



ENTREPRENEURSHIP WITHIN A BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This paper has two goals: to demonstrate the divine aspects of entrepreneurship and to show that there is much more to entrepreneurialism than business activities.

Christians have a somewhat schizophrenic view of entrepreneurs. We see them as something of a necessary evil; we recognize their value to some extent but also view them with skepticism and distrust, especially those who become wealthy. They are frequently viewed in a certain accusatory way, as though their wealth has come at the expense of others.

This view stems from an incomplete understanding of what entrepreneurs do, how they function, and the role they play in God's order. Entrepreneurs are vital to fulfilling God's purpose. They are creative people who provide people with a way of serving others. In that sense, they display a divine characteristic. Furthermore, entrepreneurial activity is not restricted to commercial activity. Properly understood entrepreneurship is a special kind of stewardship, something to which we have all been called. This paper examines entrepreneurship from a biblical perspective and places the activity within the biblical worldview.

TO CREATE IS DIVINE

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”ⁱ

Genesis tells us that man is the only creature created in God’s image. This is a wide-ranging statement and applies in many ways. We have an eternal part, we have the ability to commune with him and socialize with each other, we can reason and think as well as love and worship, and we have the ability to choose and act on those choices. It also means we have the ability to create. The first thing we are told about God is that he is a creator; creation is a divine act and when humans create, they are displaying a certain part of their image-bearing nature.

The Bible tells us that when God began his creative work, the world was “without form and void.”ⁱⁱ In the Hebrew, the English phrase, “without form and void,” is *tohu wa-bohu*, and can accurately be translated as wilderness, chaos, emptiness, and darkness.ⁱⁱⁱ God’s creative act brought order out of chaos and nothingness. While human creation is not as dramatic, there is still a sense that it brings order out of chaos and nothing. The blank canvas becomes a painting, the uncut stone becomes a statue, and the empty page becomes written music, but it is broader than that; the field of weeds becomes a garden, the stand of trees becomes a home, and the swamp becomes a city.

Human creation emulates the Genesis story; it is the same impulse at work put there by the master creator. God created heaven and earth *ex nihilo*; out of nothing. Man does not create out of nothing; he has resources with which to work. Some of these resources are natural and some are manufactured, but the point is that the entrepreneur takes the same resources that are available to everyone else the same twenty-four hours a day and creates a way to make life easier and better.

TO CREATE IS A CALLING

Besides our God-given instinct to create, we are also *called* to create; it is a duty. While each person is gifted in certain ways to perform certain work, we, as a race and as individuals, are called by him to be creative in whatever task he has for us. From the very beginning, Adam was given the task of naming the animals and was told to work and take care of the garden. While these assignments may not sound like creative acts, we are examining them after the fact. At the time, this was all new and required significant creativity. Adam was delegated some tasks as part of helping creation flourish; and in reality, we are all delegated such tasks. As John Calvin states in his commentary on the creation story, “Let him who possesses a field, so partake of its yearly fruits...let him endeavor to hand it down to posterity as he received it, *or even better cultivated.*”^{iv} (emphasis added)

Calvin believes that each person’s minimum goal is to use and enjoy what he has. However, he needs to leave it in at least as good of condition as when he received it because this is sort of a first-condition stewardship obligation. The higher goal, the second condition, is to pass on what we are entrusted with in better shape than it was in when it was entrusted to us. This is an ongoing process. Calvin is specifically discussing farmland, but the concept more broadly applies to all tasks we undertake. Passing on something

that is in better condition than when we got it means improving it by adding value to it by finding creative ways to make it better. This can involve doing something to it to improve it or selling it to someone else who has a higher-valued use for it.

THE ENTREPRENEUR AS CREATOR

One type of creative activity is entrepreneurship. The common conception of an entrepreneur is a person who starts a business, but the definition is broader than that. The Library of Economics and Liberty defines an entrepreneur as someone “who organizes, manages, and assumes the risks of a business or enterprise. An entrepreneur is an agent of change. Entrepreneurship is the process of discovering new ways of combining resources.”^v There are several parts to this definition and not all of it is specific to activities in the commercial sector. Also, not all of it is tied to action; part of entrepreneurship is psychological. This definition is actually a little out of order because before one takes a risk and becomes an agent of change, one must discover the new ways of combining resources. This does not necessarily mean forming a business. Some forms of entrepreneurship lead to the formation of an organization to capitalize on the new discovery, and many of those organizations are businesses, but that is not always the case.

