

HOW TO EMULATE GOD THE FIRST ENTREPRENEUR



Biblical principles to help you
succeed as an Entrepreneur



ROBERT HARRIS

HOW TO EMULATE GOD THE FIRST ENTREPRENEUR

by Pastor Robert Harris

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Introduction

The eBook you are about to read is NOT, some kind of get rich quick formula, or a how-to become rich manual, neither is it a how -to- succeed in business guide. It's Christ-centered Holy Spirit inspired business lessons for Christians in business who desire to claim their rightful place as God's children and Co Inheritors of Gods' glorious promises in Jesus Christ.

"Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory."

Romans 8:17

Jesus Christ is the centrality of all the principles shared in this book, "He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him, nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind." John 1:2-4

God has blessed us with all kinds of blessings. He wants us to enjoy these blessings, and to live a life of fruitfulness and dominion. God's greatest desire is that we may know Him as the source of our blessings.

I have not gone into great detail expounding the principles shared in this eBook. I have simply skimmed the surface. Most of the principles can be better understood when read in their full context. For example, in Ecclesiastes 10:19 we read, "*....But money answers everything.*"

This may give a connotation that money is the solution to all our problems, but that is not the case. When we read Ecclesiastes 5:10;

"Whoever loves money never has enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with their income. This too is meaningless. Ecclesiastes 5:10, then we see that money by itself cannot satisfy or quench the thirst of finding true meaning in life.

Another example is the Principle of tithing and offering of first fruits. Our tithes and first-fruits are an outward expression of Jesus' great work on the cross. We acknowledge the price he paid on Calvary. "But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. 1 Corinthians 15:20. We cannot substitute this price.

Why am I clarifying these Principles? Many business books are written to give some kind of magical wealth creation/money-making formula. It's possible to take these Principles out of context and use them with an intention of amassing wealth for selfish gain. That's not my intention in this eBook. For that reason, let me clarify something else.

I'm not a great fan of the words 'applying Biblical principles'. I believe you don't have to pull out 'principles' from the Bible to apply in your life. Rather I believe we should be living the Bible daily. Our lips and life should be telling the same story. We should be walking epistles of the transformational power found in the gospel.

Finally, many people believe that we need things to enjoy life. To the contrary, the Bible teaches us that we need life to enjoy things. Greed for abundant possessions without knowing Jesus Christ as a life giver is vanity. "Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions." Luke 12:15

Now turn the next page and read on. I pray that the lessons you are about to learn in this eBook will awaken a hunger and yearning not just to succeed as an Entrepreneur, but to have a deeper more meaningful relationship with God the Father - the First Entrepreneur, and to develop a stronger, meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ His Son.

Chapter 1

God the First Entrepreneur

Entrepreneurship is often perceived as worldly, ungodly and unspiritual, it does not evoke spirituality. Dictionary.com defines an 'Entrepreneur' as one who;

- (1) *"A person who organizes and manages any enterprise, especially a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk."*
(2) *"An employer of productive labor; contractor."*

In every day conversation, an Entrepreneur is one who is willing to take the risk of jumping out of employment's safety net into the unpredictable waters of self-employment in order to achieve their dreams and fulfill their goals.

An Entrepreneur's greatest dream is to grow a successful business. Every entrepreneur aspires to build a business that will transcend cultures and nations. When a friend or relative tells you that they've become Entrepreneurs, what comes into your mind?

The first thought that runs through most people's minds is; do they have what it takes to succeed? Why do we think this way? Because we equate entrepreneurship with hard work, crazy schedules, constant juggling of duties, fast talk to close deals and for the lucky few, success - glitz, glamour and pomp!

It's not common to hear a pastor preach a message on how entrepreneurs should serve God with their entrepreneurial skills without having to go into full-time ministry. Yet Entrepreneurs have as much calling on their lives to spread the gospel just as Pastors and Evangelists.

God, is the first Entrepreneur. In his book *Called to Create* Jordan Raynor states, *"An entrepreneur is anyone who takes a risk to create something new for the good of others"* God created the

world, he didn't have any material, he created it out of nothing for our good.

Here are 5 ways you can emulate and serve God as an entrepreneur.

We are created to create

In Genesis God introduces himself as the creator. For five days he creates the universe and the earth, on the sixth day, he creates man. But just before creating man, God makes this profound statement;

“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” Genesis 1:26

We are created in God's image, and in his image we are creators! We see God's creative nature in Genesis 1:2. He brings substance out of nothing. “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

All Entrepreneurs conceive nonexistent ideas. Through imagination, they bring these ideas to reality.

Work as an act of worship

The Cambridge dictionary defines 'Worship' as - “to have or show a strong feeling of respect and admiration for God or a god” the Merriam Webster dictionary defines the same word as “to honor or show reverence for as a divine being or supernatural power”

God created us to reverence Him. When God created Adam, his first assignment was to work the land, “The Lord God took the man

and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”
Genesis 2:15.

We don't see anywhere in this scripture where God asks Adam to sing as a form of worship, but we see him instruct Adam to work. We can imagine that, as Adam worked the garden observing creation, he revered God. His Spirit exulted, songs of worship burst from his lips. They blended with nature's music, ascending to the throne of God as glorious worship.

Adam's second assignment was to name all the creatures God had created, “Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name.” Genesis 2:19.

Everyone isn't called to full-time ministry, but everyone is called to worship. Worshipping God in Spirit and truth is a natural phenomenon, unfortunately, it doesn't come naturally to everyone. Godly Entrepreneurs emulate God's creative nature. When they create, songs of praise and worship burst forth from their spirits.

Emulating God's Entrepreneurial Character

Our work as Entrepreneurs should emulate God. The definition of an entrepreneur is, ‘one who takes a risk to create something new for the good of others’ All entrepreneurs create something new from the figment of their imaginations.

God created the earth and gave it to us, to rule, subdue and have dominion. Entrepreneurs exercise dominion when they create products or launch services that didn't exist before. To emulate God, they must have God's heart. God desires everyone to have a relationship with him. He desires that “all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”

1 Timothy 2:4

When we emulate God in our Entrepreneurial activities we will use our business as a platform to make disciples for Jesus. Billionaire Samuel Truett Cathy founder of the fast-food restaurant chain Chick-fil-A said,

“My business grew on my understanding that customers are always looking for somebody who is dependable and polite and will take care of them. As Christians, we have an obligation and responsibility to abide by the principles of the Bible.”

God revealed himself in Jesus Christ as the source of all goodness. As Christ-followers we should show his loving character to the world. We should use our entrepreneurial work to treat our customers, employees and the public right.

