

Chapter Two

Christianity and Business Success

Chapter Objectives:

- To explore Christian beliefs and biblical principles and their impact on business ethics, motivation and practice.
- To study the influence of prayer and faith on attitudes and decision making of the Christian entrepreneurs.
- To examine the interplay of Christian moral values and business objectives, as well as the potential obstacles and opportunities in making faith a part of business.

Introduction

Scholars and businesspeople alike have talked a lot about the link between Christianity and business success. Christianity is one of the most powerful religions in the world. It affects the morals, values, and actions of its followers in both their personal and professional lives. This chapter looks at how Christian beliefs, teachings, and practices affect how businesses are run, how entrepreneurs are motivated, and how they try to make money. The chapter aims to elucidate the intricate relationship between faith and commerce in Christian communities by examining biblical principles and modern viewpoints.

The Influence of Christian Beliefs on Business Success and Ethics

The relationship that exists between the success of business and religious beliefs among Christians has been an issue of debate between scholars and business people. In this chapter, the author examines the complex association of the business performance and Christianity. Though Christianity still has a direct influence on the values and behaviors of many cultures, it does not necessarily directly affect the consequences of business. But there is an influence which is reported in many areas in the bible. As an example, the book of Deuteronomy chapter 8 verse 18 (ESV) states, "You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day..." reminding the business people that God is the one who provides power to make them wealthy. Similarly, chapter 16 verse 3 (ESV) of Proverbs says, "Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established". Committing your work to God makes your plans to be successful. The quality of your plans remains the same. The quality of

your plans determines level of success your business could be. The plans will be successful if the person commits his ways to God.



Figure 2.1 Christianity and Business Success (Davinci, 2026)

In the article titled “Perceived Impact of Prayer on Academic Performance of College Students”, Famula (2024) concludes that the relationship between prayer and the performance of a business is not simple and straight-forward and is impossible to measure directly. Rather, ethical principles and virtues that are advanced in the Christian faith like honesty, integrity, diligence and justice tend to make businesses successful. An example is Proverbs chapter 11 verse 1 (ESV) which teaches that, A false balance is an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is his delight. The

scripture shows the need to maintain honesty and impartiality in business transactions. The Christian values of honesty, integrity, hard work and fairness are further affirmed in other passages in the bible. Colossians chapter 3 verses 23-24 (ESV) says, "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ". This promotes a hardworking culture whereby it is believed that everything one does at work must be taken seriously and with a feeling of greater cause. The value of labor in skill and excellence is emphasized in Proverbs chapter 22 verse 29 (ESV): "Do you see a man skillful in his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before obscure men". This scripture encourages people to be exemplary and apply their talents in the business to achieve success.

In the bible, there are lessons on equity and morality at workplace. In Leviticus chapter 19 verse 13 (ESV) it reads, "You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning." Wage withholding has been identified as one of the issues that reduce motivation and payment is an ethical necessity. Ephesians chapter 4 verse 28 (ESV) also stresses on ethical behavior: "Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need". The scripture supports the importance of honest work and generosity.

Perceived Role of Prayer in Business

Christianity presents itself in a variety of denominations that have different interpretations of the Bible. This discussion is based on the biblical teachings compared to the personal group beliefs. Being a subdivision of Christianity, it is advocated that good things like success and situations are possible with assistance in accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. It is buttressed by scriptures in, Psalm chapter 90 verse 17 (ESV) that says, "Let the favor of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish the work of our hands upon us; yes, establish the work of our hands!" The verse is a prayer of the blessing of God and the administration of one own work. This scripture is further supported by Matthew chapter 7 verse 7 (ESV) which says, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you." This verse speaks about the mightiness of praying and seeking help of God. It guarantees that God intervenes in the prayers of human beings.

The majority of Christians believes in prayer as one of the methods by which their lives and business prospects can be improved to a certain degree; they believe in high outcomes of prayer. Christian religious leaders also indicate the chances of success in business being influenced by prayer. But we have cases also, in which this belief is expressed in a way which may serve to cause unrealistic expectations. It takes holistic approach to be able to pray and strive in business. God bestowed the mechanisms of

the world. Individuals were allowed to be enlightened by God. People should also be taught to pray to God as much as they are taught to work. The bible talks about how God bestows to his people wisdom when they seek it James chapter 1 verses 5 (ESV) "And if any are lacking in wisdom, he shall ask God, who is liberal to all, and will not reproach him, and it shall be given him. In this verse, the writer encourages people to seek wisdom from God which is a very essential factor in business.

