

The Importance of Starting a For-Profit Business as Mission to Advance God's Kingdom

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A Senior Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for graduation
in the Honors Program
Liberty University
Fall 2016

Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

This Senior Honors Thesis is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for graduation from the Honors Program of Liberty University.

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Abstract

All Christians have a duty to advance the Kingdom of God according to Matthew 28:16-20, which tells Christians to, “go and make disciples of all nations” (New International Version). The gospel has not yet reached many areas of the world that Christians could influence if they started a Business as Mission (BAM). A BAM start-up would provide jobs to the surrounding communities and aid in improving the economy. Assisting others by providing jobs and meeting their physical, spiritual, social, and economic needs will empower individuals and allow communities to flourish. Even non-Christians find helping others important, which is seen through the concept of corporate social responsibility in numerous organizations. All Christians should seek to do everything to the “glory of God,” with excellence according to Colossians 3:23, which can be demonstrated through starting a for-profit Business as Mission.

The Importance of Starting a For-Profit Business as Mission to Advance God's Kingdom

The church and missions' world are starting to recognize the value of combining business along with missions to create a Business as Mission to advance God's kingdom. In the past decades, assumptions were made that only individuals educated in theology or those that attended Seminary were allowed to become missionaries because they were the only ones equipped to go into the world and share the gospel. That is not the case anymore for Christians who are business men and women. God is moving in the hearts of business men and women by calling them into the unreached parts of the earth. God made business as a means to help others, and Christians get to take part in serving others and changing communities by implementing Business as Mission (BAM). Individuals in business are now contributing to advancing the gospel by using their business skillset to get into different areas of the world such as the 10/40 window, an area located mainly in Asia, the Middle East and Africa that houses over 68% of unreached people in the entire world, and other countries around the world. Business as Mission has impacted these areas strongly and allowed non-believers to understand Christianity and begin their relationship with God.

Many opportunities await to spread the gospel through the use of missions, specifically by starting a Business as Mission (BAM). BAMers continue to make positive changes in the world, encompassing all aspects of society, including economically, socially, environmentally, and spiritually. As Grudem (2003) states, "the ability to earn a profit...results in multiplying our resources while helping other people," therefore profits become good when they help support others (p. 45). If executed correctly, Business as Mission will make a positive and lasting impact globally as seen in several examples

throughout the thesis. Next, common terms are defined that commonly arise when discussing Business as Mission to give the reader a better understanding of the terms used throughout the paper and in Business as Mission companies.

Defining Business as Mission Common Terms

In the Business as Mission field, a variety of definitions and aspects of Business as Mission exist. An overarching definition of Business as Mission is, “a for-profit commercial business venture that is Christian led, intentionally devoted to being used as an instrument of God’s mission to the world, and is operated in a crosscultural environment, either domestic or international” (Johnson, 2009, p. 28). Another term often associated with BAM is tentmaking, which differs from Business as Mission, and is defined by Patrick Lai (2015) as, “a believer who intentionally takes a job with a company in another culture, is fully supported by that job, and strives to witness cross-culturally” (p. 26). Some people use Business as Mission and Tentmaking terms synonymously. Others believe tentmakers are solely considered, “non-professional missionaries” (Wilson, 2002, p. 15). Some people refer to business as a platform for missions where missionaries only use their “business” to get into a closed country (a country that is closed off to offering missionary visas), and then neglect the business aspect of the ministry (Johnson, 2009, p. 30). Tentmaking and Business as Mission are further defined below.

Tentmaking

The word, “tentmaking,” originated from the apostle Paul who built tents in the Bible as a means to spread the gospel (Wilson, 2002, p. 16). Tentmaking has been commonly used to refer to Business as Mission, but BAM goes further than this. The goal

of tentmaking is to get a job in a business, whether that be Christian or secular, to try to minister through the job and minister to others (Lai, 2005). Many times tentmakers will try to partner with an organization, like a church or non-profit, to spread the news of Jesus Christ. While the goal of tentmaking is ultimately positive, tentmakers are only able to stay in a job for as long as the company keeps them hired, meaning the time they have in a particular area to minister to people and spread the gospel may be limited by the allotted time their visa allows them to stay in the country. Tentmakers could also get released from their company at any time or the company itself could not survive the market, which could take away the tentmaker's opportunity to serve the community if they had to return home due to their visa being revoked.

Business as Mission (BAM)

A variety of definitions exist that seek to define Business as Mission. Some people group Business as Mission along with, "business for mission," which is, "using the proceeds of business as a way of financing mission" (Johnson, 2009, p. 30). Others say business as mission means, "business in missions," which refers to a Christian business set up, "to proclaim Christ in cross-cultural settings" (Russell, 2010, p. 23). Another way people associate business as mission is by stating, "business as a cover for missions," meaning that the business, "simply wants to obtain a visa," and there is no real business that operates within the country (Russell, 2010, p. 23). BAM seeks to build a real business that is not financing a mission- the business *is* the mission. It can include using proceeds of a business to finance missions, and although the business is focused on making a profit to advance the Kingdom, it also involves helping the employees and communities, "spiritually, economically and socially" (Beals, 2014, p. 3). Additionally,

BAM is not a cover for going into another country as all Business as Missions will be run as real, profitable businesses. Similarly, tentmaking remains different from BAM in the sense that Business as Mission encompasses all aspects of business, rather than working for a business and ministering outside of the business with the help of a church or another organization.

