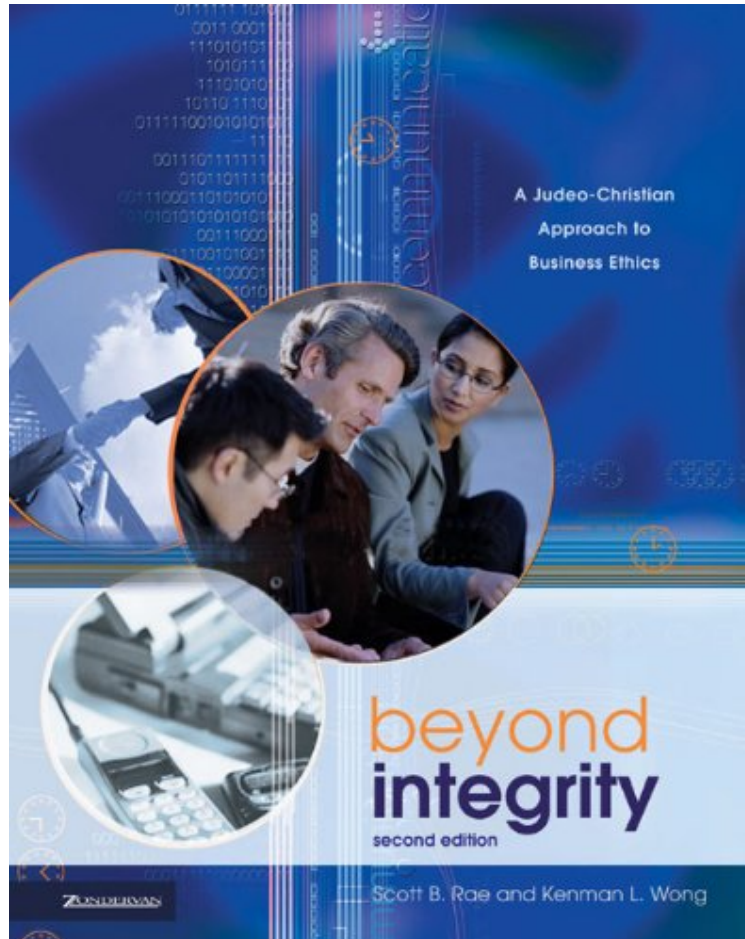


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Beyond Integrity: A Judeo-Christian Approach to Business Ethics

Scott Rae, Kenman L. Wong

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Integrity is essential to Judeo-Christian business ethics. But today's business environment is complex. Those in business, and those preparing to enter the business world, need to grapple with the question of how integrity and biblical ethics can be applied in the workplace. They need to go 'beyond integrity' in their thinking. Beyond Integrity is neither excessively theoretical nor simplistic and dogmatic. Rather, it offers a balanced and pragmatic approach to a

number of concrete ethical issues. Readings from a wide range of sources present competing perspectives on each issue, and real-life case studies further help the reader grapple with ethical dilemmas. The authors conclude each chapter with their own distinctly Christian commentary on the topic covered. This third edition has been revised to provide the most up-to-date introduction to the issues Christians face in today's constantly changing business culture. Revisions include: * 30 new case studies * 1/3 new readings * 50% substantially revised * sidebars that reflect the issues in the news and business press * summaries and material for discussion

