

Canopy of Prayer

Dear Prayer Partners in Europe

Lev. 19:9-10 "When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the Lord your God.

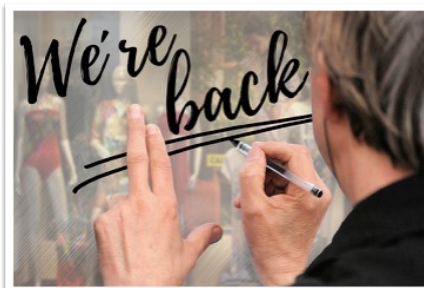
If we applied this verse to our economy today, how different the world would be. We strive to do everything as efficiently as possible, to bring in everything that can be achieved for the maximum profit. But that was and never is God's intention. What can we leave for those who have less than us?

Corrie Oosterhuis

The world of finance and business during a global pandemic

Faith in Business (www.faith-in-business.org), encourages and equips Christians to be faithful followers of Jesus in the business world.

As you probably know, the UK has had more COVID-related deaths than any other European country. In 2020 their response to the pandemic (and I say this both about its Government and the people as a whole) was haphazard and ill-disciplined. Since January, however, the situation has improved. Cases and deaths have fallen dramatically and over half the population has now been vaccinated.



Earlier this year the Government set out a four-stage 'roadmap' for a gradual return to normality. We have now embarked on the second stage where most retail outlets and indoor leisure facilities

have been allowed to reopen, and hospitality venues can serve people outdoors. Interestingly, each of these four stages is seven weeks (slightly more than 40 days) in length.

This led me to reflect on the fact that in the Bible several key characters had to wait 40 days for something important to happen: Noah, Moses, David, Jesus and the disciples (after the resurrection). A period of 40 days generally signals a time in which God is preparing people to fulfil his purposes.

While people who run businesses understandably feel impatient because they want to get back to normal, they and we need to exercise patience. We know from bitter

recent experience that too fast an attempt to resume normal business risks a resurgence of COVID-19 infections.

The waiting time can however be a time of thorough and fruitful preparation. It provides scope for reconsidering one's purpose. It is good to do this both on a personal and corporate level.

Here are some questions both to think and pray about:

- What are we about as a business?
- Have we lost our 'first love' in terms of fundamental aspirations and commitments?
- What are our short-term, medium-term and long-term goals?
- What are the temptations we need to guard against and avoid?
- Has maximising profit become an all-consuming obsession?
- Are any of our different stakeholder groups suffering from neglect?
- Should we be developing new products, services and markets?
- In the light of the above, should we revise our corporate mission statement?
- What is the godly heritage we want to pass on?

Remember how Jesus used his 40 days in the wilderness to reaffirm and refine his purpose (Matthew 4:1-11).

So let us pray that businesses across Europe may be patient during this time of waiting, use it for fruitful preparation and reconsider their purpose in a positive way. May there be many companies that emerge from this pandemic with new energy and direction, ready to serve society in imaginative and dynamic ways.

Brexit is done!

With the almost unanimous vote in the European Parliament last week, the 4 year process is complete. The EU and UK now need to work on the rebuilding of their relationship. With the events of the last week over fishing rights around the Channel Islands and tensions in Northern Ireland, we can see this may not be a straightforward task. Let us continue to lift our continent before the Lord for unity and good relationships.



Additional Prayer points:-

1. Pray that tensions arising from new fishing permits required around Jersey post Brexit can be resolved amicably.
2. Pray for those who are suffering from long-term effects of Covid 19, for their full recovery and ability to get back to work and other activities.

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