Tom Sudyk, defines Business as Mission as, “the strategic use of authentic business activities to create cross-cultural opportunities to minister and evangelize within the business’s spheres of influence with the aim of holistic transformation” (Johnson, 2009, p. 29). The stated definition encompasses the majority of what BAM has to offer to societies around the world, although, a certain aspect not included in the definition is profit. When BAM or Business as Mission is stated, the definition that aligns most closely with for-profit Business as Mission is as follows: “Kingdom businesses [BAMs] are for-profit, commercial enterprises in the mission field of the developing world through which Christian business professionals are seeking to meet the spiritual, social, [emotional] and economic needs” (Eldred, 2005, p. 61). This definition provides an all-encompassing, lucid and coherent description of the essence of Business as Mission. It includes one of the most important aspects of creating a business, which is making sure the business is profitable. If a business is not profitable then it will not be able to reach people if it has to be closed because of low profit margins, therefore providing no impact to the community. Although profit is the most important component to keep the business operating, BAM seeks to do more than just make a profit – BAMers desire to impact the community and the individuals around them in order to win souls over to the Kingdom of God.

Creative Access Nation (CAN) / Restricted Access Nation (RAN). CANs and RANs refer to countries where missionaries want to go, but they are denied missionary visas to get into the country. Ironically, “over 80 percent of unreached peoples” live in these areas (Lai, 2005, p. 19). BAMers have an advantage to get into these countries as they go in with intentions of genuinely helping the community and starting real businesses, so many times BAMers can still get into the CANs because they will go in with a business visa and actually add value to the economy. The majority of countries that are CANs are countries where the prominent religions are, “Buddhism, Hinduism, [and] Islam,” where “the unreached people groups live under the watchful eye of the governments that are openly hostile to the gospel” (Lai, 2005, p. 19). These countries are called creative because, although most people can get into the country with a business visa, secrecy and creativity must be used in order to stay in the country and minister to the people living there. CANs and RANs are referred to as the same type of country and can be used interchangeably (Lai, 2005).

Business as Mission and kingdom businesses refer to the same concept of building or creating a business overseas with a for-profit mindset in order to make an eternal impact on those the BAMer comes into contact with in and around the surrounding communities.

The Need

Now that the reader has some background information on Business as Mission and how it differs from tentmaking, it is now time to address the question, “In our globalized world, is there still a need to minister and take the gospel to the communities throughout the world?” If there is no need, then Business as Mission would be futile.

Jesus explains to his followers what they are to do while on earth in Mark 16:15. He states to them to, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation” (Mark 16:15, New International Version). All of creation has not heard the gospel, yet Christians have incredible resources and new technology which allows them to reach the unreached. The need is still large to reach those who have never heard the gospel and Christians have a duty to allow themselves to be used by God until all of the world has heard the gospel.

Globalization and its Impact on the Modern Day World

Globalization most commonly refers to barriers being broken between specific parts of society, such as political, economic, technological, and social (Rundle & Steffen, 2003). Because of technology and globalization, communicating and reaching other people across the world is nearly effortless now. With a cell phone or computer, an individual can be connected across the world in seconds. Globalization has had a major impact on our society today, including impacting how Christians should participate in missions. Christians need to take advantage of the tools God has given in order to reach the nations for Christ. Everyone who considers themselves a Christian can and should serve God in any discipline that they feel called to do so whether that be a baker, biologist, financial analyst, teacher, or any other field of study.

As globalization impacts the world, new ideas and theories also penetrate the global church. In their book, *Great Commission Companies*, Rundle and Steffen state that, “another barrier is falling – a theological one – that is having a profound effect on how the church understands and fulfills its purpose” (Rundle & Steffen, 2003, p. 16). The barrier relates to how the church treats those who work in secular areas other than having

a position in the mission field or in the church. A, “challenge for the business professional comes from within the church, where many mission workers hold a mindset with a dichotomy between the secular work force and a professional clergy” (Beals, 2014, p. 3). A wrong but recurrent idea commonly found with the church is that the more “mature Christian” will be the one who will feel the call of God on his life to be a pastor, foreign missionary, theologian or something else relating to the spiritual realm, and that those who feel called to business are second tier Christians or do not care about the gospel reaching the nations (Rundle & Steffen, 2003). Unfortunately, these ideas are unbiblical and have allowed Christians to believe the lie that their secular work cannot be associated with Christianity. Thankfully, Christians are called to look to the Bible for their truth. The Bible fortunately makes it clear in 1 Corinthians 10:31, that “whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God” (New International Version).

Our Mission as Christians

In *Western Christians in Global Mission: What’s the role of the North American Church?*, Borthwick (2012) states, “The biblical mandate, combined with the stewardship of the amazing human and material resources of North America, [should] compel us to find our fit” (p. 21). In essence, missions can fit into some part of everyone’s life, whether that be in a job, church, or hobby. Everyone should strive to do missions at some point because, if the Christian truly believes he is a Christ follower, he is without excuse to execute the Great Commission according to Matthew 28:16-20, which discusses how disciples of Christ are to go into the nations proclaiming the gospel (New International Version). All Christians should minister to others when God presents opportunities and

listen to the Holy Spirit and allow him to guide them into the ministry they are to be involved with, not only locally but also globally.

