Forthcoming in the *Journal of Ethics & Entrepreneurship* 6 (2016): 117-31

The Soul of the Entrepreneur: A Christian Anthropology of Creativity, Innovation, and Liberty

Jordan J. Ballor
Research Fellow and Executive Editor, *Journal of Markets & Morality*
Acton Institute
98 East Fulton Street
Grand Rapids, MI 49503
Voice +1 616.454.3080, Fax +1 616.454.9454
jballor@acton.org

Victor V. Claar
(corresponding author)
Professor of Economics
School of Business
Henderson State University
HSU Box 7890
Arkadelphia, AR 71999-0001
Voice +1 870.230.5457, Fax +1 870.230.5286
vclaar@gmail.com

The Soul of the Entrepreneur: A Christian Anthropology of Creativity, Innovation, and Liberty

ABSTRACT

Although often acknowledged as critically important, the role of the entrepreneur in the modern economy is often underdeveloped or inadequately understood. The reason for this is in large part due to the complex anthropological mysteries that lie at the heart of entrepreneurship. The Christian moral tradition provides important insights into the nature of the human person, particularly with respect to entrepreneurial activity, that provide a more comprehensive understanding of human action. Christian teachings regarding the creation of the cosmos, the human person as created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), and human beings as free moral agents combine to present an account of entrepreneurship in terms of spiritual as well as material realities. From the Christian perspective, the soul of the entrepreneur is determinative for his or her role in promoting human flourishing.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, Christianity, human anthropology, innovation, personal liberty

NOTE: All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®. Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide. www.zondervan.com The "NIV" and "New International Version" are trademarks registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica, Inc.™

INTRODUCTION

The entrepreneur is essential to economic growth and development. Those who make it their business to study the entrepreneur and his work understand well this vital role. Schumpeter ([1934] 1982) sees entrepreneurship as the major driver behind an economy, and Shapero (1985) eloquently states,

> For communities and for society, entrepreneurship provides the means for achieving the level of diversity, innovation, and independent decision making required for survival, development, and freedom. Entrepreneurship is a profound, vital, pervasive human process with important possibilities for the individual in terms of independence, creativity, personal expression, and even health.... A society where individuals are encouraged to take control of their own lives is a society of freedom and growth (p. 3).

And as Jackson and Rodkey (1994) point out, there is now overwhelming empirical evidence that entrepreneurship is a key source of job growth, and is essential to the ongoing health of a market economy. More recently, Koellinger and Thurik (2012) find, using panel data from 22 OECD countries, that entrepreneurship tends to be a leading indicator of the business cycle. They also conclude that entrepreneurs play major roles in nations' recoveries from recession.

Though there now exists a vast and growing literature that explores the nature of the entrepreneur as well as her contributions to human progress, it is nevertheless true that the motives, activities, and social contributions of the entrepreneur are sometimes overlooked or inadequately understood by those who are neither entrepreneurs themselves nor students of entrepreneurship. This is particularly true in the case of religious thinkers and theologians, who often tend to have an animus towards market activity and economics (Ballor, 2010; du Plessis, 2010; Hill & Lunn, 2007; Lunn, 2011; Schneider, 2007). Choi (1993) explores one aspect of such reactions in his study of entrepreneurship as a potential driver of envy in a market economy. Choi argues that entrepreneurs—at least the ones who achieve some level

of success—may become the objects of envy by others who cannot comprehend the contributions of the entrepreneur. Choi points to several factors that potentially explain why those who are not entrepreneurs themselves may discount the considerable efforts and the resulting valuable contributions of entrepreneurs. First, in accord with Frédéric Bastiat's observations about human tendency to discount the unseen, Choi notes that entrepreneurial activities are rarely observed directly by others. Unlike manual labor, which most of us frequently have opportunities to observe in our neighborhoods, along our car and train trips, and in shops and other businesses, we rarely observe directly the work that entrepreneurs do. According to Choi, we tend to underestimate the difficulty of entrepreneurial contributions, then, because we do not observe directly such efforts. Further, because we are not ourselves bearing the risks undertaken by the entrepreneur in the pursuit of uncertain rewards, we tend to inaccurately assess those risks. Specifically, says Choi, we are likely to underestimate the level of risk assumed by the entrepreneur, and to assume that the entrepreneur sleeps at least as soundly each night as we do. Under such circumstances, it is likely that entrepreneurial accomplishments will foster envy in the hearts of those who perceive such success as something less than earned success.

