

Warde Rooted

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Our Mission

Warde Rooted is a journal of Christian thought written by students who believe faith and learning grow from the same root. Each issue brings biblical wisdom into conversation with the subjects we study and the careers we're preparing for, from business and science to art and politics.



Contents

The Original Word 4
By Oliver White

Redefining Success 8
By Antoni Moczerniuk

The Weight of the World 15
By Cooper Fichandler

World's Above 18
By Matthew Marsick

The Original Word

Oliver White

A student marches across the stage in his cap and gown, receives his diploma, moves the tassels from right to left; Finally, he tosses his cap in the air, signifying the end of his higher education. He worked hard for four years, receiving a degree in marketing, and strives to be the best. Throughout his college experience, he was taught the ins and outs of marketing: taking classes in psychology, communication, business strategy, and analytics. He learns that to be successful in the industry it is important to focus on four things: understanding the customer, creating an identity and reputation, communicating clearly, and having good ethics.



It's important to note that it's not all about selling the product, but about your audience, building relationships, and communicating. So, where does this instinct for trust based connection come from?

Humans were created in a unique way, responding to those who they know and like, as trust-based connections are much more reliable than a strictly transactional one. Humans relate to this form of connection because we all have a creator, a loving God that made us in his image. He created us to form relationships, to love one another, and to lead by example, which emphasizes how many lessons taught nowadays can be drawn back to the Bible. Jesus and His disciples did not treat the good news of the gospel as a transaction, where followers must do something to receive the gifts of God. Instead of this, it was evangelism that was based on a strong relationship, both with God and with others.

Notably, Paul built strong relationships with those he was teaching, which was extremely effective, as Christianity spread throughout the world, and the disciples went far and wide with the word of God. This approach is very similar to that of modern times, which is for a reason. I will explore how many of the communication principles that make modern marketing effective are the same principles demonstrated throughout Scripture, revealing how biblical wisdom continues to inform effective communication today.

The Apostle Paul was arguably one of the most influential people in the Bible, as he wrote 13 books of the New Testament, planted numerous churches, and evangelized to all nations. He travelled thousands of miles throughout the Middle East proclaiming to Jews and Gentiles alike the good news of Jesus Christ, being one of the most efficient and powerful evangelists of all time.

Some might argue that painting Paul in the same light as a modern-day businessman is sacrilegious, and that he had a much more powerful conviction and purpose than those on Wall Street. The answer to this is that he did, as he spread a message of selflessness, love, and compassion: one that is much different from that of today. He was sent by God to preach as opposed to those today that are in the business world for selfish reasons.



However, it is important to not ignore the parallels. Academic and Marketing Professor Robert M. Morgan tells us that “modern marketing theory emphasizes that long-term success is built on trust and commitment rather than purely transactional exchanges.” This can be drawn back to Proverbs 28:20 where it says that “A faithful man will abound with blessings, but whoever hastens to be rich will not go unpunished.” Faithfulness in the Bible can be described as loyalty and unwavering reliability. These two messages preach the same thing: Trust and loyalty are the fundamentals of human connection.

While the disciples did have a much more important mission, it is still important to note how the Gospel was spread.

On the other hand, people debate that Christians are trying to take credit for the principles of our society, and that we are just projecting our faith onto a modern development. They suggest that there is no correlation between the two, and that it is a stretch to say that the principles we find today stemmed from thousands of years ago in the Bible.

The Oxford University Press claims that “The Bible informed the way many late eighteenth-century Americans thought about human nature, civic virtue, social order, political authority, the rights and duties of citizens, and other ideas vital to the establishment of a political society.” Many foundational beliefs and habits in our society are informed by the Bible. This includes communication through marketing strategy. Companies today realize that success in the long run is not dependent on the products alone but on creating a trusting relationship with their customers.

One modern example of this is Chick-fil-A, who has built their reputation through consistent service in their communities and upholding good customer service. While it is not perfect, their success indicates that trust and character often create a strong customer loyalty. These principles are taught in business schools today, but scripture also emphasized the importance of honesty and long term trust many centuries before.

