

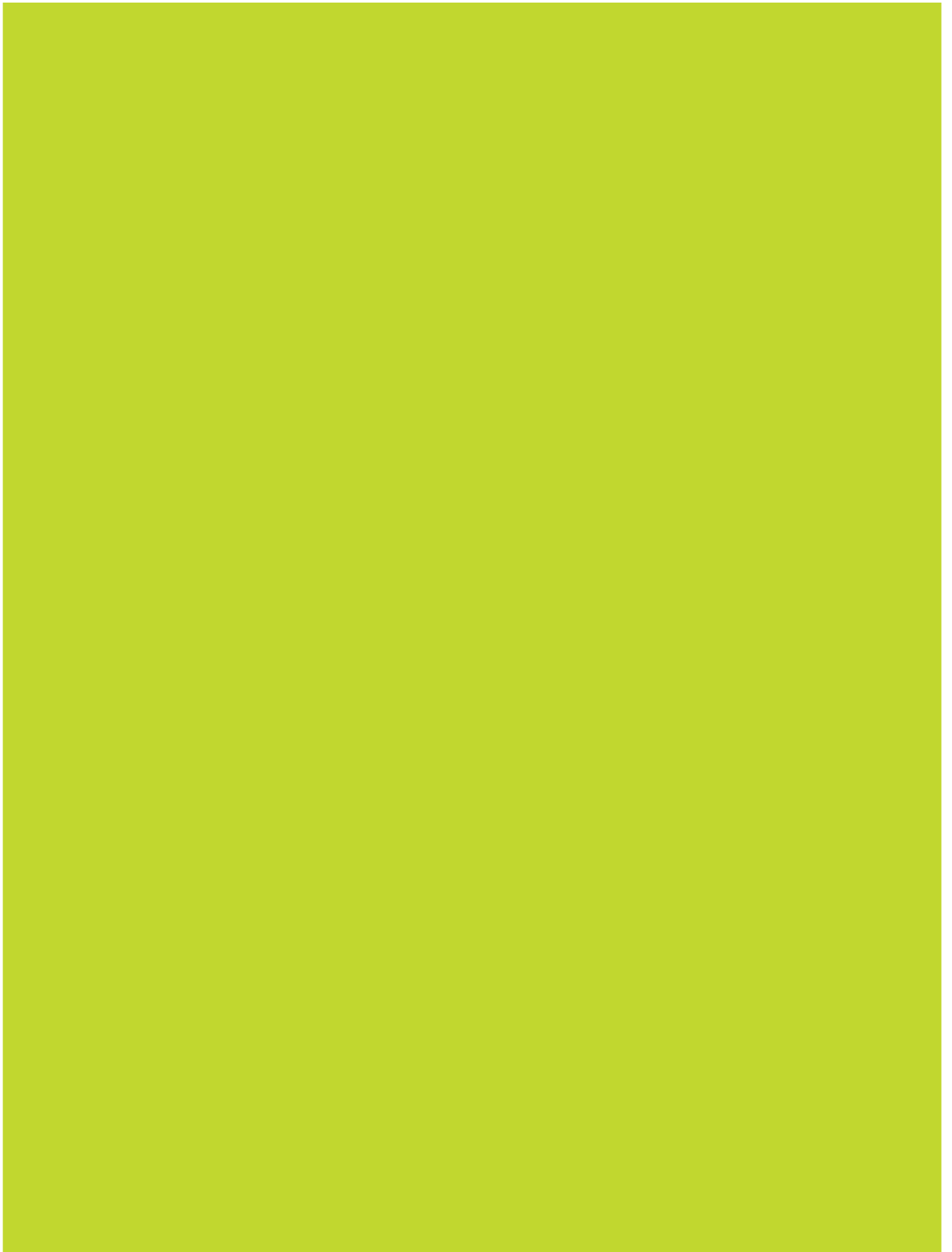
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KingdomProject™

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CONNECTING YOUR WORK LIFE WITH THE REDEMPITIVE MISSION OF CHRIST.



Be a shepherd,  
not a sheep.

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The Kingdom Project™ is a no-cost discipleship/training program designed to help business/institutional leaders more fully connect their vocational gifts and corporate enterprises with the redemptive mission of Christ.

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## Kingdom Project Will:

- Give you new ways to think about faith in the marketplace.
  - Help you consider your vocation and its role in advancing the kingdom of God.
  - Allow you to think in new terms about your organization's role in advancing the kingdom of God.
  - Equip you to improve the performance of your organization by improving the lives of your coworkers, employees, and clients.
  - Show how you can improve the society by aligning the interests/operation of your enterprise with the kingdom of Christ.
  - Illuminate and validate your work in this *missional* calling so that you advance the kingdom through your vocation.
  - Equip you and your company to become a “creator” of culture in hopes of supplanting the prevailing culture.
  - Demonstrate how you can establish a legacy with eternal significance and lasting value.
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## The Situation

The corporate culture in America is perhaps one of the most challenging arenas for modern Christians to effectively live out and apply their faith. Is it also one of the most influential contributors to the creation of culture in twenty-first century America and therefore should be established under the lordship of Christ.