Yet entrepreneurial success, in its ideal form, is earned. Percy (2010), following Kirzner (1973, 1985), identifies four elements of entrepreneurial work. First, entrepreneurs remain alert to information, realizing that it has the potential to lead to creative knowledge. Unlike their less-entrepreneurial counterparts who may also possess the same information, entrepreneurs constantly seek ways to unleash the creative potential of such knowledge. Second, entrepreneurs seek to discover "changed conditions or overlooked possibilities" that lead to opportunities either now or in the future. Third, entrepreneurs capably bring the other factors of production—land, labor, and capital—to bear on their own discoveries. And finally, owing to the risk involved in the third element, entrepreneurs will not

creatively follow through on their insights unless they expect to receive rewards sufficient to make their entrepreneurial efforts appear worth undertaking (Percy, 2010, p. 26).

But even if one accurately understands the activities of entrepreneurs and the measurable benefits that follow—whether those benefits accrue to the entrepreneur, her investors and employees, their customers, or to society more generally—Christian scripture and church teaching suggest that there is deeper value and meaning to be found in the life and work of the entrepreneur.

First, in church tradition, the human person is called to carry out creative work. Inasmuch as the Creator designed human beings in his own image, humankind is called to its own creative activities—including entrepreneurship. Second, the value of creative work is not limited to material rewards—whether those rewards are narrowly or broadly dispersed. In the Christian view of the human person, each of us is constantly being internally transformed through the creative activities we undertake. The human person, created in God's image, consists of both body and soul. Through our participation in creative acts of our own, we are—with God's help—evolving into fuller versions of the creative beings he intends for us to ultimately become. Work, including entrepreneurial endeavor, arises out of and, in turn, shapes the human soul (DeKoster, 2010). Thus the entrepreneur possesses a moral and spiritual imperative to carry out his creative work, and the benefits that follow are both temporal and eternal, material and spiritual.

In the remainder of this essay we articulate a Christian anthropology of the entrepreneur. We proceed as follows. First, we describe the Christian account of God's creation of the cosmos, linking that creative act to the responsibility of human beings to continue God's creative work. Next we describe more fully the innovative role of the human person in the Christian tradition as he follows through on his mandate

to further develop and cultivate God's created order. Finally, we consider the necessary condition of moral agency for humankind; without adequate liberty to make free choices in the pursuit of the entrepreneurial calling, humans will be limited in their abilities to discover God's plan as well as in their capacities to achieve creative outcomes that lead to both personal and social enrichment—whether external or internal.

CREATIVITY

In the Old Testament of the Bible, God's first act is to create. In church tradition, God creates the universe—and all that is in it—*ex nihilo*: out of nothing. According to the creation account found in Genesis 1, God creates day and night, he forms the earth, its land and seas, its creatures and vegetation, and he places the stars in the heavens and dictates the laws that govern them. Upon reflection, God considers his each of his works and pronounces them "good." Note that God's creative act does not consist of merely making matter appear: God also gives order to the universe through laws such as those of quantum and particle physics, gravity, and planetary motion. These are sometimes referred to as *primary creation* (out of nothing) and *secondary creation* (the ordering and arrangement of the cosmos).

God's final creative act in the Genesis account is to create humankind. Moses writes, "Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.'

"So God created mankind in his own image,

in the image of God he created them;

male and female he created them" (Genesis 1: 26-27).

Several points are worth noting here. First, God's final act of creation is the creation of the human person. We may also infer that God views man as the grandest of his creations, since he reflects upon man and woman and pronounces his work to be not merely "good," but "very good" (Genesis 1:31). Second, God creates humankind "in his own image." And at this point in Hebrew and Christian scripture, one of the few things we actually know about the nature of God is his creative inclinations and abilities as suggested by his acts in this chapter.

Not only does God create humans in his own image, he gives them specific work to do. As noted above God creates humankind with a mandate to rule over all living things. In addition, "God blessed them and said to them, 'Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground'" (Genesis 1:28).

Further, even in this paradise created by God's own hand, there is nevertheless work for humans to do. In the next chapter we read, "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" (Genesis 2:15). We may thus conclude that the work itself was not part of God's punishment for the sins committed the chapter that follows. Human beings had a responsibility to care for and develop God's own creation even before sin fractured the relationship between God and humankind.

