

The Kingdom at Work Bulletin



Bulletin 7
February 2016

Christian faith and the economy

Editorial

This *Bulletin* draws together summaries of a number of books, or sections of books, which explore the relation between Christian faith and the economy.

The aim is to provide an overview of recent attempts to address the question of what Christian faith has to offer in understanding and shaping the future of a global market economy which is currently failing in many ways to enhance the well-being of humankind.

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The efforts made by Christian authors to overcome the divide between faith and economics have been seen by some with experience in this field as far from convincing. John Atherton believes that endeavours to identify ‘a Christianity fit for the purpose of engaging (with the market)’ has only revealed a Christianity ‘not fit at all!’ Eve Poole’s comments that her research into the church’s engagement with market economics revealed an ‘often contradictory approach’ which offers, at best, ‘thin pickings’.

Nevertheless, the books referred to below are evidence of the readiness of a number of Christian authors to engage in the important debate about the contribution that faith might make to the search for a just and sustainable global economy. It is a debate admirably encouraged by the hearings and other events set up by St Paul’s Institute and a few (though all too few) other agencies.

What seems to be clear from this debate, as Rowan Williams and Jeremy Kidwell suggest, is how difficult it is to demonstrate how theology can engage in a transformational way with powerful global economic forces. The problem is exacerbated when the theology being employed, on the one hand, becomes utopian, or, on the other, is reduced to ethical generalizations. The problem of engagement is also exacerbated when it is assumed that the economic forces concerned are ‘given’ and irresistible - that ‘there is no alternative’.

Perhaps one way to begin to resolve this impasse is to accept Rowan Williams’ contention that what connects economics and theology at the most profound level is human relationships. Thus we should not be trying to bring together theology and economics by devising ‘a theology for economics’ but by setting that encounter in the broader context of a

theology for society. Or, to put it another way, we should not be attempting to devise a theology for the ‘City’ as a financial entity. We should be bringing theology and economics together in the context of a theology for the city as a human entity¹.

A relational approach to the engagement of theology and economics has a liberating outcome. It means that economics and economic theory are always held to account by a vision of the well-being of the whole of humanity. It means that economics becomes the servant not the master of human relationship. Economics and economic models are no longer conceived as ‘given’ and beyond human efforts to transform them. This is why Eve Poole’s belief in the transformational power of human scale choices in market transactions rings true. It also means that theologians (‘we are all theologians now’) and economists (‘we are all economists now’) engage first and foremost as human beings sharing a common human agenda not as professionals separated by distinct or, worse, rival disciplines.

Perhaps the most liberating outcome of beginning with the primacy of human relationships is that a theological vision of a world of ‘justice, peace and the integrity of creation’ brings into play the power of a communal spirituality². This turns a sometimes soulless engagement between theology and economics into a dynamic encounter which, contentious as the process may sometimes be, makes possible the mobilization of those collective energies which have the potential to transform human institutions and organizations that negate or misuse the gifts of the kingdom.

David Clark (Project Co-ordinator)

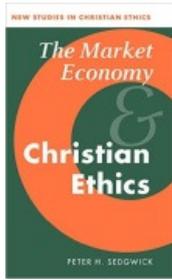
The following summaries are written by the authors of the books referred to at the top of each article. A few other books (not reviewed here) on the same theme are referred to in the text of some of the articles. The summaries are set out in publication date order. The books are by British authors writing from a Christian perspective.

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¹ From 1994 until 2000, I was involved in a Birmingham project entitled the Human City Initiative, documented in *Breaking the Mould of Christendom* (2005, reprinted 2015. Upfront Publishing, pp. 188-209). Its mission statement was ‘to enable those who share a vision of Birmingham as a human city to work together to make that vision a reality’. The Initiative was grounded in a communal theology and its practice was one of lively encounter and engagement across every sector, including the business world.

² See *The Kingdom at Work Project* (2014, Upfront Publishing, pp. 61-83).