Historically, it was Christian ideas and principles that gave birth to free-market capitalism, established work as a noble calling, created the means of finance, and encouraged the concept of capital investment. Christianity—believing human beings were made in the image of God—prioritized the development of human potential as expressed in one's vocation and ignited unparalleled entrepreneurialism, creating the largest economy in the history of the world. These consciously Christian economic principles have fostered more human flourishing—lifting more people out of poverty—and proven more beneficial to humanity than any other political or economic enterprise in all of human history. What may be surprising to note by many Christians today is that this historic activity was not seen as collateral to the Christian faith but actually an integral part of God's redemptive kingdom come into the world (i.e., the gospel or “good news” of the kingdom).

In the post industrial-revolution era, there is perhaps no more important sphere of American life and culture than business to transform with the gospel of the kingdom. For most of human history, predominantly agrarian societies were the cultural context into which the church carried its mission. Commercial enterprises existed on a smaller scale, touching far fewer people. Starvation was a much more pressing concern than “career development.” This is clearly no longer the case. We now live in a culture shaped, in large part, by global corporations and powerful business conglomerates. As a result, the church must seriously consider this new context as an opportunity to bear witness to the King and advance his kingdom.

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## The Problem

While there is no doubt a scientific aspect of business—absolutes that are inviolable, such as general accounting principles and profit margins related to expenses—there is also an essential philosophical aspect. Every successful commercial enterprise is ultimately a marriage of the two: sound business science wedded to a given business philosophy or vision. The difference between success and mediocrity or *failure* lies not so much with the quality of science—for these principles are nearly universal—but in the strength of vision or philosophy that drives the enterprise and its employees. The Bible underscores this principle in Proverbs 29:18, which says, “Where there is no vision, the people perish” (KJV).

**The question ultimately becomes, What philosophy governs your business?** Suffice it to say, the vast majority of American businesses are no longer guided by a consciously Christian conception of reality (a Christian worldview), in which business is understood as a *redemptive instrument* that serves to either fulfill the dominion mandate or advance Christ’s kingdom. And, given the fact that only 4 percent of Americans (77 percent of whom claim to be Christian) possess even a rudimentary understanding of the Christian worldview, according to recent research, the church is presently doing very little to reverse this condition.

Presently, and by every measureable account, this former depth of theological wisdom (or the Christian worldview) applied to public life has been largely forgotten. As a result, many Christians have come to understand the role of their faith in the marketplace in overly simplistic terms. Today being a Christian businessman is almost always reduced to nothing more than personal piety and evangelism in the workplace. Others may feel that giving a portion of their profits to missions satisfies their business’s missional purpose. *While all of these are indeed good, this worldview of business remains inadequate in advancing the all-encompassing redemptive mission of Christ, that is, the kingdom.*

Furthermore, this narrow view of faith in the workplace has left many Christians devoid of true meaning and purpose relative to their personal vocations. They do not see their work as a holy calling that can practically serve to advance the kingdom of God on earth. In the most practical terms, their faith remains disconnected from a significant portion of their life: their vocation. One consequence of this disconnect is that many Christians fall into the false position of trying to derive meaning and purpose *from* their work. In biblical terms, this is idolatry! Instead, the Christian—having been “raised to new life in Christ,” been given a new identity and purpose—must now bring *that* meaning and purpose *to* his work. This, and only this, can provide real meaning, purpose, and satisfaction to one’s vocation, whether that be mopping floors or working as a corporate CEO.

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## A Solution

While there is much talk within the church today of the Christian worldview, we would argue that most of these discussions remain academic. In other words, most worldview training remains at the 50,000-foot level, centered on the *historic* role of Christianity in shaping Western civilization. Others simply illuminate the contrast between the secular and biblical views of morality and ethics. While this knowledge is no doubt important, and provides an essential foundation, it often lacks ground-level application. This weakness was the inspiration for the Kingdom Project.

**After more than eight years of writing, teaching, and speaking on the subject of Christian worldview from an academic level, S. Michael Craven now wants to personally help others apply these principles so they can both experience personal transformation and become transforming agents themselves.** Our desire is to help Christian business/institutional leaders discover how their vocational gifts *and their enterprises* can tangibly advance the kingdom of God.



