



Why Business Matters to God: (And What Still Needs to Be Fixed)

By Jeff Van Duzer



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Jeff Van Duzer grew up thinking business was the source of much damage and evil in the world, the work of greedy capitalists polluting the environment. Thirty years later he was dean of a business school. In the course of that remarkable transformation, Van Duzer found cause for both hope and concern. He discovered many business people achieving a great deal of good for society as well as a lot of illegal and unethical behavior. Along the way he found some who thought that merely being honest and kind was what made business Christian. Others said they'd never ask pastors for business advice because they had no interest or experience in their work. After all, wasn't "full-time Christian service" what the church was all about? This book explores the nature and meaning of doing business and finds it calls for much more than most think. Van Duzer presents a profoundly Christian approach that integrates biblical studies with the disciplines of business and economics. Looking beyond the place of ethical principles and the character of the individual, Van Duzer displays a vision of business that contributes to the very purposes of God.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Van Duzer has given us a new paradigm for business and a framework to review it. This book is well suited for undergraduate business classes as students explore and learn about being a Christian in business as well as a Christian business owner. Pastors would gain to read this volume, as it would help them prepare and counsel those in their churches who are in business. Van Duzer has shown that a different way of looking at Christians in business is not only beneficial, but necessary." (Gavin Baker, Stone-Campbell Journal, Fall 2012)

"This book should be standard reading for business students of faith, giving them the theological undergirding of the vocation of business as a sacred calling from God. It affirms that it is possible to do business well and profitably by viewing it this way--as a service to the community and to employees." (Scott B. Rae, Journal of Markets and Morality, Vol. 14, No. 1)

"This book is a necessary read for any businessperson who takes both their business and faith seriously. Almost more important, however, is that this book should be read by Christians outside of the business world." (Craig Martin, The Marketplace, March-April 2011)

"Jeff Van Duzer understands business. He knows how to read the Bible. He can stand toe-to-toe with the theologians. *Why Business Matters to God* is a rare breed--a book of real-life business practice grounded in competent biblical scholarship. Business people can read it and see how to apply the Christian faith to their daily work. Scholars and pastors can read it and see exactly why business has an irreplaceable role in Christian life. The book is filled with cases and examples that bring every concept down to reality. Van Duzer is so clear and practical that I found myself mentally arguing with him page-by-page about the concrete practice of business in Christian perspective. Must be his classroom experience in encouraging debate. A huge contribution to the emerging discussion about what it means to follow Christ in the business world of the twenty-first century." (William Messenger, executive editor, Theology of Work Project, board of directors, ArQule, Inc., and adjunct professor of business ethics, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute)

"In a crisp and clear fashion, Jeff Van Duzer gives us a theologically grounded and practically embodied understanding of a Christian view of business. He provides a compelling interdisciplinary synthesis that engages a comprehensive Christian theology with the complexities of running a business. It is a book which theologians and pastors will find useful as they seek to show the implications of faith. It is also a book which business leaders will find helpful as they seek to deepen and mature their work as a vocation. Through Scripture reflections, analogies, cases and stories, Van Duzer weaves a theological narrative that concretely includes business both in terms of the good that it does and the evil that it inflicts. The book helps us to see things whole and deeply in a world of business that can too easily see things partly and superficially." (Michael Naughton, Moss Chair in Catholic Social Thought, University of St. Thomas)

"Jeff Van Duzer has written an incredibly important book on a subject that, in recent years, has generated much more heat than light. Finally, we have a substantive, relevant book that articulates a theology of business that is both rich and practical. With clear insights derived from Scripture and the world of business, Van Duzer advances a vision for companies and their leaders that is purposeful, profitable and sustainable. He calls all of us to action by showing that we need a different way of doing business. *Why Business Matters to God* shows us how we can move forward, and it should be required reading for anyone in business who

cares about the common good." (D. Michael Lindsay, author of *Faith in the Halls of Power*)

"No business school faculty has done a better job of exploring the integration of Christian faith and values with the education of business managers than Seattle Pacific University under the leadership of dean Jeff Van Duzer. *Why Business Matters to God* walks its readers through key biblical texts and themes on the one hand, and today's business challenges and opportunities on the other. Van Duzer interacts creatively with some of the best classic and contemporary thinkers on the subject of faith and work. A good and important read for business veterans as well as students and recent grads." (David W. Gill, Mockler-Phillips Professor of Workplace Theology & Business Ethics, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary)

"I have been looking for a book like this for over twenty years. Now it finally exists. The majority of Christians in the world are engaged in some kind of business activity. Though churches and dozens of books provide helpful guidance on how to do business in ethical ways, tragically, very few offer insight into why God would have someone do business at all. This book lays a solid and practical foundation for a theological understanding of God's purposes for business and in so doing issues a prophetic challenge: maximizing profit isn't even on the list of God's purposes for business. Rather, God has far deeper and more life-giving reasons to call people to business. Drawing on the author's rich experience both in the 'business' of law and as the dean of a remarkable Christian business school, on his theological studies, and on his exceptional skill as an educator and communicator, this book is a feast of spiritual insights, business case studies and very practical implications. It deserves to be a must-read for Christians in business, for business courses in colleges and business schools, and for church fellowship groups." (Tim Dearborn, director of Christian commitments, World Vision International)