Novak (1982) has argued that the entrepreneur's creative potential and activities directed toward realizing that potential parallel God's own creative work in the first two chapters of Genesis, a concept sometimes called "co-creation," and in this way it is creation in a *tertiary* sense. Human co-creation is activity undertaken to develop the created order, including the world as well as the human person, on the basis of the gifts and talents God has provided in his own acts of creation. Thus, in Novak's view,

each entrepreneur is fulfilling his or her sacred calling to subdue the earth as God has commanded (p. 98). The broad scope of the biblical story from creation to consummation (or fulfillment) can thus be understood as the development of the world from a garden (Gen. 2) to a city (Rev. 21).

Thus creative work itself is no punishment for sin. Far from it. In God's ideal relationship, he intended humans to continue his creative acts by working with the gifts he alone had provided. In the third chapter of Genesis we discover that the punishment for sin is not work, but toil. God tells Adam,

"Cursed is the ground because of you;
through painful toil you will eat food from it
all the days of your life" (Genesis 3:17).

Percy (2010) points to several instances in the Old Testament that suggest that a proper view of the human person is not as a mere caretaker of God's creation. Instead, we are to creatively and skillfully utilize God's rich providence, fulfilling our mandate given in Genesis. For example, in the book of Exodus, the Lord tells Moses, "I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of crafts. Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you" (Exodus 31:2-6). Indeed, Scripture indicates that God blesses his people with creative knowledge, abilities, and intelligence, and expects them to utilize such blessings both in the service of God and the service of others.

Although the idea of human work as “co-creation” has sometimes been criticized (e.g. Hauerwas, 1983), understanding human creativity as derivative of and dependent upon the prior divine creation of the cosmos provides a fruitful avenue for exploring the dynamic intersections of human labor, innovation, and liberty. Human work, the application of creative reason and effort to the world, is thus understood to be a primary way in which human beings exercise causality, both positively (in light of creation) and negatively (in the shadow of sin). As C. S. Lewis (1972) puts it, God “gave us small creatures the dignity of being able to contribute to the course of events in two different ways.” Lewis identifies these two ways as work and prayer, and in respect to the former, God “made the matter of the universe such that we can (in those limits) do things to it; that is why we can wash our own hands and feed or murder our fellow creatures” (p. 106).

INNOVATION

In the Christian view each person—created in God’s image (the *imago Dei*)—bears a mandate to carry out God’s ongoing creative work in the faithful stewardship of God’s creation. In Christian tradition, then, all creative acts are a reflection of the *imago Dei*, whether carried out by those who confess Christianity or by others who do not. Our very entrepreneurial natures and actions are God’s creative image bursting forth from each of us. Whether we are creative in our scholarship, our businesses, or the prudent management of our families, and when we creatively approach tasks or perceive the unmet needs of others, we are working out our entrepreneurial purpose.

Though everyone possesses entrepreneurial potential, and though many pursue entrepreneurial activities, Szabó (2014) argues that the fullest realization of God’s entrepreneurial intention for human beings might be found only among those who appreciate their personal responsibility to God’s cultural mandate. For example, Szabó states that even the most devout of Christian business people may not be

realizing their own entrepreneurial potentials as bearers of the *imago Dei* if they do not discern that one of their responsibilities to their creator is to continue his creative work through entrepreneurship. That is, God is calling us to be more than mere Christian workers. Instead he longs for us to see ourselves as his agents in the world, pursuing our entrepreneurial work as part of his plan for the world. Szabó writes that "the Christian entrepreneur understands [that] God owns everything and the entrepreneur is…a steward managing all the available resources. This type of stewardship is a difficult task" (p. 23).

Haymond (2012) considers whether the wife of noble character described in Proverbs 31 might be considered as the entrepreneurial archetype of the Old Testament, and Percy (2010) also consults this particular passage as evidence of the elevation of the entrepreneur in the Old Testament. The passage also makes quite clear that the virtuous wife is not a mere caretaker. She is an entrepreneur, and an innovative one at that. The passage reads, in part,

> "[10]A wife of noble character who can find?
> She is worth far more than rubies.
> [11] Her husband has full confidence in her
> and lacks nothing of value.
> [12] She brings him good, not harm,
> all the days of her life.
> [13] She selects wool and flax
> and works with eager hands.
> [14] She is like the merchant ships,
> bringing her food from afar….
> [16] She considers a field and buys it;
> out of her earnings she plants a vineyard.