Jesus Christ was the perfect communicator. He embodies everything that is to be an effective communicator. He spoke in parables, formed relationships, he was authentic, and he practiced what he preached. While he did preach to the religious elites such as the Pharisees and Sadducees, he also taught common people and social outcasts.



His disciples were fishermen and tax collectors. He did not withhold his message and taught in ways that everyone could understand: He used parables and analogies with them.

For example, in the gospels, such as in Matthew 13:47-50, Jesus tells the Parable of the Net, in which he explains the kingdom of heaven in the terms of a fishing net. He says that the kingdom of heaven is like a net that gathers fish; The good fish are sorted into containers while the bad fish are thrown away. It teaches the afterlife in simpler terms for his audience. This is extremely helpful because many of the people that he was preaching to were fishermen, and Jesus spoke in their language to help convey his message. He understood that it is important to know your audience and to communicate clearly to get your message across, an important lesson taught today. Jesus Christ represents many truths that are crucial to real human connection and relationship: something modern day marketing students are taking notes on.

As that graduate walks across the stage and tosses his cap in the air, he carries more than a diploma in marketing; He carries a set of principles that are not inventions of the business school but lessons from a much older wisdom. Paul understood his audience well and built his relationships on a strong foundation. Jesus reached fishermen through parables and examples to better connect and explain it to them. Neither one of them was selling a product, but building trust, and an authentic relationship. Now, students must realize that it is not just an interesting parallel, rather a blueprint to forming relationships in the business world. God created us to connect, not just at church on Sundays, but throughout our careers and life in its entirety.



Oliver White

Class of 2027

Redefining Success

Antoni Moczerniuk

Sitting in a high stakes interview for a prestigious internship, an ambitious business student feels ready and ecstatic after years of mastering spreadsheets, cost cutting strategies, and financial optimization. Yet, as the process of corporate acclimation begins, these people are quickly confronted with an unseen reality: the ultimate measure of success is shareholder dominance, a world where profits must rise even if it means squeezing suppliers and turning a blind eye to the exploitation of human life.



With all of the corruption, cruelty, and callousness that the elites of our world achieve on a daily basis, it is no wonder why some areas of work no longer feel fulfilling: our modern workplace society pushes more towards financial success and security than true happiness. It is here, with all of the hostility toward Christianity seen today, and all of the distancing that companies do to separate employees' jobs from their personal lives, that we must reestablish our economy in a way that everyone involved can reap the rewards, not just the wealthy few who built their successful lives off of manipulating the situations of others.

