

Balancing Business and the Christian Life

This is a study of three basic principles for keeping yourself balanced in business, family and church. To be successful, you must join them together as individual currents flowing through one river (which represents your life). Each of these principles is to reflect continuity of character and convictions that you should have as a follower of Christ, regardless of your circumstances.

Galatians 6:7 (NKJV)

“Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. {8} For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption, but he who sows to the Spirit will of the Spirit reap everlasting life. {9} And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.. {10} Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith.”

To balance something means to keep it in a steady position so that it does not fall. It's to maintain equilibrium without being upset to one side or the other. God's plan for you is that you live a balanced Christian life of business, church and family. He wants you to sow what is God-pleasing into your business, so you can reap what is God-pleasing from all three. A balanced approach to these three parts of your life means you will not allow yourself to become unbalanced in any of the three. They are to work together in the harmony that only comes from pleasing God.

2 Corinthians 5:9 (NKJV)

“Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him.”

I. Basic Principles of How to Treat Your Customers or Clients

1. The character and quality of a business comes from the character and quality of the person who owns or runs it. You should be the same person in or out of business. Your ethics and how you display them to others should reflect the same biblically-based God-pleasing character anywhere and to anyone. To consciously do less would be to sin.

Galatians 2:20 (NKJV)

“I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

2. Living by faith in Christ means all your customers or clients trust you because they clearly see you trusting God in all things. You don't deliberately deceive, manipulate or take advantage of anyone. You are truthful and trustworthy in all of your dealings as a businessperson. People who are your customers or clients will have an encounter with the Jesus through you that will be edifying to them.

Romans 8:14 (NKJV)

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are children of God.”

3. A business is successful if it is owned or run by a person who understands that it must provide value to those it serves. This value must consist of two things.

First: The product or service it provides must be worth at least what it costs its customers or clients (and if you are a wise business person, even greater value than it costs).

Second: The greatest value you can offer is that the customer or client senses the presence of God in his or her encounter with you. This is a reflection of the attitude of Jesus, who came to serve. It should be your attitude as a businessperson.

- God will not honor works of the flesh. You will find a partial list of these works in Galatians 5:19-21. He will never honor a business that takes advantage of others for any ungodly reasons. You can be sure to have success by serving and providing others value for what they have paid for.
 - Your product or service must reflect the fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22-25. You are no longer captive to carnal, selfish thinking or actions. Walk in the Spirit and you will not fulfill the lusts of the flesh.
4. Do not be tempted to ignore the biblical requirements for living as a Christian businessperson, whose life glorifies Christ.

God is interested in being the controlling Partner in your business. He expects you to understand, acknowledge and appreciate the value this brings to your business. Demand of yourself that your business reflects the same Christian attitudes you have in the church or at home.

A wise businessperson understands that it's God who makes you profitable. If you reject Him and make greed and pride your partners, God will take His hands off. You will lose the divine favor you would have had and will eventually lose your business. Therefore, your primary goal for every business encounter should be that your customers or clients experience the fruit of the Spirit in your dealings with them.

II. Basic Principles for Operating Your Business

Success is guaranteed by a foundation of honesty and holiness.

- You must have integrity without compromise.
- Sincerely appreciate the people who are your customers or clients. They are gifts from God.
- Give the highest priority to assuring that whatever you sell or the services you offer genuinely meet the needs of your customers and clients.
- Never try to deceive your customers or clients.
- Give no place to the devil by making excuses for any ungodly greed in your business practices. There is never a valid excuse for you to fall prey to doing the wrong thing. Keep it simple. Do the right thing.

1 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NKJV)

“No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

- Your tithe belongs to God. Rob Him of it and the windows of heaven will shut. If you don't tithe, you are out of balance and will be out of favor with God. It's your choice. Make it a wise one. Trust God without trying to justify any greed or selfishness.

Malachi 3:8-11 (NKJV)

“Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me. But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings. {9} You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, Even this whole nation. {10} Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the Lord of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you such blessing That there will not be room enough to receive it. {11} “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,”

III. Basic Principles for a Balanced, God-pleasing Christian Business, Family and Church Life

1. Be that whole person who moves between family, church and business seamlessly. Nothing should change about your personality or compassion for people in any of these three parts of your life. If they see you, they ought to see Jesus!
2. Never give yourself to making money at the expense of your time with your family. This is a foolish, dangerous attitude that lacks an eternal perspective. It will cause you to neglect your family time or church attendance.

Eternal value has nothing to do with your bank account. It will be found in the legacy of influence and grace you leave in your family and church. (See Luke 12:15-21, below.) Your bank accounts and the things of this world will belong to someone else when you go to be with Jesus. Avoid an eventual and profound sense of regret. Balance your time properly. Your business belongs to God. It's not yours! You are just a steward of what He has lent to you.

Luke 12:15-21 (NKJV)

“And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.” {16} Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. {17} And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ {18} So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. {19} And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you

have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” {20} But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ {21} “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.””

3. Be completely committed to tithing and unselfish giving in the church and to others who may have a need. When the opportunity arises, help the poor with whatever you can from or with your business. God will multiply it and you will reap blessings. These actions will help you maintain a God-pleasing balance in all three parts of your life.
4. Seek godly wisdom for your decisions in life, business, family and church. God’s wisdom always works in the same ways. It does not change because of people, places or circumstances.

Proverbs 4:5-7 (NKJV)

“Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. {6} Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; Love her, and she will keep you. {7} Wisdom is the principal thing; Therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.”

5. Let the Royal Law of Love rule every aspect of your life. It will never fail you. Follow it and you will not fail others or yourself.

Matthew 22:37-40 (NKJV)

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” {37} Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ {38} This is the first and great commandment. {39} And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ {40} On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

Matthew 22:37-40 is an appropriate ending to this study. Whether in business, family or church, everything necessary to live a balanced, God-pleasing life is found within those words from Christ. Jesus was very clear with His instructions: Love God with all your heart, wherever and with whomever you find yourself. Love your neighbor in the same way. Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:8).

Suggested reading and workbooks to help you get to a place of satisfaction with who you are as a businessperson, spouse or parent and member of your church:

The Leadership Puzzle – Marketplace, Ministry and Life
Books One and Two

Available through Dr. Abramson's website, Mentoringministry.com.

<http://www.mentoringministry.com/bookstore/the-leadership-puzzle-1/>