

Worldview for the Marketplace: AUDIO #4

LESSON AT A GLANCE

“Living and Working Strategically”

Threefold Cord: Revelation

MASTER PRINCIPLE #4

Work is a holy and everlasting calling in God.

Key scriptures:

Gen. 1:26, 2:1-2; Deut. 28:1-2; Psa. 90:12,17, 139:16; Isa. 48:17-19; Matt. 11:28-30, 28:18-20; Luke 14:26-35; John 5:17,24,30, 14:6,16,26,28, 16:7-16, 17:1-5,20-26; Acts 2:23, 17:26; Rom. 8:15-17; 1 Cor. 3:9-15, 9:25-27, 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:1-9; Gal. 4:1-7; Phil.2:1-11, 3:7, 4:9; 1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 2:9-18, 4:15, 5:12-14, 12:11; 2 Pet.1:10-11; Rev. 13:8, 17:8

Key concepts found in this lesson:

Modeling what we are building after God and His ways of building.

1. God models for us what He expects us to do as we fellowship with Him in His strategic work and life.
2. God plays everyone who is in shape and plays them at the level they are prepared to play.
3. Strategic living requires serious levels of resource planning, personal discipline, and an active commitment to see God's Kingdom extended on earth.
4. Some work passes through death into eternity.

How each of these four major teaching concepts generally applies to the marketplace ministries:

Key business applications:

Seeing and applying the strategic development of a learning and character-based organization.

1. All organizations should develop a self-conscious “way” or climate that is biblical and that sets the standard for all practice and behavior.
2. Training and advancement should be the goal for all members of our families, churches, businesses, and nation.
3. All the elements of strategic planning and discipline must undergird our business and stewardship preparations and executions.
4. Building character and skills must be at the center of our business enterprise: Profit will be the “fruit.”

You are called to co-manage God's creation in Christ.

Romans 8:17

Study • Train • Obey

“Living and Working Strategically”

I. MASTER PRINCIPLE #4:

Work is a holy and everlasting calling in God.

- A. This lesson deals with following God as His disciples:
 1. In His lifestyle, as revealed in scripture.
 2. In His work patterns, as revealed in scripture and nature.
- B. This lesson will also take us deeper into both strategic thinking and its applications:
 1. We will examine the six basic components of strategic thinking.
 2. We will again discuss the issue of “earth work” that we can take with us into heaven.

II. God models for us what He expects us to do as we fellowship with Him in His strategic work and life (Gen. 1:26, 2:1-2; Mat. 11:28-30; John 5:17,24,30, 14:6,16,26,28, 16:7-16, 17:1-5,20-26; Rom. 8:17; Phi. 2:1-11; Heb. 2:9-18, 4:15).

- A. Our presupposition is that God models for us what He expects from us. This leadership principle establishes the integrity of saying, “I ask of you what I ask of Myself” (Heb. 2:9-18, 4:15)!
 1. Leaders (Jesus) model for those who follow them the activities, character, and attributes they expect from those followers.
 2. We therefore, as do the historic Christian creeds, believe that the Trinity models for us the essentials of both human requirements and the keys to successful life achievement as well.
- B. God models for us in the Trinity the essentials of successful organizations and successful individual labor and reward. Among these modeled attributes within the Godhead are:
 1. A commitment to work (Gen. 2:1-2) and its eternal nature (John 5:17).
 2. A commitment to building in council (Gen. 1:26-“us”).
 3. A commitment to a division of labor (John 14:16,26, 16:7:16).
 4. A commitment to the executive function and authority structures (John 14:28; Phil. 2:1-11).
 5. A commitment to train (Heb. 5:8), and a commitment to exalt (Psa. 40:8; John 17:20-26).
 6. A recognition that responsibility brings both judgment (the cross) and maturity (John 17:1-5).
 7. A commitment to expand and grow through shared responsibility (Rom. 8:17; Rev. 2:26).
 8. A commitment to work in perfect harmony with the goals and methods of the organization, adding our distinct labor and gifts as needed (John 5:24,30).
- C. God’s ultimate strategy for productive work is to bring others into common labor with Him so that they can learn to think like Him and work with Him.
 1. We see this truth explicitly shared by Christ in Matthew 11:28-30: “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me.”
 2. There is great truth in the statement “it takes one to know one.” (Parent, child, pastor, etc.)

Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that earth time is about avoiding sin and preparing for heaven, not being overly concerned with the theology of God or trying to build like He builds.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, all organizations should develop a self-conscious "way" or climate that is biblical and that sets the standard for all practice and behavior. While avoiding sin and preparing for heaven is important, Jesus commanded us to occupy until He comes, to learn and practice biblical ways in all areas of life.