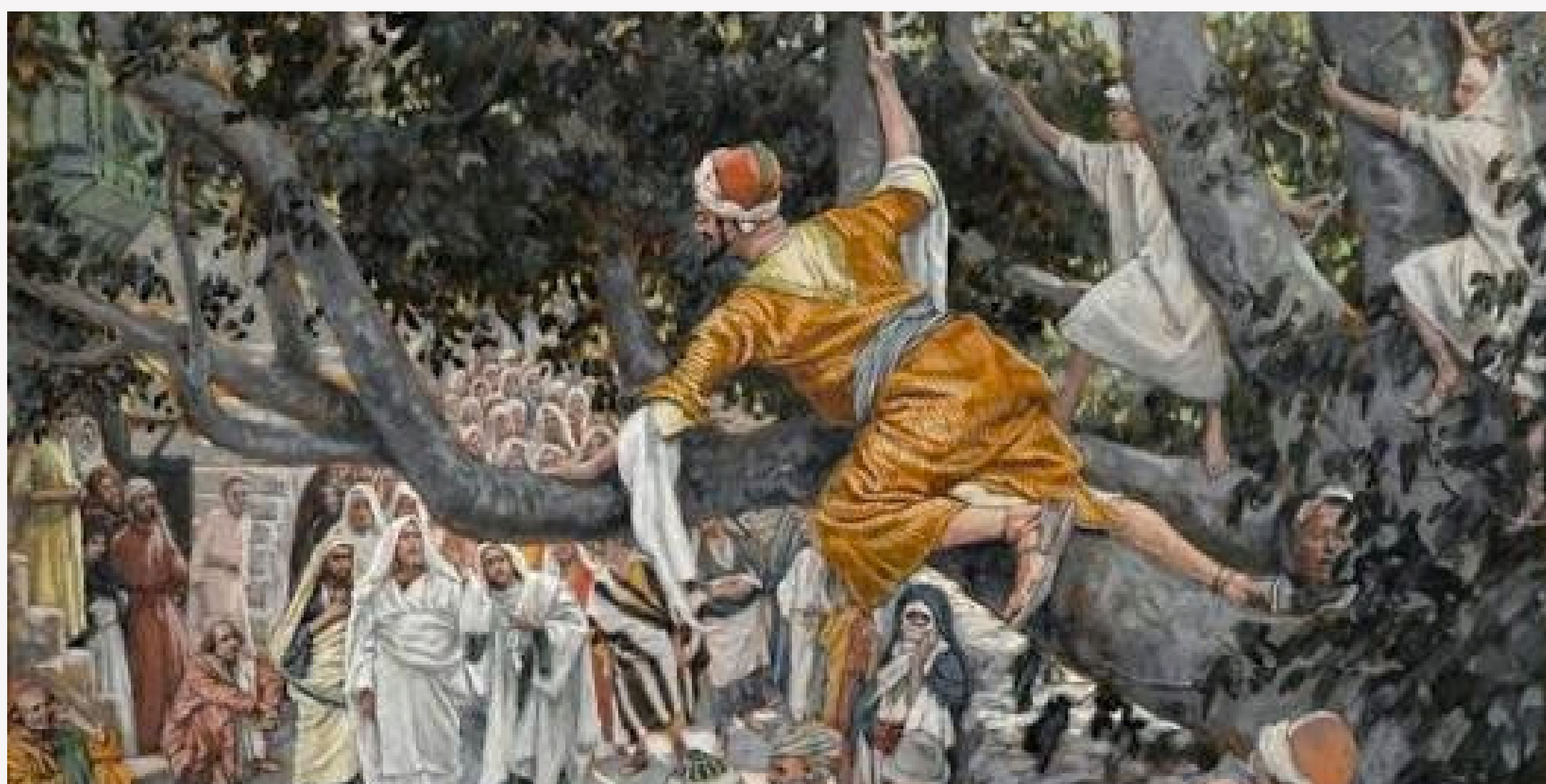
We must pivot to making the world a better place for us all, just as the Lord our God would have done. Hence, we should all strive to be like Zacchaeus: the wealthy but disliked chief tax collector in Jericho. Zacchaeus was moved by the stories of Jesus, being one of the many who poured into the streets of Jericho to catch a mere glimpse of the Son of God. However, being too short to see through the sea of citizens, Zacchaeus climbed a nearby tree to get a better vantage point.

As Jesus passed by the Tree, he called Zacchaeus by name, and announced to the crowd that He intended to stay at his house that day. Thrilled at the declaration, Zacchaeus welcomed Jesus to his home, leading Him through a disapproving crowd on the way. Deeply moved by Jesus's acceptance and love for him, "Zacchaeus stood up and said to The Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount'" (Luke 19:8).

In response to this dramatic change of heart, Jesus declared that salvation had come to Zacchaeus's home, affirming that He came to seek and save. The story of Zacchaeus shows us the everlasting love and acceptance of The Lord, and how his teachings can rebuild the bridges that were destroyed by our greed and sin.

Additionally, Author Amy Lindeman Allen perfectly ties this story with how it can help out the state of our economy today: observing that "Zacchaeus's encounter with Jesus demonstrates that true repentance within an exploitative socioeconomic system requires structural restitution and a radical reorientation of corporate wealth toward community care" (Political Theology Network). Let us all strive to be more like Zacchaeus, working to homogenize our workforce, rekindle relationships, build trust, and work towards collective ascension instead of individual greed.

