

Entrepreneurial ecclesiology and pastoral kenosis: A theological-ethical analysis of the commercialisation of leadership in contemporary independent churches

Marcellius Lumintang¹ , Antakirana² 

¹Sekolah Tinggi Teologi IKAT Jakarta

²Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Internasional Harvest Tangerang

Correspondence:

marcelliuslumintang@sttikat.ac.id

Article History

Submitted: August 5, 2025

Reviewed: July 28, 2026

Accepted: August 20, 2026

DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.30995/kur.v12i2.1521>

Copyright:

© 2026, Authors

Licensed:



Abstract: This study offers a theological-ethical analysis of the commercialisation of pastoral leadership in contemporary independent churches. Entrepreneurial ecclesiology, namely the adoption of business logic, managerial efficiency, and measurable growth into church governance, has shifted the pastor's identity from servant to spiritual entrepreneur. Using a qualitative-theological method and a normative analytical approach grounded in library research, this article identifies four dimensions of the problem: ecclesiological distortion, a structural accountability deficit, a pastoral identity crisis, and the commodification of charisma. The analysis shows that the structural autonomy of independent churches, originally a missional strength, simultaneously becomes the condition that allows commercialisation to proceed without institutional correction. Drawing on Miroslav Volf, John Howard Yoder, Eugene Peterson, and Robert Borrong, this article articulates five normative criteria for the integrity of pastoral leadership. This research links ethical critique with structural analysis so the resulting criteria can translate into governance instruments rather than remain moral exhortation.

Keywords: commodification of charisma, entrepreneurial ecclesiology, independent church, pastoral kenosis, theological ethics

Introduction

Contemporary independent churches live amid two logics that do not always coincide. On the one hand, the logic of calling places the church as a fellowship of believers formed by the Word and the work of the Holy Spirit. On the other hand, the logic of the market demands efficiency, measurable growth, and financial sustainability. Over the past two decades, urban economic pressure, competition among religious institutions, and the need to fund operations independently have prompted many churches to adopt a model of leadership that emphasises an entrepreneurial spirit.¹ By an independent church, this article means a Christian congregation that governs itself structurally and financially, does not stand under the synodal authority of an established denomination, and is generally, though not always, oriented towards the evangelical or charismatic movement. This structural autonomy is what leaves

¹ Pete Ward, *Liquid Church* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002).

churches of this kind relatively free to adopt managerial logic and corporate-style forms of organisation, since they are not bound by the supra-local ecclesial accountability mechanisms that synodal churches typically possess.²

Miroslav Volf has long warned that an orientation that places too much emphasis on organisational effectiveness can obscure the nature of the church as a fellowship, or *communio*.³ That warning now takes a more concrete form. The adoption of business logic no longer stops at the level of organisational structure but has penetrated the dimension of pastoral leadership itself. The senior pastor is no longer understood merely as a spiritual servant but is also expected to act as an institutional manager, the public face of the church, and the driving force behind its spiritual activities.⁴ This shift in role does not arise from individual moral failure but from structural pressures that operate gradually and often go unnoticed by those subject to them.

A number of earlier studies have mapped this phenomenon from various perspectives. Pete Ward has examined how consumer culture and social mobility shape fluid patterns of congregational life oriented toward choice.⁵ Marcus Moberg has shown that marketisation is not merely a technique borrowed by the church but a discourse that changes the way the church understands itself.⁶ Mara Einstein has analysed how religion is packaged as brands that compete for attention in the media space.⁷ Shayne Lee and Phillip Luke Sinitiere have traced the ways in which several American evangelical leaders position themselves as innovators who market spiritual products in a spiritual marketplace.⁸ In the Southeast Asian context, Jeaney Yip and Chang-Yau Hoon found that branding strategies and image management have become integral to the way *megachurches* in Indonesia build their identity and attract young, middle-class congregants.⁹ Further work with Susan Ainsworth shows how an independent church in Jakarta consciously designed its brand narrative the way a corporation designs its identity.¹⁰ In Singapore, Yip and Ainsworth documented how the procurement of worship buildings is carried out through complex property business schemes.¹¹ From South In South Africa, Mookgo Kgatle shows how prophetic ministry has become a paid service, while Madipoane and Malesela Masenya read church schisms as a prototype of religion's commodification. There is a significant research gap. The literature on the entrepreneurial church is fairly rich, but most of it is descriptive, sociological, or grounded in

² Scott Thumma and Dave Travis, *Beyond Megachurch Myths: What We Can Learn from America's Largest Churches* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007), 66.

³ Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 112–114.

⁴ Shayne Lee and Phillip Luke Sinitiere, *Holy Mavericks: Evangelical Innovators and the Spiritual Marketplace* (New York: New York University Press, 2009), 146–148.

⁵ Ward, *Liquid Church*.

⁶ Marcus Moberg, *Church, Market, and Media: A Discursive Approach to Institutional Religious Change* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017), 2–6.

⁷ Mara Einstein, *Brands of Faith: Marketing Religion in a Commercial Age* (London: Routledge, 2008), 20–27.

⁸ Lee and Sinitiere, *Holy Mavericks*.

⁹ Jeaney Yip and Chang-Yau Hoon, "'To Build a Generation of Stars': Megachurch Identity, Religion and Modernity in Indonesia," *South East Asia Research* 24, no. 4 (2016): 477–491.

¹⁰ Jeaney Yip, Susan Ainsworth, and Chang-Yau Hoon, "JPCC: A Megachurch Brand Story in Indonesia," in *Routledge International Handbook of Religion in Global Society*, ed. Jayeel Cornelio, François Gauthier, Tuomas Martikainen, and Linda Woodhead (London and New York: Routledge, 2020), 42–51.

