

How Christian Entrepreneurs Can Save the Church . . . and the World

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What is Entrepreneurship?

According to Harvard Professor Howard Stevenson, entrepreneurship is defined as:

“The pursuit of opportunity beyond resources controlled.”

“Pursuit”

- Albert Einstein: “Nothing Happens Unless Something Moves”
- Guy Kawasaki: “Don’t Worry Be Crappy”
- Winston Churchill: “Never Never Never Give Up”
- Bias Towards Action
- Don’t stop even when you look ridiculous (Disney, Cell Phones, Ebay)

“Opportunity”

Keep your eyes open and have an OUTWARD (not inward) focus:

- Pain equals opportunity
- What is your relevant “market”?
- What do you potential “customers” want and need?
- Religion is on the decline but spirituality is on the rise: A BIG MARKET OPPORTUNITY FOR CHURCHES!!!

“Beyond Resources Controlled”

- The Entrepreneurial Mindset: “Go Big or Go Home” (Johnny Tsunami)
- Star Trek Theology: “Boldly Go” “The Good of the Many Outweigh the Good of the Few”
- Capture the imagination of how things COULD be
- Get the word out through marketing and visibility
- Be the place people want to be . . . “if you’re so good then people should be knocking down your door to get in”

The Challenge for Long Standing Institutions the Could bring them Failure

- The Biggest Competitor is the Status Quo: Trying so Hard to “Hold On”
- Creativity and Risk Taking are Lost or Overcome by Fear of Failure
- All Institutions have a “useful life” and don’t have to continue forever, and their termination is natural if they don’t pivot to meet the market needs (e.g. Blockbuster vs. Netflix)

Why Christian Entrepreneurs?

- Sacrifice, hope and service to others
- God the “Creator” and Jesus the Entrepreneur
- “Love without action is meaningless”
- Church history of innovation and entrepreneurship
- Vast Church support system and network
- Social Gospel Movement

What is the “Church” model of the future?

Some possibilities:

- More than Sundays
- Church as Community Center?
- Church as Incubator?
- Church as Co-Working Facility?

Some Aspects of the Reinventing Central Union Church

- CUC is land rich and cash challenged . . . this will likely only get worse
- The optimal approach is generating positive cash flow by carrying out its mission. Other approaches, e.g. selling or renting land or starting unrelated businesses on site, do not expand CUC's mission, and only kick the can down the road
- Churches like CUC are legally permitted, like hospitals, to make money carrying out its mission.
- Create value first, and then the money will take care of itself

Central Union Has Competitive Advantages and “Secret Sauce”

- Standing in the Community and Credibility
- Plenty “Resources Controlled”
- Membership
- Mantra: “Love Never Faileth”

Final Thought

The “survival” of Central Union Church should not be the main objective or the most important thing.

So what is?

Serving the Needs of Community

- Need to find a sense of “urgency”
- The facilities and land are just “things” and there is no independent need to “save” them apart from serving the community
- Can the land and facilities be repurposed to better serve the community?
- What other “resources” beyond money can CUC leverage to make impacts?
- What does “love” have to do with it??? **EVERYTHING . . . IT’S THE FUEL THAT PROPELS CHRISTIANS TO DO AMAZING THINGS!!!**

Our charge is to help the “Whole Creation”

PUT LOVE INTO ACTION . . . IT WILL NOT FAILETH YOU