On the other hand, some argue that Zacchaeus's sudden transformation is viewed too idealistically, and they question the long term sincerity of his sudden pledge. They suggest that a single emotional encounter with the Lord rarely dismantles a lifetime of greed, sin, and bad habits. In this view, emotional awakenings cannot override the structure of financial systems, which prioritizes wealth allocation above anything else.



This focus on profit making is best touched upon by economist Milton Friedman, who asserted that “There is one and only one social responsibility of business: to use its resources and engage in activities designed to increase its profits so long as it stays within the rules of the game, which is to say, engages in open and free competition without deception or fraud.” While Friedman’s profit centered model dominated the late 20th and early 21st centuries, modern ethical beliefs have shifted away from this methodology.

As the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* notes, “While shareholder primacy models suggest that managers should maximize financial returns above all else, stakeholder theories argue that businesses have extensive moral obligations to all individuals impacted by their operations.” This quote directly challenges the beliefs of Friedman and other profit focused businessmen, exposing the moral clash between shareholder primacy stakeholder theory. It introduces a shift that could radically change the way the business world works for everyone: a world where every worker at every position is compensated fairly for the contribution they bring; a world where the affluent elite sacrifice their resources, greed, and life of sin to make the world a better place.

This shift is not just ethical; it is practical. According to research published by Taylor & Francis, “Modern governance frameworks must expand to legally and ethically accommodate a plurality of institutional objectives beyond raw profit optimization if firms are to remain sustainable in a complex global economy.” It is a powerful blow to the claims made by Friedman, but also a potent advocate for discoveries made by the *Stanford Encyclopedia*: contending that businesses must enhance their ethical code in order to sustain and progress our global economy.

With this rising clash between shareholder primacy and stakeholder theory, more and more people attempt to break the status quo of cruelty and corruption that we see in the world of business, attempting to embrace a multitude of goals beyond just profit gain. Taking this uprising into account, we can transform our work environments into a place of equality, but also maintain that goal of profit maximization. After all, as Christians, we must not be motivated by greed. We must not be embellished by our wealth. Instead, we must work together as one body and mind, slowly improving our lives and the lives of our acquaintances. If we are blessed with wealth, we must dedicate it all to our Lord: to give it back to the world and make it a better place, just as Zacchaeus did 2,000 years ago.

Thus, in order to reshape the way the corporate world operates, we must first destroy the elitist assumption that human workers are just instruments utilized to increase the value of capital. We must strip the lies of greed from the eyes of the elite, shatter the current inescapable economic system of our planet, which relies almost entirely on your land of birth; and most importantly: we must give the elite their humanity back. The plurocrats of this world need to realize that the human beings that they exploit are the actual creators of their wealth, not just line item expenses on their spreadsheets. Historical groundworks for Christian based economics directly challenges shareholder primacy, asserting that the people involved in the creation of wealth must always be prioritized over gaining material wealth.

As Pope John Paul II noted, “The principle of the priority of labor over capital must be upheld because human work remains the primary efficient cause of all economic activity, while capital is a mere instrument.” When corporations prioritize capital over the human cause, the ethical foundation of commerce itself collapses. This contradiction will inevitably lead to uneven wealth distribution, environmental destruction, and exploitation; The latter of which prompted Pope Leo XIII to warn that “to lay upon the



teeming masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than that of slavery itself is a profound injustice that violates the natural dignity of human work.”

This quote directly dismantles the argument of Milton Friedman, who argued that a manager’s only duty is to make money for the owners; whereas Pope Leo XIII’s quote verifies that prioritizing capital over labor is a form of workplace violence, and exposing far we have descended into barbarity at the mere thought of cash flowing through our bank accounts. On the other hand, Pope Leo simultaneously reinforces our claim, showing that just as Zacchaeus had to realize that his wealth was created by exploiting others, modern business leaders must realize that true success cannot be achieved by degrading those who built it.



