

The Antioch Partners

*A strategic alliance of Presbyterian Frontier Fellowship and
The Outreach Foundation*

September, 2009

Dear Friends of The Antioch Partners (TAP),

Greetings in Christ! As I mentioned at the end of our June 09 TAP Update, one of TAP's strategic priorities is Business as Mission (BAM). BAM has become an increasingly important dimension of the world Christian movement over the past ten to fifteen years, and we believe God is raising up many Presbyterian business people who will use their business skills in strategic ways for the sake of God's global purpose in Christ.

What is BAM? BAM is focused on the way in which business people, and businesses, can be an instrument of God's blessing to the nations. BAM has been defined as "... a strategy for the Glory of God, through viable and sustainable businesses which have Kingdom of God values, purpose, perspective and impact – with the specific purpose of the transformation of people and communities: spiritually, economically, socially and environmentally" (YWAM).

These businesses "which have Kingdom of God values, purpose, perspective and impact" are often referred to as kingdom businesses, and God is using many of these businesses to impact people's lives in some of the most difficult-to-reach parts of the world. What exactly is a kingdom business? A kingdom business, like any good business, is a business that seeks to be profitable and sustainable. Furthermore, a kingdom business is committed to excellence, operates with integrity, and has a system of accountability. But, as the above definition explains, the bottom line for kingdom businesses goes beyond profitability. Kingdom businesses are committed to operating in such a way that they provide a context for evangelism and discipleship, mobilize and sustain prayer support, strive for the holistic transformation of individuals and communities, seek the holistic welfare of employees, model Christ-like servant leadership and embody kingdom ethics.

These kinds of companies are operating all over the world (many in the 10/40 Window). One such company is described in the book Great Commission Companies (Rundle and Steffen, IVP 2003, pp. 109-124). Because of security issues, Rundle and Steffen changed names and obscured details of this company. This company, Silk Road Handicraft Company, was established in 1998 in Central Asia. The company produces handcrafted home furnishings. In 2003 the company employed approximately 300 employees in two factories and revenues were projected to be \$3.1 million. The management team consists of Christians who are committed to the company's missional goals. In addition to providing jobs for hundreds of people in this frontier mission environment, many employees have become followers of Jesus, churches have been planted, local staff are being developed as leaders, and social problems have been addressed. Truly, this company is being used by God to bring about transformation in a very difficult environment.

From the very beginning, BAM has been a part of our vision for TAP. One reason for this is the strategic nature of BAM. Consider the following:

- In the areas of the world where Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism are the primary religions, 90% of the world's unreached/least-reached peoples live and 80% of the world's poorest populations live. Furthermore, unemployment in these areas ranges from 30% to 80% and it is even higher among the minority Christian communities.
- There is a clear correlation between poverty and disease, such that impacting poverty can also impact community health.
- The connection between poverty and social problems such as, human trafficking, prostitution, etc. Impacting poverty can impact these destructive social realities.
- Many countries where the majority of unreached/least-reached peoples live severely limit the activities of "missionaries," but Christian business people can often freely serve.
- Kingdom businesses enable local churches to support pastors and ministries (and not be dependent on foreign support).

Another reason BAM has been a part of our vision for TAP is the strategic potential BAM offers in helping us achieve TAP's mission. TAP is committed to expanding long-term, cross-cultural mission service opportunities for Presbyterians, and BAM does that by opening new ways for Presbyterians (in this case, business people) to use their skills in cross-cultural contexts for the glory of God. Also, business people are one of greatest resources within the PCUSA (and one of the most un-engaged resources!), and BAM will enable us to engage this important constituency in new ways. Finally, BAM is a proven strategy for reaching out to unreached/least-reached peoples in a holistic way, and this is a priority for TAP.

Hopefully, you now understand why we are excited about how God is going to use TAP's engagement in BAM to create new ways for Presbyterians to participate in God's mission! A task force reporting to the TAP Board spent a year considering the best ways for TAP to engage in BAM, and as a result of that task force's work, TAP has entered into a strategic alliance with an existing BAM entity. This alliance means there are immediate opportunities for business people to go and work in kingdom businesses in places like Asia and the Arab world, to serve as short-term mentors/trainers, and to provide capital to BAM companies (as investors). In the coming months, we will be hosting presentations about BAM for business people in various US cities. Please pray with us for God's anointing upon these gatherings.

As always, we are deeply grateful for your continued partnership in ministry with TAP!

In Christ,



W. Andrew Adair
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Note: Some material in this Newsletter has been adapted from the "BAM Lausanne Occasional Paper No. 59," Oct. 2004 (Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization)