

March 19, 2006
Theology of Oil: Oil and You
By John Van Sloten

[PRE service CLIP #1 – 60 minutes – 2:53 – 4:03]

In the beginning “God spoke: “Let us make human beings in our image, make them reflecting our nature, so they can be responsible for the fish in the sea, the birds in the air, the cattle, and, yes, **Earth itself**, and every animal that moves on the face of Earth.” God created human beings; he created them godlike, reflecting God’s nature. He created them male and female.” 1:26-27

Last Thursday met with one of **God’s created beings! one of his image bearers...** the CEO of an oil sands exploration and development company... 21st floor, corner office, nice digs... **PAUSE...** Let me tell you I was pretty **stoked** about meeting!... I love talking to CEO types... **drive... edge... deal making psyche... business acumen... savvyness... energy!!**

[“**Lead me not into temptation**”... **(SLOW)** “not that I would leave ministry oil patch”.... just reminded me of what I loved so much as a commercial developer’]

So alive... so real... so much fun... PAUSE... and now, as I think about it... **so much a reflection of how God made me...** of how God made that CEO... **(SLOW)** “**So much a reflection of who God is!**”

To be made in God’s image is to reflect who O is! so my hope in meeting with business leader see what I could learn about God through him!... **PAUSE [MIRROR ILL]...** through him as a **human being... &** through the **things he does, creates, makes...** (ie: if he’s an image bearer do “God like” things!) **PAUSE..** can do this math w/all humans/ activities (**Van Gogh**

Bono... Lance Armstrong... a newborn baby) but on Thursday **do it through oil exec... oil industry...**

So what did I learn about God on the 21st floor... where was he present in an Oil Sands Exploration company?

As I think back on that meeting **really all over the place!... PAUSE...** CEO started by showing me [**aerial pictures of the project**] like a proud dad... real healthy sense of joy what he was a **part of building! PAUSE...** All I could think, “God looking down on all that he had made, God looked over everything he had made; it was so good, so very good!” Genesis 1:31

God’s **creation** is good... **material** things are good... **enterprise** is good...**PAUSE...** **you**(image bearer of O) are good... **work** that you do, things create good [**SIN pollute, corrupt, stain, twist, taints**]... **PAUSE**

After intro-ing project I asked,“**What do you do?**” (**real entrepreneur came out!**)... talked about role **pulling it all together** (team, vision, [\$\$]) “I love creating something out of nothing...” **LONG PAUSE...** moment said those words I thought [**“EX NIHILO” – idea of a universe (BANG)... “God in Flesh” (bang)**]

Reading a book about **nature of work this week...** “Enterprise is, in its first movement, the inclination to notice, the habit of discerning, the tendency to discover what other people don’t see. It is also the capacity to act on insight, so as to bring into reality things not before seen. It is the ability to foresee both the needs of others and the combinations of productive factors most adapted to satisfying those needs.”

as I read those words... didn’t know if talking about the **entrepreneurial spirit (business) or creative nature of God!... PAUSE...** God is **first mover...** all wise/ knowing/discerning... **great discoverer, and see’er...**

he **created ex nihilo**... he pulled factors together (**in all things and in oil things**) to satisfy **our** needs!!!
God is **the** creative source... **joy/satisfaction** in doing!

PAUSE... Entrepreneurs reflect heart of God! Cool!
“**God with an entrepreneurial Spirit**” very cool...
PAUSE... makes me wonder about the whole “**God saw that it was good,**” statement from Genesis... always envisioned it “**solemnly**” “**AND GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD**”... **PAUSE...** but now, given this entrepreneurial view... wonder might be a bit more passion in that statement...

You see... for entrepreneurs “**Doing the deal**” feeling an adrenalized buzz all **deal junkies** know... “Yes! It worked... pulled it off... struck oil!...” wonder if God’s, “It was good!” like that! “**YES!, this is amazing, male and female!... Outstanding.. GOOD!**”

PAUSE... And the feeling is not just for entrepreneurs it’s for all of us!... all who bear God’s image whether your building a **company... career... curriculum... lego castle...** you’re doing a **good God thing!** your **creativity**(I wonder if get oil out of dirt?) **is a gift...** your **innovation** (New way design a truss... do ESL) gift!... **foresight** (save environment... save a life... save humanity) ... those traits are **Godly, God given** attributes!... (God is honoured when use!)

So go for it!!... make it happen... take the risk... do the hard work!... PAUSE... HMMM... “Risk taking... Hard work” two more entrepreneurial traits came up in my meeting with that CEO ... (ate in his office!)
Risk/Hard work they’re industry ‘givens’... LONG PAUSE... they’re also **givens in God’s economy!**...

