

*The Christian World View of
Business and Occupations*

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The Coalition on Revival

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What is the Coalition on Revival?

The Coalition on Revival is a network of evangelical leaders from every major denominational and theological perspective who share a vision for and a commitment to revival, renewal, and reformation in Church and society in America.

People of Anabaptist, Arminian, Lutheran, Calvinist, and Wesleyan denominational backgrounds are all represented among COR's leaders. Pre-, a-, and post-millennialists are cooperating with each other, sharing the exciting task of getting God's will to be done on earth as it is in heaven insofar as that is possible between now and whenever Christ comes back to Earth. Charismatics and non-charismatics, covenant and dispensationalist theologians, have joined arm in arm in prayer and hard work to see revival, renewal, and reformation in the Christian Church and the American culture.

COR's vision is to see Christians everywhere doing all they can in the power of the Holy Spirit to take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ (2 Cor. 10:5), in every aspect of life. Toward that end, we have developed a series of worldview documents that set forth what we believe are the fundamental and essential points of the total Christian world and life view. The COR worldview documents state what we believe are the biblical principles for all spheres of human life including theology, evangelism, discipleship, law, civil governments, economics, education, family, medicine, psychology and counseling, arts and media, business and professions, and science and technology. We believe that the COR worldview documents state where the entire Church must stand and what action it must take to accomplish its task in the remaining years of the Twentieth Century and on into the next century.

COR steering committee members from all walks of life were joined by many hundreds of other interested Christian scholars, pastors, and laymen in developing the COR documents during many series of workshops and conventions. Each document therefore, reflects input from theologians, philosophers, professionals in their respective fields, pastors, and lay Christians. We have sought to avoid denominational and theological bias in the documents; our aim has been to focus on principles so fundamental that we are convinced no Bible-believing Christian who studied the major questions related to each sphere of life would come to a contradictory conclusion.

COR views itself as a "Bible obedience, holiness movement" that crosses denominational and theological lines. The next step on its agenda, now that its basic documents are complete, is to disseminate them widely and to educate hundreds of thousands of Christians on how to make Christ Lord of absolutely every aspect of life. We plan to do that through publications, and through seminars, and training workshops in the major cities of America and Canada. COR will also work in cooperation with other Christian networking groups to help unify the pastors in major population centers around the vision of mobilizing their people to "Get God's will done in their city as it is in heaven" to whatever degree that is possible before the return of Christ. We believe America can be turned around and once again function as a Christian nation as it did in its earlier years. We believe that wherever the pastors of any city in the world join together in unity to make Christ Lord of every sphere of life, and, with Spirit led strategy, mobilize their people into a unified spiritual army; that city can and will become "a city set upon a hill" and be "a place where righteousness dwells."

About the 17 World View (Sphere) Documents

COR developed the 17 World View Documents, which set forth what we believe are fundamental and essential Biblical principles governing 17 major areas or *spheres* of human life and activity: law, government, economics, business and professions, education, art and media, medicine, science and technology, psychology and counseling, Christian unity, local and world evangelism, discipleship, helping the hurting, educating Christians about social and political moral issues, revitalizing Christian colleges and seminaries, marriage and the family, and pastoral renewal. These documents offer Christian leaders concise and comprehensive Biblical principles of how to apply the Truth of the Bible to all spheres of life and ministry. Each document includes short, creed-like statements of affirmation and denial that we believe state non-negotiable Biblical truths for that sphere of reality.

The 17 World View Documents were developed within 17 different committees made up of leaders with experience and expertise in the 17 different fields over an intensive three-year period of dialogue, critique, editing, and finally, a consensus conviction. Sixty of COR's National Steering Committee members with over 300 other theologians, pastors, lawyers, doctors, businessmen, and Christian workers made up the 17 committees. COR sends forth these documents to the Church at large with the prayer that they may be used by God's Spirit to get God's will done on earth, as it is in heaven—to whatever degree that is possible prior to the Return of Christ.

Preface

Man's Dominion Mandate

Because man is under God, as God's image-bearer, he possesses limited sovereignty over nature. Therefore man is responsible, as God's faithful servant, to co-labor with Christ to bring all nature under God's rulership, that His will might "be done, on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). This mandate to subdue the earth (Genesis 1:26-28) was part of God's provision for man in the creation, and was fully affirmed in Jesus Christ's victorious Death and Resurrection, by which His eternal, triumphant reign is established.