Additionally, God has allowed Christians to live on the earth to advance his Kingdom. Business can be an avenue that allows Christians to follow God's heart and do good. "Whenever business is carried out justly, it does good and is God-ordained because we are assured that all good things 'come from above,'" according to James 1:17 (Plummer & Tunehag, 2013). The marketplace, in itself, is a good concept, because it meets people's needs and provides jobs for people that need them. Business allows people to make money and profits, which can in-turn allow those people to help others like the widows and orphans, who God calls Christians to support in James 1:27 (New International Version). In his article entitled, *Moving Toward a Marketplace Missiology*, Johnson (2003) states, "God is moving in a dynamic, fresh, new and powerful way in the world according to many observers. Surprisingly, this new movement is occurring in and through the market and it may become the most influential, effective mission field of the twenty-first century" (p. 87). Business and Christianity can be combined to create a marketplace that thrives while bringing spiritual awakening; Christians in business get the opportunity to take advantage of the fact that they associate with both business and Christianity, and they can use that to impact the world. If Christians truly believe that the Bible means what it says, then they should be led to action. Romans 1:16 states, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes" (New International Version). Christians should be encouraged to give the free gift of salvation to those who truly need it. Christians need to look at the opportunity to witness from a biblical worldview, realizing that through the power of the

Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ they can add to the global mission's agenda to reach the nations for Christ.

The Mission Field

In order to reach people with the gospel, first Christians must look at the need. It is pertinent to understand who has been reached and who has not heard of the gospel. By examining the mission field that BAMers could start a business in, it is helpful to understand the type of people that have to be reached, what the beliefs currently are, and how they may react when the gospel is presented to them. Different areas of the world may be impacted differently and the gospel may need to be presented differently in order for it to resonate with the people. In order to learn more information on these topics, statistics are helpful in examining the world in its current state.

A study conducted in 2010 by the Pew Research Center and published in 2012, found, "that there are 5.8 billion religiously affiliated adults and children around the globe, representing 84% of the 2010 world population of 6.9 billion" (Hackett & Grim, p. 9). The study grouped people into 1 of 8 categories which are: Christians, Muslims, Unaffiliated, Hindus, Buddhists, Folk Religionists, Other Religions and Jews (Hackett & Grim, 2012). While Christians make up 32% of the world's religious population, the other 68% make up all other religions (Hackett & Grim, 2012). Christians should be astounded by these statistics and compelled to minister to others as Christ has called Christians to do according to the Bible.

Islam versus Christianity. According to the Center for the Study of Global Christianity, a study from 2000-2010 showed that Islam was the fastest-growing religion in the world. "Islam grew at 1.86% per annum, whereas Christianity grew 1.31%"

(“Quick Facts about Global Christianity”). These statistics should also encourage Christians to spread the gospel at a rapid pace with urgency. One of the reasons why the gospel has not reached certain parts of the world is because the gospel normally stays in the same area and within the same people groups (Rundle & Steffen, 2003). Unless missionaries, organizations or BAMers focused on missions make a large effort in order to get the gospel to other people groups and translated into their languages, the people in unreached areas do not receive the gospel. Some people may believe that missionaries or people coming out of Bible college are the only ones equipped to spread the gospel, but every country has businesses and a market for businesses (Beals, 2014). People in closed or restricted countries need to hear the word of Christ, and Business as Mission provides an avenue to get into a country, and sincerely help the people there by allowing them to improve their standard of living and contribute to the community.

United States. According to the latest Religious Landscape Study completed by the Pew Research Center in 2014, 70.6% Americans associate themselves with Christianity, which includes different categories such as Evangelical Protestant, Mainline Protestant, Catholic, Mormon and also includes Jehovah’s Witnesses (Smith, 2015). This number fell 7.8% from the previous Religious Landscape study in 2007 (Smith, 2015). In the 2014 study, 4.7% associated themselves as Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, or Hindu. Another 16.1% do not associate with religion at all or are Atheists (Smith, 2015). Additionally, the other 0.8% do not know which religion they associate with or refused to answer (Smith, 2015). Moreover, even though the United States most highly associates with Christianity, only 53% of the people surveyed believe religion is important, and even fewer – only 36% attend services regularly (Smith, 2015). These shocking statistics

show that the United States is being separated with different religions. Christianity has already experienced declines in the people that associate themselves with Christ. The implications of these statistics assume that although the United States may not be entirely receptive to the gospel in the current way it is being presented, it may be receptive to newer ways of presenting the gospel, such as BAM. There is still a huge need that can be met in the United States in order to bring non-Christians to hear about the good news of Jesus Christ, and churches and Christians must become creative in order to minister to the lost in the United States.

10/40 Window. The 10/40 window is a prime example of an area where business and missions can be combined to help non-Christians understand the gospel. The 10/40 window is an area comprised of, “the majority of the world’s Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists,” and it is located, “between 10 degrees north and 40 degrees north latitude,” in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa areas (“What is the 10/40 Window?”). As of 2016, there are more than 4.84 billion people living in within the 10/40 window. Of these 4.84 billion people, over 68.4% are considered unreached by the Christian church (“What is the 10/40 Window?”). Many of the countries that Buddhist, Muslims, and Hindus live in do not offer missionary visa’s and are thus considered Creative Access Nations (Lai, 2005). The solution to reaching these people is implementing Business as Mission (BAM) in these countries. Christians are called to go and reach the unreached according to the Great Commission in Matthew 28:16-20, which states that Christians should make disciples of all nations, sending those disciples out to witness to others (New International Version). Jesus commands Christians to go and reach the unreached, love on those who are unloved, and advance his Kingdom so that all the world will know that

He is Christ (Borthwick, 2012). Business as Mission encompasses this idea by creating a sustainable business that can be used to advance God's Kingdom.

Business as Mission Spreads the Gospel and Meets Practical Needs

Now that it is understood that Christians have a duty to take the gospel to the unreached and a majority of the world still needs to hear the gospel (some for the first time), it is important to understand why Business as Mission is the answer to get the gospel to them, and why traditional missions methods will work, but Business as Mission has the chance to be more sustainable in a local community. This section of the thesis examines the question, "Why is for-profit Business as Mission an effective way to reach people with the gospel in the mission field?"