It has been established in research that, although Christianity and prayer can have some influence on moral decision making, motivation, and self esteem, does not have direct influence on business success (Rietveld & Hoogendoorn, 2022). The effects of prayer appear to be rather indirect and rely more on the attitudes, power and the decision - making process and not on the material profits. This school of thought recognizes the role played by spiritual activities and actual business knowledge this suggest that Christian religion may not necessarily result to success in businesses.

Specifically, certain writings like Deuteronomy chapter 28 verses 1-14 are highly quoted in order to contend that obedience to the commandments that are provided by God bring blessings, which are perceived differently across societies. Blessings are material prosperity to some people, and qualities like wisdom, peace or resilience to some. These variations in the interpretation influence the manner of praying in the corporate world. This however is coupled together with the works when the bible is referring of blessing. Although Jacob was blessed by Isaac, his blessings were not immediate, but it came after a long time when he worked for Laban (Genesis chapter 29-31).

The empirical literature, such as the studies by Cater and Alderson (2022) of the family firms in the U.S.), found that work practices, such as the use of prayer, might affect how leaders behaved and how the companies interrelated with the stakeholders, but did not find any signs of improved business performance. The findings demonstrate that prayer may be one of the means of fulfilling the spiritual or psychological needs but not one of the means of guaranteeing business success because non-Christians may also achieve business success in other means. This means that to achieve success in business, prayer alone is not sufficient.

A successful business practice in most cases is a combination of strategic planning, resource management, practical skills and flexibility in addition to the spiritual practices. Prayer to the majority can be inspirational, comforting and aids one to overcome business obstacles but it does not replace ethical and effective business management. The business involves both spiritual and practical aspects of life and the balance between the two aspects of the business might be a big one. Personally, it appears that faith and diligent work, lifelong learning and the subsequent development of the relevant skills are the most effective means of adapting to the peculiarities of business success.

Christian Morality and Business Conduct

Christian teaching has a substantial influence on the ethical principles of business conduct, in particular, starting a business. Teachings of Christianity emphasize such virtues as responsibility, honesty, integrity, and helping others. Proverbs chapter 10 verse 9 (ESV), states that, "Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out". These teachings in the Bible establish an atmosphere in which the owners of the business are advised to be truthful, distant themselves from evil when dealing with all stakeholders, and prioritize the long-term relationships over short-term profits. By adhering to these rules, Christian business owners will be able to establish a positive image, which will be significant in the long-term success of their enterprises. Proverbs chapter 14 verse 23 states that, "In all toil there is profit, but mere talk tends only to poverty". The bible advises people not to be lazy or talk too much but to work hard. The point is that believers should be diligent workers.

The other significant aspect of Christian business ethics is moral responsibility. Christian teaching has a wide element of stewardship. It states that God has entrusted individuals with resources and talents and they need to utilize them well and in a morally acceptable manner so as to benefit the business and society at large. The business owners have to make decisions that should not only favor their bottom line but also their health and happiness of their employees, customers and the community at large due to the sense of responsibility they feel. Luke chapter 16 verse 11, says, "If then you have not been faithful in the unrighteous wealth, who will entrust to you the true riches?" This scripture shows the relation between the earthly and the spiritual duties. The business people are encouraged to act faithful here on earth so that they will be trusted with heavenly blessings. When business people follow their moral responsibilities, there is a high chance of involving themselves in community development initiatives, business practices that are environmentally friendly and other business practices that are ethical. These are all aspects that lead to social license of a business to operate.

Honesty is a factor that should be utilized in establishing trust within and without a group. With honest business people, chances of acquiring loyal customers, partners who can be trusted and work hard are high. Fraud, legal issues, and reputational damage to a company can be expensive to the business owner since they occur less frequently when business leaders practice honesty. Additionally, honesty also enhances a better working environment as the employees will feel appreciated and will say what they want without fear, which will be more motivating and result in improved productivity. In the book of Ephesians chapter 4 verse 28, it reads, "Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need". This Christian scripture

demonstrates the importance of working and sharing with others. Closely related to honesty is the aspect of integrity which means being uniform in your actions, what you believe and how you do things. Christian values compel the owners of the business to remain honest and make moral decisions, even in cases when it is difficult and they are tempted to cheat with morally wrong decisions. Integrity prepares the business owners to be stronger and accountable and as a result, the business owners can go through the rough situations and still hold on to their values. This decision ultimately draws the attention of interested parties who respect moral leadership that may bring to light improved business prospects and further development.