Why else would Jesus tell parables **talents**... parable of **Shrewd Manager**... Minas?... **PAUSE...**

I wrote an oil patch paraphrase Minas (imagine how J would have told **CAPP**) Listen carefully... **what do you think Jesus is trying to teach here?**
[READ Paraphrase...] That’s entrepreneurial leadership... **Heart of E!... PAUSE...** & lesson?...
PAUSE... “**Go for it!... dream... risk... have a little faith... work that deal all you got!** God wants this from U... **demands** it... doesn’t suffer fools gladly”

God wants this from you... in terms of pursuing his deal (**KOG... knowing him... build God’s good in world**) and in terms more material (“it is good”) pursuits... (**work, education, drilling, refining, environmental protecting**) b/c not mutually exclusive... we serve God in **both church and office... worship him here and out there...** in all we do... everywhere!
Whole world belongs to God!... He’s saving it all!!

LONG PAUSE... I wonder.... if Jesus taught parable (perfect image bearer) taught image bearing means risk... **mean God’s a risk taker?... PAUSE...**
Well, if Jesus really best image/face of God say yes!
God so bent on recovering something of amazing value buried deep within “soil of our souls”... PAUSE... so bent on discovering what life really is like for us... entered into our existence... took on mortal flesh... came as a baby... God took the risk of letting us hold him!...

Did it really know the lay of the land... do seismic on humanity... **feel infancy...** know **puberty...** experience a **father’s hug/mom’s kiss...** be **surprised...** have fun **exploring...** joy of discovering... the beautiful gift

of material reality... **Know it so that he could save it...** (Heb 2:14-18, The Message)

God did whatever it took do the deal... risked it all...

Jesus was a **salvation innovator... messianic entrepreneur** ... first into “death and resurrection” market! the pinnacle of a O’s risk taking creativity **for all of us... for you!**

A Story on Investment

An Oil Patch paraphrase of Jesus’ story on investment
(From the Gospel of Luke 19:12-27)

There once was a woman, VP of operations for a major global oil firm, who needed to attend a Board of Directors meeting in Europe; time had come for her to become COO. Before boarding her flight she called her top ten division managers together, increased each of their ‘new projects’ budgets by thirty percent (times were good in the oil patch!), and instructed them, “Put this money to work until I come back.” **PAUSE...**

But there were others at the firm who despised their boss. Stabbing her in the back, they faxed a damning letter to the board, signed by each and every one of them, “We won’t work for this person!”

When the newly minted COO **successfully** returned from her trip she had all ten of her managers meet in the boardroom; she wanted a progress report.

First guy up said, “We made a one hundred percent return on our investment, the new seismic equipment we bought made all the difference.” **PAUSE** “Awesome leadership,” she said, “You’ve shown me that you’ve got what it takes, you’re my new VP Exploration”

Second manager said, “We invested the money into some new SAGD technology and got a fifty percent return.” The COO said, “Great, you’re VP Operations.”

Working around the table, the next manager said, “Boss, here’s your budget allocation back. I just couldn’t find a project or investment that made sense to me. So I just let the funds sit in our current account. To tell you the truth, I was scared witless. I know your reputation, that you have high standards, hate sloppiness and don’t suffer fools gladly.” **LONG PAUSE...**

She looked her apprentice straight in the eye and said, “You’re right, I don’t suffer fools gladly, and you’ve acted the fool. Why didn’t you find some low risk security to invest in so we’d have at least have gained a little interest?”

Then she turned to the CFO, who was sitting there, “Take his budget and give it to my new VP Exploration” Perplexed, the CFO said, “But he already has a huge budget!” “Yeah I see that,” she responded, “But this guy gets it; Put your neck on the line and get more than you ever dreamed of. Play it safe and end up holding the bag.”

“And oh, those staffers tried to pull the rug out from under me by petitioning the board, tell them that they’re fired! I don’t want to see their faces again!”

A Story on Investment

Jesus in the Gospel of Luke 19:12-27, The Message Translation

"There was once a man descended from a royal house who needed to make a long trip back to headquarters to get authorization for his rule and then return. But first he called ten servants together, gave them each a sum of money, and instructed them, "Operate with this until I return."

"But the citizens there hated him. So they sent a commission with a signed petition to oppose his rule: "We don't want this man to rule us."

"When he came back bringing the authorization of his rule, he called those ten servants to whom he had given the money to find out how they had done.

"The first said, "Master, I doubled your money."

"He said, "Good servant! Great work! Because you've been trustworthy in this small job, I'm making you governor of ten towns."

"The second said, "Master, I made a fifty percent profit on your money."

"He said, "I'm putting you in charge of five towns."

"The next servant said, "Master, here's your money safe and sound. I kept it hidden in the cellar. To tell you the truth, I was a little afraid. I know you have high standards and hate sloppiness, and don't suffer fools gladly."

"He said, "You're right that I don't suffer fools gladly--and you've acted the fool! Why didn't you at least invest the money in securities so I would have gotten a little interest on it?"

"Then he said to those standing there, "Take the money from him and give it to the servant who doubled my stake."

"They said, "But Master, he already has double . . ."

"He said, "That's what I mean: Risk your life and get more than you ever dreamed of. Play it safe and end up holding the bag.

""As for these enemies of mine who petitioned against my rule, clear them out of here. I don't want to see their faces around here again."

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