

Christian Business Owners Fellowship

OHIO

The purpose of the Christian Business Owners Fellowship of Ohio is to encourage and equip Christian Business Owners and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) to operate their businesses and conduct their personal lives according to biblical principles in pursuit of Christ's eternal objectives.

Five key words define our focus and intentions: Fellowship, Relationships, Encouragement, Stewardship and Accountability while emphasizing that whatever our business in the marketplace, it should be used as a platform for ministry. At various times and in different situations these five key areas of focus may be demonstrated in a one on one relationship or in a small group. *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Col 3:17 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Col 3:23-25 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me — put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. Phil 4:8-9 NIV*

The Purpose and Philosophy of CBOF-OHIO

At all times members of CBOF will make every attempt to affirm the Scriptures of the New and Old Testament as the foundation for all actions as God's word, complete and eternal in its truth and application.

Christian Fellowship

We are committed to supporting Christian Fellowship as defined by Jesus Christ where we are commanded to love one another as he has loved us. *A new command I give you: Love one another, as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another. John 13:34-35 NIV. Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply from the heart. 1st Peter 1:22 NIV.*

We believe that there are at least seven functions necessary in order to demonstrate this kind of Christian Fellowship.

1. We need to be transparent in our walk with Jesus and others.

2. We need to walk with true humility loving others more than ourselves.
3. We need to trust one another and be trustworthy
4. We need to demonstrate that the Holy Spirit dwells in us to guide, direct, convict, comfort and help us remember all that Jesus taught.
5. We need to help one another discover our grace gifts for ministry with full reliance on the Lord Jesus Christ.
6. We need to be constantly reminded that we have been called to the marketplace for ministry in the name of Jesus Christ using our company as a platform.
7. We need to learn to maintain our integrity by honoring the confidentiality of all conversations with one another.

Christian Encouragement

We are committed to the practice of true Christian Encouragement which keeps a focus on helping all CEOs and Owners during times of fear and difficulty as well as in times of great success to trust in God for everything. Christian Encouragement is never legalistic judgment or offering what is sometimes called positive criticism. Neither is it advice without grace and understanding of our common predicament of being imperfect in this world. Christian Encouragement always helps God's people to trust in Christ for all things.

Lawrence J. Crabb, reminded us in his book Encouragement that words that encourage are inspired by love and directed toward fear. Words that encourage are motivated by Love, not fear. Encouragement involves the replacement of the greatest fear in another person with the unconditional love of God through Jesus Christ. Perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The man who fears is not made perfect in love. 1st John 4:18 NIV.

A strong emphasis on advice and counsel, mentoring in one on one relationships and in small groups will be encouraged by CBOF.

Servant Leadership

The leadership style of Jesus was expressed humbly and with all of God's grace when Jesus said: *I am among you as one who serves: For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.* Luke 22:27-28 NIV. *You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave— just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."* Matt

20:25-28 NIV. The model of servant-leadership is the key for all Christian Business Owners and CEOs in their management-leadership style. (*See Jesus Leadership Principles*).

The Priesthood of all Believers

In the Scriptures all believers are defined as priests and or ministers of God, specifically a royal priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9) serving a King (Jesus), a holy priesthood offering spiritual offerings of soul and body for the glory of God (Rom. 12:1) and priests of God and of Christ (Rev. 20:6). Believers are also called into a kingdom of Priests and a holy nation (Ex. 1:6). When a CEO-owner really begins to assume his or her proper role as a priest in a company there is no end to the ways God will be glorified in the marketplace and in the company. In the Scriptures the duty of a priest is to bring the people into the presence of God. A Christian CEO or Owner has the responsibility to live out his or her faith as a priest to his employees, customers, suppliers, vendors and even competitors.

Stewardship: Christians are stewards not owners, it all belongs to God

Day one of creation was an expression of God's detailed plan for the stewardship of his resources. It is impossible to study the Word of God without understanding that God through Christ has a great deal to share and teach about this important topic. The imperative truth underlying all of this teaching is that God owns it all. He is indeed the source of all resources in the universe and beyond. Just as Jesus is given authority over the Earth, Heaven and Hell, so it is clear who controls it all. The most important biblical principle regarding the use of resources is very simple and yet very complex: GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ALL RESOURCES...GOD OWNS IT ALL. Stewardship is not all about us. It is all about God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit teaching and guiding us in the proper respect and use of all resources and their management. *He (Jesus) is before all things, and in him all things hold together* (Col. 1:17). *You may say to yourself, my power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me. But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant.* (Deut 8:17-48). *The whole earth is mine* (Ex 19:5).

Christians are focused on the Eternal Values not the Temporal

The world's focus is on the temporal, immediate gratification and sensory satisfaction. The Christian must be focused on the eternal while living within the world. This is called living within a Kingdom mentality. We build companies not for our own glory but that they might be a platform for witnessing to Jesus Christ. We do not try to emulate the world's standards by declaring our companies to be so called *world class*, but rather striving to have them known by the *Kingdom Class standards* in the Bible. *Seeking first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well* (Matt. 6:33). *Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth...but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.* (Matt 6:19-20). *Set your hearts on things above, not on earthly things* (Col. 3:1-2). We believe it is important for every company to have a clear statement of their purpose as well as a clear understanding of their core values.

All work is sacred. There is no sacred/secular life style for Christians.

Faith and work do belong together as part of the creation experience. All Christians are called to live in one world shaped and mandated by Christ. It is the undivided life style for a Christian there are not two worlds in which they practice their faith. As A.W. Tozer made this clear in The Pursuit of God, *It is not what a man does that determines whether his work is sacred or secular; it is why he does it. The motive is everything. Let a man sanctify the Lord God in his heart and he can thereafter do no common act. All he does is good and acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For such a man, living itself will be sacramental and the whole world a sanctuary. His entire life will be a priestly ministration. As he performs his never so simple task he will hear the voice of the seraphim saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory."*

Understanding and acting on the sacred-secular problem is a critical factor in running a company on biblical principles and following Christ. You and I are the same people on Monday as we are on Sunday. There is never a divide in worlds (secular/sacred) for Christians and no biblical foundation for even thinking about the sacred/secular as being credible.

Therefore say: This is what the Sovereign LORD says: I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you back the land of Israel again. They will return to it and remove all its vile images and detestable idols. I will give them an undivided heart and put a new spirit in them; I will remove from them their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh. Then they will follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. They will be my people, and I will be their God. But as for those whose hearts are devoted to their vile images and detestable idols, I will bring down on their own heads what they have done, declares the Sovereign LORD. Ezek 11:17-21