By recognizing that human labor holds priority over capital gain, corporate leaders can begin expanding their morality past the walls of their headquarters and look directly at the human cost inside their own global supply chains.

In today's world, the true measure of a faith rooted corporate ethics model does not lie in how a company treats its executives, but in how it protects the most vulnerable people at the very bottom of its global supply chain. Our global interconnectedness allows corporations to distance themselves from the human cost of production by outsourcing its labor to developing countries, such as Vietnam, Mexico, and Poland.

However, our christian based ethics insist that the distance does not erase our accountability. According to research found in JSTOR, "Multinational corporations possess a moral obligation to ensure that the workers in their global supply chains are provided with living wages and safe conditions that respect their inherent human dignity." From a theological point of view, this responsibility is established in the sacred value of the person, instead of the geographic or economic utility they possess. As a result, Christianity.com emphasizes that "because every individual is made in the image of God, Christian consumers and business leaders are called to actively oppose supply chains that reduce marginalized workers to mere objects of economic convenience."

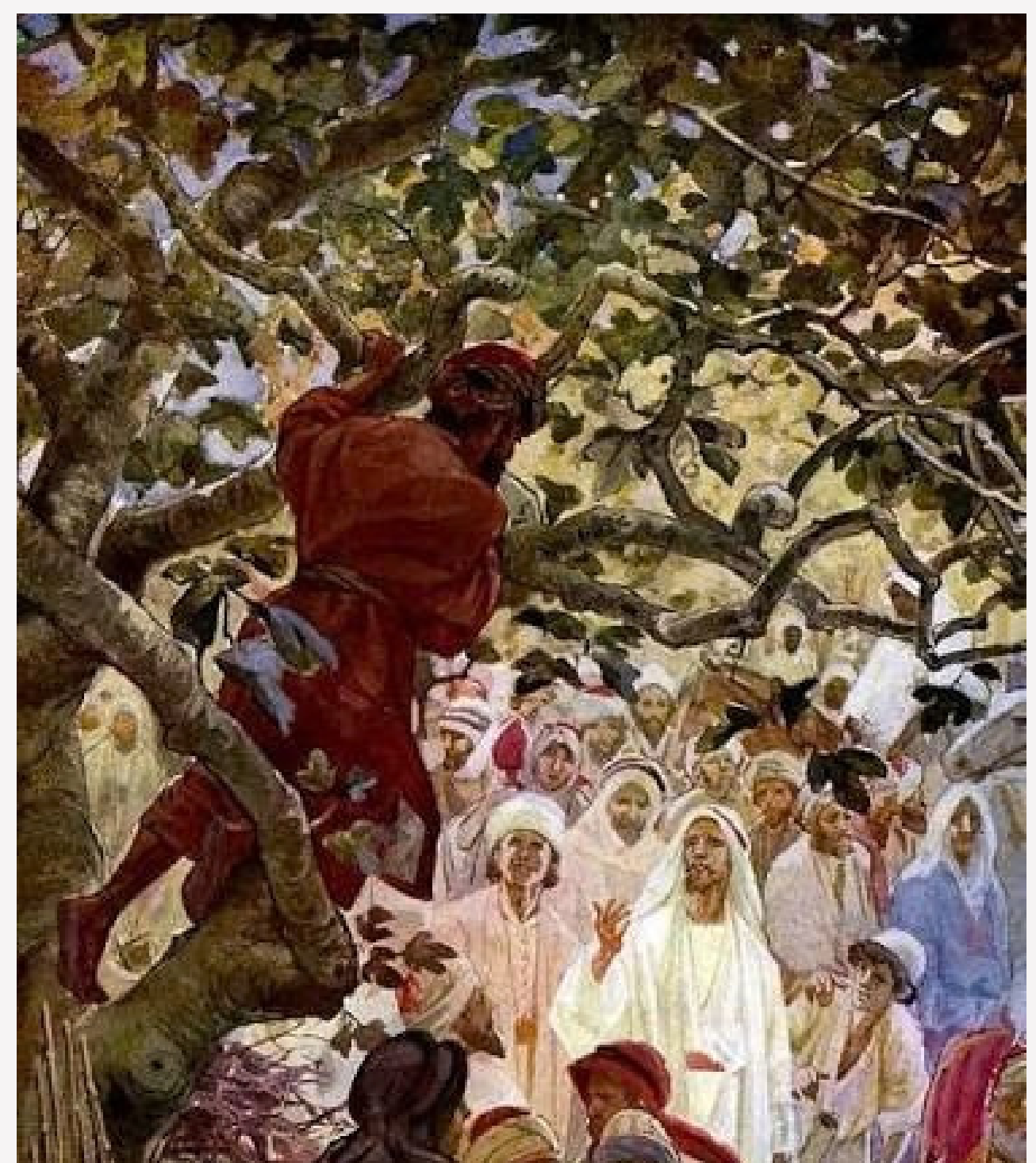
Evidently, this standard completely shatters Friedman's claim that a company's only moral duty is to maximize investor returns. Under a Christian framework, a corporation cannot proclaim it is acting responsibly just because its overseas sweatshops are legal; if a supply chain strips a worker of their human dignity and rights, it is a failure of morality: something that cannot be justified no matter the profits gained. However, this Christian necessity to oppose exploitation reflects the exact realization that transformed Zacchaeus. He did not just change his personal desires: he looked back at the vulnerable people he had manipulated and used his resources to actively right his sinful actions.