III. God plays everyone who is in shape and plays them at the level they are prepared to play.
 (Luke 14:26-35; Rom. 8:15-17; 1 Cor. 9:25-27, 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:1-9; Gal. 4:1-7; Phil. 3:7, 4:9; 1 Tim. 4: 16; Heb. 5:12-14, 12:11; 2 Pet. 1:10-11)

- A. God models building what some call "learning organizations" by requiring the members to live out a disciplined learners' lifestyle.
 - 1. Scripture uses the word "Christian" three times and "disciple(s)" over 250. This is a clue! It also illustrates the hermeneutical law of frequency.
 - 2. A "disciplined learner" is characterized by these general traits:
 - a. They practice the truths they are exposed to as a lifestyle (1 Cor. 9:25-27; Phil. 3:17, 4:9; 1 Tim. 4:16; Heb. 5:12-14, 12:11; 2 Pet. 1:10-11).
 - b. They prioritize their relationships; build strategically; expect warfare; release their resources to what they believe in (Luke 14:26-35).
 - c. They are following someone's leadership (1 Cor. 11:1) and are committed to teach-train others what they have learned (Mat. 28:18-20).
- B. As a master coach, God "plays us" at our level of preparedness.
 - 1. The level of training, sacrifice, and character equals the level of effectiveness (Jesus).
 - 2. We often play, in God, right at "the edge," by which God purifies and matures us in the process (1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:1-9).
- C. In this we both reproduce and become models or "witnesses." We are at all times either shaping the world around us or being shaped by it.
 - 1. We begin our journey as those who are influenced; move to being intercepted by the gospel; become integrated with God's truth; and then become influencers.
 - 2. God's will is that all His children become "doorways" to His Kingdom!

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Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that Christianity only has to do with God's love for us and our enjoyment of life in Christ, and that we can forsake the law and spiritual disciplines as this is simply legalism.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, training and advancement should be the goal for all members of our families, churches, businesses, and nation. Our need to train and be disciplined does not negate God's love for us and His desire that we enjoy life in Christ.

IV. Strategic living requires serious levels of resource planning, personal discipline, and an active commitment to see God’s Kingdom extended on the earth. (Psa. 90:12,17, 139:16; Acts 2:23, 17:26; Rev. 13:8, 17:8)

- A. God lives and works strategically as the above scriptures underscore. The closer we get to God and the way He thinks, the more strategic and focused we become.
 - 1. God apparently thinks from the end back to the beginning (desired results, back to critical path sequences to get those results).
 - 2. And from the macro (big picture) back through the micro (small details).
 - 3. While not everyone is gifted to plan this way, all successful organizations need the collective ability of a team to do so.
- B. While discipline and planning must be balanced by flexibility, both are essential to strategic work.
 - 1. “Discipline,” at its root meaning, carries the idea of removing that which doesn’t belong. Proverbs says that in God, skill (“wisdom” and discipline (“instruction” are the keys to a successful and fruitful life [hokhmah, musar].
 - 2. Both skill and discipline are the foundations of excellence.
- C. Strategic planning and thinking carries with it these six basic elements of resource identification, procurement, utilization, and replenishment:
 - 1. Revelational resources: clarity on mission and execution.
 - 2. Relational resources: the right people for the right jobs, with the ability to execute, motivate, and successfully resolve conflict.
 - 3. Educational and training resources: the information and procedures to guarantee continuous upgrading of the skill base.
 - 4. Financial resources: the necessary capital to operate, grow, and give.
 - 5. Communication resources: both internal and external message clarity.
 - 6. Prayer resources: the sustained ability to hear God’s heart and speak it into your work.

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Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that “kingdom now” theology is not from God, that is, God is not interested in seeing His Kingdom established on the earth until He returns.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, all the elements of strategic planning and discipline must undergird our business and stewardship preparations and executions. While God’s Kingdom cannot be fully established until He returns, Christ expects us to continue His work of advancing the Kingdom wherever we have opportunity and influence in our neighborhoods and businesses, etc.

V. Some work passes through death into eternity (Deut. 28:1-2; Isa. 48:17-19; 1 Cor. 3:9-15; Gal. 4:1-7).

- A. While we introduced this concept in Lesson One, we must constantly remember that our goal is to be doing eternal work now.
 - 1. When we begin to see and grow in God’s Kingdom reality, the eternal goals and values of God become clearer.

2. His goal for us on earth is that, out of our obedience, life would bless us (Deut. 28:1-2; Isa. 48:17-19), prepare us for eternity (Gal. 4:1-7), and make us witnesses that would call in the elect and confront mankind.

B. In order to analyze our current condition, either personally or in terms of an organization, we need to be able to do the following:

1. Diagram One:

a.	b.	c.	d.
Where are you now?	What change is needed?	How is it to be applied?	Has it taken?
A "picture"	A diagnosis	A plan	A new picture

2. These processes involve the interaction of:

- Management
- The staff/workers
- The systems

Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that in heaven we will forget our earth lives as sin will be remembered no more.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, building character and skills must be at the center of our business enterprise: Profit will be the "fruit." While our tears and our sin will be wiped away, there are things that we invest in now that will pass into the next age. "