

A photograph of a person's reflection in a puddle on a wet street at night. The person is wearing a dark coat and boots. The reflection is clear and detailed. The background shows the wet pavement and some blurred lights.

FAITH & CO.
BUSINESS ON PURPOSE

Group
Study Guide

Faith & Co: Business on Purpose Group Study Guide

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PHASE 2

The Calling and Purpose of Business

Introduction (5 minutes)

“What do you do?”

This question opens most social introductions. Whether at church, a mixer, or on adjacent airplane seats, once two strangers meet and exchange names, the first question is usually about occupation. That’s to be expected, considering the amount of time and energy we devote to work. We spend 40+ hours per week (about 90,000 over a lifetime) working to pay bills, provide sustenance, and enjoy ourselves if there’s anything left over.

Despite the prevalence of work in our lives, the instruction we receive on Sundays tends to be disconnected from what we do come Monday. In fact, churches often devalue the work of their members by passing down a spiritual hierarchy in which “full-time ministry” occupies the top, helping professions such as health care and teaching make up the middle, and business sits squarely at the bottom. Christians involved in business can serve God by sharing the gospel with co-workers and by earning money to support ministries and missions work. However, day-to-day responsibilities like designing products, brand strategy, setting up supply chains, managing, and selling are dismissed as incidental to one’s faith.

What would it look like to describe “what you do” with more than a quick sentence or your job title? What if you could speak about how your work is more than an economic exchange, but is a calling to serve God’s purposes in the world?

This phase focuses on the first movement of the Creation, Fall, Redemption, and New Creation narrative arc of Scripture and aims at helping you develop a biblical perspective or a theology of business by exploring the following questions:

- Can Christian business people be confident that God sees their work as being just as spiritually significant as full-time ministry within the church?
- Does God have unique purposes, or a calling, for business? If so, what are those purposes and how do they fit God’s plans?
- Is *how* we do our work a spiritual matter? Beyond being a bit kinder and more honest, are decisions like determining which markets to enter, how to pay employees, and how we market our goods and services within the realm of God’s care and concern?

Story: Saddleback Leather Company

“Everything God does is quality. No exceptions.”

 READ

To begin to develop a biblical perspective on business, let’s meet Dave and Suzette Munson, owners of Saddleback Leather Company. Dave founded the company “by accident” while serving as a missionary in Mexico. Initially, Dave struggled with reconciling his sense of calling to do ministry with owning and operating a business.

▶ WATCH: (10 MINUTES)

Phase 2, Video 1: “Not Dead Yet” (Saddleback Leather Company)

 DISCUSS (15 MINUTES):

- Can you make a biblical/theological case to support Dave’s (and Suzette’s) journey to seeing owning a business as a ministry?
- While business can indeed serve *instrumental* purposes (i.e., evangelism, earning money to support ministries), is there anything *intrinsic* to the work of Saddleback Leather Co. that might also matter to God and align with kingdom purposes?

In addition to sharing the gospel and financially supporting missions and other humanitarian organizations, Saddleback delights customers with beautiful, quality products backed by an eye-popping limited 100-year warranty. It creates economic opportunity in Leon, Mexico and treats all employees with respect. All these aspects of business matter to God, who seeks to redeem all creation, including all corners of culture and every relationship.

 PRAY/JOURNAL (5 MINUTES)

Heavenly Father, thank you for your love. Thank you for creating a world of beauty and quality. I pray that you open my heart to the opportunities you have given me in my life to do things that are beautiful and full of quality. May my work be an exhibit
Reflections: to your love. Amen.

Write out what you believe God’s call on your life might be