¹¹ Jeaney Yip and Susan Ainsworth, "'Do Business till He Comes': The Business of Housing God in Singapore Megachurches," *Pacific Affairs* 88, no. 2 (2015): 237–257.

marketing studies. Such studies explain how commercialisation works, yet they rarely assess whether and to what extent the practice can be justified in light of the nature of the pastoral calling. Questions concerning the ethical boundary between ministry and profit, the permissibility of a pastor doubling as a spiritual entrepreneur, and the impact of commercialisation on the relationship between pastor and congregation are still seldom answered, whether theologically or normatively.¹² Meanwhile, available Indonesian-language literature on pastoral ethics, such as Robert Borrong's work on the pastors' code of ethics, has formulated virtue norms for church ministers but has not yet specifically addressed the entrepreneurial pressures unique to urban independent churches.¹³

The urgency of this problem is reinforced by findings on the condition of the ministers themselves. Research by Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell and Jason Byassee on the clergy health crisis shows that multiplying role burdens, coupled with demands for measurable results, are correlated with ministerial exhaustion and ethical vulnerability.¹⁴ Kelebogile Resane even judges the loss of the dynamics of servant leadership to be the central problem for pastoral integrity today.¹⁵ In other words, commercialisation is not only a matter of the church's image in the public sphere but also a matter of the spiritual well-being of ministers themselves.

The thesis advanced in this article is as follows. The commercialisation of pastoral leadership in contemporary independent churches, if it is not subjected to theological and ethical critique, has the potential to distort the nature of the pastoral calling, which is kenotic and diaconal. This distortion does not occur suddenly but through a gradual shift in which measures of ministerial success are replaced by measures of organisational success. Without clear normative criteria and without binding accountability mechanisms, independent churches risk losing their prophetic integrity precisely when their public influence is growing stronger.

On the basis of this thesis, the study aims to analyse theologically and ethically the commercialisation of pastoral leadership in contemporary independent churches, and at the same time to formulate normative criteria that can safeguard the integrity of the pastoral calling amid entrepreneurial pressure. The novelty of this research lies in linking ethical critique with an analysis of the structural conditions of independent churches, so the resulting criteria do not remain moral exhortation but can be translated into testable governance instruments. It should be made clear from the outset that this article distinguishes two taxonomies that are related but not identical. The first taxonomy comprises the four structural characteristics of entrepreneurial ecclesiology, namely the patterns visible on the surface of church governance (discussed in the section "Genealogy and Characteristics"). The second taxonomy comprises the four dimensions of the problem that these patterns generate, namely their theological-ethical consequences (discussed in a distributed manner from the second to the fourth sections of the discussion). The two taxonomies are related as cause and effect, but

¹² Richard B. Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 464–468.

¹³ Robert P. Borrong, *Melayani Makin Sungguh: Signifikansi Kode Etik Pendeta bagi Pelayanan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* [Serving Ever More Earnestly: The Significance of the Pastors' Code of Ethics for the Ministry of Churches in Indonesia] (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2016), 15–19.

¹⁴ Rae Jean Proeschold-Bell and Jason Byassee, *Faithful and Fractured: Responding to the Clergy Health Crisis* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 79–98.

¹⁵ Kelebogile T. Resane, "Servant Leadership and Shepherd Leadership: The Missing Dynamic in Pastoral Integrity in South Africa Today," *HTS Theological Studies* 76, no. 1 (2020): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i1.5608>.

they are deliberately kept apart so that descriptive analysis (what appears) is not mixed with evaluative analysis (what is theologically problematic).

The discussion is organised into five sections. The first section outlines the genealogy and characteristics of entrepreneurial ecclesiology. The second analyses structural autonomy as the condition that allows commercialisation to proceed without correction. The third discusses the tension between the call to kenosis and the pressure of efficiency. The fourth examines the commodification of charisma. The fifth formulates five normative criteria towards an ecclesiology of integrity.

This study employs a qualitative-theological method with a theological-normative analytical approach grounded in library research. The normative approach was chosen deliberately because the central question of this research is not how widespread the phenomenon of commercialisation is, but whether and to what extent the practice can be justified in light of the nature of the pastoral calling. Such a question cannot be answered solely with data on frequency or distribution; it demands an assessment of the congruence of practice with theological norms recognised by the community of faith.

The data sources consist of three layers that are deliberately distinguished so that descriptive claims are not mixed with normative claims. The first layer comprises normative theological sources, namely the biblical texts, the works of Thomas Aquinas and John Calvin, and contemporary Christian theological ethics from the Reformed and Anabaptist traditions. The second layer is cross-disciplinary academic literature on ecclesiology, practical theology, the sociology of religion, and studies of religious marketing. The third layer is published empirical research on *megachurches* and independent churches in Indonesia, Southeast Asia, North America, and Africa, which is used as descriptive material for understanding the concrete form of the phenomenon analysed.

The analysis was conducted in three successive stages. The first stage is description, that is, mapping the forms and mechanisms of the commercialisation of pastoral leadership as documented in the literature. The second stage is theological-ethical critique, that is, assessing the mapped patterns using the framework of Christian theological ethics, in particular the doctrine of kenosis, the teaching on spiritual gifts, and the understanding of church office as a calling. This framework was then set critically alongside Peter Berger's theories of secularisation and religious market pluralism, the economic theory of religion of Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, and Max Weber's concept of charisma and its routinisation.¹⁶ The juxtaposition is carried out at three points of tension. First, Weber's routinisation of charisma is brought into encounter with the doctrine of kenosis in order to test whether the institutionalisation of charisma is still service or has shifted into self-preservation. Second, Stark and Finke's economic theory of religion is brought into encounter with Aquinas's concept of freely given grace (*gratia gratis data*) in order to assess the shift from the logic of grace to the logic of exchange. Third, Berger's religious market pluralism is brought into encounter with Volf's ecclesiology of communion in order to assess when institutional marketing changes the nature of the church. These three points of tension form the analytical

¹⁶ Peter L. Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Doubleday, 1967), 135–138; Rodney Stark and Roger Finke, *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 193–217; Max Weber, *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*, ed. Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 216–217.

framework of this discussion. The third stage is normative synthesis, that is, formulating criteria for pastoral leadership of integrity together with their governance translations.