Peter Sedgwick
The Market Economy and Christian Ethics
Cambridge University Press (1999 - reprinted 2008)

I wrote this book in 1999. It was a period when the idea of the market had spread over English culture and the economy, and the early years of the Blair government. I wanted to make three main points in the book. First, how does the market economy shape personal identity through consumerism and the experience of paid employment? Secondly, what impact does the global economy have on local cultures? Thirdly, as global competition and the impact of technology changed manufacturing in the West out of all recognition, what is the effect on Western societies in terms of poverty, de-industrialization and marginalization?

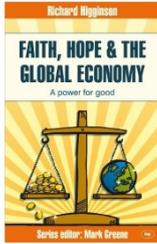
There were questions, which is my preferred style as an ethicist. I was not commending the market economy, though some read the book that way. I argued that the period of Western romanticism, from the late eighteenth century onwards, lay at the root of self-expression and self-discovery that created modern consumerism. This has taken over from religious belief as the heart of Western, and increasingly global, culture. Yet the experience of being in work can also have a hugely beneficial effect in terms of self-esteem. I referenced many social psychologists at this point, and I wrote the book when I was the Church of England's national policy officer on mental health.

The impact which the global economy has had on local economies is devastating, and it has also led to much deindustrialization and poverty in the West. An earlier book of mine was *The Enterprise Culture* (SPCK, 1992), which studied how increasingly the enterprise culture was a process of continual destruction of old ways of economic life, while yet offering individuals in small enterprises the chance to express themselves in new ways- as well as often making a great deal of money. But part of both books was to emphasize how new ways of working in small firms offer a totally new way of working for many people. Small firms had always been there, but they have become far more important as a lifestyle choice since the 1980s.

So what can be done? In my book I emphasized the enormous importance of the Roman Catholic and Anglican churches in critiquing this new world. Part of this critique is taken up by a young business woman Eve Poole in her books *The Church on Capitalism* (Ashgate, 2010) and her recent *Capitalism's Toxic Assumptions* (Bloomsbury, 2015) [see below]. She also blogs on <http://evepoole.livejournal.com/>. I am heartened by the strong critique made by Pope Francis of the harsh effects of the market in his encyclicals. I am delighted by how Archbishop Justyn challenged payday lenders like Wonga. It is also wonderful how Fair Trade has grown, and tax havens are slowly (too slowly) being rooted out. It is a long campaign where the churches need to be ever vigilant at scandals of low pay, and corporate greed. This world will not go away - ever.



Peter Sedgwick has written about the church and the economy for 30 years. His last post was that of Principal of the Church in Wales training college, St. Michael's College, Llandaff. His wife is a vicar on a council estate in Cardiff where he lives in retirement.



Richard Higginson
Faith, Hope & the Global Economy
Inter Varsity Press (2012)

The central argument of my book is that when rightly understood and applied, Christian faith can be an enormous *power for good* in the global economy. It has been at times in the past, and it is in some places in the present. But this does not happen universally or automatically.

In my book I explore three types of distorted theology in the economic sphere. These are *prosperity theology*, which makes too easy an equation between personal wealth and God's blessing; *anti-capitalist theology*, which has a laudable concern for justice and the poor, but fails to appreciate the positive role played by business; and the *sacred-secular divide*, which accepts a compartmentalised existence with no attempt to apply Christianity to economics.

I argue that where Christian faith is a power for good it fulfils the following criteria:

- *Stimulating enterprise*, the mainspring of the economy. The Church should encourage entrepreneurship as a noble vocation that requires qualities of vision, passion, risk-taking, persistence and decisiveness.
- *Reducing poverty*, business having the potential to deliver people from dehumanising and demoralising conditions. A Christian view of business has social as well as financial purposes.
- *Promoting integrity*, encouraging people to do business without deception, and living integrated lives displaying honesty, consistency and transparency.
- *Ensuring sustainability*, not just of individual businesses but the earth on which we and business depend. The Church should encourage responsible stewardship.
- *Fostering discipleship*, by speaking openly of our faith. Christians are more likely to be credible witnesses of they can show their faith has something useful to say about economic issues.

Faith, Hope & the Global Economy follows a credal structure. It shows how every episode in the biblical story has something important, challenging and hopeful to say about business practice. So the book has chapters on creation, fall, the history of Israel, the incarnation and ministry of Jesus, the death and resurrection of Jesus, the story of the church, and our future hope, all related to topical issues and live examples of Christian business practice. These have been gleaned not just from academic study but extensive overseas travel.

