

How do I apply biblical principles to my business?

- 1) **Whatever you do in word or in deed, do it for the Lord** (Prov. 3:5; 1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 5:9; Eph. 5:15-17; Col. 3:17). As you perform your job, realize you are living for Christ. He should receive honor through your career just as he does through your church involvement. As a Christian, you are a spiritual being; therefore your work life is as spiritual as your devotional life. It all belongs to God.
- 2) **Do all things without complaining and disputing** (Phil. 2:14). Don't be a whiner. The world has plenty of critics and complainers. Keep a positive spirit. You know the Lord. No problem is beyond his power.
- 3) **Be humble** (Prov. 11:2; 16:5; 29:23; Phil. 2:5-8). Follow Jesus' example: Christ relinquished his heavenly throne to live as a commoner among the people he had created. Even secular leadership pundits recognize that great leaders are humble people who make the places they lead great.
- 4) **Watch what you say** (Prov. 8:8; 10:19-21; 15:23,26; 16:13; 25:15; Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6; James 3:1-12). Words aptly chosen can encourage and energize others. Careless talk can debilitate you or your listener. Don't speak rashly. Think before you speak. Be mindful how you address others. Do you tend to inspire people, or injure them? Winning an argument gives fleeting gratification, but winning a friend brings lasting satisfaction.
- 5) **Keep learning** (Prov. 1:5). Smart leaders realize there is much they don't know. Keep reading, studying, and seeking advice. Maintain a teachable spirit. Don't let pride hinder you from growing spiritually. The Bible is a treasure trove of wisdom, and even secular leaders are discovering that biblical principles make solid business sense. As a businessperson, you can't afford not to know God's Word.
- 6) **Guard your integrity** (Ps. 18:23; 26:11; 37:37; 41:12; Prov. 2:7; 11:8). Whether you're in politics, the professional sector, the marketplace, or church ministry, you are an ambassador for Christ. The competitive drive in leaders can tempt them to compromise their principles, if the outcome looks appealing. Don't do it. Your integrity is priceless. Don't allow anyone or anything to dismantle it. God's Word is filled with promises for those who honor him (1 Sam. 2:30). Scripture warns us that if we pervert our way, we will eventually be found out (Prov. 10:9; Eccles. 10:1).
- 7) **Work Hard!** (Prov. 10:4; 21:5; 27:23). Don't spend your days scheming shortcuts to success. The reason many people underachieve is that they are not willing to pay the price of hard work. Lazy people do not impact the world for good. Rather, they have a negative effect on those in their sphere of influence. Ask God for his evaluation of your work ethic.
- 8) **Seek good counsel** (Prov. 11:14; 13:18). Good advice is invaluable. The wisdom of a godly colleague can save you from disaster. You must be teachable, however, to benefit from counselors. Be proactive. Enlist a group of wise friends to help you process ideas and issues. Don't be like King Rehoboam who ignored sage instruction and listened instead to people who led him to ruin (1 Kings 12:1-20). Only fools isolate themselves from those who will tell them the truth (Prov. 18:1).
- 9) **Honor the Lord with your wealth** (Prov. 3:9; 11:25). Can God trust you with riches? Some Christian businesspeople seek wealth simply to improve their lifestyle. Others have a greater vision for their earnings – investing in God's kingdom. Your decisions in this regard will set you apart from secular magnates. While many non-Christian businesspeople are philanthropic according to their personal interests, Christians give generously as God directs, knowing he will lead them to invest in eternity. Jesus urged: "Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure – pressed down, shaken together, and running over – will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you" (Luke 6:38)
- 10) **Show mercy** (Prov. 11:17). Running a business or leading an organization requires some tough calls, but as you seek to improve your company's standing, never forget to show mercy. You are where you are by God's grace. It is possible to succeed in competitive markets while being gracious (Mic. 6:8).
- 11) **Control your anger** (Prov. 15:18; 16:32; 29:11; Col. 3:8). Many leaders have lost everything because they could not control their temper. Anger is a deadly sin. Fury blinds people to what is important. Resentment eats away at your soul. Wrath destroys relationships, causing otherwise intelligent people to say foolish, devastating things. Anger has no place in a Christian leader's life.
- 12) **Don't fear people** (Prov. 29:25). God is the only One a spiritual leader should fear. He is the One who will eventually hold everyone accountable for their actions (2 Cor. 5:10). Letting people intimidate you makes you vulnerable to compromising your faith and integrity. God has not given you a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind (2 Tim. 1:7). Don't live in fear. Follow your Christian convictions and allow God to vindicate you in his own way.