As a methodological note, this research is conceptual-normative and does not involve interviews or field observation of particular churches or pastors. All empirical claims cited derive from published academic literature, not from primary data collected by the author. Consequently, this article cannot and does not intend to evaluate particular churches or figures, but evaluates patterns of practice. Every finding from the South African, Singaporean, or American context is used as a structural analogy for building hypotheses, not as evidence that the same pattern exists in Indonesia; for that reason, this article makes no prevalence claims about independent churches in Indonesia without the support of primary data. This limitation is discussed again in the concluding section, together with the recommended agenda for further research.

Genealogy and characteristics of entrepreneurial ecclesiology

The term “entrepreneurial ecclesiology” as used in this article is not a standard term coined by a single author, but an analytical construct built from the convergence of three lines of scholarship. The first is the study of liquid church developed by Pete Ward, which shows the shift from the church as fixed membership to the church as a network of choice.¹⁷ The second is the study of the marketisation of religion developed by Marcus Moberg and Mara Einstein, which shows that the language of the market functions not only as a tool but also shapes the way religious institutions understand their mission.¹⁸ The third is the study of *megachurch* branding developed by Yip, Ainsworth, and Hoon, which shows that a church’s corporate identity is composed through deliberate symbolic choices.¹⁹ Clarity about the origins of the term matters so that the subsequent analysis does not rest on attributions that cannot be justified.

The roots of the practice itself can be traced much further back. In the United States, the church growth movement pioneered by Donald McGavran and developed by C. Peter Wagner introduced a way of thinking that places numerical growth as the principal indicator of ministerial success.²⁰ This way of thinking subsequently spread through training networks, popular literature, and leadership conferences to many independent churches in various parts of the world, including Indonesia. In the Indonesian context in particular, the spread of this way of thinking can be traced more specifically to the wave of large independent churches established in major cities from the late 1990s and early 2000s, as church leadership literature from the United States and South Korea entered the country and cross-church leadership conferences proliferated. This period coincided with the growth of the urban middle class in Indonesia, which Yip and Hoon identify as the congregational base targeted by *megachurch* branding strategies.²¹ A more detailed genealogical investigation of this wave in Indonesia, for example through the historical documentation of particular churches, remains a little-explored research agenda and is proposed again in the concluding section. What should be noted is that

¹⁷ Ward, *Liquid Church*.

¹⁸ Moberg, *Church, Market, and Media*; Einstein, *Brands of Faith*.

¹⁹ Yip, Ainsworth, and Hoon, “JPCC: A Megachurch Brand Story in Indonesia.”

²⁰ Donald A. McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970); C. Peter Wagner, *Your Church Can Grow* (Glendale: Regal Books, 1976), 32.

²¹ Yip and Hoon, “To Build a Generation of Stars.”

the movement was born of a sincere missional concern, namely the desire that the Gospel should reach as many people as possible. The problem arises not from that intention, but at the point when the intermediate indicator, namely numbers, turns into the final goal.

The principal characteristics of entrepreneurial ecclesiology, as structural features visible on the surface of church governance, can be formulated in four traits. First, an orientation towards measurable results, so that ministerial success is judged by attendance figures, growth in offerings, and media reach. Second, the professionalisation of governance, so that the church adopts divisional structures, performance indicators, and strategic planning commonly used by corporations. Third, branding, so that the church builds a visual identity, style of worship, and public narrative that are consistent and easily recognisable. Fourth, income diversification, so that the church runs business units such as cafés, content production, publishing, or paid conferences. The four structural characteristics are distinct from the dimensions of the problem: the structural characteristics are descriptive, whereas the dimensions of the problem are theological-ethical consequences. One characteristic can contribute to several problems at once; for example, income diversification contributes to both the accountability deficit and the commodification of charisma. The church is no longer viewed primarily as a fellowship of believers but as an institution that must be managed professionally in order to survive.²²

In the Indonesian context, these characteristics are displayed analogously in a study of an urban independent church that builds its corporate identity through the language of self-empowerment, a modern aesthetic, and a business vocabulary; it should be noted that this study is limited to a single case study of a church in Jakarta and is not necessarily representative of independent churches in Indonesia in general.²³ Terence Chong and his contributors show that Pentecostal *megachurches* in Southeast Asia have grown precisely by linking the aspirations of the urban middle class to carefully designed worship experiences.²⁴ In such a landscape, the senior pastor often becomes the central figure who controls almost every aspect, so that the role shifts from shepherd to institutional manager and, at the same time, the public face of the brand.²⁵

The initial impact of this model is a change in the meaning of the offering. Normatively, the offering remains voluntary, but in the subjective experience of the congregation it can feel like a social obligation to sustain the operations of an ever-expanding institution. The religious economy framework of Rodney Stark and Roger Finke helps to explain this dynamic. In a competitive religious market, religious institutions tend to behave like firms vying for consumer choice, a logic which, if left without theological restraint, erodes the meaning of the offering as an expression of love and replaces it with the meaning of a transaction.²⁶ Peter Berger had shown long before that under conditions of pluralism, religious traditions inevitably find themselves in a market situation and are driven to market themselves to audiences who are no longer bound to them.²⁷

²² Volf, *After Our Likeness*.

²³ Yip and Hoon, "To Build a Generation of Stars."

²⁴ Terence Chong, ed., *Pentecostal Megachurches in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Class, Consumption and the Nation* (Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2018), xi.

²⁵ Thumma and Travis, *Beyond Megachurch Myths*.

²⁶ Stark and Finke, *Acts of Faith*.

²⁷ Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*, 127–131; 155–156.

In the long term, this model has the potential to create symbolic inequality within the body of the church. A pastor who succeeds in building a large institution with a broad following tends to be regarded as more spiritually authoritative, while a pastor who serves a small congregation or one in a peripheral area is given less consideration in public discourse about Christianity. Scott Thumma and Dave Travis note a pattern of such informal hierarchy among *megachurches* and small churches in the United States.²⁸ A paradox arises that is not easily resolved. The church declares itself inclusive, yet the practice of entrepreneurship in fact reinforces a hierarchy based on economic capacity and media visibility.