[17] She sets about her work vigorously;

her arms are strong for her tasks.

[18] She sees that her trading is profitable,

and her lamp does not go out at night….

[20] She opens her arms to the poor

and extends her hands to the needy.

[21] When it snows, she has no fear for her household;

for all of them are clothed in scarlet….

[24] She makes linen garments and sells them,

and supplies the merchants with sashes.

[25] She is clothed with strength and dignity;

she can laugh at the days to come.

[26] She speaks with wisdom,

and faithful instruction is on her tongue.

[27] She watches over the affairs of her household

and does not eat the bread of idleness.

[28] Her children arise and call her blessed;

her husband also, and he praises her:

[29] "Many women do noble things,

but you surpass them all."

[30] Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;

but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised…."

In the passage we see the unmistakable traits of the entrepreneur, as well as the praiseworthiness of a woman committed to her work as a holy calling. Baker (2015) makes the further claim that our entrepreneurship gives unspoken testimony to the beauty, creativity, and power—and also to the responsibility—bestowed upon us as God's image-bearers working alongside him in his ongoing creative plan.

It is worth noting that the Fall of man described in Genesis 3 did not absolve us from our entrepreneurial callings. Instead the Fall made our good work more challenging and prone to error, given our own sinful desires and human limitations. Thus, in the shadow of the Fall into sin, human beings not only make positive contributions to the world but also "invent ways of doing evil" (Rom. 1:30).

Innovation can thus be framed as a way of understanding the idea of co-creation, in which human beings exercise their God-given creative abilities to fashion new things on the basis of God's original creation. Taking what has been provided by God, human beings thus make explicit the inherent possibilities of the created order. Just as a gardener cares for seeds to nurture the young plant to fruit-bearing maturity, the broader world itself contains seemingly boundless possibilities for the development of new technologies and ways of working and living together.

Because the sheer scope and scale of the created order surpasses the developmental abilities of any one individual, or any one group of individuals, the task to cultivate the Earth is thus a communal endeavor that spans both time and space, across generations and cultures. In this way, God can be understood as endowing individuals with different gifts, talents, dispositions, and circumstances within which to make their unique contribution to the larger unfolding of God's creative and redemptive plan. As the Reformed theologian Abraham Kuyper (2011) puts it, "Had it been intended otherwise, then every

person, man or woman, would have to be in full possession of all genius and all talent. But this is not the case. Genius and talent appear only as distributed among a few individuals" (p. 42). Thus, he concludes, "the rich variety among people, in terms of aptitude and talent, came forth from the creation itself and belongs to the essence of human nature" (p. 43). Often this reality is explored under the rubric of the Christian doctrine of *vocation* or *calling*. There is a fundamental calling that God has laid upon every created person to exercise his or her God-given gifts (or graces) to serve both God and their fellow human beings.

The entrepreneur likewise has a particular calling to exercise his or her unique talents. As Sirico (2000) writes, "Entrepreneurship is an institution that develops organically from human intelligence situated in the context of the natural order of liberty. Those with the talent, calling, and the aptitude for economic creativity are compelled to enter the entrepreneurial vocation for the purpose of producing goods and services and providing jobs" (p. 7). Kirzner (1985) has helpfully described entrepreneurship as a kind of discovery process, a view that gains added salience when placed within the context of divine providence. The entrepreneur, as a key driver of healthy markets, can be understood as discovering and developing the possibilities that God has provided on the basis of his original creation and ongoing providential care. As Klay and Lunn (2003) write, "Through his providential care, God preserves all creation, including humanity. It seems that one way by which God preserves humanity is through specific gifts of human disposition, creativity, and vocation, such that markets produce and distribute goods and services throughout societies where no, one person or any region could be self-sufficient" (p. 557). What Kuyper (2011) observes of the artist then can be understood as applying equally well to the innovative entrepreneur: "The artist has a sharper eye. He sees what you do not see. He has a more fertile imagination and captures in the mirror of his imagination things that escape your notice. He sees more; he sees deeper; he sees better; he sees things in relationship to each other" (p. 164). The apostle Peter enjoins his listeners to "use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards

of God's grace in its various forms" (1 Peter 4:10), including the grace of entrenrepneurial insight and innovation.