Empowered to work by God's Spirit

God is the first entrepreneur. He is the source of all ingenuity and creativity. God's Spirit empowers us to be creative. In Exodus 31 Moses had to build a tabernacle, he had the design from God. He however needed help to translate God's blueprint to reality. God instructed him;

“See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah” He revealed further, *“ See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, Moreover, I have appointed Oholiab son of Ahisamak, of the tribe of Dan, to help him. Also, I have given ability to all the skilled workers to make everything I have commanded you* “Exodus 31:2,6

Albert Einstein, the famous scientist who discovered the theory of relativity, said, *“I want to know God's thoughts; the rest are just details.”*

When you have God's Spirit as an Entrepreneur, you have God's mind, He gives you: “a well-instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being instructed.” Isaiah 50:4.

God values our work, he has promised to bless us through the work of our hands, we should seek to be empowered by his Spirit who will guide us in our entrepreneurial journey.

Reflecting God's Character in Entrepreneurship

God the first Entrepreneur revealed his character as a creator. He calls us to be co-creators. God created the world, he left it largely undeveloped and uncultivated, instead, he gave us the mandate to subdue and dominate the world. He wants to see his creative character reflected in us.

Since we are created in God's image, we reveal his nature by being creators. Our work is the mirror that reflects our god-like nature to the world. God is filled with joy every time he sees us creating just like he did at creation; He uses our work to accomplish His will on earth.

Ecclesiastes 9:10 instructs us, even as it reminds us of our mortality, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom." Entrepreneurship gives us the opportunity to work, it's a platform that helps us to express what God has deposited in us.

We reflect God's Character by our entrepreneurial productivity and how we live as Christians. Colossians 1:10 says, "so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God."

Successful Entrepreneurship demands complete immersion. We have to reconnect with God. His Spirit releases a creative power in us, we need this power to create.

As Christians, we have the help of the Holy Spirit who gives us the mind of God - the first Entrepreneur. 1 Corinthians 2:10 says, "these are the things God has revealed to us by his Spirit. The Spirit

searches all things, even the deep things of God.” We can create just as God creates.

Chapter 2

Biblical Pillars for successful Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is expressing what God buried in you before you were created. Successful entrepreneurs stir up their gifts and talents, draw from their experiences, and act out their beliefs. Succeeding as an entrepreneur is not an accident but a divinely orchestrated plan.

The greatest pillar of success is obedience, obeying God's word. "Keep this Book of the Law always on your lips; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."

Joshua 1:8

Scottish Baptist and Holiness Movement evangelist and teacher Oswald Chambers wrote this,

"It is impossible to live the life of a disciple without definite times of secret prayer. You will find that the place to enter in is in your business, as you walk along the streets, in the ordinary ways of life, when no one dreams you are praying, and the reward comes openly, a revival here,

a blessing there." - Oswald Chambers

Entrepreneurs who incorporate Biblical principles in their businesses enjoy great success.

Let's look at some principles from the Bible that have been used by entrepreneurs to fuel astronomical business successes for people who integrated them in their businesses.

Practice the Law of Harvest

John D Rockefeller one the wealthiest men who ever lived is quoted saying, “I never would have been able to tithe the first million dollars I ever made if I had not tithed my first salary, which was \$1.50 per week.” He believed in the law of harvest.

The law of sowing and reaping works when you honor God and sow generously from the produce of your land, your income – profits, salaries and wages. Faithful men and women who obeyed God’s word and honored this principle in history have amassed fortunes.

This law is captured in the following scripture, “Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously.” 2 Corinthians 9:6

Put people First

The second principle for business success, is putting people first. People should come before profit. Organizations that practice honest corporate social responsibility win the hearts of people in their communities, nations and globally.

When you put people first you will treat your employees with respect and dignity, all businesses that mind their employee’s welfare become industry pacesetters in their fields. When employees know that they are respected and honored, they will go out of their way to invest their energies, skills, and talents to grow an organization

The Bible exhorts every business leader to grow their business by, “not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others.” Philippians 2:4

Have a clear Vision

Having a vision and mission statement is not an idea birthed in corporate boardrooms. It is a business principle that was recorded long before multinationals existed.

“Then the Lord replied: ‘Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it.’ Habakkuk 2:2

Having a clearly written vision about your business that spells out a well-defined mission for the business is the first building block for starting a successful entrepreneurship venture.

Have the end in mind

Architects, structural engineers, designers and most creatives always start with the end in mind. It is not by chance that they do so. God, the chief architect of the universe said before the beginning of time.

“I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say, ‘My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.’ Isaiah 46:10 NIV

Visualize where you expect your business to be in 20, 30, 40, 100 years from now, businesses that were started with the end in mind, still flourish today long after their vision bearers are gone, Cadbury, Horlicks, Bacardi, Colgate-Palmolive, Hilton are just but a few names that have outlived their founders and still bear the founder’s name.

Do not limit your dreams

Entrepreneurs who allowed their visions to outgrow their dreams, have built businesses that have long surpassed their individual capabilities. God, the creator of the universe has plans for everyone and would love to see those plans accomplished in everyone's life.

He says, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.

Jeremiah 29:11 NIV

When you allow God’s plans to roll out in your life, your dreams regardless of how impossible they look on the surface become valid. You can achieve the impossible. Your entrepreneurial journey is only limited by the extent of your dreams.

These business principles drawn from the bible have been the galvanizing force behind hundred’s probably thousands of businesses in the world. Business people who honored God, obeyed his word and incorporated Godly principles in their businesses have witnessed amazing results.

Cher Wang, a committed Christian, founder of HTC Corporation, a Taiwanese Smartphone maker is quoted saying;

“the bible is the best book for management practice”

In proverbs 4:7 the Bible advises, “Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore, get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.”

Acquired understanding can be equated to passive energy. Passive energy is activated by work, hard work. Proverbs 14:23 states; “All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.”

Quoting the late Sam Walton founder of Walmart, a devout Christian;

“Two things about Sam Walton distinguish him from almost everyone else I know. First, he gets up every day bound and determined to improve something. Second, he is less afraid of being

wrong than anyone I've ever known. And once he sees he's wrong, he just shakes it off and heads in another direction." Sam Walton

Do you get up every day determined to improve something, try something new, make an improvement to your business? Read on and learn five more pillars of business success:

Build for the future

Visionary leaders build businesses that will outlive them. Building a business that will live on long after you are gone starts with a vision, a vision for the future.

Where do you see your business 50, 100 years from now? God instructed Abraham to look and see, "For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. "Genesis 13:15. When you 'see' you put up structures that will steer the business through turbulences.

Building for the future also requires that you lay the right foundation, you lay a foundation that guarantees your services and products will remain relevant in successive generations. This should be built on an honest, caring and transformational workplace culture.

Many businesses die on the demise of their founders. That should not happen to your business, your labor should be enjoyed by your descendants. The Bible says, "A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children: and the wealth of the sinner is laid up for the just. Proverbs 13:22

Bring your family along

Pursuing business success is hard work, it's easy to leave everyone behind, burn the candle on both ends, and reason out, how you will come back for the family once you have succeeded.

