

Published by Biola University School of Business for MBA students and friends

## Word Study: **LAITY**

Laity (Greek, *laikoi*) is the whole people of God—both clergy and so-called laity. It is a term of honor since the whole people of God in Christ is chosen to be a “royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people [*laikoi*] belonging to God” (1 Peter 2:9). Christianity arose as an essentially lay movement and it was a long time before “lay” became a term for second-class status. Some pressure came from popular piety that used Old Testament models of priestly leadership and projected them into the church—even though in Christ the priestly privileges were extended to the whole church.

The most damaging influence in the decline of the laity is still with us:

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## DEVELOPMENT & DIRECTION

**Tom A. Buckles, Ph.D.**

*Associate Professor of Marketing*

From its inception, a key objective for Biola's MBA program was that it be significantly different from the thirty-seven other MBA programs in Southern California (as well as those in the rest of the United States) in its overall goals for integration of faith and learning. Four distinctives were determined, as ways of pursuing this:

- 1) A commitment to biblical integration
- 2) A focus on the entrepreneurial spirit within the corporate culture
- 3) A unique individual mentor program
- 4) A part-time format for fully employed professionals

Not only do these distinctives make Biola's MBA program significantly different from those offered by other educational institutions in Southern California, but they set it apart from its Christian counterparts across America, defining the program's own distinctive sense of purpose and ministry to the Christian community as a whole. Furthermore, when a building campaign for the School of Business was launched last spring, another distinctive was more specifically defined, namely, that this new place would be a center for building character necessary for the ministry for which the students were being equipped.

If the coupling of “business” and “ministry” takes you by surprise, you are not alone. As we considered the MBA program over the summer one issue that kept rising to the top was the artificial division that still too often exists in the minds and lives of many Christians, in practice if not intention, between the sacred and the secular. Specifically, what can Biola's MBA program do to debunk some of the common myths in this area, including:

- Being a business person is not a “real” ministry.
- While Christian missionaries may enter restricted countries as teachers, medical workers or employees, when a person establishes a profit-making business in such a country and engages in outreach, this is distinct from “missions work.”
- The main way in which one serves God in any vocation is through personal witness. One's calling, or vocation, is not in itself really that significant for the kingdom—especially if that calling is in the area of business.
- A successful business person can find a place of service in the church in administration, as part of a building or finance committee, or in teaching about personal finances; but real “spiritual” ministry is for those with other gifts.

Biola's MBA program is significantly different from those offered by other educational institutions in Southern California . . . with a distinctive sense of purpose and ministry to the Christian community as a whole.

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# On the MOVE!

**Larry D. Strand**

*Dean of the School of Business*

We are into the second year of the MBA program, and what the Lord doth provide! It seems like only yesterday we were in the planning stages of creating the program, and now we have a growing MBA program, and have already begun an aggressive promotion to get the word out. We have found that the clear expression of our distinctives has been received with genuine interest and has marked our MBA as having value beyond the typical program. Some highlights since the beginning of the summer:

- Funding for the School of Business building is in the active stage, with a continuous team effort in making contacts and developing long-term relationships. We are encouraged in the process and see progress in both relationship building and promising returns for the goal of raising \$5,000,000.
- Ten new MBA students began classes this fall. They represent a diverse range of companies, from large organizations such as Boeing, Carrier, and Samsung to regional businesses such as The Wilkin Group (Inland Empire—marketing and advertising) and SmpI Solutions (Orange County—telecom integrator services).
- The mentor program, one of the distinctives that is mentioned as a significant driver in the decision to select the Biola MBA, continues to grow in both applications and in active assigned mentors. We are grateful for the work of Harold Taber in leading this part of the program. ◇

## LAITY continued

secularization by copying the world leadership patterns. In the Greco Roman world the municipal administration has two parts: the *kleros* (clergy), the magistrate; and the *laos* (layperson), the ignorant and uneducated citizen.

Excerpted from *Liberating the Laity*, R. Paul Stevens, InterVarsity Press, 1977, p. 21. ◇

## DIRECTION continued

In early October Dean Larry Strand, Professor Steve Rundle and I attended a consultation on the role of business in relation to missions, the primary purpose of which was to bring together practitioners from all over the world to discuss the concept of kingdom entrepreneurship as a means of fulfilling the Great Commission. Steve has researched and published in the area of business as mission for the past few years and was one of the plenary speakers, discussing how to prepare the next generation of kingdom entrepreneurs (see right for a summary of his presentation).