I believe some of the most positive signs of hope are found in *alternative business models*, enterprises that fall somewhere between conventional business and the charitable sector. They have mixed motives, aiming both to be profitable and to do good. They include social enterprise, fair trade, micro-credit, cooperatives and eco-friendly companies. Alternative business models are not a panacea; they can all be done well or badly. But I have seen enough positive examples to believe they offer genuine hope.

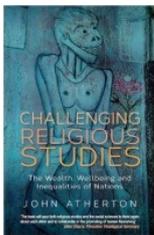
However, I do not write off mainstream business. Many conventional companies show positive qualities, especially where corporate social responsibility is taken seriously and

not just a public relations exercise. So the book also offers advice for Christians working for large companies. A strength of capitalism is its openness to a variety of business models. We need kingdom-minded people not just working for the ‘purer’ alternatives, but as moles within the system reforming more conventional companies in a positive direction.



Richard Higginson has been a Lecturer in Ethics and Leadership at Ridley Hall, Cambridge since 1989. He is currently Director of Studies at Ridley and Director of the Faith in Business project, a unique resource for relating Christian faith to the business world which integrates the areas of faith, values and leadership. He is Co-editor of the quarterly journal *Faith in Business*.

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John Atherton
Challenging Religious Studies:
The Wealth, Wellbeing and Inequalities of Nations
SCM Press (2014)

‘Not poor, not dead:
the contributions of a market economy to human wellbeing’

In 1900, John Robert Atherton (my uncle) was born and died. His family was poor, working class. I am now 76, highly educated, and with a professional middle class lifestyle and income. I am not dead, nor poor. And that is a personal sign of the most remarkable changes in world history – of dramatically improving life expectancy, and the dramatic decline of poverty. For example, with regard to the latter (of particular concern to Christians, historically and contemporarily), those still living in extreme poverty (living on less than \$1.90 a day) numbered 1.9 billion in 1990. That number has dropped dramatically in only 25 years to 700 million. It constitutes a most remarkable, historic change. And why? Because China and India - a third of the world’s population - adopted market friendly economic policies from the 1970s. It’s nothing to do with liberation theology (indeed most liberation theologians were and are opposed to market economies).

Markets, of course, have existed successfully for thousands of years, as necessary and effective ways of exchanging goods and services, and linking manufacturing towns and the agricultural countryside. They became particularly important in the European Middle Ages, with towns being granted royal charters to hold markets, including my own town, Chorley in Lancashire (it still has thriving market). The modern market economy, operating increasingly globally as well as nationally and locally, stands in that producing, consuming and trading tradition. From their early development, markets and then market economies were also intimately and integrally linked to the emergence of money, from the first millennium BCE, and its central role in income, as increasingly the principal means of participating in markets and market economies. These, in turn, were connected to the increasingly complex development of financial systems, from the medieval Italian city states, the early modern Netherlands, Britain into the modern age and, finally, into the twentieth century with the USA.

Markets are intimately linked to all these developments (my current and probably last research project is to explore them, and to sketch a Christianity fit for the purpose of

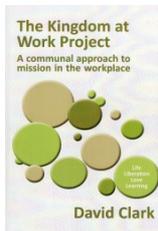
engaging them – at the moment it’s not fit at all!). Along with technological innovations, and the institutions of good governance, market economies have contributed to that historic transition from the vast majority of the world always being poor and always dying young, to the vast and increasing majority being materially well off and living increasingly long enough to enjoy all that such material wellbeing brings with it, including health and education.

Of course, these developments also generate severe problems, from grave inequalities, poverty and ill-health, to environmental challenges and their intimate relationship to the industrial revolution. How these can be developed into more constructive relationships will be central to the further promotion of human and nature’s wellbeing. Yet these problems, grave as they are, do not negate the seminal achievements of the Industrial and Mortality Revolutions, and the role of market economies in them. ‘I came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly’ (John 10:10). These historic contributions to wellbeing should be regarded as integral to that now more achievable biblical hope.



