**The $100 Startup: Reinvent the Way You Make A Living, Do What You Love, and Create a New Future**

by Chris Guillebeau


Reviewed by David W. Gill  
www.davidwgill.org

Chris Guillebeau is an entrepreneur, traveler, and writer. *The $100 Startup* is his second book. Traveling the world as a young man he says “I learned how freedom is connected to responsibility, and how I could combine my desire for independence with something that helped the rest of the world” (p. xv). “The goal isn’t to get rich quickly but to build something that other people will value enough to pay for. You’re not just creating a job for yourself; you’re crafting a legacy” (p. xviii).

The critical starting point, Guillebeau says, is to find the convergence or overlap between (1) what you are good at and have a passion for and (2) what others value or need. It can’t be one or the other; it must be both. “Value” means helping people; it’s about the benefits of your service or product, not about the features. Guillebeau returns to this theme over and over: a successful business startup is about usefulness and helping people --- giving them something they want or need or taking away something they want to get rid of!

Guillebeau offers great step-by-step counsel on how to figure out what business to get into, how to create a startup business plan, how to fund it, and how to market it. His style is breezy and readable with lots of examples and lots of repetition of the key points. And don’t forget the title: the $100 Startup. We are not talking about the startup that requires venture capital with lots of zeros.

I have no idea what Guillebeau’s philosophy of life or faith stance might be but his stress on the importance of good work and the core purpose of business being to serve others (not just transfer their money to my pocket as quickly and fully as possible) --- these are profoundly biblical themes.

It is time for the church to step away from the economic blame game (“it’s all Obama’s fault!” “government isn’t the solution, it’s the problem” “when will those predatory, greedy capitalists on Wall Street actually be the job-creators they claim to be, instead of the job-exporters to cheap labor markets around the world” etc etc.). Joining the chorus that looks to Wall Street business development for economic help --- or the chorus that looks to Washington to solve our problems --- these are both a tired, unfruitful waste of time. Guillebeau is one of those voices that points to a third way: individual, family, and neighborhood entrepreneurship. Our churches are full of (1) people who want to work and need a job, and (2) people who know how to start and run businesses. When will we get busy and help each other and start a third way economic revolution based in our churches and neighborhoods?