In response, a number of theologians from the radical Anabaptist tradition, such as John Howard Yoder and Stanley Hauerwas, return the church to its identity as an alternative polis, that is, a distinct political community whose loyalty to the Kingdom of God is not subject to the logic of either the market or the state.²⁹ For Hauerwas and Willimon, the church is called to be a colony that lives by a narrative different from that of the surrounding consumer culture, not merely a provider of spiritual services competing in the free market.³⁰ Such critique is often judged unrealistic by independent churches that must survive without the structural support of a parent denomination. Precisely for that reason, the critique needs to be carried forward with an analysis of the structural conditions that make this pressure so strong, and not stop at a moral appeal.

Structural autonomy and the accountability deficit

The structural autonomy of independent churches is born of sincere concern. This form allows rapid decision-making, flexibility in innovation, and closeness between leadership and the local context. Many independent churches were established precisely as a corrective to synodal bureaucracy judged to be slow and insufficiently close to the needs of the congregation. Yet this strength has another side that is rarely discussed openly. When the highest authority stops with the pastor or with a small circle around the pastor, there is no ecclesial body above with the authority to review, rebuke, or restore.³¹

This deficit operates at three levels. At the first level, the deficit occurs in financial oversight. Without an independent auditing body and without an obligation to report to any body outside the congregation itself, the boundary between the institution's finances and the pastor's personal finances depends entirely on individual integrity. At the second level, the deficit occurs in doctrinal oversight. The absence of a supra-local teaching council makes doctrinal deviation, including preaching that links the giving of money with the assurance of blessing, difficult to correct from within. At the third level, the deficit occurs in the handling of complaints. Congregants who experience pressure or abuse of authority have no avenue of appeal outside a structure led by the very party complained against.

Studies from the South African context show the concrete consequences of this deficit, but they are presented as illustrations of a mechanism, not as evidence that the same pattern also occurs in Indonesia. Mookgo Kgatle notes how prophetic ministry can shift into a service for

²⁸ Thumma and Travis, *Beyond Megachurch Myths*.

²⁹ John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), 35–39; Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon, *Resident Aliens: A Provocative Christian Assessment of Culture and Ministry for People Who Know That Something Is Wrong* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 50–51.

³⁰ Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*.

³¹ Thumma and Travis, *Beyond Megachurch Myths*; cf. Borrong, *Melayani Makin Sungguh*.

which fees are charged, while Madipoane and Malesela Masenya read the wave of church schisms as a prototype of the commodification and commercialisation of religion that proceeds without institutional corrective mechanisms.³² In the Indonesian context, Sony Kristiantoro's study of spiritual tourism shows a similar mechanism in a different form. The pastor occupies a central position as the party trusted to promote the trip while also receiving conveniences and benefits from the organisers and from their own congregation, a position that is structurally prone to conflicts of interest.³³ More recent studies show that this pattern continues and develops: commercialisation reaches more concrete spiritual objects such as items regarded as anointed, holiness as a means of social transformation is turned into a symbolic commodity, and religious commercialisation even overlaps with gender-based violence against congregants.³⁴

It must be stressed that the accountability deficit is not a moral accusation against independent churches. Synodal churches also experience failures of oversight, and the existence of structures does not in itself guarantee integrity. What is to be shown here is a conditional relationship. Structural autonomy removes one layer of correction that is available to synodal churches, so that the burden of safeguarding integrity shifts almost entirely onto the congregation's internal mechanisms and the personal virtue of the pastor. In a situation where market pressure is intensifying, the absence of this corrective layer makes it more likely that deviations will continue for a long time before being detected. This analysis is the basis for why the normative criteria in the final section of this article cannot stop at an appeal to virtue but must be translated into governance instruments.

Pastoral leadership between the call to kenosis and the pressure of efficiency

The core of the pastoral calling in the Christian tradition is kenosis, the self-emptying exemplified by Christ as declared in Philippians 2:5–11. A pastor is called to serve and not to be served, and to give their life for the flock entrusted to them, as described in John 10:11. This concept forms the basis of a pastoral ethics that emphasises humility and self-sacrifice rather than individual achievement that can be marketed. John Calvin affirmed that the office of church minister is a means God uses to sustain the people, so that its authority inheres in the Word that is served, not in the person of the minister.³⁵

The pressure of efficiency brought by entrepreneurial ecclesiology often collides with these values. Efficiency demands results that can be shown, namely growth in congregation numbers, increased revenue, and increased visibility in the digital space.³⁶ Pastors who cannot

³² Kgatle, "Go Deeper Papa, Prophesy, Do Something"; Masenya and Masenya, "Church Breakaways as a Prototype of Commercialisation."

³³ Sony Kristiantoro, "Komodifikasi Agama dalam Holy Land Tour: Sebuah Tinjauan Sosiologi Agama [The Commodification of Religion in Holy Land Tours: A Sociological Review of Religion]," *DUNAMIS: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 6, no. 1 (2021): 27–29.

³⁴ Mookgo S. Kgatle and Vuyisile Qiki, "The Commercialisation of Anointed Water in Two Ministries: An African Theological Perspective," *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 57, no. 1 (2023): a2937; Collium Banda, "Holiness and Sustainable Social Transformation among Neo-Pentecostal Prophets in South Africa," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45, no. 1 (2024): a3218; Kelebogile T. Resane, "Gender Based Violence in the Commercialisation of Religion in Neo-Pentecostal Churches," *Pharos Journal of Theology* 105, no. 2 (2024).

³⁵ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.3.1–3.

³⁶ Thumma and Travis, *Beyond Megachurch Myths*.

show such quantitative results are often judged less successful, and so are driven to adopt marketing strategies and to build a self-image. The theological irony is sharp. Strategies intended to widen the proclamation of Christ risk placing the proclaimer at the centre of attention, so that the Christ who is proclaimed is displaced into the background.