Sali in Senegal

Many people may be weary of the idea of Business as Mission and really try to contemplate if BAM is something that is actually a need in the world. Taken from Lai's (2015) book, *Business for Transformation*, the following story is a real life example of, "the why" for doing Business as Mission:

Sali is a Muslim man who lives in Dakur, Senegal. I [Patrick Lai] was in Dakar for a week doing some consulting work with a nongovernmental organization (NGO). While looking for a taxi, Sali was the only driver in a long queue of taxis parked near [my] house who spoke English. I rode with Sali everyday, and as we drove we became better acquainted with one another. [Later I learned that Sali] earned a master's degree in business arts (MBA). Surprised, I asked Sali why he was driving a taxi if he had an MBA. He replied, "Sir, there are no jobs and I have two little girls. They both like to eat, so to keep them fed, I drive a taxi." [Sali and

Patrick met with the director of the NGO to see what the NGO should be doing to help the surrounding communities.] Sali answered, “They should be creating jobs.” “Why jobs?” Sali replied, “You asked me what we need, what we need are jobs. If the NGO creates jobs for us, then we can decide if we need water or medicine or education. If they create jobs, then we can be in control of what we need, rather than having you imperialist Americans telling us what we need.” (pp. 4-5)

The story of Sali in Sengal is a prime example of the need for Business as Mission. People in foreign countries want to feel empowered to do their own work. Many organizations such as UNICEF, Samaritan’s Purse, and Red Cross go into countries or have projects going on such as building hospitals or creating wells and providing clean water for the people there. The act within itself is extremely generous and helpful to these people, but the downside is that the nationals who live in the country and even some nations that get continual help feel like they are stuck in a rut that they cannot seem to get out of. Imagine all of the pride that people would feel if they were able to help themselves and get a job, and in turn help their communities in the act.

Sali is just one example of a person in the world who has a degree, but does not have a job because there are not enough jobs. In addition to Sali, there are people all over the world who have not had the chance to get an education, although they have the skills necessary to accomplish a simple job, such as working in a bakery or a factory. Creating a Business as Mission provides a pragmatic solution to the need for more jobs. It will allow the economy to be positively affected as well as the person that gets the job be affected because they are allowed to take pride in the work that they do. Furthermore,

because the people are overjoyed and thankful when they get a job, this opens up a door unlike any other that allows the spiritual aspect to be fulfilled and the gospel to be transmitted into other nations.

Business as Mission allows not only individuals to be changed, but the change extends to families and communities as well. Individuals who go into Business as Mission seek to ensure positive change in the communities they establish their business in and make an impact on the surrounding society by providing jobs and changing the entire lives of the employees in a positive way. Missionaries sometimes have difficulties getting into certain countries, but BAMers are normally accepted into the country without problems because they obtain business visas and are able to work on creating a profitable business for the community.

For-Profit versus Non-Profit Businesses

As discussed, the most common type of person that goes over to another country to advance the gospel is referred to as a missionary. People who invest in going overseas and starting a Business as Mission are missionaries, only with a different mindset about business and how they will advance the gospel. Some reasons individuals want to start a Business as Mission are to get access into a particular country, it provides legitimacy from the surrounding community, they have a story to tell people why they are in the country, and it helps build relationship development and relationship contacts (Russell, 2010). As Christians, any advance in the Kingdom of God is a step in the right direction, but from a business perspective, starting a business and setting it up to fail is foolish and nonsensical.

Some people have the opinion that business can be used as a platform to enter another country, but the difficulty with using business as a platform for missions is that the individuals operating their so-called business do not normally take care of the typical business operations. For the most part, these people do not mind if the business side of their mission falls beneath the bottom line; instead they are only in the country operating their “business” as a means to advance the gospel, and they are most commonly supported with funding from churches or family and friends (Russell, 2010). While this is a good thought at first, it devalues the meaning of business at its core, which is, “an organization that creates and/or distributes goods and/or services and relies on financial profit for survival, success and expansion capability” (Russell, 2010, p. 36). Final profit is the key here. The reason profit is essential to creating a successful Business as Mission is because without profit the business will fail, and then there would be no way to carry out the Business as Mission.

Additionally, over time, people will begin to realize that the Christians are only running their business to witness. If non-Christians find out that Christians are lying about their so called “businesses,” it could lead to the non-Christians feeling as if the organization lacks credibility, and as a result, could impact conversations about Christ. A non-believer may think, for instance, if a Christian is willing to compromise in his business, does he actually take his Christianity seriously? If Christians are called to do everything to the best of their ability (Colossians 3:23), which includes starting a business, then the purpose of their business should be to make a profit to advance the kingdom of God, since, by definition, that is what makes a successful business. Just like business is a long-term task, “striving for excellence isn’t something you do for a while,

then stop, then continue some other time at your convenience. It's a long term proposition" (Steward & Shook, 2004, p. 24). Christians should strive to run businesses with excellence in all areas of the company in order to do their best for the Lord.

Christians are called to go into all of the areas of the world. Missionaries should go into other countries to find, "legitimate employment," implying that they should not use business as a "cover" for being in another country, but rather they should embrace the business and work while in the country they are serving (Russell, 2010, p.159). This is the entire idea behind starting a Business as Mission. The business founder can sustain themselves, while also sustaining the country they are ministering it, all the while providing support for the people and building relationships, which leads non-believers to Christ. Creating a for-profit Business as Mission in another country will be beneficial to the natives of the country, while also allowing the BAMer to present the gospel to people when the right time comes. BAM will not only provide jobs for the people, but will help their local economy to flourish. As for the missionaries in-country, creating a for-profit business will allow them to be completely honest about what they are doing in the country and why they are there (Lai, 2005).

