

By Alexandria Milot

In a broken society that seems blinded by investments and income, it is hard to understand why God still commends our efforts in making profits. Most Christians can recall the Biblical parable of the Good Samaritan. The Samaritan cared for a Jewish man, sacrificing his own wealth to help him, and expected nothing in return (Luke 10:25-37). We see this as the ultimate example of how to help others and how to use the resources that have been given to us. However, there are many examples throughout the Bible where God reveals to us his support of profit-seeking individuals and businesses.

Despite the good work done through non-profit organizations, good works can still be done by companies that aim to profit off their product or service. Before looking further into what God says about profit, one must understand its definition. Profit is defined as selling a product or service for more than the total cost for producing the product or providing the service. Profits are usually a good measure of whether a business is successful within its industry. When profits are high, investors are more likely to take an interest in a business.

As Christians we do not only care about what the world thinks about our business, but also about how God judges our actions and motives. Some people believe aiming to profit in a business venture is a self-centered practice. Profit-seeking can be viewed in a negative light simply because it benefits the individual more than the surrounding community. However, key examples are given to us by Jesus through his parables. The parables teach the importance of using our money wisely and gaining a profit, which eventually leads to a greater reward.

One example is the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-20). A man leaves for a journey. He gives money to his servants and entrusts them with his property. When the man returns, he finds two of his servants have multiplied their shares, but one servant has fearfully buried his talent. The man praises and rewards his “good and faithful” servants because they had made a profit from the resources they had been initially given (Matthew 25:23). Not only does God commend profit seeking, but he refers to it as a “good and faithful” act.

Earning a profit may be seen as the exploitation of others by someone who does not believe that for-profit companies are encouraged by God. Making a wrongful profit and taking advantage of consumers is
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