

Worldview for the Marketplace: AUDIO #5	
LESSON AT A GLANCE	
“The Power of Obedient Faith” Threefold Cord: Revelation	
MASTER PRINCIPLE #5 The possibility of failure is essential to human growth.	
Key scriptures:	Gen. 12:3; Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; 2 Kings 4:all; Prov. 12:10; Matt. 5:13-16, 20:1-16, 22:37; John 7:17; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 12:all, 13:all; Gal. 5:22-26; Heb. 11:all
Key concepts found in this lesson: <i>How to apply biblical faith in our decision-making and witness at work.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In God, obedience and trust, not “reason,” are the “currency of success.” 2. From the human perspective, “faith” is a form of risk which builds our discernment and our trust in God. 3. If our ministry is in the marketplace, then our faith must be fully expressed there. 4. Experiencing failure ourselves, and sometimes letting others fail, is a two-edged sword which contributes to our maturity.
How each of these four major teaching concepts generally applies to the marketplace ministries:	
Key business applications: <i>Practicing biblical decision-making in matters of faith, evangelism, and employment practices.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In life and in business, “reason” must be defined as adhering to biblical principles in our decision-making process. 2. Managing “risk” is about eliminating false assumptions; presumption on God; unbiblical partnerships; and the demand that results look exactly like we think they should. 3. We must live in our witness at work, displaying our humanity; humility; fearlessness of conviction; love; and honoring of God. 4. We must have the courage to accept being hired, promoted, or demoted based upon what God is doing to clarify and develop our calling, skills, and character.

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

Romans 8:17

Study • Train • Obey

“The Power of Obedient Faith”

I. MASTER PRINCIPLE #5:

The possibility of failure is essential to human growth.

- A. This lesson deals with two colossally important issues:
 1. That our lives and business ministries must be built on faith, not human reason.
 2. That biblical faith is a “dimension” which often involves testing, “failure,” and adjustment as stages in the journey to obedience and expected results.
- B. Therefore this lesson lays the foundation for:
 1. Establishing a biblical methodology for decision-making.
 2. Integrating our Christian faith into the entire fabric of our work, and in particular, our marketplace ministry.

II. In God, obedience and trust, not “reason,” are the “currency of success” (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37; John 7:17; 1 Cor. 2:all).

- A. As we have already seen, and will see again, human “reason” is a false god, and our plumb line in God is obedient faith and trust.
 1. True reasoning, which is God’s intellectual gift to us, is reasoning from the correct biblical assumptions as we work through scriptures with the Holy Spirit and competent supplementing counselors.
 2. Because the mind justifies what the heart has chosen, “reason” is never objective and is always based on values and presuppositions.
- B. The core values of biblical decision-making are:
 1. Does this decision embody the multitude of scriptures dealing with this or similar situations?
 2. Does this decision have as its primary goal obeying and honoring God and the developing of the moral and spiritual character and virtues of all involved participants?
- C. All of the above presupposes “reasoning” or thinking out of our spirit, not our natural intelligence (1 Cor. 2:all).
 1. In the “fall,” man’s soul-life took ascendancy over his spiritual life.
 2. In Christ, we are “spiritually reborn,” which means our spiritual being in God recovers its proper life-governing role (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:37).
- D. “Success” then is measured by:
 1. Honoring God.
 2. Serving all men and women as God declares He wants them served.

Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that "success" is measured best by achieving the goals we have set for ourselves and helping others do the same.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, in life and in business, "reason" must be defined as adhering to biblical principles in our decision-making process. Personal goal-setting and strategic planning help us achieve true success only when they are founded on obedience to what God has spoken to us and when we have surrendered our own will and independence to trust in Him.

III. From the human perspective, "faith" is a form of risk which builds our discernment and our trust in God (Gen. 12:3; Heb. 11:all).

