



Created to Create

Exploring Vennture's Creation Theme

Michael Waddell, Senior Associate, Vennture

I've always admired creative people and can think of several over the years who have fascinated me with their natural, God-given ability to create, design or innovate. Throughout the history of civilization, generations of people have benefitted from the creative genius of others.

Thomas Edison, Walt Disney, Henry Ford, Margaret Atwood, Leonardo Di Vinci, Steve Jobs, Joni Mitchell and countless others have created amazing pieces of art, music, innovative technologies, architectural masterpieces and businesses.

We may never know someone as famous as Walt Disney or Margaret Atwood, but we all have those friends, don't we? The ones who, without much effort, can put pencil to paper and sketch the most amazing drawings, pick up a guitar and make the most beautiful music, take rough pieces of wood and craft them into a masterpiece. Or walk into the kitchen and turn a few simple ingredients into the most flavourful plate of food without even looking at a recipe. Maybe you're one of these individuals ... or maybe you feel the best you can do is draw stick people or make a humble pot of Kraft dinner.

Regardless of where you fall on the creativity spectrum the truth of the matter is, as human beings, we all have an innate ability to create and to be creative. Maybe you don't have amazing artistic abilities, or musical talent, but perhaps you can create elaborate spreadsheets, design detailed plans or plant a beautiful flower garden.





The Bible begins with the creation story where, from nothing, God lays down the very foundations of the Earth and beautifully creates everything in it. And, as amazing as all this creation is, we learn that God's most remarkable work was creating human beings. As creative as all the people mentioned above are, they pale in comparison to God, the Creator of the heavens and the Earth.

Do you know what's even more amazing about the creation story? We learn, in Genesis 1:26-28, often referred to as the Cultural Mandate, that we have been made in the IMAGE and LIKENESS of God and have been given a mandate to co-create with Him. God instructs us to be fruitful and multiply, fill the Earth and subdue it, which means we are to cultivate the Earth in a manner that brings glory to God and contributes to the flourishing of individuals, families and communities.

Vennture aims to help people discover their unique ability to co-create with God for the betterment of communities and His glory.

In her book, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from its Cultural Captivity*, Nancy Pearcey says,

"The lesson of the Cultural Mandate is that our sense of fulfillment depends on engaging in creative, constructive work. The ideal human existence is not eternal leisure or an endless vacation—or even a monastic retreat into prayer and meditation—but creative effort expended for the glory of God and the benefit of others. Our calling is not just to 'get to heaven' but also to cultivate the earth, not just to 'save souls' but also to serve God through our work. For God Himself is engaged not only in the work of salvation (special grace) but also in the work of preserving and developing His creation (common grace). When we obey the Cultural Mandate, we participate in the work of God Himself, as agents of His common grace."

I don't know about you, but I find it extremely exciting to know that we can participate in the redemptive work of God through our daily work! Let me take this thought a bit further...

A holistic theology of work is an understanding that our work is not simply a means to an end (i.e., working to earn money to buy food and clothing) or something to endure (i.e., working for the weekend or retirement), but is part of God's master plan to redeem all creation. When faith meets work all the hours of our days can be infused with meaning and purpose.

At Vennture, we work to assist in the creation of transformational businesses that preserve and develop God's creation. We do this within a partner network and in a spirit of mutuality by: providing meaningful work for individuals; needed products and services in the local marketplace; and opportunities to participate in God's redemptive work of bringing transformation to communities and healing to a broken world.

Several of our global partners are already reshaping their views of work and business and are integrating a more holistic understanding of the theology of work. This has led them to create Vennture Initiatives aimed at addressing brokenness in their local communities, such as poverty, unemployment/underemployment, food insecurity or addictions.

For example, our partner, Alempang Baptist Church in Nagaland, India, has created a business to address high rates of unemployment among young people, many of whom have struggled with addictions. Thanks to the MITA Organic Food Processing business, recovered young adults have been given an opportunity to learn new skills allowing them to earn an income and contribute to the growth of their community.



In Capiz province of the Philippines, our partner, Kabuganaan Philippines Ministries, has created two businesses aimed at bringing transformation and healing to the brokenness in their local communities. Food for Life has helped lift farmers out of systemic poverty that has been perpetuated by broken government systems and unfair economic conditions. And Bugana Livelihood Center has provided equipment, materials and training so that vulnerable women and out-of-school youth from poor communities can earn a fair wage to help support their families' basic needs.

To use some business language, Vennture is “scaling up” our efforts so we can expand our work with partners in the creation of more redemptive and transformational businesses. We are currently working with several other partners to conceptualize new transformational businesses and we are excited to see what opportunities will arise in the months ahead. If you'd like to learn more about how you can participate in the creation of new Vennture Initiatives, either by sharing your resources or your expertise, please reach out to us through any of the channels listed below.