In the realm of business and trade, the mandate to subdue the earth is carried out by Christians' serving mankind in productive activities, thereby establishing the reign of God in their areas of stewardship. Men are to use their God-given creative abilities and energies to serve God by serving man and helping man to overcome, control, and use the natural world.

The role of Christian business people is unique and far-reaching. They interact with a major segment of the adult population; they are instrumental in the generation and distribution of wealth; they exert significant influence over public policy; and, they give credibility (or denial) to many of the great themes of Scripture.

A High Calling

A productive lifestyle is a true and a high calling of all Christians. All occupations not contrary to God's Law are to be considered worthy. Old Testament distinctions between "secular" and "sacred" were done away in Christ ("All things are holy . . ."), and believers should view their "secular" work as "full-time Christian service."

God, in His sovereignty, calls men into various duties and stewardship within His Kingdom, giving them differing talents and abilities. It is the full use of those talents that determines success in the eyes of God, who alone holds the scales of success. Success is much more than the acquisition of material possessions. It is, rather, progressively increasing dominion in one's sphere in obedience to God's will as revealed in His Word and to the continuing revelation of His Holy Spirit.

Individual Performance and Conduct

The Christian in business, as he exercises God's dominion mandate, subscribes to unchanging standards for individual performance. He is obliged to perform his responsibilities, no matter how seemingly trivial, as unto the Lord. While productive output may vary according to the talents and abilities of each

individual, each one—working by this standard—will produce godly excellence, thereby increasing and expanding the dominion of God’s Kingdom on earth.

Christians in business are also obliged to pursue their efforts in a highly ethical manner, eschewing all practices and procedures that are unethical, even if they are legal. It also follows that they are obliged to promote good practices in their spheres of influence, and to expose practices contrary to God’s Law. Business activities that are controlled or manipulated for personal gain by ungodly means and methods will result in the destruction of the free market, increased coercive regulation, increased poverty, and decreased freedom under God.

Free Market

The nature of the economic system in which the Christian businessman functions affects his ability to be productive and to contribute to the general good. In this regard, the principles of the free market (*i.e.*, **private ownership of property, fair competition, reward for productivity through profits, the uncontrolled pursuit of one’s dreams**) more clearly conform to scriptural tenets than controlled or statist economic systems. Christian businessmen therefore should work to preserve and advance the free-market system, which is jeopardized in a wicked and perverse society. By so doing, both God’s and their dominion are increased. Resources that otherwise would be controlled by the kingdom of darkness are released to God’s purposes.

Summary

The extension of God’s rule is required in all occupations. We are admonished to exercise dominion by taking every part of the world away from the power of Satan and laying it at the feet of our Lord. He then places these areas under our stewardship, rewarding faithful service with trust and increased responsibility: “. . . to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more” (Luke 12:48).

With these thoughts in mind, we offer the following affirmations and denials as an initial step in understanding and applying the Christian world view in the field of business and occupations.

Statements of Affirmation and Denial¹

The First Responsibility: Glorifying God

1. We affirm that all Christian business people are called first and foremost to glorify God with the totality of their lives; that this means living a holy life of obedience to the Bible, fulfilling one’s role in the Body of Christ, which will include a constant seeking of commitments to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord among their acquaintances and then helping new converts to get started on the road

1. We implicitly endorse, without restating them here, the economic principles stated in *The Christian World View of Economics* (also published by The Coalition on Revival), recognizing that there is close correlation between business and occupations, on the one hand, and economics, on the other.

to Christian maturity; and that these God-ordained priorities are the Christian businessman's greatest asset.

We deny that these God-ordained priorities are a liability to the Christian businessman.

Business as a Calling

2. We affirm that the calling of God to function as a servant in the role of a Christian businessman is a high calling; that it requires great personal commitment; and that when a person is called to function in business, God will grant as much of His blessing and grace to his endeavors as He would to any other calling, including to those occupations normally considered "full-time" ministries.

We deny that involvement in business is anything less than full-time Christian service.

Possessions and Ownership

3. We affirm that God owns all that we have; that any talents, abilities, and power to make wealth come from Him; that whatever success we enjoy is a result of God's blessing and favor; and that Christians in business must avoid the pride and snares that the Scriptures often warn accompany wealth and worldly success.