John Atherton is Visiting Professor of Religion, Ethics and Economics at the University of Chester and Honorary Fellow of the William Temple Foundation. He also works in close conjunction with Uppsala University in Sweden. His current research is focused on trying to engage with the economics of material wellbeing, income and money, and to develop an appropriate Christian model for doing so.

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David Clark

The Kingdom at Work Project

- a communal approach to mission in the workplace

Upfront Publishing (2014)

Stage 5 A communal economy for the world of work (pp. 84-102)

Stage 5 is an important section of a book which explores how Christian faith, underpinned by a theology of community, could transform the world of work. This section’s thesis is that all economies (as with every other aspect of society) need to be transformed by and to manifest four core gifts of the kingdom community: life, liberation, love and learning (identified in Stage 2). The section draws freely on Roman Catholic Social Teaching, among other sources.

An economy reflecting the nature of the kingdom community must be ‘an economy of grace’¹. Such an economy derives its meaning and power from a gift relationship bonding humanity and the kingdom community. It is an economy which is inclusive and universal, embracing what Roman Catholic Social Teaching calls ‘the universal destination of human goods’², the belief that ‘God gave the earth to the whole human race for the sustenance of its members without excluding or favouring anyone’. It must also be an economy which does

¹ Tanner, K. (2005) *Economy of Grace*. Augsburg, MN: Fortress Press

² *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (English edition, 2005), London: Continuum (paras. 171-184)

not collude with ‘structures of sin’, in particular those which accept the ‘primacy of things over persons’¹.

- A communal economy manifesting *the gift of life* puts responsibility for the environment high on its agenda. It places human needs before wants. It challenges the pursuit of and dependency on endless growth.
- A communal economy transformed by *the gift of liberation* is concerned to further human dignity, with a ‘living wage’ as a bottom line. Personal fulfilment is of supreme importance. Collective responsibility to alleviate the distress of those out of work and of the world’s poor is a collective concern.
- ‘Helpless alone and gifted in relationship: this is where we start addressing the world of economics from a Christian standpoint,’ states Rowan Williams.² Caring relationships are the key to an economy transformed by *the gift of love*. Such an economy fosters a strong sense of solidarity. It is about generosity, equity and mutual trust. It seeks co-operation and partnership and rejects unbridled competition.
- *The gift of learning* is particularly pertinent within a knowledge-driven economy. It is a gift which furthers holistic and ‘authentic human development’, spiritual as well as economic, as the gateway to the creation of a global community which embraces and enriches all.

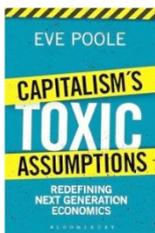


David Clark is a member of the Methodist Diaconal Order. He was a senior lecturer in community education at Westhill College, Birmingham. During that time he set up the Christians in Public Life Programme and founded the Human City Institute. He is Co-ordinator of the Kingdom at Work Project.

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Eve Poole

***Capitalism's Toxic Assumptions:
Redefining Next Generation Economics***
Bloomsbury (2015)



‘Capitalism for the Kingdom:
should we dethrone the market economy, or redeem it?’

My first book about theology and capitalism looked at the Church of England’s engagement with economics from the fall of the Wall to the collapse in credit (*The Church on Capitalism*, Palgrave, 2010). In it I surveyed the available theological commentary on market economics, and the church’s often contradictory approach to it. Those of you who have been labouring in this vineyard for some time will be unsurprised by the thin pickings my research produced. What theology there is, tends to focus on the kinds of conversations about the topic we might theoretically have, rather than actually having these important conversations. So I decided to get on with it myself, and sketched out a manifesto for reform, which was

¹ *The Common Good and the Catholic Church’s Social Teaching* (1996) London: Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales (para. 118)

² Williams, R. (2012) *Faith in the Public Square*. London: Bloomsbury (p. 229)

published as *Capitalism's Toxic Assumptions*. You can see the four minute summary of my thesis on youtube here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNnLyKRI5is>

While I have spent a lot of time publicising the book within the secular world, my vanguard for the re-building of the market is the Christian community. We know the work is urgent, and we've already made a start. We're also an incredibly powerful lobby in our own right because of the purchasing power we collectively represent. Because my target for reform isn't the two or three Whitehall SpAds who might re-draft policy, but the army of participants in the market who see reflected in this mirror of society a nightmare for the poor, not a vision of God's household.