Eugene Peterson names this problem accurately when he judges that many ministers have changed jobs without realising it, from work centred on prayer, the reading of Scripture, and spiritual direction to the work of managing a religious institution that must keep running.³⁷ For Peterson, pastoral integrity lies precisely in three acts that are invisible and unmeasurable, namely prayer, the reading of Scripture, and spiritual guidance, because it is there that true ministry is determined. The problem of commercialisation is therefore not merely a matter of money but a shift of the centre of attention from the hidden to the visible.

This tension gives rise to a crisis of pastoral identity. Bonnie Miller-McLemore stresses that pastoral ministry is by nature a reflective practice that lives at the intersection of various demands, namely pastoral, prophetic, and institutional demands, and that the tension between these roles, if it is not theologically reflected upon, can erode a minister's sense of calling.³⁸ In contemporary independent churches, this tension takes a very particular form, namely the pull between the pastor's role as a prophet who reminds the congregation of injustice and the pastor's role as a manager who must promote programmes so that the institution keeps running. The two roles do not always conflict, but when they collide, financial pressure almost always defeats the prophetic role.

Ethically, the fundamental question is how far a pastor may derive financial benefit from their ministry. Richard Hays stresses that ministry in New Testament ethics is rooted in the logic of giving that imitates the generosity of God, not in the logic of the exchange of equal value.³⁹ However, the answer to this question cannot be an absolute rejection of compensation, since pastors are human beings with living needs and a responsibility to provide for their families. The New Testament itself recognises that ministers of the Gospel have the right to earn a living from their ministry, as stated in 1 Corinthians 9:14, even though Paul chose not to use that right so that his proclamation would not be hindered. The right answer is therefore not rejection, but the setting of limits and criteria that can be examined.

A number of organisations concerned with clergy health propose a way forward in the form of adequate fixed remuneration accompanied by institutional financial transparency.⁴⁰ This proposal is reasonable but does not yet touch the root of the problem. The root lies in a mindset that quietly begins to treat ministry as an investment that must yield a return. When a pastor begins to calculate when the time devoted to pastoral care will return in the form of financial gain or reputation, something essential in the spirit of their calling has shifted, even though no rule has been broken.

In the Anabaptist tradition, the pastoral calling is understood as a charism given by God and recognised by the community, not as a profession that is sought or built through strategies

³⁷ Eugene H. Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 1–7; cf. Eugene H. Peterson, *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 30–35.

³⁸ Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, *Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 137–159.

³⁹ Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*.

⁴⁰ Proeschold-Bell and Byassee, *Faithful and Fractured*.

of self-image. John Howard Yoder affirms that the authority of leadership in the early Christian congregation arose from the communal recognition of gifts that were visibly at work, and not from professional credentials or the capacity for self-promotion.⁴¹ For that reason, the pressure of efficiency that forces pastors to keep innovating in order to maintain public visibility risks contradicting the principle of *sola gratia*, namely that ministry is a grace received, not merely the product of human hard work or skill. The conclusion of this section is that pastoral integrity cannot be measured by the number of congregants, the number of followers, or the size of the church's revenue, but by faithfulness to the calling to serve without thought of reward.

Commodification of charisma: When grace becomes a commodity

The most serious impact of the commercialisation of pastoral leadership is the commodification of charisma. In sociology, charisma is understood as a form of authority that rests on followers' belief in the extraordinary qualities inhering in a leader. Max Weber also showed that charisma tends to undergo routinisation when it must be institutionalised and funded.⁴² Peter Berger complements this analysis by showing that in a religious market situation, religious institutions are driven to package the content of their beliefs so that it can be marketed to audiences who are free to choose.⁴³ In entrepreneurial practice, these two tendencies meet, and charisma is often reduced to a personal brand that can be sold through books, seminars, online classes, and various digital content products.

Kate Bowler documents how, in the history of the prosperity gospel in the United States, a number of figures built media networks that marketed spiritual products and made personal testimony part of their selling power.⁴⁴ Lee and Sinitiere call this pattern a hallmark of the contemporary spiritual marketplace, in which a leader's spiritual credibility becomes an asset that can be capitalised.⁴⁵ James Twitchell even reads the *megachurch* as one of the most advanced forms of institutional branding in America, alongside universities and museums.⁴⁶

Theologically, the commodification of charisma is a form of the misuse of grace. Thomas Aquinas distinguishes between grace that sanctifies its recipient and grace given freely for the benefit of others, and affirms that the second kind is given for the common building up of the body of Christ, not for the personal gain of the recipient.⁴⁷ When charisma is traded as a commodity, it loses its character as a sign of God's free presence and becomes symbolic capital that can be exchanged for economic value.

Acts 8:18–23 points to this deviation at the very beginning of church history, when Simon tried to buy the power of the Spirit with money and was sharply rebuked by Peter. This event is a prime example of the problem, in which Simon offers money to Peter and John in order to

⁴¹ John Howard Yoder, *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community Before the Watching World* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992), 11–17.

⁴² Weber, *Economy and Society*.

⁴³ Berger, *The Sacred Canopy*.

⁴⁴ Kate Bowler, *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 105–106.

⁴⁵ Lee and Sinitiere, *Holy Mavericks*.

⁴⁶ James B. Twitchell, *Branded Nation: The Marketing of Megachurch, College Inc., and Museumworld* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004), 47–50.

⁴⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 111, a. 1 and a. 4.

obtain the power to confer the Holy Spirit. Peter's rebuke shows that the problem is not merely money but the assumption that God's gift (*dōrea*, a free gift) can be obtained through the exchange of value (Acts 8:20). This logic of exchange provides the framework for assessing the commodification of charisma today, namely not whether money is involved, but whether spiritual gifts are treated as something that can be bought or exchanged.

The ethical impact is the exploitation of the relationship between pastor and congregation. Simon Coleman, in his study of the globalisation of charismatic Christianity, shows that in such networks giving is never neutral but is bound to an economy of blessing that links the act of giving with the expectation of receiving.⁴⁸ Congregants who believe their pastor's charisma to be a channel of divine blessing may feel a moral obligation to buy the products offered or to give offerings in a certain amount, because such acts are interpreted as support for the pastor's anointing. A relationship of this kind becomes unequal and prone to the abuse of spiritual power, since the congregation's bargaining position is far weaker than the symbolic authority inhering in the pastor.

