

WEA GA Business Report: Faith, Business, and the Culmination of the Ages

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Where: JW Marriot Hotel, Seoul, Korea

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Executive Summary / Abstract

This report provides a comprehensive summary of the multi-faceted discussion at the 2025 WEA Seoul General Assembly Business Breakfast, a pivotal gathering of global leaders from ministry and the marketplace. The session began with a warm welcome and opening prayer from **Dr. Goodwill Shana**, Former WEA Chair, before moving to its core theme of integrating faith and work. The formal introduction of the WEA Business Bible, a landmark resource for this mission, was presented by its publisher, **Nicolas Leone**, who framed it as the continuation of a historical legacy where commerce and technology have been essential for the dissemination of scripture.

A keynote sermon by **Pastor Rick Warren**, Executive Director of Finishing The Task, provided the deep theological grounding for the assembly. He systematically presented ten foundational, biblical reasons why work matters to God, moving from the sheer portion of life dedicated to it to its role in character formation and our preparation for eternity. He challenged the attendees to re-evaluate their perspective on wealth, urging them to become "Kingdom Builders" who use their resources to store up "treasure in heaven" by investing in people. This teaching was powerfully reinforced by the personal testimony of **Lew Cirne**, a global technologist and philanthropist, and the inaugural address from the new WEA Secretary General/CEO, **Dr. Botrus Mansour**, who reaffirmed the "Every One by 2033" mission.

The event concluded with a powerful and unifying invitation from **Dr. Goodwill Shana**. He offered extensive and heartfelt thanks to the Korean host partners, including Sarang Church and the Korean Evangelical Alliance, for their exceptional hospitality and collaboration. He framed the indispensable partnership between business and ministry using the profound biblical metaphor of Joseph of Arimathea, a businessman whose resources and influence were critical in the transition from Christ's crucifixion to His resurrection. This, he argued, is the vital role of business leaders today: to partner with the church to facilitate the work of the Kingdom in ways ministry leaders cannot do alone. The session closed with a unified call for every believer in the marketplace to see their work as a divine calling, a primary ministry, and a vital mission field for the glory of God.

Detailed Summary of Key Content

A Foundation of Worship and Welcome

The 2025 WEA Seoul General Assembly Business Breakfast commenced in an atmosphere of warm fellowship and spiritual focus. **Dr. Goodwill Shana**, in his capacity as the esteemed Former Chair of the World Evangelical Alliance, welcomed the diverse assembly of global leaders. His opening prayer set a foundational tone for the entire meeting, centring on the enduring and unwavering faithfulness of God, a theme that would resonate through the subsequent discussions on mission, business, and perseverance. Following this, the room was filled with special music from **Rev. Sung-Sam Ko** and the renowned tenor **Huw Priday**, whose performances served not as mere interludes but as integral acts of worship, preparing the hearts of the attendees. Further warmth was added through the formal "Words of Blessing" delivered by **Rev. David Hwang**, the respected Senior Pastor of Saejungang Church, who extended a gracious welcome on behalf of the Korean church.

The focus then shifted to the formal launch of a key strategic tool. In a compelling video greeting, publisher **Nicolas Leone** introduced the WEA Business Bible. He masterfully built the historical and biblical case for its necessity, arguing that the integration of business and faith was not a new invention but a recovery of a powerful, age-old principle. He traced a direct lineage from the patriarchs and early church entrepreneurs to figures like Johannes Gutenberg and William Tyndale, who leveraged business acumen and technological innovation to make the scriptures accessible to the masses. Leone positioned the Business Bible as the 21st-century continuation of this legacy, a comprehensive digital platform designed to equip modern believers in the marketplace for their divine calling. A prayer of dedication for the meal to follow was then offered by **Prof. Park Myeongsu**, transitioning the assembly into a time of networking and fellowship.

A Call to Urgent and Unified Mission

Following the breakfast, the atmosphere was reshaped by a deeply personal testimony from **Huw Priday**. He shared movingly of finding refuge in God's "everlasting arms" during personal tragedy, connecting the experience of suffering to profound spiritual growth. He then revealed a prophetic sense, given to him in late 2019, that the world was entering "the culmination of the ages," a conviction that he stated made the present gathering incredibly important. His subsequent performance of "The Holy City" infused the room with a palpable sense of eschatological urgency.

This provided the backdrop for the inaugural address from the WEA's new Secretary General/CEO, **Dr. Botrus Mansour**. He powerfully reaffirmed the central vision of the alliance: "to have reached every one by 2033." He stressed that this was not the task of one denomination or organisation, but a mandate for the entire global body of Christ. Dr. Mansour paid special tribute to the host nation, expressing his profound admiration for the South Korean church, having witnessed its passion and missional heart firsthand. He then formally extended an invitation to all attendees to "come and invest in this great mission with the WEA," a clear call for partnership and collaboration. This vision was immediately embodied in a testimony from **Lawrence Cirne**, founder of New Relic Inc. A global technologist, inventor, and philanthropist, Cirne shared his personal journey of how faith had been the driving force behind his professional life, providing a powerful, real-world example of the principles the assembly had gathered to discuss.