The sad reality is that the family won't wait for you. To avoid being alone at the apex of your success carry the family along. Do not sacrifice your family for business success. Create a healthy work family balance.

What does it mean to have a healthy family work balance?

God the creator of the first family - Adam and Eve, ordained a family work balance that guarantees that every person who obeys his instructions has enough time for their family.

In Exodus 34:21 He says, "Six days you shall work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; in plowing time and in harvest you shall rest."

Assemble an unbeatable team

Nobody has ever built a successful business alone. It is important to Identify the right people who will carry the business' burden and birth your vision to reality.

Henry Ford, American Industrial automaker, knew something every businessman should emulate. He surrounded himself with an army of informed people who helped grow his business.

During an inquiry, when pressed to answer an intellectual question he responded by saying that he had a row of buttons in his office that summoned members of his team;

"Now would you be so good as to explain why, just to answer your questions, I should have a brain stuffed with general culture, when I am surrounded by employees who can supply any information I might want to know? Henry Ford

Surrounding yourself with an inspired team that is committed to success, is what great leaders do. Create a team with diverse

talents and skills, inspire them to back your vision, lead them and your business to greatness.

Diversify your talents and opportunities

Successful entrepreneurs at one point in growing their business careers had to wear many hats. Management hat, Production hat, Accounting hat, etc. As an Entrepreneur, you must diversify your talents and embrace every opportunity.

Most business people tried their hand at doing different things before succeeding. When you explore opportunities, you open yourself to gaining valuable experience that will give you an edge over the competition.

King Solomon the greatest businessman recorded in the Bible admonishes in Ecclesiastes 11:16, "Cast your bread upon the waters, for you will find it after many days. In the morning sow your seed, and in the evening do not withhold your hand; For you do not know which will prosper, either this or that, or whether both alike will be good. 'Ecclesiastes 11:1,6

Build a legacy not monument

You have a choice, to build a legacy or a monument, Merriam Webster dictionary defines legacy as, *"something that is or may be inherited."* in contrast, it defines a monument as *"a shaped stone laid over or erected near a grave and usually bearing an inscription to identify and preserve the memory of the deceased."*

The only true wealth that endures through generations, is the impact you make on people's lives. Let me ask a question. Do you remember the name of the richest person who lived 50 years ago? I bet you don't. But I bet you remember the name of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr! Why?

The Bible says of those who build monuments after themselves, "Their tombs will remain their houses forever, their dwellings for endless generations, though they had named lands after themselves. Psalms 49:11.

You should build a business that has a positive impact on the lives of people in your community, your nation and in the world.

Do you want to see your business grow beyond your vision? Do you want to build a business that will live on long after you are gone?

The Bible is God's infallible truth. When you incorporate its truth in your business, when you partner with God you build a legacy that will glorify His name through generations.

Chapter 3

Biblical Principles practiced by successful Entrepreneurs

Tyler Perry, the successful American actor, writer, producer and director, at one time listed as the highest paid man in entertainment grossing, \$130 Million between May 2010 and May 2011, was quoted asking, “You know what the question is that a lot of people ask me all the time?”

It is a question whose answer will be the basis of this article. Tyler Perry recounts what people ask and his answer; “How did you make it? How did you make it?” Well, I’d say there’s only one answer for that, and I say this in press all the time but people, they will cut it out of articles or they don’t want it printed or they don’t want it said, but the truth be told, it was nothing but the grace of God. Nothing but the grace of God”

Successful entrepreneurs do not succeed by accident; they are committed to success. They seek knowledge, timely and relevant knowledge. The bible was inspired by the greatest Entrepreneur of all time, God. He established principles that have stood the test of time.

Over millennia both believers and non-believers have used business advice found in the bible and succeeded immensely. Here are a few of those principles.

Be an excellent worker

Imagine for a moment that you are working for the greatest mind on earth, that your employer is not just an inventor but the creator of everything that you see. Imagine that he has put the same capacity to create and reproduce beautiful things in you, and that he has

equipped you with all the skills and talents that you need, will you be an excellent worker?

The Japanese have a saying, “whatever you do, do it with dignity and excellence.” You and me know that the Japanese are excellent at what they do. The bible says, “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters.”
Colossians 3:23 NKJV

Working to express the gifts deposited in you by God is the most rewarding experience any human being can ever have. What’s your work ethics?

Be a trusted steward

The story of the talents found in the book of Matthew 25: 14-29 is a well-known biblical illustration of stewardship. Merriam Webster dictionary defines steward as “*one employed in a large household or estate to manage domestic concerns (such as the supervision of servants, collection of rents, and keeping of accounts)*”

A steward makes decisions that he knows will please his master, he works knowing that he shall be called to account someday. How do you handle your finances? do you hoard and expect to grow more? do you use your finances to have an impact on your family, your community, your nation and the world?

It's no secret that the richest people on earth are the greatest philanthropist. Warren Buffet the second richest man at one time, lives a frugal life, yet he is committed to giving away 90% of his wealth. Visit the [giving.pledge](https://givingpledge.org/) website and get inspired at how the rich are giving and yet they get richer.

*“One person gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly,
but comes to poverty.” Proverbs 11:24 NIV*

Know your priorities

God created the universe, he placed the stars in the sky, He knows each one of them by name, He has ordained the number of days for everyone. Knowing God as your father is the beginning of your entrepreneurial success.

“But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.” Matthew 6:33.

The next priority should be your health, your sense of wellbeing. Taking good care of your body, watching what you eat and exercising. “No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.” I Corinthians 9:27.

Your family should be the next most important priority after God and yourself, “Anyone who does not provide for their relatives, and especially for their own household, has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.” I Timothy 5:8. Everything else should then follow.

Know your purpose

You are not a product of an accident despite the circumstances of how you were conceived. God put unique gifts and talents in you that only you can unleash and help solve a myriad of problems.

Do you know your life’s purpose? The worst thing that can happen to anyone is to live a purposeless life.

Here is a question, why do you want to succeed as an entrepreneur? is it because you want to express your unique talents? Is it because you want to solve a problem? Your purpose

will direct your passion, what are you passionate about? What gets you excited when you wake up in the morning? Work on it.

Find your purpose and package it for the world, focus on solving a problem with your gifts and talents, express your unique personality in what you do.

Uphold your integrity

Cutting corners and taking short cuts will abort your purpose sooner than later. The late Zig Ziglar had this to say about integrity, "With integrity, you have nothing to fear, since you have nothing to hide. With integrity, you will do the right thing, so you will have no guilt."