A number of pastors who are critical of this practice try to separate spiritual ministry sharply from commercial activity. They restrain themselves from selling spiritual products directly to their own congregations and accept only offerings that are truly voluntary. In practice, this boundary is often blurred, especially when product promotion is conducted through the pastor's personal channels, which are the same as those of the ministry, so that congregants find it hard to tell which is a pastoral invitation and which is a commercial one. This blurring is what makes the separation of channels not merely a matter of administrative tidiness but also a matter of ethics.

In Indonesia, studies in the sociology of religion on religious commodification show that the tendency to turn spiritual symbols and experiences into saleable products is not a phenomenon isolated to a particular church tradition but a broader pattern in the urban religious landscape.⁴⁹ It should be stressed that academic studies specifically mapping the scale of this problem in independent churches in Indonesia remain very limited. For that reason, this article refrains from drawing conclusions about the extent of the phenomenon in Indonesia and places its empirical mapping as an urgent agenda for further research. What can be concluded normatively is that the structure of opportunity for such deviation genuinely exists, and it is this structure that calls for ethical oversight.

Towards an ecclesiology of integrity: Five normative criteria

Having mapped the problem in the preceding sections, the next step is to formulate normative criteria that can safeguard the integrity of pastoral leadership. The criteria below are prescriptive and are framed so that they can be translated into governance instruments that can be checked, rather than merely memorised. For this reason, each criterion is accompanied by indicators of its application.

The first criterion is faithfulness to the prophetic mission. A pastor must dare to speak the truth even when it is unpopular and financially disadvantageous. The Gospel must not be compromised for the sake of institutional growth or to protect the public image. Walter

⁴⁸ Simon Coleman, *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 201–202.

⁴⁹ Kristiantoro, "Komodifikasi Agama dalam Holy Land Tour."

Brueggemann reminds us that the task of the prophetic spiritual leader is to dismantle the false consciousness formed by the dominant culture, including the culture of religious consumerism, while building an alternative imagination of what it means to be the people of God.⁵⁰ The indicator of application is simple yet sharp, namely whether, within one year of ministry, there has been any proclamation that clearly risks reducing financial support or popularity, and whether that proclamation was nonetheless delivered.

The second criterion is financial transparency. The church must be open about the use of funds, including the amount of the pastor's salary and allowances. This openness is not a sign of suspicion but a form of respect for the congregation that gives. The indicator of application is the availability of an annual financial report audited by an independent party, accessible to all members of the congregation, and containing a clear separation between the institutional budget, ministerial compensation, and every business unit managed by the church. Joe Trull and James Carter place honest financial management among the most decisive areas of the ethical responsibility of church ministers, precisely because this area is the least often examined.⁵¹ Recent empirical findings in the Indonesian context support this emphasis: a study of 167 church council members found that moral obligation, not merely formal rules, was the most decisive factor in the intention to disclose finances to the congregation, so that financial transparency is fundamentally an ethical-theological matter before it is an administrative one.⁵²

The third criterion is a pastoral relationship that is not exploitative. A pastor must ensure that the congregation does not feel compelled, whether directly or through subtle spiritual pressure, to give donations or buy products. Ministry must be voluntary and driven by love, not by social obligation or guilt. Hauerwas and Willimon remind us that the church as an alternative colony should be a space in which social relations are shaped by grace, not by the logic of exchange.⁵³ The indicator of application is the separation of channels, that is, the non-use of the pulpit, congregational groups, and official ministry channels for the promotion of the minister's personal commercial products, and the non-linking of promises of particular blessings to the amount given.

The fourth criterion is a balance between the institutional dimension and the communal dimension. The church needs to manage its organisation professionally and responsibly, but without forgetting its identity as a fellowship of believers formed by the work of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁴ This means that structure, management, and finance must always be subject to, and serve, the relational and communal dimension, not the other way round. The indicator of application is the presence of measures of ministerial success that are qualitative and relational alongside quantitative measures, for example the depth of discipleship, the congregation's involvement in diakonia, and the availability of the pastor's time for personal pastoral care that cannot be delegated.

⁵⁰ Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 39–45.

⁵¹ Joe E. Trull and James E. Carter, *Etika Pelayan Gereja: Peran Moral dan Tanggung Jawab Etis Pelayan Gereja* [Ethics of Church Ministers: The Moral Role and Ethical Responsibility of Church Ministers], trans. Samuel Septino Saragih and N. Susilo Rahardjo (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015), 87–88.

⁵² Rossalina Christanti, Wahyu Satria Wibowo, and Yahya Wijaya, "Perceptions of Church Financial Transparency: Ethical-Theological Analysis and Financial Accountability," *Evangelikal: Jurnal Teologi Injili dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat* 7, no. 1 (2023): 35–49.

⁵³ Hauerwas and Willimon, *Resident Aliens*.

⁵⁴ Volf, *After Our Likeness*.

The fifth criterion is binding structural accountability. This criterion is a direct consequence of the analysis of the accountability deficit in the preceding section. The previous four criteria will remain mere exhortation if there is no body with the authority to examine and to rebuke. For that reason, independent churches need to establish oversight mechanisms that are not wholly under the pastor's control. Possible forms include a review board with members from outside the congregation, participation in networks or inter-church associations with a code of ethics and complaint procedures, and adoption of a pastors' code of ethics at the network level. Robert Borrong affirms that a pastors' code of ethics does not restrict freedom of ministry but protects the congregation and the minister from unfounded accusations.⁵⁵ Kelebogile Resane adds that restoring servant-leadership dynamics is a prerequisite for restoring pastoral integrity as a whole.⁵⁶