Recognizing the broader definition is vital to seeing entrepreneurship as a creative act. As such, it fits nicely into God’s order. Once a person has discovered a new way to combine resources, he becomes an agent of change which may include forming a business and managing it. But it all starts with an act of discovering. This seems to imply that these new ways are just waiting to be found and anyone could do it. In some sense this is true, but there is a difference between an entrepreneur and someone who makes a discovery.

Anyone can have a good idea, and that is an entrepreneurial moment, a moment of discovery. In that moment, the individual is a pure entrepreneur: “[T]he pure entrepreneur...is a decision-maker whose entire role arises out of his alertness to hitherto unnoticed opportunities.”^{vi} But, *being* an entrepreneur is different, it is a mindset of *always* being alert, that is *always looking* for new ways to do things. Being an entrepreneur is a way a person sees the world coupled with the desire and perseverance to make the change he sees become a reality.

Entrepreneurialism is similar to the sculptor who sees a great statue in a raw rock and then carves the statue for the rest of us to see, as Michelangelo supposedly said, “I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free.” Entrepreneurism is far different than running a business. The definition above references management, but that is not an entrepreneurial function—though the management role often falls to an entrepreneur. Some entrepreneurs, like Bill Gates, are also decent managers. Others, such as the young Steve Jobs who was fired from his own company, are not.

The world of writing provides an apt example. There are many sorts of people who work with words. An entrepreneur is like a writer: a Shakespeare or a Hemmingway. He or she sees stories and can tell them in new and interesting ways because it is the way that he or she sees the world. In contrast, a person with a mere entrepreneurial moment is like a person with a mere “writing moment.” He or she may produce a

well-written letter to the editor or a short story, writing a quality four hundred words on something that he or she is really passionate about. This, however, is the way that he or she sees a certain event, not the entire world. A manager is like an editor who takes what is already written and makes it better in certain ways. All three are important and make significant contributions, but only one of them is a writer. All three may be creative at times but only one of them *is* a creator, only one of them is taking the risk of being rejected, only one puts all he or she has on the line to provide us with something new. That is what the entrepreneur does.

Economist Joseph Schumpeter, who focused on the more narrow notion of business entrepreneurship, emphasized the creation aspect as the core of the entire market system:

The opening up of new markets, foreign or domestic, and the organizational development from the craft shop and factory to such concerns as U.S. Steel illustrate the same process of industrial mutation—if I may use that biological term—that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one. This process of Creative Destruction is the essential fact about capitalism.^{vii} (emphases added)

The entrepreneur sees a different order within the current order, and he has a vision for a different future than the one to which the current order will lead. We see this in all sorts of well-known stories. Both Steve Jobs and Bill Gates had the vision to make computers available to the average individual. Henry Ford, after failing in the luxury car business, had the vision to popularize the every-man car. Walt Disney and his vision of feature-length animated movies—and the list goes on.

Taking risk and discovering new ways to combine resources, however, is not just a traditional business activity. It may be most easily seen in the commercial sector but there is a rising awareness of the value of social entrepreneurship, the creative talents of people starting nonprofit-type organizations. We have had this for years with groups like the Red Cross, but now there is a growing body of research and professional literature about political and social entrepreneurship.

Since entrepreneurship is primarily about discovering new ways, being agents of change, and being alert to new opportunities, then we must conclude that entrepreneurial activities are not exclusive to business formation as this story demonstrates:

Four years ago, Alicia Knight would have been the last person you could ever imagine home-schooling her kids.

She was a very active parent in the Stafford County, Va., public schools, where her son Roger was a fifth grader... Whenever her son struggled with his homework, which was often, she said: "You've just got to get this school work done because, with God as my witness, I'm NOT home-schooling you!"