Further, business professionals will be able to use the skills they have obtained through experience and schooling to advance the countries' social and economic status. Running a business requires many different types of skills including creating a successful business plan, understanding the economy and market the business will be entering, possessing accounting skills, along with understanding management, human resources, marketing, and many other ideas. Additionally, with the added pressure of starting an international business, he or she will have to learn all of the customs and laws, adapt to

the culture, learn the language, meet with nationals, purchase a building space, and much more. Regardless of these aspects, most people who go into the field of Business as Mission genuinely feel a call on their heart to combat social injustice and feel that the Lord is guiding them to a Business as Mission (Russell, 2010). Being able to fight against injustices in the world will help society have a higher quality standard of life. BAM will also improve the areas where the community is located by (hopefully) being able to aid in reducing crime, making the standard of living higher for the people there, and putting money into the local economy. By using these skills BAMers also have the opportunity to decide which sector or type of business they want to get involved in. After all, the business a BAMer starts, is their business, so they get to make the decisions for the company, which allows them to feel pride in their own start-up. Starting a new business venture as a mission is a way to combine skills, ministry, and bring social justice to the community where the business begins.

As a BAMer it is important to maintain integrity in all aspects of the business as the BAMer represents Christ, and what Christ has done in his life. Ultimately, the goal is for people to come to know Christ for themselves in a real and intimate way through the BAMer and his business. By being a light in the community, the BAMer and his business will be able to impact the economy, social life, environment, and their employees' spirituality. By examining the Bible, Christians learn that sin impacted the world negatively near the beginning of creation, but Christ still has a plan to make the gospel heard throughout the world. Christians are part of Christ's plan, and Business as Mission is an effective way to get the gospel into many areas, reached and unreached.

Biblical Basis for Business as Mission

In Matthew 6 Christians are encouraged to pray that God's Kingdom come and his will be done on earth as it is heaven (Matthew 6:9-10, New International Version). If Christians are called to do everything to the glory and honor of God (Colossians 3:23, New International Version), then business should also be included in this. Business as a whole should focus on bringing God honor and praise. One of the goals of Christianity is to always seek to glorify God in everything we do, which includes imitating God's character and following his laws and plans for our life (Steffen & Barnett, 2006). When Christians imitate God's character in their own lives, they show others what God has done through them and the great work that God can do in their lives as well.

Just like Adam was called to work in Genesis 1:28, Christians are called to work as well (New International Version). Christians can and should serve in many different areas of the world, including all different fields of work. When Christians continually seek the Lord and strive to bring glory to his name, "we can say that business is not just a means to an end but an activity that imitates and glorifies God," which exalts the Lord and brings glory to his name (Steffen & Barnett, 2006, p. 119). Christians need to strive to seek the Lord and serve the Lord in any career they choose; in order to understand how to be better prepared for Business as Missions, Christians can look at the apostle Paul as an example of an early Christian who did missions work in order to further the gospel for the Kingdom of God.

The Apostle Paul as an example. In biblical times, the apostle Paul was a missionary to surrounding countries while he had a self-supporting job. Paul lived in an area where there were many different cultures represented, much like the business world

today. Christians can relate to the different cultural aspect of the Bible and use the Business as Mission idea to bring others to Christ (Russell, 2010). Paul states how he works in 2 Thessalonians 3:10;12 saying, “Even while we were with you, we gave you this command: ‘Those unwilling to work will not get to eat.’ We command such people and urge them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and work to earn their own living” (New Living Translation). From this verse, one can infer that Paul worked for a living and God wants Christians to do their best to work unto the Lord as well.

Although Paul used tentmaking as a means to serve others, he put God first in almost everything he did. As someone looking to go into Business as Mission, one can read and study the scriptures and follow the example that Paul put in place to preach the gospel at all times, while running a business to bring glory to God (Mark 16:15, New International Version).

Learning from the Secular World

Before examining ways that BAM has a positive effect on communities and people throughout the world, it is important to note that not only is the Christian sector starting to believe in helping others in ways than just providing a job, but the secular world and large corporations are starting to adapt the idea that helping others does good for the corporation and its employees. Many corporations that have a goal and mission to help others have proven to be very successful in their endeavors.

Many companies in the secular world have realized that doing good deeds for others reaps positive benefits, not only for their company but also for their customers. Potential buyers feel as if they are helping the world, so they are more willing to buy the product. Even the founder of TOMS, Blake Mycoskie, in his book, *Start Something that*

Matters, states, “giving is good business” (Mycoskie, 2011, p. 153). Businesses have adjusted their bottom lines to represent people, planet, and profit, rather than just focusing on profit. This has created a mentality for consumers where they, “no longer feel conflicted by the issues, but are committed to supporting change” (Fisk, 2010, p. 2). When people see that a business supports a worthy cause, they are much more likely to purchase something from that business if they know they are helping others. In a study conducted by Euro RSCG Worldwide in 2008, consumers said they would be “willing to pay more for a product if a portion of the proceeds goes to a good cause” (Bennet, Gobhai, O’Reilly, & Welch, 2010, p. 28). The above statement provides evidence that people are ready to help change the world because they see the needs that still are not met by all countries.

Creating businesses with the mindset of helping people is a part of Business as Mission, only in a different way. Most of the time a Business as Mission aims to preach the gospel, whereas a secular business may aim to help because they believe it is the right thing to do. Potentially, a Business as Mission could be a company that donates money towards good causes or even makes a product that goes to help someone else when one product is purchased, like the TOMS shoe model. Focusing on people, planet, and profit should also be a part of Business as Mission while including a spiritual aspect to bring souls into the Kingdom of Christ.

