Kenneth J. Barnes
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary
and
Laszlo Zsolnai
Corvinus University of Budapest

Love in Business: Sentimentality or the Ultimate Virtue?

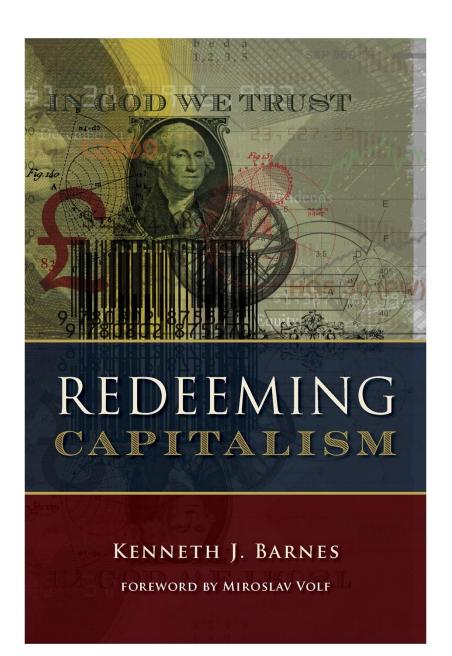
European SPES Annual Conference May 24-26, 2018 Leuven

Central Proposition

On the basis of calculative self-interest business cannot regain trust from the public and cannot get deep support from its stakeholders. For re-establishing trust and getting deep support business should show that it loves and serves its all stakeholders.

Virtues in Business

The virtue ethics literature in business focuses mainly on the cardinal virtues and disregards the role of the theological virtues. But without the foundational role of the virtue of love, the cardinal virtues have a limited role in transforming businesses into high purpose organizations.



Capitalism

- "A subject, not an object"
- "The capitalism we have is the capitalism we've chosen
- The evolution of Capitalism (Traditional, Modern, Postmodern)
- Postmodern capitalism: "devoid of a moral compass and resistent if not impervious to ethical constraint"
- Replace or redeem?

A Model of Redemption

- Biblical Precedence
- Theological Precedence
- Common Grace
- Wisdom
- Cardinal Virtues
- Theological Virtues (faith, hope and love)

The Theological Virtues: Faith

- "Confidence in what we hope for and assurance of what we cannot see" (Hebrews 11:1)
- Trust in something outside ourselves
- "Knowledge applied" (Packer)
- Is possible remoto Dei
- For Christians it is rooted in the *imago dei* and the *missio Dei*
- "Ultimate concern" (Tillich)

The Theological Virtues: Hope

- Positive and forward looking ("Kingdom focused")
- Optimistic but not naïve
- Mission oriented
- Requires endurance
- Requires patience
- Requires confidence
- Need not be "passive"
- "Concern for the future"

The Theological Virtues: Love

- "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonour others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away....And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is *love.* " (1Cor. 13 sel.)
- "Concern for the Other"

Driver	Traditional	Modern	Post-modern	Virtuous
Purpose	subsistence	acquisition	consumption	well-being / flourishing
Capital	means	credit	debt	thrift
Nature of Work	class	calling	professionalism	spiritual / work as worship
Method of Work	rhythmic	regimented	compartmentalised	holistic
Ethic	orthodoxy	"in" the world	"of" the world	common grace
Accountability	God is watching	self monitoring	no one watching	Covenantal / mutuality
Ontology	saved by works	pre-destined	temporal	imago / missio Dei
Theology	God is remote	God is active	God is dead	God is present / accessible
Geography	local	international	global	think globally / act locally
Epoch	agrarian	industrial	Informational	Inter-connected
Output	necessities	products / services	brands / images	added-value
Sociology	homogenisation of cult & culture	homogenisation of cult / marginalisation culture	marginalisation of cult / homogenisation of culture	harmonisation of cult & culture