God cares that we do everything with integrity, David in honoring God with his wealth said this, "I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things I have given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you." 1 Chronicles 29:17

These principles have been basic cornerstones used by successful entrepreneurs. You too can embrace, and make them your lifestyle. Uphold them make them your mantle and see your business shoot to new heights.

Chapter 4

Business Secrets every entrepreneur should Know

Business is dynamic, succeeding in business is elusive. No one has ever succeeded in business who did not learn their hearts out; They learnt everything, soaked up knowledge, drenched themselves in ideas, sought wisdom.

They researched, pored over books, reveled in new discoveries, browsed countless sites and blogs to stay ahead.

Every successful businessman and woman, has a unique story, a knee jerking story, about overcoming overwhelming difficulties. They have stories of how they chose not to quit in tough times, of how they believed in their dreams, pursued their passions, followed their hearts, ignored the pain of setbacks, and succeeded.

Though they celebrate every milestone of success in their business, they do not rest on their laureates and gloat over yesterday's success. They are constantly in motion, seeking new avenues to generate income. Looking for new ways to improve their products and services. They are on a perpetual discovery for new markets and new customers.

Martin Luther King Jr's advice; "If you can't fly then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but whatever you do, you have to keep moving forward" applies to businesses with futuristic mindsets. Motion is like a breath of fresh air to any business. It rejuvenates, reinvigorates, and refreshes.

Small businesses, just starting out, have little experience of what to expect on their quest for success. They need all the help that they can get.

As a new business owner you have the option of learning from others, or learning by default from your mistakes. Learning from others will cost you nothing, and is the surest way that guarantees you success.

Stand out from the crowd

Nobody likes to be different, society has trained us to conform. We live in communities that look down on anyone trying to be different. You are expected to stay in line or risk being ostracized. This expectation to stay in line and to conform is what kills creativity.

Succeeding in business is about expressing your creativity. Doing what everyone else isn't doing. What distinguishes your business from your competitors? What new angle or feature can you apply to an existing product or service that will set you apart from everyone else?

Market leaders in every sector have managed to differentiate themselves from competition. They do this by excelling where they are different. Amazon, Facebook, Walmart and Walt Disney have all excelled by offering products and services that are unique to their brands.

Customers develop sentimental attachment overtime with consistent businesses that offer quality. New startups do not have a track record. So when starting out, do not fear standing out from the crowd, develop a product or service that is uniquely yours. Fight to keep your unique brand, embrace market dynamics to stay ahead of competition.

Grow your existing customers

As most businesses grow they have a tendency of pursuing new business at the exclusion of existing customers, this is a mistake. Businesses that understand their existing customer's value grow rapidly.

Providing exemplary service to your existing customers will retain your business and tap into the most reliable marketing strategy - word of mouth. Happy loyal customers eventually become brand ambassadors who go out of their way to recommend your product or service.

When starting a new venture, have a powerful customer strategy, that is committed to offering an out of this world experience to your customers. The saying that, "The customer is king" still holds true.

Build strong relationships

Successful businesses build strong relations in three areas:

- **Networks**

Every successful entrepreneur understands the power of networking. A business network is an interconnecting, mutually beneficial relationship that connects likeminded people who support the business' vision.

Networks are exponential, they grow. When starting your business, strive to grow thriving networks that will add value to your business.

- **Advisors/Mentors**

No one has a monopoly to knowledge, however, businesses that succeed, secure their knowledge in trademarks and patents. This means that you must generate fresh ideas to succeed. Identify experienced advisors and mentors who will help you generate these ideas.

- **Talented people**

A business cannot grow without the help of skilled and talented people. Successful business people have a knack for identifying

talent and retaining it. Learn the secrets of successful headhunting to acquire talent for your start up.

Keep in constant motion

Motion is what keeps a business energized. Calculated, focused motion keeps the product or service fresh in the customer's mind. New marketing strategies to reinvent and recreate the product or service in the customer's mind will spur motion.

The business world is constantly evolving, successful companies, recognize that what worked yesterday might not work today. To stay ahead, they continuously search for better ways of reinventing and reaching out to their customers.

Adapt and Remain Agile

Do you know why dinosaurs became extinct? They failed to adapt to a changing environment. To succeed in business, you must adapt and change to a dynamic environment.

You have to be alert and watchful, ready to change with the times. That's what has kept companies like Coca Cola, Amazon, Microsoft and Facebook, leaders in their Markets.

Agility in business is a skill that is developed by visionary leadership. Your vision for the business will prepare you for unexpected changes.

Ability to adapt coupled with agility in decision making is what will keep your business flexible and ready to roll in times of crisis. This will protect you from paralysis by inertia, a serious ailment that destroys corporations.

Starting a business is easy, succeeding in business is not. Successful entrepreneurs learn from others' experiences.

The business secrets shared in this eBook, are not really 'secrets'. They're time tested principles used by all successful business men and women.

Incorporate them in your startup. Infuse your business with power. Prop your business to remain relevant in a competitive world.

Chapter 5

Biblical Principles of Handling Money in Business

Money is emotive, handling money in business is a skill. Succeeding in business is all about how you handle money. Howard Dayton, the visionary behind *Compass Finances God's way*, a successful entrepreneur and writer, compiled 2350 scriptures from the Bible that speak about money.

Wikipedia writes of how that discovery had a profound effect on his life. "God gave him a passion to share the life-changing principles." God is concerned about how we handle money. He has ensured that we are adequately equipped in his word to handle money.

To succeed in business, you must learn the principles of handling money. Evangelist Rev. Billy Graham shared this timeless Biblical wisdom;

If a person gets his attitude toward money straight, it will help straighten out almost every other area in his life. Rev. Billy Graham, Evangelist

The principles shared in this chapter are financial gemstones entrepreneurs have used through the ages and succeeded;

The Principle of Tithing and Giving

God wants us to honor him with our wealth He instituted the principle of paying tithes to help divorce us from the love of money. Jesus Christ our high priest receives our tithes and presents them before God. "Here mortal men receive tithes, but there he receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives."

Hebrew 7:8

Tithing and giving is a key that gives us access to the bounty of God's storehouse. "Honor the Lord with your possessions, and with the first fruits of all your increase; So your barns will be filled with plenty, And your vats will overflow with new wine." Proverbs 3:9-10

Giving liberally unlocks the doors of God's favor in our lives. "Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you." Luke 6:38

God commands his blessings upon our lives in the measure of our liberality to giving. "But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." II Corinthians 9:6.

The Principle of Planning and Budgeting

Business is about planning. Before launching any business, you must develop a business plan. This plan becomes a road map for your business, it directs all your activities in the business.