Once a business acknowledges its moral responsibility to these vulnerable foreign workers, the entire goal of commerce must shift away from restrictive employment towards an economy focused on universal justice).

Ultimately, applying a Christian lens to corporate governance does not mean abandoning the marketplace, but rather transforming it from an engine of extraction into a system of societal restoration. We must restructure the business world, shifting it away from the systems that run on the greed and cruelty of the elites, along with the exploitation and vulnerability of the people at the bottom of the chain. As Pope Benedict XVI argues, “The market must be guided by the principles of justice and the common good, rather than being left entirely to the forces of club competition and unchecked external exploitation.”

When justice becomes the guiding measurement, the very objective of corporate strategy transforms. This ideal shift is similarly expressed by theologians Wong and Rae, who note that “a truly Christian vision for the marketplace redefines corporate success from mere wealth extraction to the purposeful cultivation of products and systems that serve global human flourishing.” This goal of “human flourishing” must be pushed more in our society, working towards the great good of our species instead of the cold goals of “profit maximization.” Friedman’s view on the global economy is short sighted, selfish, and unfulfilling for the human soul, whereas the Christian view presented by Pope Benedict XVI, Wong and Rae create a sustainable, integrated, and balanced economic system for the citizens of our planet.

This comprehensive vision of human flourishing brings the entire argument back to the ultimate lesson of the Zacchaeus narrative. When a business leader undergoes a genuine moral transformation, they do not need to abandon their career. Instead, like Zacchaeus, they stay fixed within the marketplace and use their corporate influence to reshape society for the benefit of everyone.



As you can see, the corporate world stands at a crossroads, where the non-stop pursuit of shareholder primacy has left a trail of human suffering across many global supply chains. Evidently, treating workers as mere line item expenses is not just a lack of morality or business ethics; it is a violation of human rights and dignity.

However, the story of Zacchaeus serves to us as a reminder that our individual greed does have to dictate the final say; for true success is found when leaders step down from their towers of sin, look at the workers who have built their wealth, and use their corporate power to foster true human flourishing. This transformation is not a fantasy, or a utopian dream, but something that is measurable; something that is possible.