LIBERTY

Since everyone has different gifts, talents, abilities, and dispositions, and the process for realizing and manifesting these is not fully understood by human beings ahead of their realization in time, the innovative diversity of entrepreneurs, and creative work more broadly, thus requires a context of liberty for the moral exercise of the creative calling. In this way, the Christian anthropology of the entrepreneur makes clear that the entrepreneur is called to both creativity and innovation. It follows, then, that authentic entrepreneurship requires a fertile political, social, and economic environment in which entrepreneurs can both envision and effect change. Entrepreneurs will not conceive ideas that seem impossible in light of assumed constraints, just as none of us would imagine what we might try if the law of gravity did not apply because no one believes that the law of gravity will be repealed.

Envisioning what new things might be possible in the future demands a future expected to hold great possibility and opportunity. The Christian virtue of hope is thus an essential element for the realization of human development (Klay & Steen, 2013). Claar et al. (2012) provide empirical evidence that attitudes regarding one's belief regarding whether one might effect change can be strongly driven by one's political and social context and history; using a survey of MBA students from the United States, Poland (a former eastern bloc nation) and Armenia (a former Soviet republic), the authors find that the U.S. students are significantly more likely to believe that they can succeed in bringing about change—even while their Armenian counterparts possess a persistence that their U.S. counterparts lack.

Skillen (2010) addresses specifically the critical role of government in creating a climate that fosters entrepreneurship. Skillen writes, “Government exists within, and to do justice to, a political community, and, to properly exercise the responsibilities of its office it must, among other things, do justice to that which does not originate with the political community, including individual and entrepreneurial responsibilities” (p. 320). Entrepreneurs thus operate within the context of social institutions, including markets and governments as well as religious institutions and families, that provide both resources and constraints.

Inasmuch as the Christian anthropology of the entrepreneur suggests that the fullest human flourishing includes both personal and material progress, the entrepreneur will achieve the most—both for herself and the community—when she possesses the freedom and moral agency to make wise, informed choices in the pursuit of her entrepreneurial calling. Szabó (2014) writes that a “Christian entrepreneur should search for…great freedom in order to follow God’s will, but this often requires making sacrifice” (p. 23). Freedom and responsibility are the hallmarks of mature human action, and in this way the moral agency of human beings must be respected and acknowledged by any legitimate complex of social institutions.

Consider an example from the New Testament of the Bible: the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25. Jesus says,

> “Again, it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted his wealth to them. To one he gave five bags of gold, to another two bags, and to another one bag, each according to his ability. Then he went on his journey. The man who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work and gained five bags more. So also, the one with

> two bags of gold gained two more. But the man who had received one bag went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.
>
> "After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have gained five more.'
>
> "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
>
> "The man with two bags of gold also came. 'Master,' he said, 'you entrusted me with two bags of gold; see, I have gained two more.'
>
> "His master replied, 'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!'
>
> "Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. So I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.'
>
> "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest" (Matthew 25: 14-27).

Both Bradley (2014) and Percy (2010) glean entrepreneurial insights from this passage. Percy notes that "the trading activity of the two stewards is important. Christ praises them for the energy, alertness and perseverance they demonstrate in making a truly significant profit" (p. 48). Percy also observes that the

fear of the lazy steward leads him to shy away from the risks and hurdles that are often essential to authentic entrepreneurial accomplishments.

Bradley devotes particular attention to the opportunities that the master affords to the stewards for their ongoing personal development and growth. The passage tells us that the master allocates the bags among his stewards according to their abilities. It is also clear that the goal of the master in the passage is not to maximize the return on his investment. If that were the case, he would have trusted his wealth with just the first two stewards, and given nothing to the third. But the master nevertheless gives even the third steward an opportunity—though relatively smaller—to develop his entrepreneurial alacrity. In the same manner, God grants human beings opportunities to exercise our own valuable entrepreneurial talent and creativity in the hope that we develop those talents and attitudes even more fully.

To the observations of Bradley and Percy we would add the following: None of the servants is given a single explicit word of instruction from their master regarding what he expects them to do once they have been trusted with his wealth. Indeed, the passage tells us only that the master hands out the bags, and then departs on his journey. He never mentions anything about desiring to increase his wealth. Upon the master's return, he lavishes his greatest praise upon the servants who—despite their seeming ignorance regarding what would give the master pleasure—assume considerable risk and creatively put the master's fortune to productive use. These servants are then entrusted with even greater responsibilities.