Merriam Webster Dictionary defines a business plan as *"a detailed plan setting out the objectives of a business, the strategy and tactics planned to achieve them, and the expected profits, usually over a period of three to ten years"*

Business plans are heavy on financials, - how business money should be handled in order to realize the business's objectives. According to [tutor2U](http://tutor2u.com) a business budget is;

"a financial plan for the future concerning the revenues and costs of a business. However, a budget is about much more than just financial numbers. ... Budgets for income/revenue and expenditure are prepared in advance and then compared with actual performance to establish any variances"

The Bible in Habakkuk 2:2 clarifies; “Then the Lord answered me and said: “Write the vision And make it plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.” Have a clear, well written business plan that captures your business’ budget proposals.

The principle of record keeping

Following closely on the heels of planning and budgeting is the principle of record keeping. All successful entrepreneurs have put into practice this principle. Properly kept business records are a reflection of a business’ health.

Record keeping should start with your very first transaction, and should faithfully record all your financial activities. Proverbs 27: 23 says, “Be diligent to know the state of your flocks, And attend to your herds” record keeping helps you to know the state of your business.

An added advantage to good record keeping, is that it will keep you on the right side of the Government. IRS on their [website](#) state the following benefits about good record keeping;

“Good records will help you do the following:”

- *Monitor the progress of your business*
- *Prepare your financial statements*
- *Identify sources of your income*
- *Keep track of your deductible expenses*
- *Keep track of your basis in property*
- *Prepare your tax returns*
- *Support items reported on your tax returns*

The Principle of avoiding debt

The principle of avoiding debts should not be confused with taking on investors. Business growth leverages on the power of OPM (Other People's Money) which is not the same as borrowing mindlessly to finance your business' expenses.

Borrowing to keep yourself afloat is senseless. Piling up credit card debts, takes away your financial freedom. Proverbs 22:7 The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is slave to the lender.

To avoid getting into unnecessary debt, startup up entrepreneurs need to research and focus on a small group of early innovators that will help them develop a Minimum Viable Product (MVP). This helps keep launching costs low and will give your product or service's a chance in the market.

Most businesses take on debt because they are in a rush to grow. Eric Ries Author of the *Lean Startup* shares this advice, "Reading is good, action is better." "Don't be in a rush to get big. Be in a rush to have a great product." "The goal of a lean startup is to learn what is valuable to the customer.

Romans 13:8 exhorts, "Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law."

The Principle of Saving

Successful Entrepreneurs track their cash flow. Knowing where your money comes from and how it is spent, will help you cut out unnecessary costs. A business that can keep costs down will build a cash reserve. A healthy cash reserve is the power behind rapid business growth.

Wise entrepreneurs are shrewd; they keep their eye on cash reserves. Proverbs 21:20 advises, "Precious treasure and oil stay in the home of the wise, but fools swallow them up."

The famous Wealth Management expert, Suze Orsman shares the following advice on saving;

“Cash - in savings accounts, short-term CDs or money market deposits - is great for an emergency fund. But to fulfill a long-term investment goal like funding your retirement, consider buying stocks. The more distant your financial target, the longer inflation will gnaw at the purchasing power of your money.”

Before tackling more money handling principles, here is a breather: Everybody who learns how to handle money, by following these principles eventually succeeds. Business success is a result of making correct decisions that move the business forward.

The world's advice on how to handle money in business often goes against God's principles. God is concerned about money, how we handle money. He is concerned that we do not fall into temptation of worshiping money.

The love of Money has the power of turning us away from God. Jesus knew this when he shared this scripture: *“No one can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.”* Matthew 6:24

God's desire is that we prosper financially, he wants us to have dominion. Money runs the world's affairs; you cannot claim to have dominion if you do not have money. In Genesis God blessed us to be fruitful and to have dominion.

Christian Entrepreneurs have an advantage over the competition. They have access to the Bible, the greatest business manual ever written. Strive Masiyiwa the Zimbabwean Christian telecommunication magnet billionaire is quoted saying;

“My favorite business book is the bible. If you study the bible with a view to

extracting principles on how to set up, and manage a business effectively, you will be absolutely amazed; it has everything.” Strive Masiyiwa

Now let's go back and look at more money handling principles that will help grow your business:

The Principle of Generosity

The word Generosity is defined by the Cambridge dictionary as “a willingness to give help or support especially more than usual or expected” To be generous is to give. Generosity therefore is an act of giving. Giving is a natural phenomenon ordained by God.

God created everything to give. The sun gives light and warmth, the earth gives its bounty, the moon and stars give their beauty and light. Giving is an act that is supposed to come to us as naturally as breathing. Sir Winston Churchill said, “We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.”

Down in Africa, in the Congo forest, the locals trap monkeys by putting a ripe banana in a guard tied to the ground with an opening large enough to allow the monkey's hand to slide through, but small enough to restrain the monkey from pulling out its closed fist. The poor monkey takes the banana, refuses to let go and is caught.

That's what happens when we withhold our blessings from others. We get caught in a vicious circle of greed that eventually destroys us. Proverbs 11:25 says, “A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed. When we give to the poor we lend to God.

“He who has pity on the poor lends to the Lord, And He will pay back what he has given.” Proverbs 19:17

The Principle of Investing

The Bible's principle of investing is contrary to the world's measure of investing. The world says “hoard for yourself as much as

you can.” God disagrees, He says;

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Matthew 6:19-21

The Biblical principle of investing is about our hearts. Are our hearts aligned with God's will? Jesus when talking about investing in God's Kingdom said to the rich young ruler, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.”

God cares that we serve him with our wealth, our hearts should be on his agenda, touching and affecting the souls of men. When we make him a partner in our business he promises to prosper us. Colonel Sanders founder of KFC says this about aligning our business with God's will:

“I still believe in the importance of charity, which means giving to God his just measure of goods he has seen fit to bestow on you in the form of material gain. When I started out in the franchise business, I didn't know exactly what I was doing by promising God his part if he helped make my enterprise a success, but I now think that that is the reason for my success ever since.”

The Principle of Self Discipline

Self-discipline goes hand in hand with delayed gratification. The world says, “take now pay later” It's philosophy is “take everything you need now on credit and pay later.” God disagrees, He says, “Wealth gained by dishonesty will be diminished, but he who gathers by labor will increase.” Proverbs 13:11

Growing wealth little by little doesn't have to be painful or strenuous, if you are operating in God's divine blessing. Let's listen

in to billionaire who followed this principle and grew their wealth;

“Lots of nights I would sleep in the back of my car so I would have enough money to buy cookers the next day if someone took a franchise. - It took about two years. I made only about a nickel on every chicken that they sold. And they got three dinners out of it. But I got one nickel for the whole meal. But you’d be surprised at how fast those nickels added up... I finally got up to where I had an income of a thousand dollars a day.” - Colonel Sanders founder of KFC.