Alicia Knight, the die-hard anti-home-schooler, changed her mind gradually. The first person to work on her was her own son, who heard her say she was never going to home-school him and took that to mean that homeschooling was a viable alternative to the torture he was suffering at school and with homework.^{viii}

One takeaway from this story is that it shows that entrepreneurial action is much broader than starting and forming new business enterprises. Another point is that anyone can be a pure entrepreneur if he or she is *alert to the possibility of a better solution than the current order*. In the story, the son had an entrepreneurial moment but he was not yet an entrepreneur because he did not see the world through those lenses all the time.

However, the homeschooling movement is loaded with true entrepreneurs. Perhaps the best examples were the early pioneers of the movement who broke new ground by choosing to homeschool. Others who came later followed the path already blazed but took advantage of other entrepreneurial opportunities such as forming co-ops, writing and developing curriculum, organizing homeschool events, and so forth. What was an underground method of educating as late as the 1980s and was not even legal in every state until relatively recently is now a nationwide multimillion dollar industry. This is the result of entrepreneurs, almost all of whom were homeschooling parents who had a vision and found a creative way to make it a reality.

Any organization that creatively uses resources in new ways to generate value is, in a very real sense, an entrepreneurial operation. A ten-year-old convinced there must be a better way to do school, the homeschool mom who starts a co-op, and the curriculum developer are all entrepreneurs. They all exhibit alertness to new opportunities and discover ways to satisfy them.

Some economists argue that it is entrepreneurial action that makes us human in the economic models. Many modern economic models treat man as a sort of automaton referred to as *homo economicus*. *Homo economicus* is a highly logical, self-interested, and cost-benefit calculating being.^{ix} This is not a Christian view of man, nor do all economists take this view of man. Israel Kirzner writes,

It is the entrepreneurial element that is responsible for our understanding of human action as active, creative, and human rather than as passive, automatic and mechanical. Once the entrepreneurial element in human action is correctly perceived, one can no longer interpret the decision as merely calculative – capable in principle of being yielded by mechanical manipulation of the “data” or already completely implied in these data.^x

In other words, it is the entrepreneurial process, the God-given ability to create, that makes us human and differentiates us from the soulless *homo economicus*.

STEWARDSHIP AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

It is important to make a distinction between entrepreneurship and stewardship. Stewardship is a very broad application. It is submitting one's entire life and all activities to God. However, in the more narrow application of resource management, stewardship is meeting Calvin's first condition: leaving things in as good of a condition as when they obtained them. This is good and it is what most of us do, or at least try to do. Entrepreneurship is a special kind of stewardship that meets Calvin's second condition—using the resources one has and leaving them in better condition than when he or she obtained them.

We are all commanded to be good stewards of that which is entrusted to us. In Jesus' parable about the wealthy man who leaves monetary talents with his servants, the man punishes the servant who simply preserves the money without investing it. Preservation is not the goal; it does not please the Lord. The faithful servants were entrepreneurs—or at least had entrepreneurial moments—and were able to significantly increase their master's wealth. They used the talents which put them at risk of loss but ultimately met Calvin's second goal of improving that which they obtained.

The unfaithful servant is told that he should have at least put the talent in the bank and earned interest. This would have been faithful stewardship, the use and careful management of the resource. Instead the servant did what he thought would preserve the talent, but did not use it. He failed to try and was punished. We are not told, but one gets the impression that a failed attempt would have been better than not trying.

A personal example from the present day demonstrates the distinction between entrepreneurship and stewardship. I have a friend in the African nation of Malawi who has started a chicken farm. He bought some chicks, went out and found customers, and now has an ongoing chicken business. This friend is an entrepreneur because he has taken resources (some family land and a little savings) and combined them in a certain way to create value for many people. My friend has a vision of becoming a significant agricultural entrepreneur. I am involved as an investor. As such, I am practicing stewardship. I am not combining resources in a new way or taking much risk; I am taking some risk but not as much as my friend. In this case, my friend is making the resources God has blessed him with more valuable than they were before, including the resources with which I am entrusting him.