The doctrine of Christianity encourages people to engage in ethical business through moral responsibility, honesty, and integrity. These values not only assist the business owners to do the right thing, but also succeed in business by earning the trust, loyalty and long-term growth. However, as the discussion indicated, to ensure that business operations are aligned with the principal concepts of Christianity the pursuit of material success should be tempered with the spiritual honesty. In this manner, the business owners would be able to demonstrate how religion and morality would collaborate, and it is good to both individuals and societies.

Balancing Profit and Principle: Christianity's Guidance for Ethical Commercial Success

Christianity, with all its variations, has significant constraints towards ensuring commercial prosperity. Although it is true that the Christian doctrine influences ethical conduct and motivates a large number of people to follow their goals ethically, empirical data continually refute the idea of faith as the single indicator of business success. Actually, the pure following of Christian values may even retard economic development, as it happens in evangelical congregations in southern Ethiopia where spiritually conservative members tend to avoid venture offers that do not conform to their beliefs (Sommerschuh, 2021). In a comparable vein, the Eastern Orthodox tradition has long been suspicious of wealth and commerce, which is representative of the general ambivalence of the Christian tradition toward commerce (Whitener & Salter, 2022; Gregg, 2021). Despite the fact that Christianity teachings have been used to promote good character like integrity, perseverance and volunteerism, which are qualities that are associated with successful businesses, they do not alone, contribute to financial prosperity. Christian religiosity and practice associated with prayer have not been suggested to directly affect economic performance. Rather Christianity tends to have an indirect impact through the development of effective moral character and productive social networks. Christian communities are able to foster cultures of ethical leadership and cooperation and provide moral and emotional support to the business people. Though, the advantages are auxiliary and do not protect businesses against market pressures or substitute business competencies. Inspirational quotes like Galatians

chapter 6:9 “And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up”, are mentioned by business owners as inspirational quotes that help business people to persevere through tough times. The churches are promoting high ethical standards and promote members to support one another. However, there is still a fear of the commercialization of religion especially in certain Pentecostal movements where material wealth is perhaps a priority at the cost of spiritual growth. Critics believe that the matter of equating prosperity with the divine favor may erode the authentic spiritual ground of the business success.



Figure 2.2, Balancing Profit and Principle (Davinci, 2026)

The view that faith and financial success are intertwined has been complicated further by Prosperity theology, which says that a blessing by God is manifested through wealth. But the practical experience of the world has demonstrated that among the most religious Christians there are numerous cases of economic difficulties and business collapses, which argue against the inadequacy of religious faith as the only means of wealth. The intricate interaction of faith, competition, and business success proves that religious beliefs may aid in making moral choices and staying strong, yet do not guarantee business development and profitability. Though, Christian values may assist business owners to establish ethical conduct and create favorable communities; still, it is not a universal recipe to succeed in business. Business realities are influenced by a set of various factors that are interdependent such as market dynamics, innovation, managerial capability, and resource availability. Christian religion may be an effective hint to morality and inspiration, although it has to be supplemented by practical approaches and business behavior. Studies confirm that even with compliance to Christian values, it does not imply commercial success. The key ingredients to the long-term entrepreneurial success still include hard work, patience, and constant reinvestment in the business (Maviya, et al., 2024).

Christian Values as Business Assets

Christian values are excellent to business owners since they determine the culture of the business entity and how it conducts business. As an example, honesty is a thing that allows the clients and the investors to know that they can trust the business owner. It also makes the workplace a safe place to be. This transparency may make a business pop out as one of the best business partners or service providers in a saturated market. Perseverance is a component of any business and can be overcome by tenacious business people who have a biblical understanding of perseverance. Community service, however, ties a business with the greater good by establishing goodwill which exceeds the mere transaction and establishing long term relationship with the clients, as well as local players in the sector.

The Bible is the source of the ideas of many businesspeople. Galatians chapter 6 verse 9 (ESV) says, “Do not grow weary of doing good, lest you by forbearing yield a harvest when the time is”. In this verse, the power and the long-term planning is evident, which is vital in business. In the times of slow business, some doubt, or any disappointments that may be encountered in business, these Bible verses can enable business people to remain on course, in terms of their mission and values. It is always good and encouraging to bear in mind that one should not give up on doing the right thing when dealing with ups and downs of the business world and it will end up rewarding the individual in the end.