In the jargon, the market is a complex adaptive system. It's a welter of messages about supply and demand, generated by us. And the best way to 'disturb' complex adaptive systems is simply to alter these messages. We did it before with Fair Trade. Now, a third of all bananas sold in the UK are 'Fairtrade. and a quarter of the coffee market is too. And we can do it again, by voting our cash for the Kingdom. Which is why I think the quickest and most Christian way to get the market we long for is by redeeming it, not by starting again from scratch.

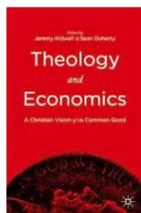
If the market was run by angels, how would it look? Let's think about this practically. You may have choices you can make about your labour, you may have choices you can make about your investments. Even if you don't, you still have choices you can make about how you spend the money entrusted to you. Every one of those transactions sends a message into the marketplace, reinforcing or challenging it. So when your bank statement hits the mat or your inbox at the end of each month, pore over it. Where do you bank? Where does your income come from? Which utility supplier do you use? Where do you shop for groceries? Which charities do you support? Do you give enough to the church? Can you keep working at every transaction until it is full of grace?



Eve Poole teaches leadership and ethics for Ashridge Business School. She is an Associate Research Fellow of the William Temple Foundation and Chairs Faith in Business at Ridley Hall. Eve has an MBA from Edinburgh, and degrees in theology from Durham and Cambridge.

Eve Poole: 07974 000707 <http://evepoole.livejournal.com/twitter.com/evepoole>
[skype: eve.poole](skype://eve.poole)

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Jeremy Kidwell and Sean Doherty (editors)
Theology and Economics: a Christian Vision of the Common Good
Palgrave (2015)

Jeremy Kidwell writes:

When we think about the task of bringing Christian ethics into business and economics it may be tempting to veer towards one of two extremes. On one hand (and I have heard this refrain enough times to verify that it is popular in certain contexts) one may assume that Christianity and business just weren't meant to mix. One is about the dynamics of faith and the other is about the cold mechanics of commerce and the two simply aren't compatible. Of course, the profusion of corporate scandals and economics crises is enough to remind us that values are

at the very heart of business and such a separation of these two realms is deeply problematic, at best.

On the other hand, it is equally possible to assume that Christian theology and economics are easy companions. At a series of events over the past, between 2012 and 2014, a range of British scholars in theology, Christian ethics, schools of business, and professional Christian economists met to hold exactly this kind of conversation (hosted by the Kirby Laing Institute for Christian Ethics, the Tyndale Fellowship Ethics and Social Theology Group, and the UK Association of Christian Economists). This occasionally contentious, and sometimes frustrating conversation was nevertheless tremendously promising. I experienced it as resonating with Isaiah 2:4 where the prophet declares that, in response to God's righteous judgment, people 'shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks' (NRSV). I came to feel that this collaboration between Christian thinking and business might be one that could lead to the transformation of society in pursuit of the common good.

There is not just one simple reason that Christian economists and Christian theologians struggle to integrate their two ways of approaching the world. Christianity has its own orthodoxies, as does business, and we are not eager for our interpretation of these to be re-contextualised. There is a tendency for theological reflection to offer an idealised understanding of the world, whilst economics offers a more reductive and pragmatic way of seeing things 'on the ground'. But these are over-simplifications. The reality is that, when we apply theological reflection to real world situations, the process requires hard work and mental agility. It is my conviction that this is God's intention. As Proverbs 25:2 puts it: 'It is the glory of God to conceal things, but the glory of kings is to search things out' (NRSV).

In reflecting on the promise of integrating theology and economics, as well as the complexities that this undertaking represents, a number of the scholars who were involved in our project contributed essays which have been collected in a volume entitled *Theology and Economics: A Christian Vision of the Common Good*. If you'd like to reflect more on some of these issues, I'd recommend you pick up the volume and read some of the essays presented there. You'll read about the insights that the concept of Christian 'virtue' might bring to business schools, some of the stereotypes about economics that prevent us from bringing faith into that context more effectively, how early Christians thought about business and technology, and why some economic concepts like 'rational economic man' just aren't fit for purpose.