Ways BAM Impacts the Community

Since the fall of man, there has been and continues to be an overwhelming amount of sin in the world (Romans 5:12, New International Version). Sin has led to brokenness in the world in four areas. These areas are the economy, social life,

environment, and spirituality (Russell, 2010). When Christians strive to improve the four areas of brokenness in their business and the marketplace, then they will be working to fulfill the calling that has been given to Christians by God (Russell, 2010). Christians should feel privileged that God has called upon them to help change the world through Business as Mission. Using BAM will not only help the world in practical ways by providing jobs and helping the economy and environment, but it will also allow the gospel to be known throughout the earth, especially in areas that are difficult to reach like the 10/40 window. Examining the

Economy. When referring to economy, this relates to, “the provision of goods and services to humankind” (Russell, 2010, p. 15). There are many ways that businesses can get involved in contributing to a damaged economy. By creating a sustainable business through BAM, the business will not only provide jobs for the people working, but they will also be able to contribute goods or services to the local economy. One of the main goals of BAM that separates it from tentmaking and being a missionary is that Business as Mission provides jobs for the people. In essence, it is a job, “maker,” not a job, “taker” (Johnson, 2009, p. 34; Beals, 2014, p. 2). A key point when starting a Business as Mission is making sure that you are not taking anyone else’s jobs. Once a business starts paying its employees, the entire economy will become stronger. These employees will now have, “buying power,” to contribute to their local economies (Johnson, 2009, p. 34). Subsequently, these employees will be able to provide for their families, which will lead to contributing to the local economy. When buyers start to buy goods in their local economy, they will in-turn start to improve the entire local community. After the employees start buying local, this is where BAM really begins to

take off. The goal of BAM is ultimately to contribute to the local economy and eventually the entire economy of the country the business is located in. The newly created BAM business eventually allows these people to move higher and higher up in society, and overall, “allows the people and their communities (and nations) to develop the capacity to realize fuller, healthier, richer lives” (Johnson, 2009, p. 35). Business as Mission will help stimulate the global economy, while allowing the gospel of Jesus to get into the hands of those who may not have gotten reached before.

Social life. The social aspect refers to the BAMer’s “relationship and community with one another” (Russell, 2010, p. 15). The way the community interacts with the Business as Mission shapes the view that the society will have of the business. If the BAM creates a positive atmosphere and serves the community, then the community will welcome the business. On the other hand, if the business treats its employees terribly, then they will seem like a nuisance to the society. Another one of the main goals of BAM is to come along side of the community and help it not only grow but thrive. When the people in the community welcome the business, this welcomes building relationships, which leads to opportunities to share the love of Christ with these people. BAMers are there to run a business, but they are also there to serve the community and to be the hands and feet of Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:27, New Living Translation). The goal of being involved and reaching the community is to, “take a holistic approach, which includes but goes far beyond evangelism and discipleship” (Johnson, 2009, p. 43). This includes participating in activities with the community, going to lunch with members of the business and their families, being there for the employees and their families during times of need, offering prayer, and sincerely being a friend to these unreached souls. A

reciprocal relationship is key; a main proponent of BAM is to let the employees and community minister to you as you also minister to them (Johnson, 2009). People enjoy serving others, and most of the time want to. Embracing a, “genuine partnership,” is crucial (Johnson, 2009, p. 44). It is important to note that the business will be an instrument to help transform the community, but Jesus is going to be the real reason that people are transformed and given a new life in him. By loving and serving a broken community with intention, Jesus will be made known throughout the nations and lost souls will come into the Kingdom of God.

Environment. This particular part of BAM refers to, “creation and our relationship to it” (Russell, 2010, p. 15). Throughout the story of Genesis, God refers to the creation of the world, and he gives Adam the job of being a steward of his creation (Genesis 1:28, New International Version). Christians should take it upon themselves to protect the earth and everything in it since God took the time to create it. A Business as Mission can decide to use environmentally friendly products and protect the environment as they creating products and serve the community. Although not Christian run, Patagonia seeks to give “1% on sales or 10% of pretax profit, whichever is greater” to support the environment and environmental causes, while they also use ingredients for their products that are environmentally friendly (Lyons, 2013, p. 66). Additionally, Tom’s of Maine gives, “10% of pretax profits to environmental and social organizations,” and chooses to use environmentally friendly ingredients in their products that are naturally derived (Lyons, 2013, p. 66). Although environment is not the most important aspect of society, it is something that Christians should pay attention to and make wise business decisions about.

Spirituality. As defined by Russell, spirituality relates to, “our unique relationship with the triune God” (Russell, 2010, p.15). Even though Adam and Even were shut out of the garden in Genesis 3, Jesus still desires to have a relationship with all of his children throughout the world (New International Version). All people are made in God’s image and he intends to have a personal relationship with them if they will accept Jesus into their heart (Van Duzer, 2010). These people will not know the gospel unless someone goes to tell them the gospel. Using Business as Mission brings a different aspect to spirituality because it is not only providing for spiritual needs but also physical and emotional needs. The Discipler’s Model, created by William Yount and Mike Barnett, makes it clear that Christians must meet the people’s needs and establish the Bible as the foundation when looking to minister effectively in different cultures. The Discipler’s Model aligns perfectly with the purpose of Business as Mission, and provides a great template to follow for starting a Business as Mission (Yount & Barnett, 2007).