Table 1. Five Normative Criteria, Indicators, and Governance Instruments

Criterion	Indicators of Application	Suggested Governance Instruments
1. Faithfulness to the prophetic mission	Presence of proclamation that clearly risks reducing financial support or popularity and that is nonetheless delivered within one year of ministry	Annual sermon record or archive; forum for evaluating proclamation together with the team of elders
2. Financial transparency	Annual financial report audited by an independent party, accessible to the whole congregation, containing a separation of the institutional budget, ministerial compensation, and business units	Annual external audit; publication of a summary of the financial report to the congregation
3. Non-exploitative pastoral relationship	Separation of official ministry channels from the promotion of personal commercial products; no linking of promises of blessing to the amount given	Written policy on the separation of channels; a congregational complaints mechanism independent of the pastor
4. Balance between the institutional and communal dimensions	Qualitative measures of success (depth of discipleship, involvement in diakonia) available alongside quantitative measures	Annual ministry evaluation with dual indicators (quantitative and qualitative)
5. Binding structural accountability	A body outside the pastor's control with the authority to examine and rebuke	External review board; membership of an inter-church network with a code of ethics and complaints procedure

These five criteria are not intended to reject the entire entrepreneurial spirit in church ministry. Creativity, responsiveness, and the ability to manage resources are gifts that benefit mission. What is offered here is the subordination of that spirit to the purposes of ministry, so that it becomes a tool and not a master that dictates the direction of the church. Kgatle and Manyaka-Boshielo even show that social entrepreneurship within a congregation can be an

⁵⁵ Borrong, *Melayani Makin Sungguh*.

⁵⁶ Resane, "Servant Leadership and Shepherd Leadership."

expression of holistic salvation when it is directed towards community empowerment and not towards the accumulation of the leader's profit.⁵⁷ The difference between serving entrepreneurship and exploitative commercialisation therefore lies not in whether money is present, but in the direction in which benefits flow and in whether corrective mechanisms exist. Recent studies from the Zimbabwean context affirm a similar distinction, namely that church enterprise can be a redemptive blessing (rather than a curse) when it is consciously directed towards community empowerment, rather than merely imitating the logic of secular business by church leadership.⁵⁸

Finally, independent churches need to develop a culture of critical and sustained self-evaluation. By involving theologians, ethicists, and congregational representatives in a joint accountability forum on a regular basis, a church can reassess its practices and ensure faithfulness to its calling, rather than being swept along by the pressures of an ever-changing religious market. Such a culture demands a particular courage, since it presupposes a willingness on the part of leaders to be examined. It is precisely that willingness that most concretely embodies kenosis in governance.

Conclusion

The commercialisation of pastoral leadership in contemporary independent churches is a serious theological-ethical problem that demands a response that is at once critical and constructive. Four principal findings can be formulated. First, entrepreneurial ecclesiology is not merely a collection of management techniques borrowed by the church but a discourse that changes the way the church understands its own success, so that intermediate indicators in the form of numbers turn into ultimate goals. Second, the structural autonomy of independent churches, which was originally a missional strength, is at the same time a condition that removes one layer of institutional correction and thereby allows commercialisation to continue for a long time undetected. Third, the pressure of efficiency collides with the kenotic calling, not primarily over the matter of money, but over the shift of the centre of attention from hidden acts to visible achievements. Fourth, the commodification of charisma turns grace given for the common building up into exchangeable symbolic capital, and at that point the relationship between pastor and congregation loses its equality.

On the basis of these findings, this article formulates five normative criteria for pastoral leadership of integrity, namely faithfulness to the prophetic mission, financial transparency, a non-exploitative pastoral relationship, a balance between the institutional and communal dimensions, and binding structural accountability. The fifth criterion is the contribution that distinguishes this article from earlier ethical critique, since without corrective mechanisms that carry authority, the previous four criteria will remain mere moral exhortation. The final conclusion is that pastoral leadership integrity is measured not by how much the church grows quantitatively, but by how faithful the pastor is to their kenotic and prophetic calling and how willing they are to be examined.

⁵⁷ Mookgo S. Kgatle and Semape J. Manyaka-Boshielo, "Social Entrepreneurship in the Selected Neo-Pentecostal Churches: A Holistic Salvation," *Verbum et Ecclesia* 44, no. 1 (2023): 1–7, <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v44i1.2726>.

⁵⁸ Kimion Tagwirei, "Redeeming the Cursed Blessing of Church Business in Zimbabwean Neo-Pentecostalism," *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025): a92.

This research has three principal limitations: it is conceptual-normative and library-based, without field data; some of the cross-national analogies (South Africa, Singapore, the United States) function only as illustrations of a mechanism, not as evidence of the same pattern in Indonesia; and the five normative criteria formulated have not yet been tested empirically. On this basis, further research should include comparative case studies of several independent churches in Indonesia, surveys of congregational perceptions, audits of public documents to test the indicators in Table 1, and a historical investigation of the genealogy of entrepreneurial ecclesiology in Indonesia.

Acknowledgements

Competing interests

The author declares no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced this article.

Credit authorship contribution

The authors affirm that both contributed to developing and completing the manuscript. Lumintang contributed to the initial conceptualisation and formulation of the main ideas, while Antakirana provided critical insights, expanded the discussion, and collaborated in revising and refining the manuscript for final submission.

AI disclosure

The authors acknowledge using artificial intelligence tools to assist with preliminary idea development and identifying relevant references. All suggestions generated by these tools were critically assessed and reviewed by the authors, who assume full responsibility for the accuracy, academic integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the Sekolah Tinggi Teologi IKAT Jakarta Research Ethics Committee (No: 378/A/STTIKAT/VIII/26).

Funding information

The authors received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and are the product of professional research. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated institution, funder, agency, or that of the publisher. The authors are responsible for this article's results, findings, and content.

