for the greater glory of God.

Notes

1. *Centesimus annus*, 1991.
2. Clifton, J., *The Coming Jobs War*, New York: Gallup Press, 2011.
3. *The Economist*, 10 September 2011.
4. *Laborem Exercens*, 1981.
5. www.europeanfreedomnetwork.org
6. See www.BAMThinkTank.org
7. This piece on SME's and micro-enterprises is excerpted from an article I co-wrote with Peter Shaukat in 2009, here called "Think beyond micro".
8. May 21, 2009.
9. 26 December 2008.
10. *An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility*.

Mats Tunehag is a speaker, writer and consultant from Sweden and has worked in about half the countries of the world. For the last 20 years he has had a special focus on developing the Business as Mission, BAM, concept as well as national, regional and global strategic alliances of people and BAM initiatives.

In 2002 he initiated and co-lead the first global think tank on BAM, which produced the Lausanne Paper on BAM as well as the BAM Manifesto (2004). These have been translated into many languages and have become an often- used baseline for leaders in business, church and mission around the world.

In 2011 he developed another much bigger global think tank on Business as Mission. The key objectives were to listen, learn and share as well as connect key BAM leaders from all continents. To that end over 30 national, regional and international working groups were developed. Some were focusing on BAM in and from a region, others on a particular theme or issue related to BAM. This has resulted in the biggest global gathering and sharing of both intellectual and social capital that has ever taken place. Groundbreaking reports from these working groups are being published from October 2013 and onwards.

These two global BAM think tanks have been instrumental in building a global BAM movement, establishing a shared vision, developing common values, and facilitating a global network of BAM practitioners and other key leaders in the overall BAM ecosystem.

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Tunehag also serves part-time with a global investment fund based on Christian values that helps SMEs to grow in size and holistic impact in the Arab world and Asia, by providing financial, intellectual and human capital. Tunehag also serves on several boards and steering committees of various business associations and market place initiatives around the world.

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