“When we started, there was no money available for us. I bought a bag of soybeans — 70 pounds for two dollars — and we literally lived on soybeans. We just didn’t have any money to spend. Everything was devoted to getting the Christian Broadcasting Network underway. My first year, total income was \$8,000 for the whole enterprise. Second year it was \$20,000. And now our income is in the \$600 to \$700 million range. So it does grow. You bet.” – Pat Robertson Founder of CBN Broadcasting Network.

The Principle of Contentment

One of the most quoted scriptures from the Bible actually talks about Contentment, Philippians 4:13 “I can do all this through him who gives me strength...” The preceding verses before this scripture talk about contentment.

“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.” Philippians 4:11-12

Covetousness is the opposite of Contentment. The Wall Street mantra, “greed is good” is what drives the market economy. Greed is covetousness, a covetous mind is like a leech.

“The leech has two daughters. ‘Give! Give!’ they cry. “There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, ‘Enough!’”
Proverbs 30:15

Paul says, “But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. Those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction.”¹ Timothy 6:6-7,9

Benjamin Franklin, one of America’s founding fathers, said, “Contentment makes poor men rich, discontent makes rich men poor.” Do you live a life of contentment?

The Principle of God’s Blessings

Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary defines the word blessing as “*God’s help and protection*” God’s blessings make rich and do not add sorrow. God has blessed us with spiritual blessings. These are blessings that He bestows upon everyone who has a relationship with His son, Jesus Christ.

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Ephesians 1:3

God’s glory dwells in the heavenly realm. When we get saved, accept Jesus as our personal Savior, we remain on earth but are spiritually translocated into the heavenly places where we sit with Jesus and become co inheritors with him of God’s blessings as his children.

The Heavenly realm has no pain, anxiety, depression, sickness, poverty, hunger, suffering or sorrow. To the contrary it’s a realm filled with peace, joy, love, righteousness, holiness, and God’s glory. When we sit in this realm, we access God’s eternal blessings.

The Spiritual realm is the precursor of every physical thing that we see. God gives us power to call forth all spiritual blessings that we need for our lives through Jesus Christ. These blessings manifest in the physical where we partake of them. In Jesus Christ, we have access to everything that we need in this life.

George Müller 18th Century Evangelist from England, wrote;

“Through faith in the Lord Jesus alone can we obtain forgiveness of our sins, and be at peace with God; but, believing in Jesus, we become, through this very faith, the children of God; have God as our Father, and may come to Him for all the temporal and spiritual blessings which we need.”

Shrewd businessmen and women know the power of applied knowledge. The principles shared in these eBook are divine knowledge, knowledge that has been tested and proven to work. If applied correctly, they will help transform both your personal life and your business.

Chapter 6

How to identify business opportunities in common problems

Most people aren't sure of where to get business ideas that are guaranteed to help them succeed in business. In this chapter I will strive to open up your mind to the reality of business opportunities that stare at you right in your face, and you didn't know they even existed.

Almost everybody would love to succeed as a businessman or woman. Depressing statistics however show that there are more failed startups than successful ones, proving the sad reality, - - Entrepreneurship is not for everyone.

The same statistics show that Businesses that succeed have discovered the entrepreneurial 'magic formula' - they solve a problem. This is the cornerstone of successful entrepreneurship. To succeed as an entrepreneur, identify a common problem, tap into your skills and talents and find a creative solution.

Kevin Systrom, co-founder of Instagram, the world's most successful photo sharing website, one of America's richest entrepreneurs observes about successful startups, *"Every startup should address a real and demonstrated need in the world – if you build a solution to a problem lots of people have, it's so easy to sell your product to the world."*

How do you identify common problems? More realistically, how do you offer solutions to these problems?

Your business idea should be a set of skills or knowledge that solves problems people are willing to pay for.

Know your Unique Skills

Everybody is created with multiple skills and unique talents, unfortunately as we grow up, we conform to societal expectations and lose this unique creativity. Every person employed today gets paid for a set of skills they have developed over time through education and experience.

That does not mean that employees do not have other latent skills outside of their employment, to the contrary. The 9 to 5 job may be a source of weekly pay, but does not exhaust employees' potential.

How do you identify the latent skills lying untapped, and bring them to the fore? How do you package these skills and get people to pay for them?

A good indicator that you are good at something, is when you recognize a pattern. Friends, family and colleagues keep on consulting you and seeking for advice in a specific area that you are good at. The other indicator is; you always see solutions where other people see problems.

Identify common Problems

Identifying problems might seem easy, but in real sense it isn't. We are always surrounded by problems, because every solution we get creates a new problem. George Bernard Shaw, Irish playwright, polemicist and political activities, noted, "science never solves a problem without creating ten more."

He may have stretched this statement a little bit too far, but the truth is that every new level we achieve in scientific discoveries, creates new challenges that need new solutions.

For example, Facebook solved a social interaction problem, however Facebook chat was limited and could not fill certain needs, WhatsApp was created to fill this need, WhatsApp however could

not share images the way Instagram does, Instagram was created to fill this need, and the list goes on and on *ad infinitum*. You get the drift...

What problems have you identified that is common to everyone? do you feel in your bones you have a solution to this problem?

Be creative

Become creative about your solution, take time to work on your solutions. Novice entrepreneurs rush to bring their solution to the market without creatively exhausting the thinking process. They lay bare their unique solution to stronger competitors with deep pockets who like vultures, snap up these ideas and run with them.

Your idea may seem perfect before trying it out on your potential market, but you need to take it further. Get a focus group, a select group of people who will act as a sounding board. People who will give you honest feedback and help you improve on the product or service.

Act on your ideas

If your idea seems popular and you feel you are ready to launch, do not hesitate, many entrepreneurs have hesitated and lost momentum. Too much analysis is an action killer.

Create a minimum viable product or service and launch. Test the waters, listen to your customers and improve, keep acting on feedback to make your solution better. If demand keeps growing, you are onto something! Start shopping for financiers!

Believe you will succeed

Belief is the power that energizes successful entrepreneurs, the belief that you have what it takes to succeed, the belief that God is

on your side, the belief that He created you for this very purpose, and that you are walking in God's divine purpose.

Belief will keep you working long and hard even when you have nothing to show for your hard work, belief will galvanize you out of your bed every morning, even when bills are piling up and the only tangible thing you can show is hard and long hours.

Do you believe that God created and packaged you to offer this solution to the world? do you believe that no mountain is too high to climb? do you believe that the creator of the universe and all the heavenly hosts are on your side and want to see you succeed?

Identifying problems, acting on them, putting in long and demanding hours is the first leg on your entrepreneurial journey. Your faith in Jesus Christ is the ultimate ticket that you need. You will have confidence knowing that having done all that is humanly possible God is on your side and has every good plan for your life.

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future." Jeremiah 29:11 Now let's move on and learn how to set Christ centered goals.