"In *Why Business Matters to God*, Van Duzer, a lawyer turned business-school dean, treads where most clergy and theologians fear to go, yet where most parishioners must go every day: into the marketplace. Van Duzer resists easy stereotyping and business bashing, opting instead for a careful theological treatment of the role of business in God's created order. Noting the practical good and harm that flow from business in a fallen world, Van Duzer offers theological framing and practical ideas for how business can be redeemed, discover a new purpose and even become a new creation. Van Duzer is to be applauded and his model should be carefully considered by those who choose to be in the world but not of it." (David W. Miller, Ph.D., director, Princeton University Faith & Work Initiative, associate research scholar, and president, The Avodah Institute)

"It would be hard to imagine a better book on business from a Christian perspective. *Why Business Matters to God* is solidly biblical, deeply theological and realistically practical. It is a must-read not only for all Christians in business, but also for pastors and other church leaders who are committed to helping the people of God live each day for God's purposes in the world." (Mark D. Roberts, senior director and scholar-in-residence, Laity Lodge, Texas)

"*Why Business Matters to God* is thought-provoking. It is a theological review of 'the beginning,' 'the Fall' and 'the restoration' of God's image bearers and the resulting struggle for those engaged in business who desire to honor God. Van Duzer logically and persuasively makes the case that such business necessities as being efficient and profitable should be subordinate to the foremost responsibility of serving the public--an achievable calling, with prayer and the Holy Spirit's help." (Richard C. Chewning, Emeritus Professor of Christian Ethics, Baylor University)

"Van Duzer skillfully situates the purposes of business in the context of the grand narrative of God's creation, humankind's Fall, and our and the world's ultimate redemption. With a writing style that is both accessible and inviting, he integrates sound theology and 'real world' common sense in addressing the Christian

business person's endemic search for meaning and motivation in business. Well done!" (Dr. Mitchell J. Neubert, Chavanne Chair of Christian Ethics in Business, Baylor University)

"Dean Van Duzer has written an important book and written it well. Born in his own skepticism and refined through years of insightful reflection, his scriptural framework has contributed meaningfully to my understanding and inspires my daily work in the noble calling of business. He achieves his intention of being both affirming and provocative, and the questions he asks will help transform the minds of many as we strive to live into the answers, here, 'between the finish lines.'" (Barry Rowan, EVP, CFO and Chief Administrative Officer, Vonage)

"A significant book. Van Duzer lays a solid theological framework for understanding business in the context of God's creativity, human depravity and Christ's redemption. Well written and chock-full of vivid vignettes from the marketplace." (Alec Hill, president, InterVarsity Christian Fellowship USA, and author of *Just Business: Christian Ethics for the Marketplace*)

"This book explores the creative dimensions of God's purpose and meaning for business. It is a must-read for those who are seeking to glorify God as they do business." (C. William Pollard, Chairman Emeritus, The ServiceMaster Company)

About the Author

Jeff Van Duzer (JD, Yale Law School) is Provost of Seattle Pacific University after previously serving twelve years as Dean of the School of Business and Economics and Professor of Business Ethics and Business Law. He practiced as a partner with the international law firm Davis Wright Tremaine for more than twenty years, concentrating in commercial finance and natural resources while serving on the firm's Executive Committee and as the Partner in Charge in their largest office. Van Duzer is a frequent speaker on the theology of business and is the author of *Why Business Matters to God*, along with a number of articles in academic and popular journals. He lives with his wife Margie and has two grown sons.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Robert Farley:

Information is provisions for folks to get better life, information these days can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a knowledge or any news even a concern. What people must be consider any time those information which is inside the former life are difficult to be find than now could be taking seriously which one is appropriate to believe or which one the actual resource are convinced. If you receive the unstable resource then you buy it as your main information we will see huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen inside you if you take *Why Business Matters to God: (And What Still Needs to Be Fixed)* as your daily resource information.

Gladys James:

Reading can called imagination hangout, why? Because when you are reading a book specifically book entitled *Why Business Matters to God: (And What Still Needs to Be Fixed)* your thoughts will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe not known for but surely will become your mind friends. Imaging each and every word written in a reserve then become one type conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get just before. The *Why Business Matters to God: (And What Still*

Needs to Be Fixed) giving you an additional experience more than blown away your mind but also giving you useful data for your better life within this era. So now let us explain to you the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind will probably be pleased when you are finished examining it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary shelling out spare time activity?

Agustin Byler:

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