The Bible makes it clear that Jesus died for all. Romans 6:23 states, “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23, English Standard Version). Since Christians know about the free gift of salvation that God has given everyone, they must be able to facilitate giving the good news to people, which is where BAM comes into play. Countries all around the world, especially those that are closed or restricted access countries, need to hear the gospel. These communities and people groups are missing what it means to be a follower of Christ. Famous pastor and missionary advocate, Oswald J. Smith’s, famous quote, “We talk of the Second Coming; half the world has never heard of the first,” still remains true to this day (“Mission and Evangelism Quotes”). The command to go out into all the

world is still applicable to Christians daily lives (Matthew 28:16-20, New International Version). Putting a profitable business in a closed or restricted country will help contribute to that society; a BAmEr can minister through his business and help change the view of the people their (with the Holy Spirit) to accept the free gift of salvation (John 3:16, New International Version).

Jesus wants his followers to experience the fullness of life in him. People will have struggles and experience hardships, but Christians who feel called to participate in Business as Mission should feel an urgency to get the word out to the unknown and the unreached, especially in countries that may not be able to hear about the gospel on a regular basis. Christians interested in BAM have to take it upon themselves as their mission to combat the brokenness in the world, and share the love of Jesus with others in order to make a life-long change in the lives of their employees and communities.

Lasting Impact

People who start Business as Mission enterprises have different objectives than missionaries in some aspects. Missionaries usually get sent to do their work in a few weeks, years or even a lifetime to create a lasting impression on the people of the community. Business is also known to create a lasting presence within society, but goes further to impact the local economy. To be clear, nothing is wrong with missionaries or the way they execute their mission (after all, every effort to bring people into the Kingdom of God is positive and should never be invalidated), but creating a lasting economical impact in the community will allow the business to have a voice in the community.

Businesses, as a whole, normally start up with the intention of lasting for years, some even have goals of lasting for decades. “Earning a profit is fundamentally good” and leads the business to be able to grow in positive ways to help the community (Grudem, 2003, p. 41). Businesses that have a profit mindset will allow the business to stay around longer if they put the correct steps in place like creating a business plan and receiving correct consulting to succeed. Johnson (2003) states, “a BAM entrepreneur is making a long-term if not life-time commitment to live, work, play, and minister among those people for years to come” (p. 41). Creating a for-profit BAM allows the community to benefit in several ways. People who intend to pursue BAM should intend to spend a life-time doing so.

The Old vs. the New

Business as Mission is definitely a new and improved way to do missions, but some may be thinking, did the older model stop working or why should an individual choose BAM over a traditional model of missions? The older method of missions did not stop working, but Business as Mission provides some advantages to the typical missions’ model.

Traditional method of missions. The traditional method of missions stems from missionary prodigies like Hudson Taylor and George Mueller who were prominent missionaries during the late 1800s and early 1900s. After World War II, there was a lot of strife in the world, and students flooded Bible Institutes wanting to become missionaries to preach the gospel to the world (Fanning, 2009). After graduating Bible college these students most commonly found a mission agency to become part of where they could receive training for that particular organization and be a missionary through that

organization (Fanning, 2009). Some of these organizations like Wycliffe Bible Translators and Campus Crusade for Christ were sending bases for missionaries. Although the organizations would usually give emotional or physical support, they almost never gave monetary support. The individuals seeking to become missionaries had to go out to churches and raise 100% support in order to be funded fully while they were on the mission field since they would not have a job. They had to raise enough money to support themselves (and their families if applicable), travel expenses, vehicle costs, training, and ministry supplies (Anderson, n.d.) To be clear, getting support from others does not make a missionary inferior to a person who chooses BAM. In Ephesians 4:12 it clearly states that some are meant, “to equip the saints for works of ministry” (Ephesians 4:12, Berean Study Bible). There are others, though, who may feel led to start a Business as Mission.

Newer Business as Mission model. Business as Mission has several advantages over the traditional support methods of missionaries. A BAMer who creates their business will be able to live on the profits from the business. The idea of sustaining one’s self takes away the idea of getting support from others as the main source of one’s income (Wong & Rae, 2011). Although, supporting one’s self may not work in the beginning stages when establishing the business, BAMers have the opportunity to partner with a consulting organization who will give the BAMers a business loan to start the company and let them repay it back as they get the money (Currently, “NexusB4T is the only company,” who offers these types of loans) (Lai, 2015, p. 185). Additionally, some BAMers will raise support in the beginning, but have plans to decrease the support as their profits from their business increase, eventually with the goal of being 100% self-

supporting, which aligns with how Paul operated in the New Testament (Lai, 2015). As seen in 2 Corinthians 11:7-9, it is clear that although Paul was self-supporting, he did not refuse to accept gifts from people who wanted to give them to him in order to advance his ministry (2 Corinthians 11:7-9, New International Version). Eventually, around the 4-year mark, the BAM companies usually reach their goals of becoming 100% self-supporting since they have a consultant agency who helps them stay on task and making sure they are expanding in ways that will only help the business (Lai, 2015). Self-supporting also takes away the burden of a Business as Mission owner to feel as if they are putting financial stress on others, and allows the BAMers to be proud of his accomplishments and to rely on his own profits from his business. Knowing that the business must succeed will also give the BAMer motivation to grow his own business.

Success Stories

Now that the reader understands the need to go into all the world and make disciples of all nations, and how Business for Mission can be utilized to do that, the reader may be wondering if there have actually been people who quit their day jobs, move their families, and establish themselves in another country to create a business. Well, the answer is yes! In many instances, Business as Mission works, but it may be executed differently than people might think. Other countries, especially developing countries, are fighting to get the basic necessities, so many of the businesses provide practical products for the community whereas others outsource labor. Different countries require different business techniques to reach the lost, but all have one aspect in common: they have allowed people to understand who Jesus Christ is through their actions and it has led to conversations allowing the gospel to be presented to the employees. Business

as Mission's are located all throughout the world. BAM has had considerable success stories that have allowed companies to witness to individuals all throughout the world and in the 10/40 window.