PROFIT AND LOSS – AN EXAMINATION

An artist may measure success when his art makes people think differently about something. For an entrepreneur, however, success is measured in profits and that implies commerce. It is true that one measure of profits is when revenues exceed costs but some of the misunderstanding surrounding entrepreneurship may be tied to a misunderstanding of profit and loss. Jesus gives us a broader and more biblical way to think about profit as a non-monetary concept when he asks, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his soul?"^{xi} Paul does the same when he talks about how dying would be gain. Both are focusing on true gain as opposed to temporary gain but that, after all, is what a true prophet is.

The economist Ludwig von Mises reflects this broader way to think of profits:

Profit, in a broader sense, is the gain derived from action; it is the increase in satisfaction (decrease in uneasiness) brought about; it is the difference between the higher value attached to the result attained and the lower value attached to the sacrifices made for its attainment; it, in other words, yield minus costs. To make profit is invariably the aim sought by any action. If an action fails to attain the ends sought, yield either does not exceed costs or lags behind costs. In the latter case the outcome means a loss, a decrease in satisfaction.

Profit and loss in this original sense are psychic phenomena and as such not open to measurement and a mode of expression which could convey to other people precise information concerning their intensity. A man can tell a fellow man that “a” suits him better than “b;” but he cannot communicate to another man, except in vague and indistinct terms, how much the satisfaction derived from “a” exceeds that derived from “b.”^{xiii} (emphasis added)

In his two-paragraph definition of profits, Mises never mentions the terms “money” or “business.” He speaks of an intangible notion of psychic phenomena that cannot be measured, and this is not strictly a business notion.

To understand Mises’s definition, one must be clear on how the market process works. Successful entrepreneurs create value. Some of this accumulates to them and sometimes this value may be partially expressed in terms of dollars, but much of it is largely unseen by the casual observer. To uncover this unseen value, we need to think about how the market order operates.

The basics of a market economy are that consumers purchase items that they value more than the amount of money given in exchange for those items. To put it more precisely, people use their money to obtain that which gives them the most satisfaction, given the alternative uses they have for that money. I buy a soft drink for \$1.25 because I expect to receive more than \$1.25 in pleasure from consuming that drink and I believe that it is the best use for my \$1.25 at that moment. Personally, I do not buy a four-dollar cup of coffee because I do not like coffee and would not get four dollars of satisfaction from a cup. I have alternative uses for those four dollars that will give me more satisfaction. Only economists tend to consciously think like this, but we all follow the thought patterns. We never go to the store looking to buy items we value less than the money we exchange for the items; instead, we buy items we value at least as much as the money and its next-best use. We intend to leave the store better off than we were when we entered. Obviously, we make mistakes, but we do not make many, and we sometimes benefit from the mistakes that the store makes. Sometimes we feel cheated when something does not live up to our expectation and sometimes we get a real deal when some product exceeds our expectations. We learn, we adjust, and for the most part, things work out close to expected. In the end, we usually leave stores with more value than we had going into them. We do not usually call this profit, but it is according to Mises’s definition.

This means every customer captures some value when an entrepreneur offers a good or service to the market. *Even if the customer does not buy the product*, the competition forces other providers to improve what they offer, and that benefits all of us. This creates a great amount of wealth which is dispersed over many people. It is usually not explicitly expressed in dollars and is therefore hard to see or measure. Henry Ford created billions, if not trillions, of dollars in total value, as did Thomas Edison, Bill Gates, Andrew Carnegie, and John D. Rockefeller. They all became wealthy but none came close to earning the level of wealth they created for the rest of us.

Maybe the best example of this is agricultural entrepreneurship. The value created by barbed wire (Lucien Smith), the steel-bladed plow (John Deere), and the tractor (various claims) may be unmeasurable. The people fed and the resources made available for other uses really cannot be measured. This point is

vital. If we only see entrepreneurs as guys trying to get rich and as the only ones better off, then we see only a small part of the entire picture. Entrepreneurs create large amounts of value for many people and most of it is *not* expressed in dollars, is *not* measurable, and does *not* go directly to the entrepreneur. Industries, cities, and even civilization in general are largely possible due to advances in agriculture alone. How valuable is it to you to not have to work in the fields all day to provide your food? You cannot really express that answer in dollar terms, but you know it is very valuable. That value created fits Mises's profit definition.