The Theological Heart: Rick Warren's Ten Reasons Work Matters to God

The keynote address, delivered by **Pastor Rick Warren**, author and Executive Director of *Finishing The Task*, provided the deep theological grounding for the entire meeting. He systematically and passionately outlined ten fundamental reasons why our daily work is critically important to God.

- 1. The Significance of Time:** He began with a stark statistic: work consumes at least 40% of our lives, amounting to over 150,000 hours for the average person. Because God is interested in every part of our lives, this vast portion cannot be seen as spiritually neutral; it is a primary context of our existence and therefore of immense interest to God.
- 2. Work as an Image of God:** We work because we are made in the image of a working God. Pastor Warren anchored this in the words of Jesus in John 5:17, "My Father is always at work... and so am I." To be like the Father and the Son is to learn how to work.
- 3. Work as God's First Ordinance:** Before the family, before the church, and before government, God ordained work. He gave Adam work to do in the perfection of Eden (Genesis 2:15), proving that work is not a post-Fall curse but a core part of God's original, perfect plan for humanity.

4. **Jesus' Example:** Jesus understood his calling from a young age. At just twelve years old, He declared, "I must be about my Father's business." This demonstrates that purposeful work is central to a life aligned with God's will from its earliest stages.
5. **Eternal Preparation:** In a profound pivot, Pastor Warren argued that our work on earth is the preparation and training ground for our work in heaven. Citing the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:23), he explained that our faithfulness with the "few things" on earth directly determines our responsibilities over "many things" in eternity. This life is the audition for our eternal assignments.
6. **Spiritual Duty:** Work is a non-negotiable spiritual responsibility. Citing 1 Timothy 5:8, he stressed that providing for one's family through work is a sacred duty, and to neglect it is to deny the faith.
7. **Expression of Gifts:** Work is the primary vehicle for expressing our unique, God-given talents. He explained that these gifts are given not for our own benefit, but for the service of others (1 Peter 4:10). When we use our professional skills for the good of the world, we are stewarding our divine endowments correctly.
8. **Character Formation:** God is more interested in our character than our career. While we are working on our business, God is working on us. He uses the pressures, setbacks, and successes of our work to conform us to the image of Christ (Romans 8:28-29). The most important thing we bring home from our job is not a paycheck, but the person we have become in the process.
9. **Credible Witness:** Excellence in our work is one of our most powerful forms of evangelism. It gives credibility to our verbal witness (Matthew 5:16). He shared the story of a billionaire in Oklahoma who came to faith not through a sermon, but by being deeply impressed with the impeccable quality and integrity of a Christian carpenter's work.
10. **Ministry and Mission:** Synthesising all the points, Pastor Warren declared, "Your work *is* your ministry and your mission." He powerfully reframed the identity of every attendee: "You are a marketplace minister, and you are a marketplace missionary." In a globalised economy, businesspeople are the new missionaries, able to access countries and cultures that traditional pastors cannot.

He concluded with a personal challenge, revealing that for the last 25 years he has given away 91% of his income, choosing to be a "Kingdom builder," not a "wealth builder." He taught that the way to store up treasure in heaven (Matthew 6:20) is to use earthly wealth to invest in people who are going there, funding the spread of the gospel to make "eternal friends."

A Concluding Charge of Gratitude and Partnership

The session concluded with deeply moving remarks from **Dr. Goodwill Shana**. He first took considerable time to express profound gratitude to the individuals and organisations whose partnership made the General Assembly a success. He acknowledged the foundational work of **Professor Ted Yamamori**, a pioneer in the business as mission movement. He extended heartfelt thanks to the primary host, **Dr. John Oh** and Sarang Church, and their key partners, **Dr. Young Won Lee** and the U.S. Dupont Hospital Church. He honoured the leadership of the Korean Evangelical Alliance, **Dr. Im** and **Dr. Moon**, as well as the entire Seoul Organising Committee and the wider Korean Church. Dr. Shana highlighted the strategic importance of this location, describing South Korea as "the most passionate and the most prayerful church in East Asia" and a crucial democratic stronghold of Christianity surrounded by nations in desperate need of the gospel. He

also gave a warm and personal tribute to Pastor Rick Warren, whom he affectionately called the "Evangelical Pope," thanking him for his friendship and model of ministry.

Dr. Shana then delivered a poignant closing charge, using the biblical figure of Joseph of Arimathea (John 19) as the definitive model for Christian businesspeople. He powerfully noted that when Jesus was crucified, the disciples were scattered and powerless. They could not approach the Roman governor to ask for Jesus's body. But Joseph, a businessman of wealth and stature, could. He was the one whose position and influence made it possible to give Jesus a proper burial, a historical fact that became a cornerstone of the resurrection narrative. Dr. Shana declared that this is the vital, indispensable role of businesspeople today: to partner with the church as modern-day Josephs, providing the resources, access, and strategic acumen needed to advance the gospel at critical moments when ministry leaders cannot act alone. This partnership, he argued, is the very thing that facilitates the transition from crucifixion to resurrection in ministry efforts around the world. The meeting ended with his closing prayer for unity, for the wise stewarding of business gifts for the propagation of the gospel, and for God's blessing upon the nation of South Korea.