Thus all three stewards possessed the greatest possible liberty to decide how to care best for the master's wealth. Though given no explicit instruction, the first two stewards decide to be creative with the master's wealth, even though—like the third servant—they knew that in doing so they undertook

great risk. And it is precisely because all three stewards possessed full autonomy regarding how to care for the master's wealth that each had an opportunity to not only develop his entrepreneurial capabilities, but also to be rewarded with even greater responsibilities in the future. Moreover, the successes of the first two stewards provide not only material rewards to the master. The focus, instead, is upon the master's delight in their shrewd accomplishments.

The master's response to the servants illustrates that he assumes the moral responsibility of the servants, even without explicit or detailed instructions about the handling of their resources. The fact that two are rewarded while one is punished shows that there is an underlying assumption of culpability for the responsibility given in the care of the resources. This is the basic understanding of stewardship in the Christian tradition: On the basis of the gifts that God has given to each person, everyone is responsible to him for the exercise and development of those resources. This stewardship responsibility is summarized well in Jesus' statement that "from everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked" (Luke 12:48). Within the context of the created order, there is a relative autonomy, liberty, or independence for how to best engage and apply the resources that God has provided. But within the context of the relationship between the creature and the Creator, creatures are accountable and answerable to God for the ways in which they decide to act.

In the same way, cultivating and developing entrepreneurial skills cannot happen if humans are only given specific instructions regarding what to do—and what not to do—with the gifts we possess. Nor can we fully explore the range of entrepreneurial possibilities if institutional arrangements cordon off some regions of opportunity and discovery or try to determine or plan ahead of time what must be produced, consumed, exchanged, and distributed. As we have alluded to earlier, there is a legitimate

role for government to determine, at least in general terms and in principle, the broad realms of legally legitimate activity. These kinds of institutions of order and justice are not only permissible but actually necessary for authentic human development.

There is also an important distinction to be made between the morality and the legality of any particular undertaking. Christian entrepreneurs, for example, may decide not to engage in potentially lucrative enterprises (e.g. pornography, gambling) out of concerns about the moral validity of the industry. As Hardy (1990) writes,

> Even when we move into the realm of the morally unobjectionable, however, clearly some jobs—given the priorities of the kingdom of God—are to be preferred over others. Here all things may be permissible but not all things are expedient. In some jobs my neighbor is less well served than others…. Simply having the right attitude, the Christian attitude, is not enough. One must take into consideration the social content of one's work: am I, in my job, making a positive contribution to community, am I helping to meet legitimate needs, am I somehow enhancing what is true, what is noble, and what is worthy in human life? (p. 90)

Thus Christian entrepreneurs may focus their creative and innovative efforts on industries with lower margins out of a concern to serve those on the edges of society, represented in the Bible as the "the widow or the fatherless, the foreigner or the poor" (Zech. 7:10). Friedman and Gerstein (2015), for instance, emphasize the biblical imperative to love the stranger. Only a fertile, free society will lead to the fullest form of spontaneous dynamism that results when entrepreneurs are free to pursue their vocations lived out in response to their answers to these kinds of concerns.

CONCLUSION

The role of the entrepreneur in the market economy has received some scholarly attention, but largely continues to be mysterious, underemphasized, of underappreciated. In part this is because entrepreneurial activity has often been viewed primarily, or even exclusively, through a materialistic lens, in which the creation of wealth or the development of the material order is in focus. Although these are important and even indispensable aspects of the entrepreneurial role, the spiritual elements of entrepreneurial activity warrant greater attention. And although theologians might be expected to provide critical insight into these spiritual realities, opposition to economics as both a discipline and a realm of human activity has often prevented sustained engagement and dialogue (Ballor, 2014).

From the Christian perspective, the human person has both material as well as spiritual aspects, and the free creative and innovative activity of the entrepreneur arises out of the realities of a God-ordained and divinely created order. The human person, created in the image of God, has a responsibility to act as a productive steward of the various gifts, talents, and resources that have been endowed by the Creator. On this view, the soul of the entrepreneur is to be understood as a dynamic manifestation of the Christian conception of the human person. A Christian anthropology that relates creativity, innovation, and liberty to the entrepreneurial vocation is thus an indispensable resource for understanding the spiritual dimensions of entrepreneurship in the modern market economy.