Using Mises's profit definition lets us see more clearly how the home school child and mom in the story above are entrepreneurs. The mom created some value for herself in not having to test the child, not attending school meetings, and living with a happier child. These are the sorts of psychic profits Mises discusses in his definition of profits. None of these have dollar amounts attached to them, but they are valuable just the same. The child, however, was the one to receive most of the value which, although still not expressed in dollar terms, amounted to less frustration and more learning. One can even argue that failed entrepreneurial efforts create value by eliminating one option that need not be attempted again.

So, if we are all seeking profit which is often a psychic, non-monetary phenomenon, we would have to conclude that profits are not evil or dirty, but are a sign of successful action. From a business entrepreneur's perspective, profits are a sign of successful service since customers have to voluntarily purchase his product for him to profit. Of course, customers only purchase an item if it provides them a satisfaction that is greater than the cost to obtain it. In a more general sense, profits mean that the entrepreneur has analyzed other people's needs properly and then met them efficiently.

WHAT ENTREPRENEURS DO: A CASE STUDY

The best answer to the question "what do entrepreneurs do?" might be they are people engaged in an ongoing process of bringing increased order and value to the world. Chaos comes before successful entrepreneurship, though we often only see this in hindsight. The noisy hustle and bustle of the old corporate secretarial pools did not look like chaos until one person on a desktop computer replaced it. Only after successful entrepreneurial action do we see the increased order and better resource use. Engaging in entrepreneurial action is not always easy since many people do not see the need or like the chaos it can cause, even though they stand to benefit from it. The economist and Orthodox Rabbi Israel Kirzner is a leading thinker on entrepreneurialism. He describes the entrepreneurial process as follows:

In order to make a discovery, in this world, it is simply not sufficient to be somehow more prescient than others; it requires that that "abstract" prescience be supported by psychological qualities that encourage one to ignore conventional wisdom, to dismiss the jeers of those deriding what they have seen as the self-deluded visionary, to disrupt what others have come to see as the comfortable familiarity of the old-fashioned ways of doing things, to ruin rudely and even cruelly the confident expectations of those whose somnolence has led them to expect to continue to make their living as they have for years past.^{xiii}

If we combine this with Schumpeter's notion of "creative destruction," we start to see that the entrepreneur is not only a creator but also a disrupter, and that disruption threatens some people. We see the creative process in developing new ways and methods of serving others, even in the face of resistance.

THE CASE STUDY OF TREES IN NIGER: A STORY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP

There are essentially three ways a person can use his talents: he can squander them as the prodigal son, who demanded his inheritance from his father early and then wasted it on riotous living (Luke 15), he can preserve them as the unfaithful servant discussed above did, or he can invest them as the faithful servants, also discussed above, did. This is visible today in many ways. One prominent example concerns the environment.

Many people, including Christians, approach the environment as a preservation issue. This is a tempting approach, but it can lead to waste. At the very least, it is the equivalent of the disloyal servant in the parable discussed above who buried the talent entrusted to him. Another approach to environmental stewardship is to use the resources to improve the earth. By using their entrepreneurial talents and creative impulses, people leave the ground in better condition than when they found it.

A story from Africa demonstrates how entrepreneurialism is the solution to many of our problems and how the "obvious solution" often leads to the exact opposite of its stated goal.

The African nations that border the Sahara desert are concerned about the desert's expansion, frequently referred to as desertification. As a result, the governments of many of these nations own the land bordering the Sahara to protect the area and preserve the vegetation. They are meeting Calvin's first condition of leaving the land in the same condition as before, but there is one significant oversight—they don't *use* the resource. In fact, the policy does the opposite: it imposes penalties and fines for anyone caught violating the law and using the trees. However, desertification has continued, except in one country: Niger.

