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VALUES

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(Proverbs 21:5, NIV).



VALUES

Homework Chapter 2

Scripture to Memorize: *“The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty”*
(Proverbs 21:5, NIV).



HOMWORK QUESTIONS

DAY ONE (Your Business Plan)

Read the Vision, Mission, and Values section of the Notes on pages 37-39, and complete your business’s Vision, Mission, and Values on pages 42-44. [Note: If you have not yet identified your vision, mission and values, this may require a significant amount of time and dialogue with your team at work and with your spouse if you are married. You may not be able to complete this by the next meeting. If this is your situation, create a timeline to complete this by the end of the study.]

1. What did you learn from completing or working on your business’s vision, mission, and values?

2. What do you hope to accomplish by implementing the vision, mission, and values?

DAY TWO (Planning)

Read Proverbs 21:5. *“The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty”* (NIV).

1. How do you think planning will benefit your business? According to this verse, what are the consequences of not planning?

2. Have you been faithful to plan well for your business? If not, what will you do?

Read Luke 14:28-30. “[Jesus said] *For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’*”

3. According to this illustration, what does the Lord think about planning?

Read Proverbs 16:1-3. *“The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. . . . Commit your works to the Lord and your plans will be established.”*

Read Proverbs 16:9. *“The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.”*

4. What is your responsibility in planning, and what role does the Lord play?

5. In light of God's role, what should your mindset be when planning?

DAY THREE (Vision, Mission, and Values)

Read Nehemiah 2:17-18. *“[Nehemiah] said to them, ‘You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem . . . I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me . . . they said, ‘Let us arise and build.’ So they put their hands to the good work.”*

1. What was Nehemiah's vision? How did having a clear mission motivate the people of Jerusalem?

2. If you have developed a Vision and Mission Statement for your business, write them below and describe how you use them to motivate others at work.

Vision –

Mission Statement –

Read Proverbs 29:18. *“Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained . . .”*

3. What is the value of having a clear vision, and what happens when you do not have one?

Read Acts 5:38-39. *“So in the present case, I say to you, stay away from these men and let them alone, for if this plan or action is of men, it will be overthrown; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them; or else you may even be found fighting against God.”*

4. What happens when we try to accomplish our vision instead of the Lord’s vision? If you have ever tried to accomplish a vision contrary to God’s, describe what happened.

DAY FOUR (Seek Counsel)

Read Proverbs 12:15. *“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel.”*

Read Proverbs 11:14. *“Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory.”*

1. Why do you think seeking counsel is important?

2. Do you consistently seek counsel from other people? If not, what prevents you?

Read Psalm 119:105. *“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path”* (NIV).

3. Should the Bible also serve as your counselor? Why?

4. Do you regularly read the Bible? If not, what hinders you, and what will you do to establish the habit of Bible reading?

Read Psalm 32:8. *“I [the Lord] will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you”* (NIV).

5. How does the Lord counsel us? Have you ever suffered for not seeking the Lord's counsel? If so, describe what happened.

Read Luke 12:16-21. “[Jesus] told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, “What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?” Then he said, “This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years to come; take your ease, eat, drink and be merry.’ But God said to him, “You fool! This very night your soul is required of you; and now who will own what you have prepared?” So is the man who stores up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.’”

6. According to this parable, what were the consequences of the rich man not seeking the Lord’s counsel as he made decisions? How will this influence you as you develop your business plan?

DAY FIVE (Case Study)

Pete Ochs, the founder of Capital III, is an entrepreneur with manufacturing, real estate, energy, and education companies in the US and Latin America.

Pete named the company Capital III because of his conviction that businesses should have a triple bottom line: economic, social, and spiritual. The *economic* bottom line is created by operating a profitable enterprise. The *social* bottom line occurs when the business leverages its financial resources to creatively meet social needs. And the *spiritual* bottom line materializes when the company intentionally uses its platform to influence its employees, vendors, and customers for Christ.

Pete realized that the glue to ensure the businesses would remain focused on accomplishing the triple bottom line were Capital III’s Vision, Mission, and Values:

Our Vision is to help change the world through entrepreneurship.

Our Mission is to be an absolutely trusted business.

Our Values are to honor God by serving people, pursuing excellence, and stewarding resources.