The professors over at Cambridge University reveal this to us in their survey of over 17,000 people, where each individual was asked how faith impacts their expectations of business. In the main abstract and conclusion of the article, authors Denis G. Arnold notes that “Our evidence suggests that, broadly, religious individuals... tend to hold broader conceptions of the social responsibilities of businesses than non religious individuals.” They discovered that when compared to non religious participants, those who identified with major religions (mostly Christian denominations) scored significantly higher in demanding that corporations not just maximize profits, but actively protect human rights, enforce fair labor standards, and help build a more ethical society.

Without a doubt, when we align our professional ambitions with our Christian values, business no longer becomes a weapon of human injustice: It becomes a tool for societal gain. For the next generation of leaders, the challenge is clear: we must refuse to climb a corporate ladder that crushes the vulnerable, and we must build a marketplace where every single person obtains the God given dignity that they deserve.



Antoni Moczerniuk

Class of 2027

The Weight of the World

Cooper Fichandler

Modern student life often feels like a never ending juggling act. At any given moment you are expected to keep many balls in the air: Maintaining a High GPA, meeting family expectations, excelling in sports or extracurricular activities, navigating social relationships, and figuring out your future. It is an exhausting cycle - just when you feel like you have caught your breath after a hard exam, you're assigned a new project, a conflict arises at home, or a relationship becomes violent.



The amount of responsibilities can make you feel like you are constantly running and the finish line never comes. When every area of your life demands 100 percent of your energy, burnout becomes more likely, almost inevitable. You look at your calendar, your to-do list, and unread messages, it becomes overwhelming. It's not that you have a lot to do, it's that you feel like you have to do it perfectly.

Beneath the day-to-day stress of assignments and schedules lies a deeper, quieter anxiety.

The realization that life often makes no sense. As humans, we are wired to look for patterns, order, and fairness. We want to believe that if we work hard, we will automatically succeed. We want to believe that good things happen to good people and that life follows a logical script. But real life quickly shatters this illusion.

- You study for days and still fail a test.
- You pour your heart into a sport or a hobby, only to get injured or benched.
- You try your best to be a good friend, but rumors get spread about you anyway.

If bad things happen randomly, and if our best efforts can still result in failure, what is the point? The lack of predictability leads directly to feelings of helplessness. When you realize how little control you actually have over your circumstances, your brain tries to compensate for overthinking. You replay past conversations, think about every worst case scenario, and overcomplicate simple situations.

From a biological perspective, stress was originally designed to protect us. The “flight or fight” response was a survival mechanism. If a predator chased you, your heart rate spiked, your muscles tensed, and cortisol levels skyrocketed so you could run faster or fight harder. In the modern world, however, our stressors are completely different, but our bodies react the same way. Our body cannot tell the difference between a lion and a looming math test. Because modern stress lasts for weeks or months, instead of a few minutes, it loses all biological benefit. Instead of saving your life, chronic stress drains your energy and causes you to overcomplicate everything.

When the noise of the world gets too loud, the healthiest thing a student can do is pause and ask a radical question: “Is this situation truly worth my peace?”

This isn’t about being lazy or giving up on your goals. It is about practicing what philosophers sometimes call “holy indifference”. It means recognizing that your worth as a human being is not tied to your performance, your grades, or your social status. Stepping back allows you to separate your identity from your circumstances.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus addressed the exact same traps we fall into today. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus targets the root of human anxiety. Our obsession with securing our own future. He points to nature as a visual aid.

“Look at the birds of the air; they do now or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” – Matthew 6:26.



Jesus tells us there is no benefit in worrying as it adds nothing meaningful to our lives, but instead trust in the Lord to provide during rough times. The educational and social systems we live in tell us that we have to earn our rest. We are told to work until we can't, and only then we have earned a break. Jesus reverses this narrative completely.

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, you will find rest for your souls.” — Matthew 11:28-29

When Jesus tells us to take His yoke, He is saying “Stop trying to pull the weight of your life by yourself. Let Me stand next to you. Let Me pull the heavy side.” He doesn't promise that the work of life will disappear, but He promises that the weight will no longer crush your soul.

Think of your life as a long road trip. As students, we are often told that we have to be the driver. We have to map out the route perfectly, control the speed, avoid every pothole, and ensure we reach a destination on time. If we get lost or there is a bump in the road, we panic.