- A. Faith must become a lifestyle, not an "isolated act" we engage when we decide to be "spiritual" or make decisions.
 - 1. Faith is living out of our spirit, in communion with and obedience to God, and following His Word as we apply it to all relationships and facets of life.
 - 2. Faith is not a "leap" it is a carefully chosen direction based on clearly observed spiritual laws and principles, and trust in the God who established them.
- B. Faith, because it is a "way," not an event, is a process in time involving:
 - 1. Discovery and verification of the issues in any situation, from a biblical point of view.
 - 2. A process of decision-->enactment-->response to results-->adjustments and corrections-->vigilance in the face of obstacles-->emerging achievement-->humility and gratitude before God.
 - 3. The "secret" of a life of faith is to train in it all day long, maintaining a constant internal dialogue with God as we go through our day and its opportunities and challenges.
- C. Biblically, the primary or foundational business relationships are those of the involved family (Gen. 12:3).
 - 1. Biblical trades or services tended to be generational, based on both discipling and apprenticeships, more than simple academic exposure to knowledge.
 - 2. Dismissing this phenomena as an attribute of an agrarian or "primitive" society misses the point: Generational transfer is the primary source of lasting wealth because it builds upon both family history and God's sovereignty.
 - 3. Family business promotes self-sufficiency under God which is economic freedom.
 - 4. Invariably, people who go through our Business School tell us that its biggest initial effect is on their families.

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Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that "faith" is far more about believing in Christ and the Bible than in "doing things" in the real world, let alone in the marketplace.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, managing "risk" is about eliminating false assumptions; presumption on God, unbiblical partnerships, and the demand that results look exactly like we think they should. Our faith in Christ and His Word must be taken into the real world of neighborhood needs, community service, and marketplace adventure.

IV. If our ministry is in the marketplace, then our faith must be fully expressed there (2 Kings 4:all; Matt. 5:13-16, 20:1-16; Rom. 14:17; 1 Cor. 12:all, 13:all; Gal. 5:22-26).

- A. From a strict, biblically textual, and word-analysis point of view, “worship” and “work” are virtually identical.
 - 1. Our work is to be a form of worship before the Lord.
 - 2. Our work is a demonstrable expression of our revelation, values, goals, ethics, morals, relational skills, stewardship skills, strategic thinking, character, etc. What else is there?
- B. Faith, in the marketplace, is where we witness (display) our true life in Christ through:
 - 1. Our love for God and fellow man.
 - 2. Our character.
 - 3. The fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-26).
 - 4. The gifts of the Holy Spirit, as adapted to the workplace (1 Cor. 12:all, 13:all).
 - 5. Our concern for “unhired lives” (Matt. 20:11-16).
 - 6. Our commitment to invest in empowering others. Wealth, talent, riches, and time are all “buried” by God in people: Discerning which ones to invest in is the key to prosperity in crisis. Example: Elisha and the widow’s oil (2 Kings 4:all).
 - 7. Our commitment to, and constantly upgraded skills in “fishing for men” (Matt. 4:19) with what people give us to work with. This would include micro-fishing (personal) and macro-fishing (the extension socially of Kingdom economic theory and practice).

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Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that the workplace is not a place to proselytize, and doing so is totally unprofessional.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, we must live our witness at work—displaying our humanity, humility, fearlessness of conviction, love, and honoring of God.

V. Experiencing failure ourselves, and sometimes letting others fail, is a two-edged sword which contributes to our maturity (Prov. 12:10).

- A. As we have already seen in discussing “faith,” failure in the short run is often a part of the process.
 - 1. Consequences are always our teacher. The issue is, how did they adjust us?
 - 2. Our primary concern must be people’s response to failure, not that we or they failed.
 - 3. As I teach in “Living Life God’s Way,” we should all have “Never Again” lists!
- B. One of the great challenges of life, therefore, becomes how do we truly help people in apparent failure.
 - 1. Unbiblical “compassion” actually further damages and imprisons them in their un-

repented errors or lifestyles (Prov. 12:10).

2. For believers and a just society, the balance and clear distinctions between “temporary relief,” “training towards proficiency,” or “outright charity” must be kept clear.
3. Modern Western social policy does not keep these distinctions clear and is often a disaster.
4. In the long run, we don't serve people by employing them where they don't belong; “using them” without upgrading their skills; or shielding them from the consequences of their actions.

Worldly Deceptions	We are told falsely that while some failures seem necessary to gain wisdom, we Deceptions should not put too much value on failure.
Key Business Applications	The truth is, we must have the courage to accept being hired, promoted, or demoted based upon what God is doing to clarify and develop our calling, skills, and character. Failure is essential for human growth.