We deny that Christians should glory in their wealth or accomplishments, and that wealth or accomplishments alone qualify one for a position before God or in God's work.

Motives and Ethics

4. We affirm that our business dealings need to be motivated by godly wisdom through seeking counsel, searching the Scriptures for revelation, and seeking God's guidance; that the nature of the Christian business enterprise is to strive for God's highest scriptural ethics in all its dealings with employees, customers, suppliers, the civil government, and any other entities with which it interacts; and that we should model the Christian ethic of loving one another in all our business dealings.

We deny that Christians in business have the option to use unsound business principles or to deal immorally with others, and that our prime motivation ought to be riches or power over others.

Stewardship

5. We affirm that the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it; that God entrusts the earth's resources to mankind and requires wise stewardship and full use; that as Christians we ought to see our vocation and any wealth obtained from it as a stewardship—a trust from God; that true success is found in taking the resources entrusted to us by God and multiplying and developing them for His purposes and glory; and that godly stewardship includes the development of human, natural, financial, and all other resources in accord with the Scriptures for the advancement of the dominion of God.

We deny that man is entitled to or is the owner of the earth and its resources.

Christian Witness

6. We affirm that the way we conduct ourselves as Christians in business will be a model of Kingdom living and integrity for our whole community; that the pursuit of excellence, loyal service, a professional approach, and accountability should be shown in our every task; and that part of Christian witness is the timely fulfillment of financial and contractual obligations.

We deny that truly Christian business practices are ever unholy, sloppy, inconsiderate, illegal, or untrustworthy.

Free Market System

7. We affirm that the principles of a free market system are ordained by God; that we have the entrepreneurial privilege and responsibility to engage in business for profit; and that financial reward for our labors is Biblical as part of God's promise for diligence (Proverbs 14:23).

We deny the legitimacy of economic systems that prevent and hinder free markets or subscribe to a philosophy of egalitarianism.

Creativity

8. We affirm that man, in his reflection of the Divine image, is creative; that all true creativity is a reflection of the divine nature; that creative technological inventions, practical discoveries, and advances that enhance productivity and increase use of resources are part of this creative process; and that all technological advances not contrary to Scripture should be promoted.

We deny that inventions and discoveries should be allowed to advance the devil's purposes, and that Scripture is anti-technological in its teaching.

Competence

9. We affirm that we should study, develop, and implement scriptural business principles and practices in order to honor and glorify the name of the Lord.

We deny that it is unspiritual or ungodly to be well educated or trained and to implement sound business practices.

Efficiency and Integrity

10. We affirm that we believe in efficiency and integrity in all practices of business, personal productivity, and safe working conditions.

We deny that God approves of inefficient and wasteful business practices.

Law of the Land

11. We affirm that the Christian business person is subject to the law of the land and is obligated to obey such law, except when it clearly violates God's Law.

We deny that man's law supersedes God's Law.

Civic and Political Responsibilities

12. We affirm that a Christian business person has the civic responsibilities of praying for those in authority and participating in the political process through voting, supporting righteous civic leadership, and seeking elected office as the Lord leads.

We deny that the Christian business person should separate spiritual or business life from governmental affairs.

Social Responsibilities

13. We affirm that the Christian business person should take an active and uncompromising position on Biblical moral issues such as pro-life, freedom of prayer, anti-pornography, anti-homosexuality, and opposition to any other philosophies or practices not built on godly principles, and that God's burden should be our burden for the poor, the hungry, the naked, those in prison, and those being persecuted for righteousness' sake.

We deny that Christian business people should disregard the critical social issues of their day or keep silent for profit or for any other reasons when responsible Christian action is possible.

Local Church

14. We affirm that business people ought to be vitally related to a local fellowship of believers, fully associated with Bible training, evangelism and service.

We deny that business relationships should substitute in the believer's life for full participation in the local church.

Biblical Priorities

15. We affirm the necessity for the business person to establish and maintain as his highest priority seeking the Kingdom of God; that this priority is the basis for Biblical service; and that it is followed by family and business endeavors.

We deny that the person in Biblical service can allow his or her priorities to be distorted from the Biblical norm without serious injury to the balance God has ordained.

Business Philosophy

16. We affirm that to be effective a business person should focus on serving the needs of his customers, employees, co-workers or associates, and suppliers, and that this includes addressing the spiritual, sociological, psychology, and security needs in addition to physical needs.