In 2009, Capital III bought a bankrupt manufacturing business located in a small rural community. Their biggest dilemma was how to hire enough workers in a town with a very small labor force. To compound the problem, they needed employees that would work a completely flexible schedule – from 20 to 40 hours a week – depending entirely on the volume of business.

Pete and his leadership team prayed and sought the Lord’s direction. They were led to try

something completely out of the box. They approached the local state-operated correctional facility about utilizing the prison population as the labor force. Inmates were earning only about 70 cents a day, and Capital III could pay them a starting salary of about \$10 an hour. Approximately thirty percent of their wage would be used to reimburse the state for their room and board. The rest they could spend, save, or send to help support their families.

This creative solution has accomplished all three bottom lines.

Economic: Because the labor force is flexible, the company is able to control and reduce its labor costs, meet the just-in-time demands of its customers, and reduce inventories, all of which contribute to the profitability of the business. The company also doesn't need to compensate the work force with paid vacation time! Inmates can earn up to \$100 per day, compared to \$7 while working for the state.

Social: The state and taxpayers benefit because a portion of what the prisoners earn defrays the cost of room and board. Prisoners are motivated to behave well while in prison, because anyone involved with a disciplinary problem is not eligible to work for Capital III. The prisoners also learn marketable skills that will help them earn a living once they are released from prison. Interestingly, the inmates have chosen to send a majority of what they receive in salary to help support their families.

Spiritual: Capital III is committed to treating the work force with respect and to help them in practical ways. They are helping to build a spiritual life center at the prison, in which life skill classes and Bible studies are conducted. Capital III also has been instrumental in starting a seminary inside the prison. The business also provides periodic meals and get-togethers for the workers and their families. Every two weeks, Capital III provides motivational and inspirational programs for its workers. In short, the workers have been valued and loved. This has influenced many to consider Christ as their Savior.

Pete Ochs has a big vision. He is praying for the Lord to replicate this model of valuing people and creating economic, social, and spiritual capital in businesses across America and around the world.

2. How will you implement what you learned, personally and in your business?



VALUES NOTES

Please read the notes after completing Day Five Homework

When David Palmer launched Palmer Software, he gathered his leadership team together for the first time and asked them, “Ever hear of a successful sports team getting ready for the big game and not developing a game plan? Or an army preparing for war and not having a battle plan?”

“In a similar way, developing a business plan is crucial for the success of our business. A business plan is important whether you are the owner or CEO of a company or the manager of a department.”

Throughout the Bible we are encouraged to plan. “*The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty*” (Proverbs 21:5, NIV). Planning requires effort, patience, and thought. It is the opposite of making quick decisions that are often reactionary and geared to solving immediate problems.

In Luke 14:28-30, Jesus illustrates the importance of planning ahead when He asks, “*For which one of you, when he wants to build a tower, does not first sit down and calculate the cost to see if he has enough to complete it? Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who observe it begin to ridicule him, saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’*”

Biblical planning begins with recognizing God’s role in the business. Proverbs 3:5-6 reads, “*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight.*” When drawing up a plan for a startup or an existing business, you should “*in all your ways acknowledge Him*” – that is, welcome God into every aspect of the enterprise.

We need God’s favor and guidance for the business to succeed. Proverbs 16:3 tells us, “*Commit your works to the Lord and your plans will be established.*” If we plan apart from seeking the Lord’s direction and only ask Him to rubber-stamp our plans, we are in a dangerous place. We are to plan, but ultimately the Lord controls the outcome. Proverbs 16:9 reveals, “*The mind of man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps.*” Author Larry Burkett observed, “Write your plans in pencil, and then give the Lord the eraser!”

THE BUSINESS PLAN

Business owners, entrepreneurs, and key managers are often consumed with running the day-to-day operations of their business and overlook developing or implementing a business plan. In *Business God's Way*, one of our objectives is to help you develop your business plan with enough detail to enable you to achieve your goals. The business plan consists of the four primary components we've mentioned before: Values, Strategy, People, and Finances – all built upon the foundation of the truths found in the Bible.

Nehemiah is a terrific example of a person who prepared and executed a business plan well. He learned that the people of God in Jerusalem were vulnerable to attack by their enemies because its walls were *“broken down and its gates are burned”* (Nehemiah 1:3). Just as any successful businessperson does, he recognized there was a need, and he modeled the steps we should take when developing and then implementing our business plan.