The conference was a very rewarding experience for all involved, as we gained an even greater appreciation of the divine creativity evidenced in the ways in which participants are seeking to build “kingdom outposts” through their various ministries. The stories of what God is accomplishing through these kingdom entrepreneurs are truly amazing and miraculous—rich resources for considering opportunities for bringing the Gospel of Christ to the seemingly least hospitable places on earth and the ways in which persons can be more fully equipped to actively participate in this. We learned, for example, that many Muslim countries closed to traditional missionaries are not only open to Christian business people, but that Christians often come to be preferred as business partners who “can be trusted.” Similarly in Israel, a publicly acknowledged Christian electronics firm that carries out a thriving Christian ministry recently received the Israeli equivalent of the Malcolm Baldrige award.

Our participation in this conference affirmed what we are seeking to build into Biola's MBA program, as person after person echoed and confirmed our desire to train and equip business persons for the ministry of Christ through the development of faith, character and entrepreneurial skills. These discussions also encouraged us concerning the role Biola's MBA could play through dialogue with the church as a whole, as an advocate and encouragement for the concept of “Business as Ministry.” This, as we understand it, encompasses three components:

- 1) Encouraging domestic Christian business people to recognize their vocation as a ministry,
- 2) Promoting the role and potential of "business as mission" in obedience to the Great Commission, and
- 3) Working with and providing resources for those who desire to see their calling (ministry) flow from a life rooted in God, bearing its appointed fruit in the world (Ephesians 4:1).

We believe that a “Business as Ministry” perspective means challenging and equipping Christian business professionals to be more intentional about integrating their life and business missions, with the mission of God in the world. We are committing ourselves to train students to recognize that the lordship of Christ means more than simply using one’s giftedness to be the family provider; rather, it encompasses the whole person for the purposes of God, in much richer ways personally as well professionally.

I'd like to hear from you about this topic and the direction the MBA program is headed. Send me your questions, comments, insights, stories, resources and opinions to [mentor@biola.edu](mailto:mentor@biola.edu). ◇

# Preparing the Next Generation of KINGDOM ENTREPRENEURS

**Steve Rundle, Ph.D.**

*The following is a summary of the plenary address given at the Consultation for Kingdom Entrepreneurs at Regent University in October, 2002.*

**K**ingdom entrepreneurship is a unique, highly specialized mission strategy that combines the skills of a business person and a cross-cultural missionary. As such, it merits its own specialized training program. While it may be possible for people to acquire the necessary combination of skills on their own, if we are serious about mobilizing and equipping an entire generation of kingdom entrepreneurs, a more structured approach is required. Universities and colleges can provide the structure, consistency, and credibility that is lacking when people fashion their own training programs.

## What is different about kingdom entrepreneurship?

One would hope that all Christian business professionals reflect Christ in the marketplace. What distinguishes a kingdom entrepreneur from other Christians in the marketplace, however, is the intentionally evangelistic and cross-cultural nature of the business. Like Paul in Romans 15:20, kingdom entrepreneurs have a burden for the spiritually driest places, and are willing to live and work in those places in order to help plant churches there. Rather than perceiving the business as a distraction from ministry, kingdom entrepreneurs recognize it as the necessary context for their incarnational outreach. The daily struggles—meeting deadlines, satisfying customers, being victimized by corruption—are precisely the things that enable kingdom entrepreneurs to model Christian discipleship on a daily basis.