The church has long been a fantastic business help place among business owners. Churches facilitate the meeting of new people, telling of stories, as well as receiving advice by facilitating people to become members of the community, scheduling networking events, and providing leadership training. Another area, which is offered by many churches, is volunteer opportunities, professional development, and professional development workshops, as well as, small business fairs. All these contribute towards the meeting and acquisition of new skills by the business people. It is institutional support that makes businesses work towards being moral and customer first and also helps to train the future generation of leaders. The churches in Zimbabwe such as the ZAOGA (Forward in Faith church) educate their audiences on a principle that they refer to as talents. This principle is supposed to be involved with every member. Individuals who adhered to this principle were successful in business. This was an intended step to make believers to open businesses and this was successful. Johane Masowe Apostolic Church have also trained their members in how to do things using their hands such as making metal pots, dishes, and other metal items. Johane Masowe church is in different countries, such as Kenya, South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Mozambique, Zambia, and other countries close to Zimbabwe. It originated in Zimbabwe.

It can be a business network via faith-based groups or a church network, but group support is required to achieve resilience and business development. Business people tend to encounter certain stressors, such as deciding by themselves and being afraid of losing money. A supportive community offers one the responsibility, the inspiration, and the good recommendations. Praying collectively, relying on peers, and resource exchange make Christian business people remain on the ground, inspired and their accomplishing their mission. Such group activities eventually lead to the creation of a condition whereby individuals strive towards individual success and at the same time contribute to the development of the larger community.

Balancing Business Goals, Morals, and Christian Faith

Religious objectives make the operations of the family business very influential through faith-based organizational, ethical, or social practices. Consequently, the theoretical implications of this include the reduced family cohesion, commitment of the employees, and performance of the firm in the short and long term (Ali & Siddiqui, 2021). Some of the biggest barriers to integrating moral values into business decisions include the normative nature of the sustainability goals, the conflict between moral and benefit values, and the difficulty of working with the stakeholders in line with their own values (Bolis et al., 2021). Collectively, these studies demonstrate that profit maximization and morality still interfere in the process of business today. Many businesspeople, particularly Christians, find it difficult to combine their faith, morals, and business objectives. Innovation, growth, and competition in business are a product of ambition,

although when it is not properly founded, it can push people into making decisions that conflict with their morals and spiritual values. Christians in business usually find it hard to reconcile the teachings of the Christian faith, such as honesty, integrity, and serving others, with their aspiration to succeed. This dynamic may influence the decision-making process of people as well as influence the overall culture of the company. For example, a Christian may not find selling beer as something to do under Christian faith, however beer is a commodity which moves very fast and may lead to a successful business. In this case faith stands on the way to success.

