

Is it time for Business Schools to start teaching Christianity?

One academic raises this poignant question in response to the recent “Credit Crunch”

“UK Business schools have produced increasing numbers of graduates over the last 20 years, yet this talented cohort has not prevented the most serious recession in 50 years”. It is on the basis of this reality that David Muskett, head of Undergraduate Programmes at Manchester Metropolitan University Business School, asks whether business teaching ought to be founded on an underlying Christian perspective. In a recent address, David, a member of his local Methodist church in Knutsford, notes that one of the criticisms levelled at business schools in the light of the recent economic crises, is that while they have been keen to teach the *techniques* of business practice, this has largely been done in a moral vacuum.



ICF members will be no strangers to questions around the place and role of Christian values within the world of business, but David Muskett stands out as being one of the few, if not only voice from the academic world, asking similar questions about how business and management is taught. His questions have certainly caught significant attention; the Times Educational Supplement carried a major feature after his address to a number of academic colleagues.

If we accept this proposition, then Muskett points out that we still have to determine what are THE definitive beliefs of Christianity. In his presentation, he explores several models, all of which have legitimate claim to represent a Christian philosophy of business, and can equally make a useful contribution to defining what has come to be known as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR).

In exploring this further, he wrestles with the question of whether values of this nature can be described as specifically or uniquely Christian or whether they represent a more generally accepted code of social responsibility. And yet he asks, if the need for “values” is promoted in the absence of any shared belief system, how can we be certain that those individualised *values* will not simply serve the self-interest of their holder and thus fail to realistically offer any ethical constraint?

He also usefully seeks to develop some practical applications of the general principles which he expounds, particularly rooted in his own specialist field of marketing. He concludes with the powerful observation that if change is to come, then those who teach the business leaders of the future have a crucial role to play in making it reality. David will be presenting another lecture later in the year, and we commend his work to ICF members and friends, who we sense will find his thinking deeply stimulating and informative.

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