I hope you'll pick up the volume and reflect on these issues with us. I also hope that you'll consider stepping into this challenging but crucial field of Christian theological engagement with our marketplaces. There was never a more important time thoughtfully to bring Christian values to bear on this context.



Jeremy Kidwell is AHRC/ESRC post-doctoral research fellow in the School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh. He is working on the project 'Caring for the future through ancestral time'. His most recent research has involved the ethnographic study of community groups (including churches) involved in sustainability. His other interests include design and patristic social ethics. He is secretary of the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics and Assistant Secretary of TRS-UK.



St Paul's Institute

Amongst coming key themes -
The challenge of income and wealth inequality



'What are we working for?'

Barbara Ridpath - Director - writes:

Bishop Richard Harries wrote in a book entitled *Is there a Gospel for the Rich?*, that 'the necessity of increasing the resources of society [is] in order to improve the quality of life for all; which does not disparage growth but asks for growth in the right areas; which supports the market economy, while at the same time works against its exploitative tendencies.'

However, all too often we work and accumulate for our own purposes, not those of God, nor even those of our neighbor, our community or society. Jesus condemns neither hard work nor prosperity. Working hard, and producing and accumulating much is no sin, *if* the product of our work is used for good ends, and does not result in an overweening attachment to the riches that work provides. On the other hand, labour for false purposes results in an increasingly unequal distribution of both income and wealth. We have seen this in both the United Kingdom and the United States in recent years, though it must be acknowledged that the last two decades have seen some considerable shrinkage in the levels of absolute poverty in other parts of the world.

Poverty in this country, together with the nefarious effects of inequality on community, trust, political participation, representative democracy and social justice has led the St Paul's Institute to begin to consider income and wealth inequality as one of our themes for the coming 18-24 months. Our intention is to open a participative discussion informed by Christian teaching on both the causes and the effects of inequality, together with concrete solutions to redress inequality in a way that encourages human flourishing for the common good.

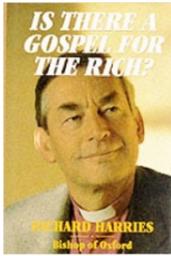
The first step is recognizing the problem. Too often the 'one percenters' live, work and socialize with each other such that they effectively avoid seeing or understanding that not everyone shares their good fortune. The second step is to understand the causes of the problem - this is where St Paul's Institute's events begin to address the underlying issues (www.stpaulsinstitute.org.uk). The third step is to look at how each of us can become an agent of change to resolve the problem.

It is the responsibility of each of us to use our gifts and our labours to improve the welfare of all, through what we do and what we give. The fruits of what we provide need to be for the benefit of the whole of society, not just the producers. There are myriad ways to serve and an equal myriad of needs. How you put your time, your talents and the fruits of your labour to use in the service of others and of God's kingdom; that is what matters. John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, quite explicitly took this theme in a 1744 sermon, where he preached: 'gain all you can: save all you can: give all you can.'



Barbara Ridpath is Director of St. Paul's Institute. She is a non-executive Director of the CYB Group, a member of Council and the Executive Committee at Chatham House, the Royal Institute of International Affairs and a trustee at Capital Mass, a London charity fighting urban poverty. She is a member of the World Economic Forum's Council on the Global Financial System. Barbara has worked in finance for most of her career, in New York, London and Paris.

Other notable contributions

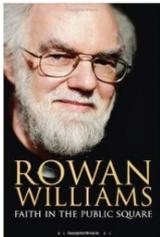


Richard Harries

***Is There a Gospel for the Rich?
Christian Obedience in a Capitalist World***

Mowbray (1992)

This book addresses the problem: how can we be rich and Christian? It looks for a liberation theology for the rich western world - how can we change both ourselves and the world we live in? How can we all, rich and poor, be changed? The poor want change, but do the rich? And yet they could find so much more than they may imagine, in the Kingdom of God. Richard Harries takes the reader through the Church's response to questions about possessions through the ages, and looks at the creation of wealth, the market economy, stocks and shares, investors, employees, in his search for a gospel for the rich as well as the poor. His book is aimed at lay people in the financial and business world and all concerned with the right use of money and possessions.