Chapter 7

How to set Christ Centered Business goals

Statistics recorded by [smallbiztrends](http://smallbiztrends.com) an online magazine that features, entrepreneurs, business owners, influencers and experts show that out of all the businesses started in 2014, 80 percent of startups made it to the second year, 2015.

About 70 percent of the startups progressed to the third year-2016, 62 percent to the fourth year of 2017, and only 56 percent made it to the fifth year - 2018. According to these statistics 44% of business startups failed in their first five years.

What did 56% of businesses do differently in their five years of operation from the 44% that failed? The answer will surprise you, - it's in goal setting. Businesses that flourished in the first five years of operation had clear well defined goals.

To understand goals, let's imagine you are driving from your home to a destination that is 5 states away. You wouldn't dare drive on the interstate without a map, would you?

That's where GPS, an amazing invention becomes a life saver. The GPS does not just map out the way, it informs you of the best route to take, the routes to avoid and the quickest way to get to your destination. Goals are like a GPS in your business.

God in the book of Habakkuk 2:2 directs, *"Then the Lord answered me and said: "Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it."*

Writing down well defined long term and short term goals is what separates businesses that succeed and those that fail.

“All successful people have a goal No one can get anywhere unless he

knows where he wants to go and what he wants to be or do.”—
Norman Vincent Peale, Minister and Author

In this article we will find out why Christians should set Christ centered goals for their businesses.

What are Christ Centered goals?

Before understanding Christ Centered goals, let's first clarify what business goals are. Goals are business statements. They are general statements of intent, meant to direct the business's activities to a desired destination. Every part of a business requires goal setting, finance, marketing, business growth, and staff management.

Corporate goals have to be SMART, they have to be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and have to be achieved within a set Time frame. Napoleon Hill author of Think and Grow Rich simplified the definition of goals, “A goal is a dream with a deadline.”

Goals are met when you act. Don Lancaster advised; “Most 'impossible' goals can be met simply by breaking them down into bite-size chunks, writing them down, believing them, and then going full speed ahead as if they were routine.”

Christ centered goals are birthed in prayer, when you seek God's direction in your business God takes control. “Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” Whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left.” Isaiah 30:21 God will direct your goal setting process.

Christ centered goals are plans drawn as directional maps that must be diligently pursued. They give direction to your business decisions. “The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty. Proverbs 21:5.

They must be aligned to God's will. "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails." Proverbs 19:21

When you are in Christ Jesus and are filled with the Holy Spirit, he makes known God's mysteries goal setting for your business becomes a simple affair. "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, Ephesians 1:17.

Should you set goals in a Christian Business?

As a Christian you may be tempted to rubbish off goal setting as unspiritual, you may reason that the Bible says we should walk by faith and not by sight. Granted the Bible says, "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." Hebrews 11:6.

Jesus said this about planning, counting costs, and goal setting. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it — 'lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'?" Luke 14:28-30

18th Century American Revivalist preacher, Philosopher, and Congregationalist Protestant theologian Jonathan Edwards wrote, "A true and faithful Christian does not make holy living an accidental thing. It is his great concern. As the business of the soldier is to fight so the business of the Christian is to be like Christ."

When you approach business goal setting with the mind of Christ you remove yourself from the equation, it's not about what you want to achieve but what Christ will achieve through you. You give preeminence to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:8,10

How do you set attainable Christ Centered goals?

Attainable goals have to be realistic, realistic goals should make sense, here lies a quandary. As Christians we move by “faith not by sight,” and “we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us.” Why should we then limit our vision to what we can “see”? Why should we tie our achievements to a set of goals?

God’s Spirit helps us to know God’s mind. However, whilst we still live in these mortal bodies we know him in part, “For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. ’1 Corinthians 13:12

Our flesh acts contrary to God’s Spirit, “For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.” Galatians 5:17 NIV. Our senses seek to make sense of what goes on around us.

Setting Christ centered goals gives direction to our senses. When we pray and surrender our daily activities to the Holy Spirit, then we move in faith and not by sight, as we follow through our written goals. God’s spirit helps us to change and redefine those goals according to His leading.

Christ centered goals should encompass every aspect of your business, they should act like road reflectors helping you stay in the lane. However, they shouldn’t be barricades that constrain God’s leading for your business.

Let's Conclude this chapter with a quote from Colonel Sanders founder of KFC, "I pray to the Almighty to encourage you to dedicate your life to Jesus Christ. Whatever difficulties you may have to face, turn to him, recognize him and render him all your glory, and he will help you overcome."

Chapter 8

Imitating God Our Creator in Business

The desire to create is natural, it's ingrained in every child at birth. Watch a child, as soon as they are old enough to think and analyze, their first instinct is to shape available materials into objects of their imagination.

In the last 100 years, the world has taken a technological leap. We are surrounded by every imaginable gadget, conceived and created by innovators who released their creative powers to bring into existence figments of their imagination.

In the beginning, God our creator created the world and by extension the universe out of nothing. He imagined as it should be and called forth everything that we see, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters." Genesis 1:1-2

When creating man, God spoke to the Trinity. He said, Now "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." Genesis 1:26.

George Washington Carver 20th century American agriculturist scientist and inventor credited with promoting planting alternative crops to cotton, and being solely responsible for the rise of US peanut production said,

"No books ever go into my laboratory. The thing I am to do and the way are revealed to me the moment I am inspired to create something new. Without God to draw aside the curtain, I would be

helpless. Only alone can I draw close enough to God to discover His secrets.”

As a scientist and innovator, he knew the secret to his genius, God. All of us are called to create, it doesn't matter whether we are scientists, musicians, designers, farmers, traders, manufacturers, singers, beauticians, preachers, or teachers, we've all been endowed with different creative abilities:

In this article I will explore how we should imitate God's creative characteristics in business:

We are created in God's image

We are created in God's image; this is the first Characteristic we should exude. Psalm 82:6 says, "I said, 'You are "gods"; you are all sons of the Most High.'" In Romans 8:17 Apostle Paul qualified this statement, "Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

Romans 8:17

God created in all of us a desire to create. This desire imitates his nature as a creator. Every time we create or see others creating, we take spontaneous delight just like he did during creation. "God saw all that he had made, and it was very good." Genesis 1:3. This reflects his character in our actions and the actions of others.

The desire to own things goes hand in hand with creating. God owns everything he created. "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is." Deuteronomy 10:14. God is sovereign; he's put a piece of sovereignty in all of us; - our desire to own things. We imitate his sovereignty in ownership of resources.

Owning resources and putting these resources to good use, is not the same thing. This is where we reveal our god-like

characteristics. Paradoxically, we put our resources to good use by giving some of them away. When we give to the church, the disadvantaged in the society or the poor, we exude God's giving character;

“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.” John 3:16

Using our possessions for God's Glory

No other generation has seen an influx of worldly possessions like our generation. Pushing innovative boundaries, we have created incredible scientific inventions to make our lives easier and better. Technological breakthroughs in manufacturing processes have poured an avalanche of new products in our midst.