REFERENCES

Baker, B. 2015. Entrepreneurship as a Sign of Common Grace. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 18(1): 81-98.

Ballor, J. J. 2014. Theology and Economics: A Match Made in Heaven? *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 26: 115-134.

Ballor, J. J. 2010. *Ecumenical Babel: Confusing Economic Ideology and the Church's Social Witness*. Grand Rapids, MI: Christian's Library Press.

Bradley, A. 2014. Why Does Income Inequality Exist? An Economic and Biblical Explanation. In A. Bradley & A. Lindsley (Eds.), *For the Least of These: A Biblical Answer to Poverty*, 153-174. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Choi, Y. B. 1993. Entrepreneurship and Envy. *Constitutional Political Economy* 4: 331-347.

Claar, V. V., Frey, R., Szarucki, M. & TenHaken, V. R. 2012. Hope for the East: Entrepreneurial Attitudes of MBA Students in Two Transition Economies Relative to Those in the USA. *International Journal of Business Excellence* 5: 220-237.

DeKoster, L. 2010. *Work: The Meaning of Your Life—A Christian Perspective*. Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press.

Du Plessis, S. A. 2010. How Can You Be a Christian and an Economist? The Meaning of the Accra Declaration for Today. *Faith & Economics* 56: 65-79.

Friedman, H. H. & Gerstein, M. 2015. 'Loving the Stranger': The Key to Prosperity. *Journal of Ethics & Entrepreneurship* 5: 49-65.

Hardy, L. 1990. *The Fabric of This World: Inquiries into Calling, Career Choice, and the Design of Human Work*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Hauerwas, S. 1983. Work as Co-Creation: A Critique of a Remarkably Bad Idea. In J. W. Houck & O. F. Williams (Eds.), *Co-Creation and Capitalism: John Paul II's* Laborem Exercens, 42-58. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Haymond, J. E. 2012. The Proverbs 31 Woman: Entrepreneurial Epitome? *Faith & Economics* 60: 1-16.

Hill, P. J. & Lunn, J. 2007. Markets and Morality: Things Ethicists Should Consider When Evaluating Market Exchange. *Journal of Religious Ethics* 35(4): 627-653.

Jackson, J. E. & Rodkey, G.R. 1994 The Attitudinal Climate for Entrepreneurial Activity. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 58(3): 358-380.

Kirzner, I. M. *Competition and Entrepreneurship*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973.

Kirzner, I. M. *Discovery and the Capitalist Process.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985.

Klay, R. & Lunn, J. 2003. The Relationship of God's Providence to Market Economies and Economic Theory. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 6(2): 541-564.

Klay, R. & Steen, T. 2013. Christian Hope and God's Providence in the Context of Economic Change and Development. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 16(1): 175-194.

Koellinger, P. D. & Thurik, A. R. 2012. Entrepreneurship and the Business Cycle. *Review of Economics and Statistics* 94: 1143-56.

Kuyper, A. 2011. *Wisdom & Wonder: Common Grace in Science & Art*. Grand Rapids: Christian's Library Press.

Lewis, C. S. 1972. Work and Prayer. In W. Hooper (Ed.), *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*, 105-107. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Lunn, J. 2011. Capitalism as Heresy: On Why Theologians Criticize Markets. *Faith & Economics* 57: 1-24.

Novak, M. *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.

Percy, A. *Entrepreneurship in the Catholic Tradition*. Lanham: Lexington, 2010.

Schneider, J. R. 2007. Christian Theology and the Human Ontology of Market Capitalism. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 10(2): 279-298.

Schumpeter, J. A. [1934] 1982. *The Theory of Economic Development: An Inquiry into Profits, Capital, Credit, Interest, and the Business Cycle*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction.

Shapero, A. 1985. Why entrepreneurship? A worldwide perspective. *Journal of Small Business Management* 23(4): 1-5.

Sirico, R. A. 2000. The Entrepreneurial Vocation. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 3(1): 1-21.

Skillen, J. W. 2010. Doing Justice to Entrepreneurial (and Other) Responsibilities. *Journal of Markets & Morality* 13(2): 319-344.

Szabó, A. 2014. Doing business in Christian way. *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development* 10: 16-27.