Here are the steps Nehemiah took:

1. Prayer. When Nehemiah learned of the problem, he *“sat down and wept. For some days, [he] mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. . . . [He said] ‘Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant . . . Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man.’ I was cupbearer to the king”* (Nehemiah 1: 4, 11, NIV).

The most critical ingredient in the success of any business is to pray – especially when starting a business, making crucial decisions, or grappling with a difficulty. Invite the Creator of the universe to give you guidance as you develop the business plan. As we learned last week, He owns your business and wants to be involved as you manage it.

Psalm 127:1 emphasizes the significance of God's role in your business. It says, *“Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it; unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman keeps awake in vain.”* Stop reading for a few minutes and ask the Spirit of God to make this truth part of your thinking. Unless the Lord builds and protects your business, you are working in vain. This is the reason your business must be built on prayer.

When I was in the commercial real estate development business, I realized the importance of confirming that the Lord wanted me to develop a project before launching it, because the financial cost of failure would have been catastrophic. On my last project, that meant praying on my knees on the land of the potential project every day for six months. Finally, the Lord made it clear through a unique set of circumstances that He wanted us to go forward with the development. When you know for certain He is calling you to do something in business, it increases your confidence and courage, and you can experience peace even in the midst of challenges.

2. Purpose. Some months later, the king asked Nehemiah why he was sad, and he responded by saying it was because Jerusalem had been reduced to rubble. *“Then the king said to me, ‘What would you request?’ So I prayed to the God of heaven. I said to the king . . . ‘send me . . . that I may rebuild it.”* (Nehemiah 2:4-5).

Nehemiah concisely communicated to the king what he wanted to accomplish and why. This was his 30-second elevator speech that summarized his Mission and Vision.

3. Plan. Nehemiah told the king precisely how long he would be gone. Then, he asked for letters from the king guaranteeing his safe passage for the long trip and letters requisitioning the timber needed to rebuild the city gates. Nehemiah had planned ahead and identified what he would need to be successful.

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Every business and organization should have clearly articulated Vision, Mission, and Values. This is the framework from which every decision, large and small, should be made. Companies often define Vision and Mission differently; therefore, you may need to adjust the headings to conform to your definitions.

Vision (or Purpose) Statement

Without a clear vision, people tend to drift away from the real focus and purpose of the business. Proverbs 29:18 says it this way, *“Where there is no vision, the people are unrestrained . . .”* One of the biggest advantages of implementing clear vision, mission, and values is that they will attract the right people to your business and repel the others. The only thing worse than not adding staff when you need them is to add the wrong people.

A vision or purpose statement does not describe what we do; it communicates why we exist. It should describe future outcomes, benefits, and what the business will look like. As you review the following vision statements, note how they define how they want to be viewed by people and the markets they serve. We have included Compass as an example for those who work in a church or non-profit charity.

Alcoa: Our vision is to be the best company in the world – in the eyes of our customers, shareholders, communities and people. We expect and demand the best we have to offer by always keeping Alcoa’s values top of mind.

Chick-fil-A: To glorify God by being a faithful steward of all that is entrusted to us and to have a positive influence on all who come in contact with Chick-fil-A.

Compass – *finances God's way*: To see everyone, everywhere, faithfully living by God's financial principles in every area of their lives.

First Southern National Bank: We will use our example, our influence, and our resources to help others make wise financial decisions.

Mission Statement

A business's *mission statement* describes the primary activity that must occur consistently for a company to be successful. It defines what distinguishes your business and what should influence your effort to fulfill your purpose. When drafting your mission statement for your business or department, make it concise, realistic, and motivating.

The following are examples:

Joe Gibbs Racing: Our goal is to field for our sponsors and fans competitive race cars on a consistent basis with the goal of winning races and championships. Our expectation is that we will be able to see in our growth and success, things that would have never been accomplished except by the direct intervention of God.

Walt Disney: To make people happy.

First Southern National Bank: First Southern is a team committed to affirming the dignity and value of all people, being responsible stewards, delivering more than is expected, and making our communities better places in which to live.

Compass – *finances God's way*: Equipping people worldwide to faithfully apply God's financial principles so they may know Christ more intimately, be free to serve Him, and help fund the Great Commission.

Values

A business's values are intended to govern how a business operates and deals with customers, vendors, employees, communities, and other stakeholders. The values help determine priorities and facilitate decision-making.