Bibliography

- Banda, Collium. "Holiness and Sustainable Social Transformation among Neo-Pentecostal Prophets in South Africa." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 45, no. 1 (2024).
<https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v45i1.3218>
- Berger, Peter L. *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion*. New York:

- Doubleday, 1967.
- Borrong, Robert P. *Melayani Makin Sungguh: Signifikansi Kode Etik Pendeta bagi Pelayanan Gereja-gereja di Indonesia* [Serving Ever More Earnestly: The Significance of the Pastors' Code of Ethics for the Ministry of Churches in Indonesia]. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2016.
- Bowler, Kate. *Blessed: A History of the American Prosperity Gospel*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *The Prophetic Imagination*. 2nd ed. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.
- Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, IV.3.1–3.
- Chong, Terence, ed. *Pentecostal Megachurches in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Class, Consumption and the Nation*. Singapore: ISEAS Publishing, 2018.
<https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591420000248>
- Christanti, Rossalina, Wahyu Satria Wibowo, and Yahya Wijaya. "Perceptions of Church Financial Transparency: Ethical-Theological Analysis and Financial Accountability." *Evangelikal: Jurnal Teologi Injili dan Pembinaan Warga Jemaat* 7, no. 1 (2023): 35–49.
<https://doi.org/10.46445/ejti.v7i1.616>
- Coleman, Simon. *The Globalisation of Charismatic Christianity: Spreading the Gospel of Prosperity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
- Einstein, Mara. *Brands of Faith: Marketing Religion in a Commercial Age*. London: Routledge, 2008.
- Hauerwas, Stanley, and William H. Willimon. *Resident Aliens: A Provocative Christian Assessment of Culture and Ministry for People Who Know That Something Is Wrong*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989.
- Hays, Richard B. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996.
- Kgatle, Mookgo S. "'Go Deeper Papa, Prophecy, Do Something': The Popularity and Commercialisation of Prophetic Deliverance in African Pentecostalism." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 43, no. 1 (2022): a2480. <https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v43i1.2480>
- — —, and Semape J. Manyaka-Boshielo. "Social Entrepreneurship in the Selected Neo-Pentecostal Churches: A Holistic Salvation." *Verbum et Ecclesia* 44, no. 1 (2023): 1–7.
<https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v44i1.2726>
- — —, and Vuyisile Qiki. "The Commercialisation of Anointed Water in Two Ministries: An African Theological Perspective." *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 57, no. 1 (2023).
<https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v57i1.2937>
- Kristiantoro, Sony. "Komodifikasi Agama dalam Holy Land Tour: Sebuah Tinjauan Sosiologi Agama [The Commodification of Religion in Holy Land Tours: A Sociological Review of Religion]." *DUNAMIS: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristiani* 6, no. 1 (2021): 16–30.
<https://doi.org/10.30648/dun.v6i1.407>
- Lee, Shayne, and Phillip Luke Sinitiere. *Holy Mavericks: Evangelical Innovators and the Spiritual Marketplace*. New York: New York University Press, 2009.
<https://doi.org/10.1163/157007410X509191>
- Masenya, Madipoane, and Malesela Masenya. "Church Breakaways as a Prototype of Commercialisation and Commodification of Religion in the Pentecostal Church Movement in South Africa: Considering Curricula Offerings for Pastors." *Stellenbosch Theological Journal* 4, no. 2 (2018): 633–654. <https://doi.org/10.17570/stj.2018.v4n2.a29>
- McGavran, Donald A. *Understanding Church Growth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1970.
- Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J. *Christian Theology in Practice: Discovering a Discipline*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.
- Moberg, Marcus. *Church, Market, and Media: A Discursive Approach to Institutional Religious*

- Change*. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.
- — —. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.
- Proeschold-Bell, Rae Jean, and Jason Byassee. *Faithful and Fractured: Responding to the Clergy Health Crisis*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018.
- Resane, Kelebogile T. "Servant Leadership and Shepherd Leadership: The Missing Dynamic in Pastoral Integrity in South Africa Today." *HTS Theological Studies* 76, no. 1 (2020): 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v76i1.5608>.
- — —. "Gender Based Violence in the Commercialisation of Religion in Neo-Pentecostal Churches." *Pharos Journal of Theology* 105, no. 2 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.46222/pharosjot.105.232>
- Stark, Rodney, and Roger Finke. *Acts of Faith: Explaining the Human Side of Religion*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000.
- Tagwirei, Kimion. "Redeeming the Cursed Blessing of Church Business in Zimbabwean Neo-Pentecostalism." *African Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 2, no. 1 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.4102/AJOPS.v2i1.92>
- Thumma, Scott, and Dave Travis. *Beyond Megachurch Myths: What We Can Learn from America's Largest Churches*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.
- Trull, Joe E., and James E. Carter. *Etika Pelayan Gereja: Peran Moral dan Tanggung Jawab Etis Pelayan Gereja* [Ethics of Church Ministers: The Moral Role and Ethical Responsibility of Church Ministers]. Translated by Samuel Septino Saragih and N. Susilo Rahardjo. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2015.
- Twitchell, James B. *Branded Nation: The Marketing of Megachurch, College Inc., and Museumworld*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004.
- Volf, Miroslav. *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Wagner, C. Peter. *Your Church Can Grow*. Glendale: Regal Books, 1976.
- Ward, Pete. *Liquid Church*. Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002.
- Weber, Max. *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Edited by Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978.
- Yip, Jeaney, Susan Ainsworth, and Chang-Yau Hoon. "JPCC: A Megachurch Brand Story in Indonesia." In *Routledge International Handbook of Religion in Global Society*, edited by Jayeel Cornelio, François Gauthier, Tuomas Martikainen, and Linda Woodhead, 42–51. London and New York: Routledge, 2020. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315646435-3a>
- Yip, Jeaney, and Chang-Yau Hoon. "'To Build a Generation of Stars': Megachurch Identity, Religion and Modernity in Indonesia." *South East Asia Research* 24, no. 4 (2016): 477–491. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0967828X16674132>
- Yip, Jeaney, and Susan Ainsworth. "'Do Business till He Comes': The Business of Housing God in Singapore Megachurches." *Pacific Affairs* 88, no. 2 (2015): 237–257.
- Yoder, John Howard. *Body Politics: Five Practices of the Christian Community Before the Watching World*. Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992.
- — —. *The Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.