





Economic freedom is required to live out God's vision and purpose of us as humans. The morning panel declared humans will always be human beings. This is the starting point of any society that gets constructed. Utopia will never be attained. I remember my economics professor used to say, economics puts restraints on our utopia.

Genesis 1:26-28 is God's purpose for creation. Humans are the image of God...We are His masterpiece. He master engineered and architected us. We cannot create in the same way God can, something out of nothing, but we can create. That is where we get passion and our jobs from. We are instructed to be fruitful and multiply.

Think about if someone assigning one with babysitting, walking a dog when they are out of town, or shoveling snow. It's something they ask one to watch over when they're on vacation. The job is to take care of, to preserve it. If bad things happen, call the police, call the fire or whatever one needs to do, but they're not asked to renovate the house. They are not told to construct an addition to the house. That goes above and beyond the duties of preserving. The Hebrew word for to serve, 'abad' is an active word to holy preserve.



We did not do anything to do this we just were born into it. So how do we extend that to others... Economic freedom is a really great way to empirically assess the health of a nation... When we measure economic freedom as economists, it is data driven. Countries are scored from 0-10 on economic freedom from free to least free. These include intellectual property rights which can rest in Scripture in the 10 Commandments, levels of regulation and how difficult or easy it is to open a business and secure a line of credit to do so, the size of the government relative to its people, the soundness of the currency and monetary policy, and the freedom to trade internationally. Trade widens the circle of people that may be relied on. Venezuela scores lowest as a nation on least economic freedom, 30 years ago it was a thriving democratic country that was wealthy where one would go on a family vacation too. This scale is an empirical way to see which societies are escaping poverty and doing so rapidly, but also reveals the possibility that if we are not in the right institutions that respect humanity and human anthropology that rests in Scripture, then we can lose economic freedom like Venezuela. The population is immiserated, and the population is figuring out how to get out of it. There's no guarantee of economic freedom.

A society can have economic freedom and lose it or have little economic freedom and gain it. This must be thought of with inclusive opportunities for the poor. We don't just need to think about this globally but can also think of it in our cities and communities. How are people excluded? What are the vulnerabilities? How do we bring an economic approach to thinking about and serving our fellow human beings?

Trade empowers people to live into who it is that God created them to be. To do that and really help people is relational, not just writing a check. You cannot help someone out of addiction who is in a shelter by giving them a check, meal, water, or healthcare. You must walk with them. You need to be beside them.