The following are examples:

Lockheed Martin

Passion. To be passionate about winning and about our brands, products and people, thereby delivering superior value to our shareholders.

Risk Tolerance. To create a culture where entrepreneurship and prudent risk taking are encouraged and rewarded.

Excellence. To be the best in quality and in everything we do.

Motivation. To celebrate success, recognizing and rewarding the achievements of individuals and teams.

Innovation. To innovate in everything, from products to processes.

Empowerment. To empower our talented people to take the initiative and to do what's right.

Compass – *finances God's way*

Christ Centered. The Lord owns Compass and is the only One who knows the direction we should take. He alone produces transformed lives.

Spirit Led. In the same way that Jesus depended on the Holy Spirit to reveal the will of the Father, we too, are completely dependent on Him to reveal God's will for Compass and for each of us as individuals.

Bible Based. Everything Compass teaches and does must be based on the Word of God.

Prayer Driven. Prayer is essential. Seeking the Lord's direction, provision, and protection through prayer must be a constant focus for us individually and throughout the entire ministry.

Discipleship Focused. Jesus commanded us to "*go and make disciples of all nations.*" This was His priority, and it will be ours.

COUNSEL

The Lord encourages us to seek counsel. Proverbs 12:15 says, *“The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man is he who listens to counsel”* Receiving counsel is fundamental to operating a successful business. The collective IQ of a team is especially helpful when developing and implementing a business plan. Before making an important business decision, subject it to three sources of counsel.

1. The counsel of the Lord

In Isaiah 9:6, we are told that one of the Lord's names is *“Wonderful Counselor.”* The Psalms identify God as our counselor. *“I [the Lord] will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you”* (Psalm 32:8). *“You [Lord] guide me with your counsel”* (Psalm 73:24, NIV).

The Lord's counsel comes to us through prayer, directly from His Word, and indirectly through others. It is important to remember that only the Lord can reveal truth and proper direction. Only the Lord knows the future and the ultimate consequences of a decision.

Remember the big picture: The Lord intends for us to use our work to help us grow closer to Jesus Christ. Throughout Scripture we are encouraged to wait upon our heavenly Father. He invites us to simply sit quietly and express to Him our gratitude and love. He wants us to share our needs and concerns and ask for His direction. So, whenever you feel hurried or pressured or you experience a sense of confusion concerning a business decision, go to a quiet place that will allow you to pray and listen for His still, small voice.

2. Counsel of the Bible

As we discovered in the first chapter, the Bible is a living book that the Lord uses to communicate His wisdom and direction to all generations. Therefore, learn what God's Word says about a particular issue. If it clearly answers a question, we do not have to go any further because the Bible contains the Lord's written, revealed will. The Psalmist wrote, *“Your laws are both my light and my counselors”* (Psalm 119:24, TLB).

Unfortunately, the majority of business people who know Christ are not daily Bible readers. Romans 10:17 says, *“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”* If you want to know Christ well and learn His ways, there is no substitute for spending consistent time in God's word, the Bible.

When the Bible gives us direction, we sometimes compromise or reject it. I have learned the hard way in my life and by observing others that this is just plain dumb! If the Bible is not specific about an issue, we should seek the third source of counsel: godly people.

3. Counsel of godly people

Proverbs 15:22 reads, “*Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counselors they succeed.*” And Proverbs 11:14 says, “*Where there is no guidance the people fall, but in abundance of counselors there is victory.*” Each of us has a limited range of knowledge and experience; we need the input of others who bring their unique backgrounds to give us insight and stimulate our thinking with alternatives we would never have considered without their advice.

Are you surrounding yourself with wise counselors? In a business, they may be your Board of Directors, your leadership team, or even outside consultants.

It is also helpful to meet regularly with a small group of peers who are not associated directly with your business to share your lives, pray for one another, and be accountable to each other. You will experience the benefits and safety of having a group of people who know you, love you, and give you objective counsel, even when it hurts. I am more receptive to constructive criticism when it comes from someone who I know cares for me.

Seeking your spouse’s counsel.

“Adam, the biggest mistake I’ve ever made in business,” confided Dave Palmer, “Was not listening to my wife when she told me she was uneasy when around some of those in leadership at our former company. She didn’t have any concrete evidence that they would eventually betray me, but intuitively she didn’t trust them.”