From the Back Cover Integrity is essential to Judeo-Christian business ethics. But today's business environment is complex. Those in business, and those preparing to enter the business world, need to grapple with the question of how integrity and biblical ethics can be applied in the workplace. They need to go "beyond integrity" in their thinking. Beyond Integrity is neither excessively theoretical nor simplistic and dogmatic. Rather, it offers a balanced and pragmatic approach to a number of concrete ethical issues. Readings from a wide range of sources present competing perspectives on each issue, and real-life case studies further help the reader grapple with ethical dilemmas. The authors conclude each chapter with their own distinctly Christian commentary on the topic covered. This second edition includes recent issues that have surfaced in today's constantly changing business culture. Revisions include: • Ethical implications of information technology, biotechnology, and other important new issues • Reflections on recent court cases that shape the moral discussion • Shorter text with increased accessibility to the reader With the goal of helping readers arrive at their own conclusions, this book provides a decision-making model. Beyond Integrity equips men and women to develop a biblically based approach to the ethical challenges of twenty-first century business. About the Author Scott B. Rae (PhD, University of Southern California) is professor of Christian ethics at Talbot School of Theology, Biola University, La Mirada, California. Kenman L. Wong (PhD, University of Southern California) is professor of business ethics at Seattle Pacific University. He is a former associate of one of the world's leading management consulting firms. SPANISH BIO: Kenman L. Wong (PhD, Universidad del Sur de California) es profesor de etica en los negocios en Seattle Pacific University. el es un antiguo asociado de una de las firmas de consejeria administrativa mas importantes a nivel mundial. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved. ONE Christian Ethics in Business: Tensions and Challenges A sudden submission to Christian ethics by businessmen would bring about the greatest economic upheaval in history! A chief executive officer, quoted in 'Is Business Bluffing Ethical?' by Albert Z. Carr INTRODUCTION Recently, there has been exploding interest in the idea of 'spirituality' in the workplace. Major business magazines such as Business Week and Fortune have run cover stories on the topic, and academic conferences, corporate programs, and executive retreats have been organized around this theme. Understandably, the concept of integrating one's faith and values into the workplace is important and rightfully deserves such attention. However, actual attempts to bring faith-based values into the workplace can be challenging and riddled with tension when the 'darker' aspects of business and the reality of economic competition are factored into the equation. In fact, some research supports the suspicion that many business people do, in fact, live with two conflicting sets of rules: one for business, and one for their lives outside of work. Some observers of commercial life have gone so far as to claim that virtue and success have an inverse relationship. Unless individual participants leave 'private' morality at the door, financial gain will prove elusive. Business demands shrewdness and the bending, if not outright breaking, of rules, the argument typically goes. Play 'softly' and you will soon be surpassed. Not that 'good' behavior is nonexistent. When it occurs, however, the motivation behind it is self-interest, not ethics per se. Organizations are trapped by similar deterministic rules. A 'nice' company that engages in 'restrained' competition or sacrifices profits for the benefit of employees or the local community beyond motivational or public relations value will soon find itself in decline if competitors don't operate with similar rules and intentions. The idea that business demands different standards for behavior is particularly problematic for those who adhere to a belief system that holds that a unified set of values should be applicable to life in its totality. The thought that the very virtues that govern their lives outside of work could be the ones that jeopardize the ability to succeed within it is deeply troubling. Moreover, if the construct is true, we are led to the inevitable conclusion that all who have achieved success in business from a financial standpoint have somehow compromised their moral standards in the process. In stark contrast to the belief that financial success requires ethical compromise, a popular sentiment has it that good ethics is good business. Behavioral compromises are unnecessary and are the product of short-sightedness. After all, honesty and fairness will only enhance economic well-being. Customers prefer to deal with individuals and organizations with a rock-solid reputation for honesty. Therefore, ethics and self-interest do not clash at all. Sound strategy and prudence require only the short-term sacrifice of gain. The central focus of this chapter is to examine some of the tensions and challenges of bringing Christian ethics to bear on business. Do traditional virtues such as honesty and compassion facilitate the prospect for successful participation in business? Or, conversely, do such characteristics doom a business to fail in the 'competitive jungle' of economic affairs? In 'Is Business Bluffing Ethical?' Albert Z. Carr takes the posture that two sets of morals, one for business and one for private life, is an inescapable reality. Using the game of poker as an analogy to business, Carr argues that practices such as 'bluffing' should be judged by business rules and not by 'the ethical principles preached in churches.' He concludes that those who try to

apply their private morals at the workplace will likely fail to be successful as business people. Based on qualitative research, authors Amar Bhide and Howard H. Stevenson in their article entitled 'Why Be Honest If Honesty Doesn't Pay?' attempted to find evidence to support the popular notion that good ethics and good business are synonymous. In a somewhat surprising and optimistic conclusion, Bhide and Stevenson find that while the idea that 'honesty is the best policy' makes intuitive sense, it is an unsubstantiated claim from a rational, economic standpoint. They point to cases in which breaking one's word is actually handsomely rewarded or, at the very least, seldom punished. Even so, they argue that the trust necessary for business relationships is alive and well, because for many business people honesty is a matter of conscience and morality rather than strategy. In 'Companies Are Discovering the Value of Ethics,' author Norman Bowie contradicts the view that ethics and profits are inversely related. While he does not make the claim that good ethics always lead to higher profit margins, Bowie provides multiple examples in which ethics have had a positive impact on the bottom line. This is the case, he argues, because attention to ethics can provide firms with a source of competitive advantage. The case studies in this chapter provide windows through which one can see some of these tensions and challenges illustrated. 'Borland's Brave Beginning' presents a true-to-life scenario in which truth telling and financial success seem to be in conflict. 'Keeping Secrets' divides a manager's loyalty between an organization and a freindship. READINGS Is Business Bluffing Ethical? Albert Z. Carr Harvard Business (January--February 1968). Copyright 1967. The ethics of business are not those of society, but rather those of the poker game. Foreword 'When the law as written gives a man a wideopen chance to make a killing, he'd be a fool not to take advantage of it. If he doesn't, somebody else will,' remarked a friend of the author. Mr. Carr likens such behavior to the bluffing of the poker player who seizes every opportunity to win, as long as it does not involve outright cheating. 'No one thinks any the worse of you on that account,' says the author. 'And no one would think any the worse of the game of business because its standards of right and wrong differ from the prevailing traditions of morality in our society.' Mr. Carr became interested in this subject when he was a member of a New York firm of consultants to large corporations in many fields. The confidences of many stress-ridden executives made him aware of the extent to which tensions can arise from conflicts between an individual's ethical sense and the realities of business. He was struck also by the similarity of the special ethical attitude shown by many successful and stress-free businessmen in their work to that of good poker players. Mr. Carr was Assistant to the Chairman of the War Production Board during World War II and later served on the White House staff and as a