Unfortunately, to quench the world's thirst for an easy lifestyle. We have:

- Developed non-biodegradable products that pollute the environment.
- Some industries in pursuit of supernormal profits have engaged in unethical exploitative practices that prey on the weak in society.
- Some individuals desiring more possessions have engaged in corrupt dealings that cause harm to others instead of good.
- Some cultures have made owning property a near-impossible feat. A few powerful individuals who also double as political leaders have selfishly hoarded the rights to wealth creation subjecting a large part of the population to poverty.

All these actions dishonor God. Paul in 1 Timothy 6:17 cautions “Command those who are rich in this present world not to be arrogant nor to put their hope in wealth, which is so uncertain, but to put their hope in God, who richly provides us with everything for our enjoyment.”

God promises to give us wealth for our enjoyment. However, when we put our trust in wealth, we give birth to greed which is evil in God’s eyes. God blesses us with possessions so that we can serve others and impact their lives for the better. To quote David Steward American Billionaire,

"There's a scripture that's one of my very favorites. It says seek first the kingdom of God and all of his righteousness, and everything else will be added unto you. It means seek to serve first and bring value and make a difference in someone else's life. If you do, in due season, that will turn around to benefit you in a big way. I like what Martin Luther King said as well. He said, "Everybody can be great. Because anybody can serve."

Are you using your possessions to serve others?

Exercising Dominion

In his book *Business for the Glory of God* the author Wayne Grudem writes;

"Human desires to increase the production of goods and services are not in themselves greedy or materialistic or evil. Rather, such desires to be more productive represent God-given desires to accomplish and achieve and solve problems. They represent God-given desires to exercise dominion over the earth and exercise faithful stewardship so that we and others may enjoy the resources of the earth that God made for our use and our enjoyment."

God created us to be interconnected, we cannot achieve any greatness by ourselves. Through teamwork, we can build the Superdome, launch rockets to outer space, build satellites, discover new technologies, increase agricultural production, alleviate hunger, develop new industries and create jobs.

This interconnectivity is bound in the exchange of labor and offering of services. Only humans were given the power to exercise dominion. Only humans can exercise stewardship. The exchange of labor through employment contracts is one way of exercising dominion and good stewardship of resources.

We glorify God when we pay our employees just wages, or when as employees we work hard and with integrity for our employers.

We are interconnected in business

Business connects all of us, we are either customers, benefitting from the business, employees working for the business, or entrepreneurs operating the business. Business gives us an opportunity to either exercise authority as employers or submits to authority as employees.

Commercial interactions are a way of relating to one another regardless of whether we like each other or not, they give us an opportunity to do good to others. We either offer them excellent goods and services or we offer our talents and gifts. Commercial interactions are a great way of sharing God's love.

Buying and selling are uniquely human, no other species interacts by exchanging value for money. It's the only activity that pushes us out of our comfort zones to interact with others who may be different from us.

Buying and selling gives us an opportunity to express godly values, - honesty and truth. Jesus Summarized the law in these words, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your

soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" Luke 10:27. We have a chance to love our neighbors as we love ourselves when we buy or sell.

When we sell shoddy products, give lackadaisical services, fail to keep our business promises or take undue advantage of others, we do not glorify God. Engaging dishonestly with others is a result of living in a fallen world. As Christians, we have an opportunity to reveal God's character to the world through honest dealings.

The power of money and Profit-making

Christian Businessmen and women grapple with these questions; how much profit is honest profit? is it godly to make a profit? When we add value to the resources we take from nature for the good of others, we should expect to profit from our efforts. Profit-making is global everyone in business expects to make a profit.

Wayne Grudem writes in his book 'Business for the Glory of God' *"The ability to earn a profit thus results in multiplying our resources while helping other people. It is a wonderful ability that God gave us and it is not evil or morally neutral but is fundamentally good. Through it, we can reflect many of God's attributes, such as love for others, wisdom, sovereignty, and planning for the future."*

Money is good but money is only a tool that we use for exchange of value. We should not attach our identity to how much money we have. Money is power, it opens endless possibilities of exercising Godly Characteristics:

- We can use money to grow our business to have a greater impact and reach more people to give them value.
- We can use money to transform other people's lives, give them access to a better life by investing in their communities and families.

- We can take the gospel to the remote places of the world and share God's love with people who do not know Jesus.

Understanding society's inequality

The parable of the talents in the Bible is not just a lesson about stewardship, it's a lesson on profit-taking, diversity of talents, and inequality. In a world that requires diverse skills to accomplish different tasks, God saw it fit to give us different gifts and abilities, this means that we cannot be equal.

God in his sovereignty found it wise to give each of us different levels of stewardship. We are endowed with different wealth creation skills. Each economic level comes with deferring responsibility. Unfortunately, in a fallen world, some people who have more material possessions, have taken advantage of this inequality to oppress those they perceive to be lesser.

Poverty does not glorify God. The Bible talks of being contented in whichever state we find ourselves in; "I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want." Philippians 4:11-12

The world reels under the evil power of sin, Poverty is a result of living in a fallen world. When God cursed the earth, "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil, you will eat food from it all the days of your life. By the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food until you return to the ground since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust, you will return. "Genesis 3:17,19

Jesus came to reconcile us back to God, As Christians, we have an opportunity to manifest God's glory on earth, "For the creation

waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed." Romans 8:19. When you take the burden of others, and, "Do to others as you would have them do to you." Luke 6:31, you manifest God's glory on earth by loving others.

Why competition is a good thing

It's natural to compete, this competitive spirit starts early in our childhood, sometimes, like in the case of Perez and Zerah Judah's sons, in the womb;

"As she was giving birth, one of them put out his hand; so the midwife took a scarlet thread and tied it on his wrist and said, "This one came out first." But when he drew back his hand, his brother came out, and she said, "So this is how you have broken out!" And he was named Perez." Genesis 38:28-29

Competition helps test our abilities to make us better. A system that encourages competition rewards those who do better work for less, making quality products and services accessible to everyone. A good example of how this works is in technology, as we discover cheaper and efficient ways in manufacturing, products become cheaper and better. This increases our standards of living.

Competition is good, it makes us strive to be better, in the words of the late Gianni Versace, fashion designer who said, *"It is nice to have valid competition; it pushes you to do better."*

When we imitate God in business, we manifest His attributes and release his power to touch and change the lives of others. I hope this eBook has sparked the desire to succeed in business. Everything you have read is guaranteed to help you succeed as an entrepreneur. Now roll up your sleeves get out there and work! That's how you succeed!