If you are married, the first person to consult is your spouse. Frankly, in the beginning of our marriage, it was hard for me to seek Bev’s counsel in financial and business matters. After all, she had no formal business training. But I began to see that her wise advice saved us a great deal of money.

Women tend to be gifted with a wonderfully sensitive nature that is usually very accurate. Men tend to focus on the facts. Couples need each other to achieve the proper balance for an optimal decision. I believe the Lord honors the wife’s role as helper to her husband. Many times the Lord communicates most clearly to a husband through his wife.

Husbands, listen to me. Regardless of her business and financial aptitude, you need to listen to your wife’s counsel. I committed never to proceed with any sizable business decision without my wife’s agreement, and it has saved our financial bacon more than once! I recall preparing to make a large business investment that Bev didn’t feel comfortable with. It later went sour, and we would have lost more than \$500,000 had I not heeded her advice.

It’s important for husbands and wives to agree on big decisions because they both will experience the consequences. Even if their choice proves to be disastrous, their agreement protects their relationship by leaving no grounds for an “I told you so” response. When a couple seeks each other’s advice, they actually are communicating, “I love you. I respect you. I value your insight.”

We need to avoid one particular source of counsel. “*How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked . . .*” (Psalm 1:1). The word “blessed” literally means to be “happy

many times over.” The definition of a “wicked” person is one who lives his life without regard to God.

In our opinion, it is permissible to seek input from those who may not know Christ for facts and technical expertise, but you are responsible to make the final decision.

STARTUPS AND ENTREPRENEURS

I was completely confused and discouraged. I sensed the Lord wanted me to start a real estate development company, but that meant transitioning from a business I knew well to one I had no experience in and knew very little about. This was going to be far too risky a venture.

Then, the Lord graciously brought me a mentor. He was a godly man with decades of successful real estate development experience. I learned more about the business in two years than I would have in ten trying to do it on my own. He was a walking Wikipedia of how to do things with excellence and avoid costly mistakes. After two years of picking his brain, I felt as if I'd earned a PhD in real estate development.

If you are contemplating a business startup or you are in the midst of one, it is imperative that you pray for the Lord to send you a mentor. This can mean the difference between success and failure. In fact, I believe all of us would benefit by having a seasoned mentor, someone who has experienced challenging times as well as success. So, ask the Lord to provide you with just the right person, one who has operated their business God's way.

As you mature in your faith in Christ and become experienced in operating a business God's way, you can serve as a mentor. There are few activities more gratifying than helping an eager learner.

YOUR BUSINESS PLAN

As we have learned, there are many benefits from creating a well-conceived Business Plan. It provides a clear sense of direction for the organization and reduces uncertainties. It helps allocate funds and personnel in the most effective way. It minimizes impulsive decisions by enabling managers to think strategically, while improving the business's ability to adapt to change and grasp appropriate opportunities.

There are no one-size-fits-all Business Plans. Rather, the content and format should be adapted to your business. We suggest you complete this with your leadership team at work.

Each week during the study, you will complete a portion of your Business Plan. Our goal is for you to have a sound biblical foundation for your business and a solid business plan by the end of the study. The basic Business Plan you will be completing is also available for free in electronic form at compass1.org, as well as a more detailed plan.

This week, you will complete your Vision, Mission, and Values portion of the Business Plan. If you have not yet identified them, you may not be able to fully complete this by the next meeting. If this is your situation, map out a timeline to complete this by the end of the study.

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

Palmer Software

What is your Vision Statement?

Palmer Software will glorify God by producing excellent software, providing outstanding service, and caring for every person we meet.

What is your Mission Statement?

Palmer Software is a team committed to affirming the dignity and value of all people, being responsible stewards, delivering more than is expected, and making our world a better place in which to live.

List your Business Values.

1. **Teamwork.** We succeed as a team. Personal ambition is important but each of us must be willing to sacrifice it for a greater good.

2. **Relationships.** They matter a lot – in our faith, our families, our friendships and our work.

3. **Excellence.** We strive for excellence in all we do, and we recognize that it comes only through continuous learning and effort.

4. **Generosity.** Giving is crucial! We will share our time, our knowledge and our resources

5. **Accountability.** We believe that we should always do the right thing and we invite one another hold us accountable to be people of absolute integrity.

What is your Vision Statement?

What is your Mission Statement?

List your Business Values.

1.

2.

3.

4.

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