In Niger, the government has taken a different approach and sold the land to local villagers and businesses. The results have been dramatic:

Recent studies of vegetation patterns, based on detailed satellite images and on-the-ground inventories of trees, have found that Niger, a place of persistent hunger and deprivation, has recently added millions of new trees and is now far greener than it was 30 years ago.^{xiv}

This stands in contrast to the surrounding nations and Niger's own history. *The New York Times* reports,

From colonial times, all trees in Niger had been regarded as the property of the state, which gave farmers little incentive to protect them. Trees were chopped for firewood or construction without regard to the

environmental costs. Government foresters were supposed to make sure the trees were properly managed, but there were not enough of them to police a country nearly twice the size of Texas.^{xv}

Things change and a new approach emerged. It was not government policy or a new law:

But over time, farmers began to regard the trees in their fields as their property, and in recent years the government has recognized the benefits of that outlook by allowing individuals to own trees. Farmers make money from the trees by selling branches, pods, fruit and bark. Because those sales are more lucrative over time than simply chopping down the tree for firewood, the farmers preserve them. The greening began in the mid-1980s, Dr. Reij said, “and every time we went back to Niger, the scale increased.” “The density is so spectacular,” he said.^{xvi}

In Niger, the goal is tree preservation and a reversal of desertification. In contrast to the other countries, Niger allows use of the land and has unleashed entrepreneurial creativity which has allowed tree count to exceed all expectations. The unfaithful servant *preserved* the talent entrusted to him, while the faithful servants used and *created more* talents. Niger’s case is reminiscent of the actual first creative act in Genesis because the tribes in Niger are creating a garden out of the nothingness of a desert.

CONDITIONS AND GOVERNMENT’S PROPER ROLE

At this point, it is appropriate to discuss government’s proper role in all of this. While entrepreneurship is vital, it does not happen in a vacuum, and the societal institutions are very important. Defending the proper institutional arrangement for entrepreneurship to happen is government’s role. The emphasis is on defending what already exists. Government’s role is not to pick winners and favorites but to establish the conditions that allow everyone to flourish. In short, the government’s involvement is to be limited.

Government cannot direct or accelerate entrepreneurial activity. After all, entrepreneurship is a discovery process, not something that can be directed as though the end is known. However, the government can influence the conditions in which the discoveries are made or, in many cases, not made. If the government oversteps or fails to live up to its role, there will be little entrepreneurial activity or growth.

Biblically speaking, there are three roles for government. Its first duty is to protect life. This is expressed as the seventh commandment. There are, of course, many reasons God chooses to protect life. When human beings have to fear for their lives, they will direct resources away from entrepreneurial activities and potential growth into protecting loved ones. Fear does not promote growth and flourishing.

Government’s second duty is to protect private property, as expressed in the eighth commandment which says, “Do not steal.” This implies ownership of property as well as a clear understanding of what ownership entails. While almost every government has had some sort of law that mirrors the prohibition of murder, property laws have been less clear; the world has tried a number of systems in which property was held in common or regularly attacked, very often by government. These societies have tended to perform poorly on a number of measures, including economic growth. God’s plan is private property. As Walter Kaiser wrote about the treatment of property in the Old Testament:

Private property is both a gift and a certain type of power God has entrusted to humanity as stewards. It was God's intention that mortals should be equipped with this gift and power and that under God they should exercise dominion over the earth. An attack on the rights to private property in recent centuries has denied God's law and design by weakening those same property rights. xvii

Protection of property has many benefits. First, entrepreneurs must own property before they can trade it, use it, exchange it, rent it, develop it, and so on. None of these things can happen without private property. Secondly, an entrepreneur needs to have the right to the income that his activities generate. If one can own a piece of land but the produce grown on that land is taxed at a very high rate, that too is an attack on property that will hinder entrepreneurial activities and flourishing. Third, private property leads to better stewardship. As a general rule, private yards are much better kept than the side of the road, which is why there are the “adopt-a-mile” programs that try to pseudo-privatize the side of the road and get it better care.

Government's third essential function is dispute resolution. A flourishing society needs an unbiased method to settle disputes between its members. We see this in the Old Testament, when initially Moses and then later a series of judges were the primary government entities in Israel. Their main duty was to settle disputes.