But the spiritual truth is this: You were never meant to drive the car. When you learn to cast your anxieties onto Him, knowing deeply that He cares for you, the heavy pressure lifts. You can finally stop overthinking, step back, take a deep breath, and trust that the One who created the universe is more than capable of guiding you through high school, college, and beyond.



Cooper Fichandler

Class of 2027

World's Above

Matthew Marsick

Astronomy has been a highly studied topic for centuries, dating all the way back to the prehistoric times where cavemen used the stars to guide them when they were lost. Now, astronomy is studied as a way to learn about space in the hopes that it can be someday explored. While many discoveries about space have been made recently and through the act of a lot of research, most of these discoveries were made by God in the Bible over 6000 years ago. These discoveries range from being about the stars, Earth, and space in general, all of which were created by God.



The first way modern astronomy is backed by the Bible is through gravity. According to science, if gravity was just 1% stronger or weaker, life on Earth would be completely different and likely would have had a much harder time progressing. It is extremely rare that something so important to human life, gravity, is at the perfect value for all life on Earth. This points to the fact that God exists as something that must have created Earth since the gravitational pull of Earth is just right for life to exist.

Similar to Goldy Locks and the Three Bears, if the porridge is either too hot or too cold, Goldy Locks can't eat it and will go hungry. But if it is just right, then she can eat it and quench her hunger. If gravity was too high, everyone would get crushed and die, but if it was too low, people and structures would float away. At the value that gravity is at right now however, it is just perfect enough for everything to stay on the ground without being crushed.

How can something so fragile and important be so perfect? Just like glass, something so precious, can form naturally in volcanoes, but it ends up being a blob on black glass.

It can only be used in windows and lights when someone puts in work to make it. So if gravity, like glass, is so fragile and precious, then someone must have perfected it in order for life on Earth to thrive. This points us to the existence of God in our world because of the importance and perfection of gravity on Earth.

The field of astronomy proves the existence of God and backs the Bible in many other ways than gravity, like how the Earth is a sphere. In science, the belief that the Earth is a sphere is one of the most rudimentary ideas, yet it is crucial in every equation regarding the globe and space. While scientists proved the Earth was spherical through images and formulas, the Bible proved it was a sphere through God's word.

In the Bible, Isaiah 40:22, it says "He sits enthroned above the circle of the Earth" which proves the Earth is a sphere through the word 'circle'. When the Bible was written, people didn't have enough knowledge of the Earth to know if it was spherical, flat, triangular, or any shape. So how did the Bible know it was spherical? It wasn't a lucky guess, they knew it because God created the Earth to be a sphere as it is the perfect shape for life on Earth to thrive.



Then, when paired with the tilt of the Earth, it points towards God's existence even more. Had the Earth been tilted toward the sun at a different angle, temperatures at certain points of Earth would skyrocket or plummet. Some regions would be inhabitable due to extreme weather conditions and certain seasons would completely disappear. This isn't a coincidence, God knew how detrimental the shape and tilt of the Earth is to all living things, which is why He created the planet to have the perfect shape and tilt to sustain life.

God didn't just create Earth, but the entire universe as well, which is proven by the stars. Now because of science and technology, we know that there are an incomprehensible amount of stars in the universe, 1024 stars to be specific; we can only see maybe a few hundred stars from Earth.

This led people throughout history to think that there are only a couple hundred stars in the universe as they had no other way to see the billions of other stars. But when the Bible was written over a thousand years ago, they knew that there were an impossible number of stars in the universe. This is seen in Jeremiah 33:22 where it says “as countless as the stars in the sky” which would not have been possible to know without the Lord.

During the time of the Bible’s creation, counting all the stars in the sky would’ve been tedious, but definitely possible. So why does the Bible say the stars are countless? That’s because they knew how infinite God made the universe and how many stars he filled the sky with.



Matthew Marsick

Class of 2027