We deny that any business activity can, from a Christian standpoint, be considered successful without the above elements in addition to financial profitability.

God's Guidance

17. We affirm that the Christian business person should seek daily the Lord's guidance by prayer, Bible study, and godly advice, in every phase of his business, so as to glorify God in all that he does.

We deny that business persons can find God's ongoing favor and blessing while forsaking the day-to-day guidance of God in their business activities.

A Call to Action in Business and Occupations

General Actions

Because of the preceding convictions, we call upon all men and women who name Christ as their personal Savior and Lord to join us in:

1. examining earnestly these affirmations and denials in the light of God's Word to see if they are true, and informing us directly of those points in which they believe we have departed from Scripture or logic;
2. re-examining our own theories and practices of business and occupations and asking God to show us where we are falling short;
3. repenting of all known sins, confessing and forsaking them, asking forgiveness both of God Himself and of all those who have been offended, and then making all possible restitution;
4. praying for God to fill all of His people with the enabling power of the Holy Spirit in order that we may bring our personal lives and our theories and practices of business and occupations into closer conformity to His revealed will on a permanent and consistent basis;
5. seeking guidance from our brethren and local church authorities as to how we can mutually support and influence one another to make our business and occupational practices glorifying to God.

Having dealt with our own personal sins and failures, and placing ourselves accountable to the Bible and to the brethren, we now commit ourselves to:

1. influencing any known Christians or Christian associations with whom we work to consider seriously our affirmations and denials with the goal of enlisting their responses;
2. influencing those in the field of business and occupations who agree with our affirmations and denials to implement these proposals in their work;
3. mobilizing and networking our Christian resources and working in concert with the other professional spheres both inside and outside COR, to see the behavior of the Body of Christ and our nation changed to approximate more closely the view of reality and morality presented to us in the Holy Scriptures.

Specific Actions

To these ends, we commit ourselves to the following specific actions, which we believe every Christian in business should consider before God and, as the Lord directs, make part of his ongoing effort to establish God's Kingdom on earth:

1. communicating with fellow Christian businessmen (by personal conversation, books, and tapes) the concept that a person called by God to be in business should do it with all his heart as unto the Lord, challenging him to have the same religious zeal in subduing his portion of the earth and his sphere of occupation as if he were a foreign missionary reaching the unreached;
2. seeking to evangelize employees and fellow businessmen, giving them opportunities to find answers to their problems and better motivation for their work;
3. demonstrating our Christian belief in the dignity and worth of the individual by applying Biblical principles in every aspect of employee relations (reference materials available from the organization "Value of the Person"; for address contact The Coalition on Revival, 789 E. El Camino Real, Sunnyvale, California, 94087);
4. communicating directly and quickly, but with love and sensitivity, with any Christian businessman who appears to be using unethical or unbiblical business principles, confronting him in the name of Jesus; if he persists in wrongdoing, carrying out the steps of Matthew 18:15-20 until he repents; and if he does not repent when repentance is appropriate, warning the Church and the business community about him;
5. opposing governmental interference in the free market system for business and resisting bureaucratic intervention in the form of quotas, unhealthy restrictions, rewards for non-productivity, etc.;
6. working toward tax reform, standing for the elimination of graduated income tax, which robs the earner of capital needed to expand business, jobs, capital, etc., and inheritance tax, which injures continuity of ownership and by rightful heirs;
7. promoting disinvestment in those countries that subscribe to Marxist and other communist philosophies or that tolerate or promote religious persecution;

8. promoting investment in countries (such as South Africa) that provide for religious freedom and are endeavoring to solve internal problems by godly means;
9. propagating the concept that to sell products, particularly weapons, construction material, etc., to the enemies of one's own nation is a form of treason;
10. promoting among Christian businessmen the Biblical concept that wealth can be created and developed and is open-ended, in opposition to the false Marxist teaching that wealth on the earth is static and limited and may, therefore, only be amassed at the expense of others through exploitation;
11. encouraging Christian business persons to build and operate their businesses Biblically and to be productive financially, with the goal of increasing generosity to God's causes on earth;
12. encouraging the research and exposure of organizations and causes (such as liberation theology, theologically liberal institutions, Planned Parenthood) that stand against the principles of the Bible in order to warn businessmen and corporations against unwise financial support of unworthy activities and organizations;
13. actively supporting the development of organizations of Christian business people that seek to promote the world view embraced by this document.