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## Theological Consultation

Businesses today employ every sort of consultant, but how many employ a theological consultant? How can one possibly discover and appropriate real wisdom apart from the ultimate source of all truth? John Calvin wrote, “No man can survey himself without forthwith turning his thoughts towards the God in whom he lives and moves.” Every human enterprise attempts to “live and move” either in connection to the truth of God or in ignorance and sometimes denial of this fact. The latter leads to disobedience and failure, the former to obedience and blessing. But what if you had a *theological* consultant who could help you analyze and connect your business with the redemptive mission of Christ? What if someone who possessed keen *theological* understanding could mentor you, someone with uncommon sociological and cultural insight who also has experience as a corporate CEO? What if “corporate discipleship” were to enter your realm of business counsel?

What if every aspect of your organization were ordered under God’s kingdom principles—*the true interpretation of reality*—and your business actually served to *establish* Christ’s kingdom on earth? If all authority on heaven and earth has been given to Jesus, and God’s redemptive plan in history extends to all of creation, then your business can and should serve this redemptive activity.

This isn’t some naive notion of business that denies the realities of the bottom line—but *the bottom line cannot be the overarching purpose of your business* any more than breathing can be the overarching purpose of life. Breathing is certainly essential to life but it is not the purpose for which we were created! Likewise, profit is certainly essential to business, but in the scope of a Christian worldview, it is not the purpose of your business. Even secular businesses understand this principle, which is why visionary businesses—driven by purpose rather than profit—are among the most successful and enduring companies in history.

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## Creating Culture and Success

What if your business philosophy were properly aligned with the principles of God’s ever expanding kingdom? Clearly you would deepen your sense of purpose *and* you would seek first the kingdom, as Christ commands through your vocational calling. It also becomes possible that the church could, once again, become the influential creator of culture that it is called to be. We would also add that in so doing you would best position your company for long-term success and doing the most good. Is it realistic to believe that one can order one’s life and activity *apart* from God’s plan and enjoy true success?

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## How it Works

The challenge lies in the “renewing of our mind,” putting off the accepted principles and practices of the world, overcoming the fear of living by faith, as well as understanding and applying, in practical terms, the principles of the kingdom to your corporate life and culture. In support of these goals we will provide the following:

**Personal discipleship/mentoring/theological consulting:** Through routinely scheduled meetings, you and/or your executive team will receive theological consultation/instruction (corporate discipleship) related to your particular business/enterprise.

**Corporate Analysis:** We will train your executive/management team to analyze your corporate enterprise from a distinctly theological perspective. Once empowered, we will aid you/them in identifying areas of opportunity for the integration of kingdom principles that advance the kingdom of God. Sample diagnostic topics may include:

- (A) What role does your business play in the redemptive mission of Christ (i.e., the advance of God’s kingdom)?
- (B) Is your company structured in such a way that it works to relieve and remedy the practical effects of sin in the lives of its employees, the community, society, and so on?
- (C) Is your company structured in such a way that it loves its employees and customers unconditionally or is love performance-based (that is, conditional)?
- (D) How does your corporate culture bear witness to what life looks like under the reign of God?
- (E) How does management shepherd those in their employ?
- (F) How do your company’s products/services serve either the “dominion mandate” (Genesis 3) or the redemptive work of the kingdom?

**Implementation:** We will help your team develop an implementation plan (the timetable and execution remain yours) for the integration of these principles, thereby creating a business enterprise (i.e., community) that serves both God-honoring ambitions for growth and profitability and to advance the kingdom. Key areas for consideration may include:

- (A) Operational strategies and business practices that are animated by *love of neighbor*.
- (B) HR policies that see employees as human persons made in the image of God (*imago Dei*).
- (C) Personnel development strategies that engage the whole person beyond his vocational contributions to the company.
- (D) Compensation strategies incentivized by *purpose* rather than profit-making.
- (E) Hiring practices that intentionally seek to develop and employ the marginalized, handicapped, etc.
- (F) Corporate responsibility strategies that engage employees and promote volunteerism.

With more than twenty-nine years of business and leadership experience at the highest executive levels, combined with theological wisdom and cultural insight, accomplished author, speaker, and teacher S. Michael Craven is uniquely positioned to help you appropriate and apply the principles of the kingdom to your business. In doing so, we believe you will more fully discover the purpose for which you were made and more closely align your work in business with God’s redemptive plan in the world (i.e., the *missio Dei*).

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## What it Costs

**There are no fees and we do not charge for this service.** This remains first and foremost a ministry consistent with the long-held mission of the Center for Christ & Culture, which is to equip Christians to engage the culture with the redemptive mission of Christ. **We only require that all expenses (including travel-related, outside costs, and any other related disbursements) be covered.**

The Center for Christ & Culture is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. Donations are tax deductible.

**GETTING STARTED:** To begin your Kingdom Project simply complete the online application at [www.MyKingdomProject.org](http://www.MyKingdomProject.org).

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# KingdomProject™

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