CONCLUSION

Regardless of whether an entrepreneur is a business entrepreneur seeking monetary profit or a social entrepreneur seeking some other improvement in people's lives, they have one major thing in common: they must all be attuned to what people need and then meet that need. This means using their God-given creativity to find new ways to serve others. From the greediest self-centered business owner to the most giving and caring altruist, successful entrepreneurs must learn what people want and then address that issue in a cost-efficient way. An entrepreneur matches his or her God-given interests and talents with people's needs. He or she is on a mission to increase satisfaction often while being told that he or she is on a fool's errand.

Creativity is God's gift to us. He has provided all we need to serve each other and provide for our needs. As French economist Frederic Bastiat wrote in his short classic *The Law*:

Away with the whims of governmental administrators, their socialized projects, their centralization, their tariffs, their government schools, their state religions, their free credit, their bank monopolies, their regulations, their restrictions, their equalization by taxation, and their pious moralizations!

And now that the legislators and do-gooders have so futilely inflicted so many systems upon society, may they finally end where they should have begun: May they reject all systems, and try liberty; for liberty is an acknowledgment of faith in God and His works.^{xviii}

From the beginning, God intended man to be creative and to bring order and finish what he gave us. We must do this to increase our own flourishing, for history tells us that when entrepreneurial creativity is repressed, societies stagnate and eventually die.

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ⁱ Gen. 1:1, Geneva Bible 1599.

ⁱⁱ Gen. 1:2.

ⁱⁱⁱ James T. Bartsch, "A Word Study of *Tohu wa Bohu*," Wordexplain, last modified July 15, 2010, accessed February 28, 2014. http://www.wordexplain.com/Word_Study_tohu_wa_bohu.html.

^{iv} John Calvin, *Commentaries on the First Book of Moses, Called Genesis*, Volume 1 (Ada, MI: Baker Publishing Group, 1996), 125. John Calvin (1509-1564) was a Swiss based French theologian and a key figure in the Protestant Reformation. He is commonly considered the father of Presbyterianism and is known for his work *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* and his extensive multi-volume Bible commentary. For more information see <http://www.ccel.org/c/calvin>.

^v Russell S. Sobel, "Entrepreneurship," *Library of Economics and Liberty*, <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc/Entrepreneurship.html>.

^{vi} Israel M. Kirzner, *Competition and Entrepreneurship*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 39.

^{vii} Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy* (New York, NY: Harper, 1975), 82-85.

^{viii} Jay Matthews, "Correcting Misconceptions About Home Schooling," *The Washington Post*, July 27, 2004, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A17676-2004Jul27.html>.

^{ix} *Homo Economicus* is a fine model as far as it goes. Humans are self-interested and tend to be rational, but it assumes too much in some areas and reduces too much in others. The idea that humans are Spock like in their decision-making process and have complete knowledge of their costs and benefits is at odds with Adam Smith and other giants of the field and reduces man to almost unrecognizable shadow of himself. A better model is *Homo Agens* – man that acts for a variety of reasons and with variety of motivations and in a world of uncertainty.

^x Kirzner, *Competition and Entrepreneurship*, 35.

^{xi} Mark 8:36, KJV.

^{xii} Ludwig von Mises, *Human Action*, fourth ed. (San Francisco, CA: Fox and Wilkes, San Francisco, 1963).

^{xiii} Israel M. Kirzner, (1999) "Creativity and/or Alertness: A Reconsideration of the Schumpeterian Entrepreneur," *Review of Austrian Economics* 11 (1999): 12-13.

^{xiv} Lydia Polgreen, "In Niger, Trees and Crops Turn Back the Desert," *The New York Times*, February 11, 2007, http://www.irgltd.com/Newsroom/News/Niger_Desertification_FINAL.pdf.

^{xv} Ibid.

^{xvi} Ibid.

^{xvii} Walter C. Kaiser, "Ownership and Property in the Old Testament Economy," *Journal of Markets & Morality* 15 (2012): 229.

^{xviii} Frederic Bastiat, *The Law* (Auburn AL: Ludwig von Mises Institute, 2007), <http://mises.org/books/thelaw.pdf>.