

"FEAR IS A PART OF THE
JOY OF FOLLOWING
AFTER JESUS."

JUSTIN FORMAN

FAITH
DRIVEN
ENTREPRENEUR
PODCAST

ARTICLE

Entrepreneurs are 2X more Trusted than the Church. But they can do more, together.

7 in 10 Americans believe this partnership can change the world. What keeps them apart—and what's the first "date" they need to go on to bridge the gap?

**By Justin Forman, Co-Founder and President
of Faith Driven Entrepreneur**

We live in an age defined by a crisis of trust. Across almost every sector, confidence in our major institutions is eroding — and fast.

Surveys consistently show that trust in government and political leaders in the U.S. has plunged into the single digits, rarely breaking 9%.

The Church, though still holding a place of respect, now struggles to reach much beyond the high 20s or low 30s. And yet, one group continues to stand apart: small business owners, who hover more than 65% in public trust, nearly 9 times more trusted than politicians and twice as trusted as the Church. This gap isn't just a statistic. It's a



signal. It's a mirror reflecting what people believe about who actually solves problems, and who they want to follow.

The Glass Half Full: The Untapped Force Sitting in Our Pews

Here's the encouraging side of that story: **there are 20 to 100 times more entrepreneurs than there are pastors or church staff.**

They are self-funded.
They are deeply motivated.
And they're already sitting in our pews.

These are not people who have to be convinced that their work matters. These are men and women who *have already crossed that line*. They've built businesses. They've experienced success. And now they're asking a deeper question: **What's next?**

In a recent survey we conducted with David Kinnaman and our friends at Barna Research, **84%** of these entrepreneurs said they are aware of the gifts and talents God has given them. And an astounding **95%** said they *want to use those gifts and talents for the good of others*.

They are not lacking calling. They are longing for connection.
They are not lacking capacity. They are waiting for an invitation.
And yet, for decades, they've remained largely untapped by the Church.

It's Not by Accident

This separation isn't accidental. The wider and deeper this movement grows, the clearer it becomes: **spiritual warfare is real** — and entrepreneurs may be

among the most aware of that reality once their eyes are open.

Again and again, whenever a movement of redemptive entrepreneurship begins to stir, something seems to slow it down. Structures and systems built for **maintenance rather than multiplication**. Language that draws false lines between the "sacred" and the "secular." Mutual suspicion that keeps natural allies apart.

And yet... something is shifting.

The Crazy Part: Everyone Already Believes This Partnership Could Change the World

Here's the headline that should stop us all in our tracks:

Our recent national survey with Barna found that **7 in 10 Americans believe that if the Church and entrepreneurs worked together, they could solve the world's greatest problems.**



Think about that. **Seventy percent.** Across generations, ideologies, and belief systems — people already believe that this partnership could change the world.

So the question isn't, "*Can this happen?*"

The question is, "*What's keeping it from happening?*"

And maybe even more practically: *What's the "first date" these two need to go on to bridge the gap?*

A Forgotten Machine and a Fresh Acronym

If you're old enough to remember the **VCR**, you remember what a magical little box it was. Paired with a Friday night rental from Blockbuster, it could turn any living room into a theater. But without the tape, the machine did nothing. Without the machine, the tape was useless.

In the same way, **VCR** is a simple but powerful acronym for launching any movement:

- > **Vision**
- > **Capacity**
- > **Relationship**

And here's the thing: **all three already exist**. They just need to be connected

Vision: The Future Is Already Burning in Our Bones

Nobody in a city is more equipped with *vision* than pastors and entrepreneurs.

Pastors carry God-given dreams for the renewal of people and places.

Entrepreneurs carry God-given drive to build what doesn't yet exist. Each sees the world not only as it is, but as it *could* be. When that shared vision aligns — when the pastoral heart and the entrepreneurial imagination collide — culture shifts. Systems change. Movements are born.

Capacity: More Than Enough to Move Mountains

The Church and the marketplace both hold extraordinary *capacity*.

Entrepreneurs bring capital, creativity, and networks. Churches bring people, credibility, and infrastructure. Together, they possess the financial, relational, and organizational muscle to tackle problems far beyond their individual reach.

The tragedy is not that we lack capacity, it's that we haven't connected it.

Relationship: The Bridge That Makes It All Work

And perhaps most importantly, no one is more *relationally connected* than pastors and entrepreneurs.

Pastors know their communities, their hurts, hopes, and histories. Entrepreneurs know their markets, their pain points, patterns, and possibilities. When those relational webs intertwine, they create an ecosystem capable of far more than either could achieve alone.

The Realization That Changes Everything

When you step back and look at the tools, the trust, and the talent sitting on both sides, it's hard not to conclude that *something has been keeping us apart*.

It's not a lack of resources.
It's not a lack of desire.
It's not even a lack of vision.

It's a lack of relationship — the missing link that transforms scattered potential into shared momentum.

The Story Yet to Be Told

We're already seeing glimpses of what happens when this partnership forms. Stories from **Faith Driven Entrepreneurs show** how churches can become hubs of innovation, launching ventures that solve real problems, disciple entrepreneurs, and bless entire cities.

Take **Nottingham, England**, where **Matt Parfitt** and his church refused to see ministry and marketplace as separate callings. Together, they built businesses that now employ hundreds across the city. Or look to **Taiwan**, where pastors are intentionally coming alongside entrepreneurs launching franchise networks — encouraging and equipping them as Kingdom builders.

These aren't isolated stories on the fringes. They're early signs of a new normal — one where the Church and entrepreneurs work side by side to bring renewal to cities and industries.

Now imagine that story multiplied in **2,000 churches** across the country. Imagine congregations commissioning entrepreneurs the way they commission missionaries.

Imagine a "Pastor of Entrepreneurship" becoming as common as a marriage ministry or a financial stewardship class.

It's not far-fetched. It's inevitable, if we connect the vision, the capacity, and the relationships that already exist.

The trust gap is real. But so is the opportunity. The world is waiting. The Church is ready.

The entrepreneurs are sitting in the pews.
All that's missing is the bridge that brings them together.

And once it's built, **7 in 10 Americans already believe** that partnership will change the world.

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