## Screening and selecting kingdom entrepreneurs

Little research has been done specifically on kingdom entrepreneurs, so this paper draws from two other strands of empirical research. Striking similarities were found in the problems being observed and the corrective measures being recommended for traditional missionaries and expatriate employees of multinational corporations. In both cases, the most successful overseas workers are those who not only have cross-cultural knowledge, but also a genuine enjoyment of other cultures. This is consistent with what I have observed in my own research. I have found that the most effective kingdom entrepreneurs are patient, flexible, and able to get by without the comforts of suburban America. The common ingredient in their ministry backgrounds is that they were actively involved in ministry at home long before they began living and working in a different culture. In my opinion the biggest hindrance to more consistent success with this strategy are two biases in the screening and selection process. First, the screening process seems to be all too forgiving of deficiencies in the area of practical work experience. Many candidates who go through mission agencies have little experience in secular jobs, and frankly do not care much about such jobs either, except for their usefulness as an “entry

strategy.” Such an attitude is a good recipe for frustration and failure. In addition, the screening process gives too much credit for formal Bible training, even though the evidence linking such training and cross-cultural ministry effectiveness is weak at best. Put another way, formal Bible training is not a good predictor of who will be successful in cross-cultural ministry. Yet on that basis alone some ill-equipped candidates have slipped through the screening process.

## The training of kingdom entrepreneurs

Kingdom entrepreneurship is a missionary strategy that combines the skills of a business person and a missionary. It is more than an entry strategy for missionaries, and involves more than simply integrating faith and work. Failure to recognize the uniqueness of the strategy, and the preparation required, is the single biggest reason why the track record is not better than it is. Failure to recognize the uniqueness of this mission strategy is also the reason why Christian universities have not responded sooner. The good news is that many of the resources necessary to create such a program are already in place and merely have to be packaged in a way that makes sense. We need to create joint degree programs rather than trying to blend business and missions courses into a single degree. The screening and training of kingdom entrepreneurs needs to focus on two areas: (1) spiritual maturity and the ability to share one’s faith cross-culturally, and (2) the appropriate professional training and experience. The typical Christian business program is weak in the first area, and seminaries are obviously weak in the second area. Preparing the next generation of kingdom entrepreneurs will require programs that integrate both. Joint degree programs allow each degree-awarding school to keep to its primary area of specialty and accreditation. The downside, of course, is the extra time required, but the result would be an all-around stronger program and a more qualified candidate. ◇

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*Steve Rundle is associate professor of economics in Biola's School of Business, attends Sierra Madre Congregational Church and lives in Pasadena with his wife and three year-old daughter.*

# "GO TO" RESOURCES

This space will provide web site, article, and book reviews to help build the character necessary for the ministry for which you are called. If you come across a resource you think is worth sharing, please let us know ([mentor@biola.edu](mailto:mentor@biola.edu)).

Looking for a book to encourage you that your "work" is of real significance to God? That will provide a theological framework to what is now called the "marketplace movement"? R. Paul Stevens' book ***The Other Six Days: Vocation, Work, and Ministry in Biblical Perspective*** (Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., August 2000, ISBN: 0802848001) will not be a disappointment.

Exploring the theological, structural, and cultural reasons for treating laypeople as the objects of ministry, Stevens shows that the clergy-laity division has no basis in the New Testament and challenges all Christians to rediscover what it means to live daily as God's people. He shows that the task of churches today is to equip people for ministry in their homes, workplaces, and neighborhoods. Further, *all* believers are called to participate in God's mission to the world.

What is significant about "The Other Six Days" is its approach. This is not a popular critique of the separation between work and worship, mission and ministry, clergy and laity. Instead it reconstructs a unifying theology arising out of scripture, flowing out of the Trinity providing a paradigm of vocation, work, ministry and mission as an integrated whole. The outcome sought is all the people of God participating in the work, mission and ministry of the triune God.

This book is excellent for group or individual study, reflection and interaction. There are end of the chapter discussion questions, contemporary case studies to explore, situations to evaluate and examples to analyze. A good selected bibliography and biblical references for further exploration is also provided.

Overall, this book should result in a dynamic new way of understanding "calling," work, ministry and mission. ◇

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R. Paul Stevens is the David J. Brown Family Professor of Marketplace Theology and Leadership at Regent College in Vancouver, B.C. Among other books, he is the author of *Liberating the Laity* (1977), coeditor of *The Complete Book of Everyday Christianity* (1998), coauthor (with J. I. Packer) *The Equipper's Guide to Every-Member Ministry: Eight Ways Ordinary People Can Do the Work of the Church* (2000), and coeditor *The Marketplace Annotated Bibliography: A Christian Guide to Books on Work, Business and Vocation* (2002).

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