

WHY IS MY BUSINESS STRUGGLING?

By Rick Boxx

Business struggles can become overwhelming at times. There are many possible reasons for troubles in a company or organization, so discerning the root problem can be difficult. However, it is necessary. There are common root problems of a struggling business and how to respond.

The first requires asking, “Am I being a poor steward?” It is easy to get greedy or distracted, forgetting to care for your customer. Or it may involve ignoring key development and financial management disciplines of business. In the Bible, Titus 1:7 says, “For the overseer must be beyond reproach as God’s steward, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not overindulging in wine, not a bully, not greedy for money.”

When trouble comes, review your heart and your daily practices. Consider surveying your customers and examining your business and financial disciplines.

The second common problem is when the economy, or your industry, is in decline. In an economic downturn, you might assume your only response is to hang on. But proactive response is critical. Managing expenses is important, but downturns can be opportunities to grow faith and market share.

Hebrews 11:6 states, “And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for the one who comes to God must believe that He exists, and that He proves to be One who rewards those who seek Him.” If you are experiencing a downturn, boldly pray for the faith needed to put forth your best efforts to increase market share.

A third possible reason for business struggles might be that God is disciplining you or your company for sin – disobedience to His laws and principles. Years ago, I served on an advisory board for a ministry leader who was struggling to produce any tangible fruit. Something did not seem right, so we kept digging. Eventually this ministry leader announced he was resigning because of a pornography addiction. Later, one of his associates said, “I knew there was sin in the camp, but I didn’t know where.”

The Bible makes it clear: “For whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He punishes every son whom He accepts” (Hebrews 12:6). If your business is struggling, take a step back and carefully and prayerfully evaluate whether you or your team have sin in your “camp.”

Another reason your business may be struggling might be that God is testing, training, or refining you. Early in my marketplace ministry there were times when God tested and refined my faith. Payroll nearing with no money in the bank drove me to my knees pleading for God’s help. When the Lord provided in unexpected ways, it not only stretched my faith but also provided testimony to God’s greatness. I think of Psalm 66:10 which says, “You have put us to the test, God; You

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have refined us as silver is refined.” If God seems to be testing and refining you, turn to Him in prayer and marvel at what He does.

The final reason your business may be struggling may be due to a spiritual attack. Although I try not to give the enemy too much credit, there are times when God will allow the devil to sift us. Job is the best example of someone who experienced incredible spiritual battle. In Job 1, Satan has taken family members, riches, and all of Job’s possessions, but in Job 1:22 we read, “Despite all this, Job did not sin, nor did he blame God.” If you’ve considered all other reasons for your struggles and it appears it is a spiritual battle, trust God and do battle by putting on the full armor of God highlighted in Ephesians 6.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. What is your typical first response when struggling in business, whether you are an owner, executive or member of the staff team?
2. In terms of owning, operating or carrying out responsibilities in a business, what do you think it means to be a good steward? Is that something you take into account as you work?
3. How can a person grow in their faith – as well as continue to grow their business – during difficult times? Why do people often simply put their heads down and try to weather the storm, rather than seeking ways for continued growth?
4. Do you believe there is a spiritual dimension to our endeavors in the workplace, that there is a battle between good and evil – even if we cannot see it happening in a physical sense? Explain your answer.

Challenge for This Week

Is your business struggling right now in some manner – stagnant growth, decrease in sales and market share, production problems, strife among the staff, or some other difficulties? If so, now would be a good time to evaluate what is happening and how God might desire to be involved. Take some time to pray about the challenges you are facing and seek God’s wisdom for how to address them in a biblical manner. Sharing your needs with trusted friends or a small group with whom you can speak confidentially could prove to be very helpful.

NOTE:

If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:
Joshua 7:16-25; Romans 8:38-39; Ephesians 6:12; Hebrews 11:1; James 1:2-6