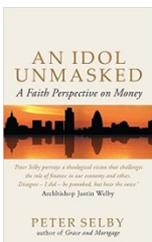


Rowan Williams

Faith in the Public Square

Bloomsbury Continuum (2012)

This collection of lectures by the former Archbishop of Canterbury includes two on Christian faith and the economy. Chapter 17 (pp. 211-224) is on the subject of 'Ethics, economics and global justice' and was delivered in March 2009, in the Temple of Peace, Cardiff. It focuses on the theme that being human is inevitably about taking risks and that this means a realistic humility in our approach to our stewardship of wealth allied to an imperative economic responsibility for the well-being of the whole of humankind, especially the powerless. Chapter 18 (pp. 226-232) is entitled 'Theology and economics: two different worlds' and was delivered at the Trinity Institute Conference, Trinity Wall Street, New York, in January 2010. It challenges the assumption that economic exchange is primary for our becoming fully being human. It argues that theology directs us to set economic transactions in the context of a broader vision of 'civic virtue' and the quest for 'the wholeness of community'.

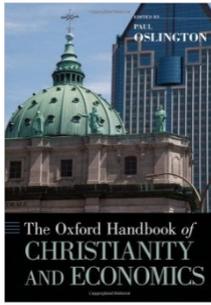


Peter Selby

An Idol Unmasked: A Faith Perspective on Money Paperback

Darton, Longman & Todd (2014)

The financial crisis of 2007/8 was predicted by former bishop of Worcester, Peter Selby, in his seminal book *Grace and Mortgage* (2009, Darton, Longman and Todd), which offered a compelling theological case for the cancellation of debt. Yet most of the responses and proposed remedies to the current crisis involve debt of one sort another. So where is the voice of faith in today's critical debates? *An Idol Unmasked* offers a brilliant critique of what money becomes when you allow its principal creators to be private companies rather than the sovereign authority. Within that exploration are expositions of parables and fundamental Christian doctrines which show that there is wisdom within the Christian tradition suited to reflection on money, as well as proposals for remedies and for action by Christians and by churches.



Peter Oslington (editor)
The Oxford Handbook of Christianity and Economics
OUP USA (2014)

Many important contemporary debates cross economics and religion, in turn raising questions about the relationship between the two fields. This book, edited by a leader in the new interdisciplinary field of economics and religion and with contributions by experts on different aspects of the relationship between economics and Christianity, maps the current state of scholarship and points to new directions for the field. It covers the history of the relationship between economics and Christianity, economic thinking in the main Christian traditions, and the role of religion in economic development, as well as new work on the economics of religious behaviour and religious markets and topics of debate between economists and theologians. It is essential reading for economists concerned with the foundations of their discipline, historians, moral philosophers, theologians seeking to engage with economics, and public policy researchers and practitioners.

[Note - This book is expensive.
The best way to access it is probably through an academic resource base.]

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What helps disciples grow?
Celebration and Exploration Event

St Pater's Saltley Trust
(working with the Kingdom at Work Project)

Over the last year, we have been working with churches across the West Midlands to find out how Christians talk about their own calling, growth and journeys of faith. We have surveyed over 1300 individuals in around 30 churches of different denominations.

**On 19 April, 2016 we will be reflecting on this research with
an open event in central Birmingham**

This is an opportunity to:

- learn from and reflect on this research and allied work
- explore the implications and possibilities for the individuals and the churches or networks to which they belong
- consider next steps, for practice and research.

For more information and to secure a place, contact: simon@saltleytrust.org.uk or fill in and return the booking form available at: <http://www.saltleytrust.org.uk/events/>

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For all matters relating to this *Bulletin* please contact -
Deacon Dr David Clark at: david@clark58.eclipse.co.uk 01629 810172
Hill View, Burton Close Drive, Bakewell DE45 1BG

From March 2016, past issue of the *Bulletin* can be downloaded from -
www.saltleytrust.org.uk/faith-and-work-in-theological-education-and-training/