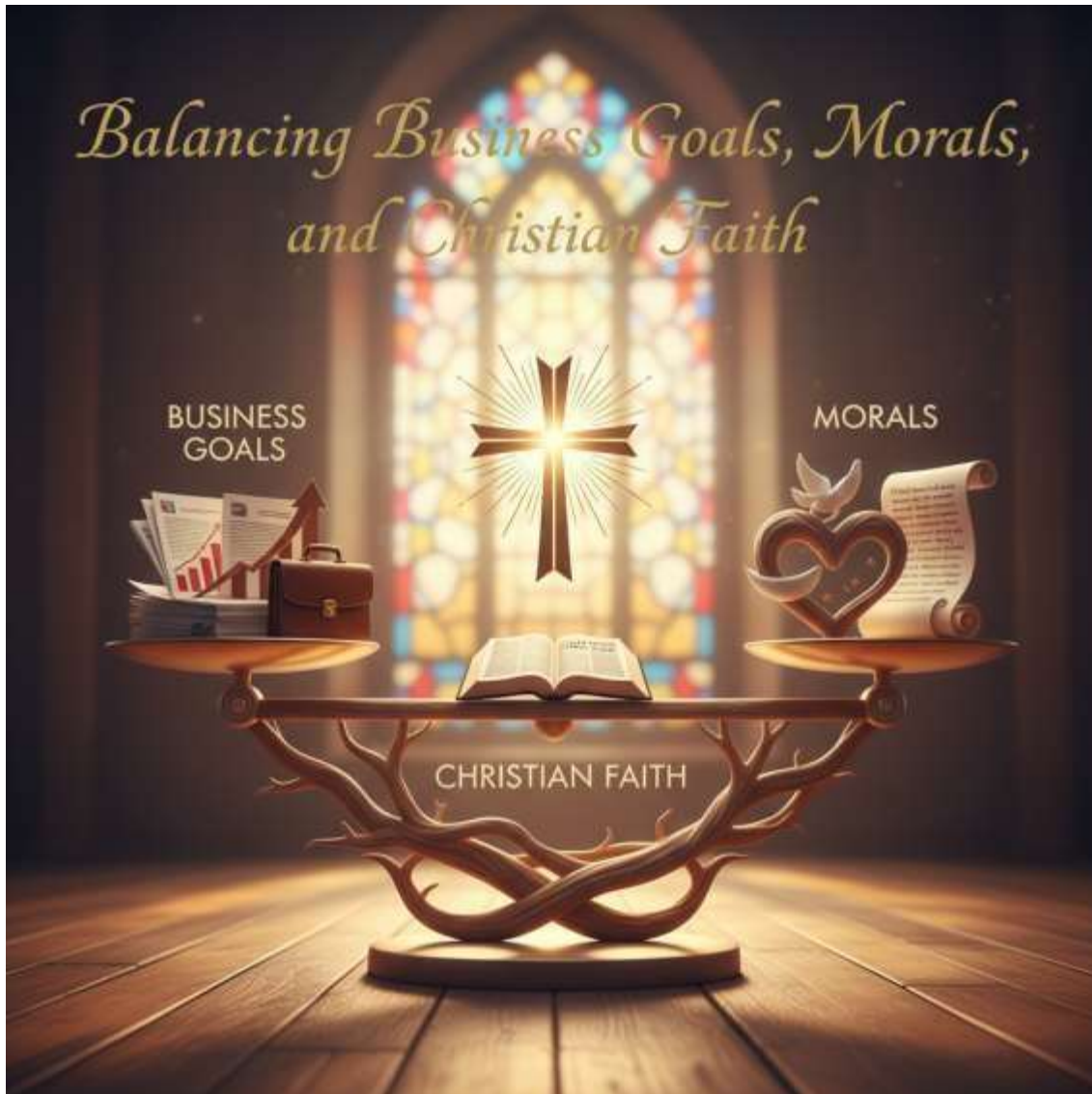


Figure 2.3, Balancing Business goals, morals and Christian faith (Davinci, 2026)

It can be quite positive to utilize Christian values in business. Such values as honesty, caring about other people, and responsibility, as well as defending the right, can build

trust with clients, employees, and business partners. Companies based on these values tend to put social responsibility, ethical sourcing, and fair treatment on their list of things to do. All these can result in long-term customers and respect within the market. There are also ways with Christian teachings about serving others that can influence business models where the needs of the community and the social welfare come first before personal gains. These types of practices result in valuable and sustainable projects. However, Christian values in business also have issues. The application of faith-based ethics can be very difficult to observe, discover business opportunities, or create issues in competitive settings when other parties have different values. As an illustration, Christian business people would be disadvantaged in case of failing to engage in illegal or immoral conduct, which is profitable. Also, there is a possibility of internal conflict due to the clash of ambition and humility. Humility is a fundamental Christian virtue, and the necessity to be submissive and selfless can appear to conflict with the willingness to develop and perform well.

Business people can prioritize their long-term impact and purpose over the money to remain faithful to their morals and not be materialistic. In order to remain authentic to your values in decision-making, regular reflection on your beliefs and values, being part of accountability groups, and defining explicit moral standards can be helpful in maintaining your values. One should also learn to be appreciative and happy where successes are viewed as opportunities to serve others and present rather than end by themselves. It is a way of ensuring that the search after money does not interfere with the initial mission and values.

It takes self-reflection and critical decision-making to find a balance between Christian religious beliefs, moral values, and business goals. This balance is usually achieved successfully by successful Christian business owners who ensure that the values are incorporated in all they do, both in the business running and leading. They put faith and morals in the center of their business, which helps keep their integrity safe and gives an example to others. The behavior demonstrates that being successful and doing the right thing in business is possible.

Practical Questions:

1. What are the implications of Christian values such as honesty, integrity and diligence on the conduct and success of business?
2. How can prayer impact the attitude and drive of Christian entrepreneurs without a promise of success in business?
3. What issues may arise for Christian entrepreneurs on a conflict between moral principles and business goals?