Hotel in Romania. The success story of this business is taken from Rundle & Steffen's book, *Great Commission Companies*. Jeri Little got saved at the age of 14 but slowly turned away from Christ. After college, he and his girlfriend went on a trip to Europe where he re-discovered who God was again. Fast forward a few years when Jeri married a woman named, Gloria, he met at church, and had two children. Jeri had a wonderful job in insurance and financial planning, and could work at his own pace, almost as if he owned the business. Over time, Jeri came to the realization that he did not want to do sell insurance forever, but did not know what his next steps would be to get out of the business. He and his wife had been supporting a business called Church Resource Ministries (CRM), which is a ministry that helps, "missionaries come alongside existing churches and ministries to help them grow" (Rundle & Steffen, 2003, p. 152). After a series of events, around the 1990s Jeri and his wife felt called to go to Romania with CRM when the country was in political upheaval. Eventually, after getting into the country and waiting more years to be able to live in Romania, Jeri had a thought, "An in-country business... not only could provide employment for locals and finances for ministry, but it could be a 'Christian touchpoint in the community'" (Rundle & Steffen, 2003, p. 156). Jeri came up with the idea of selling second-hand clothing in Romania and organized efforts to open up a clothing store with his wife and children. The clothing store was a major success and Romanian citizens could get American clothing that was sent over from churches. Jeri and Gloria decided to open up a second store in 1993, and it

began to thrive; regular customers began to come in which opened up the door for relationships to be built and the gospel to be shared. By 1995 the stores were a major success and Jeri and Gloria decided to hand the stores over to the local-church they had been working with.

Next up came the couple's dream of a hotel and restaurant called, "Little Texas," based on a popular show in Romania at the time called, "Dallas" (Rundle & Steffen, 2013, p. 161). Many times the couple did not think they would have enough money to complete the project, but God provided miraculously every time and Jeri and Gloria, along with four other couples were able to build Little Texas together in Iasi, Romania. Today, Little Texas operates as a, "four-star hotel, conference center and restaurant," where, "the hotel offers 32 rooms and suites and 2 conference rooms. The restaurant can seat 120 people, and collectively the hotel and restaurant employ 45 people and generate nearly \$1.5 million in annual revenues" (Rundle & Steffen, 2013, p. 165). The company chooses to use their profits to support ministries in Romania that support church planting and some of their profits have even gone toward helping other missionaries start Business as Mission businesses (Rundle & Steffen, 2013). Jeri and Gloria give all of the glory to God for the success that their businesses have made and the impact that they have made on the churches and surrounding areas of Romania.

The story of Jeri and Gloria is only one of many, where regular people, working a 9am-5pm day have felt called to do something more, so they decided to start a Business as Mission in another country. Because of their obedience to the call that God placed upon Jeri and Gloria's lives, many churches have been able to further the gospel, and Jeri was able to manage the clothing and hotel businesses with a Christ-like attitude. He

handled situations differently than most secular business owners would, and the employees noticed. Jeri and his wife have had people such as major diplomats and movie stars stay at their hotel where they did not explicitly minister to them, but they were able to show them the love of Christ while offering a high quality product to them.

BAM in the 10/40 window. A company named AM International was founded by “Bob” in 1989 within the 10/40 window. The company is a “consulting and manufacturing firm specializing in the technology sector” (Tunehag, McGee & Plummer, 2004, p. 40). After owning the company for 4 months, Bob had 4 employees and from 1991 to 1993, “the company averaged sales of over \$10 million per year in turn-key technologies in lighting and high-automation manufacturing” (Tunehag et al., 2004, p. 40). The company expanded its operations and as of 2004 they now have nine businesses operating in East Asia. The large amount of money that their corporation brings in gives the company political leverage to work with the local officials to impact the community as well as leverage to be able to work with 15 different non-profit agencies within the surrounding communities (Tunehag et al., 2004). Because of the large amount of profits and improvements in the community that AM International has brought, the government has not intersected or questioned the business. The company has also been able to reach out to surrounding churches as well in order to make an impact, not only through the non-profit organizations, but also affect the surrounding areas spiritually as well: “When AMI started working in a certain Central Asian Republic during the early 1990s the number of Muslims who were followers of Christ was fewer than 10” (Tunehag et al., 2004, p. 40). As of 2004, over 80 employees have received salvation through Jesus because the company encouraged their employees to meet for discipleship every week. Bob stated,

“We are God’s fellow workers. We plant the seeds by using business, but God gives the growth” (Tunehag et al., 2004, p. 40).

The story of AMI demonstrates how God is tangibly moving throughout nations where regular missionaries would not be able to penetrate, but by starting a business, Bob was able to and is still ministering to the people throughout the community and even in his own business. Bob is not only making revenue, but also has seen over 80 souls come to Christ. When following God’s purpose for a Business, individuals are highly likely to come to know Christ through a business venture.

As Christians, God has called individuals to go into the earth to spread the gospel so that everyone will have the opportunity to receive salvation. The statistics alone demonstrate the crucial need for Christians to go into the unreached parts of the earth. Starting a Business as Mission provides a way for Christians to engage themselves in the culture, while helping to boost the economy and ultimately winning souls over to the kingdom of God. The profit aspect of Business as Mission allows the company to stay existent and impact the community positively. Starting a Business as Mission will take time and dedication, but the eternal results will yield far greater results rather than possible temporary discomfort.

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