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▲ **The Role of Divinity and
Perseverance in Business,
Sustainability,
Growth and Profitability**



INTRODUCTION

- Perseverance, sustainability, growth, and profitability are all inspirational words that allude to hard work. On their flip side, however, we see God dispensing admonition to all forms of laziness and aversive behaviour towards work.
- First of all, does the Bible which is our code of conduct allow us to do business? Hence the role of Divinity in our business endeavours. The answer is an empathetic yes.

INTRODUCTION (Cont)

- There are countless references in both the Old and New Testaments of The Bible about God's opinion on business, profit, borrowing, lending money, and hard work.
- In short, God loves business and profit. **The parable of talents in Mathew 25:14-3** is a good example.
- Christians are supposed to draw their strength, inspiration, and power from prayer, fasting, and whatever the word of God instructs them to do like giving, fasting, tithing, etc.



INTRODUCTION (Cont)

- The greatest pitfall for most of us, however, is forgetting to pair prayer with handwork both mentally and physically.
- What we forget is that except for the miracle of creation in Genesis 1, most miracles in the Bible thereafter were either preceded or followed by an action from the beneficiaries.
- God expects us to participate in our miracles as much as possible. Distinguished ladies and gentlemen, let me now focus on the principles as indicated in my topic.

Principle 1: Divinity

When you pray, believe, and stand up to go to work putting your faith into action. James 2:14-26.

- Even Lazarus, a dead man was commanded by Jesus to jump out of his grave when still tied up. **John 11:13-44.**
- God promised to bless the work of our hands not the shouting of our prayers. **Deut. 28:12**

Principle 1: Divinity (Cont)

- After we pray, we must open our eyes to the opportunities or societal problems around us. Out of these, we shall create work through which God will bless us as He promised.

Proverbs 20:13, do not sleep, open your eyes and you shall have plenty of bread.

Principle 1: Divinity (Cont)

- It has often been said that if prayer alone was the reason people were blessed, Africans would be the richest people on the face of the earth. The point here is not that other people do not pray, they do, but they also add brain, hard work, and time management to their prayers.
- In Africa, unfortunately, we pray when we must work and sleep when we should pray. We ask God for miracles and miracle money not knowing that money is supposed to be a result of our brain and sweat.



Principle 1 Conclusion

Personally, I love miracles, but only those that challenge me to the entrepreneurial expressway as opposed to mere freebies. And that is where our story begins.

Principle 2: (Perseverance)

- The story of my conversion together with my family was a long one and will be for another day by the grace of God. After conversion, I sat under the tutorage of a man of God who taught me about prayer, faith in God, giving, working, and seed faith.
- For a few years, I prayed hard and believed in God but also opened my eyes every day to see what He would do. Then one day as I was walking on the streets of Kampala, He opened my eyes to an opportunity that changed my life.
- I never went to school to study outdoor advertising. But friends, we have a talking God who actually speaks to our hearts in splendid ways.



Perseverance (Cont)

- Two multinationals were fighting to get visibility in this country. God clearly showed me that I could help one of them win the other and I make money in return.
- Of course, later I worked for both of them and made even more money. The catch was that I didn't have any capital. I chose not to fear, but faced one of them and told them I could make billboards for them so they would be more visible and overcome their competitor.



Perseverance (Cont)

- They asked me what I needed. I politely asked them to fund me. At this time, there were no large format advertising billboards in Uganda. This particular company accepted to give me advance payment even when they had never met or known me before.
- I had no experience whatsoever in the field and actually learned on the job looking for people of different skills and talents e.g. welders, masons, artists, etc.



Perseverance (Cont)

- At this point, even though I could have pocketed the advance payment looking at how broke I was and there was no way they could have traced me in those days of no mobile phones, and no address systems, I chose to keep my word.
- Realizing that the deposit was not enough to cover the cost of steel and working capital, I used my power of persuasion to speak to a friend who recommended me to a steel supplier.



Perseverance (Cont)

- The supplier agreed to give me the initial quantity of steel I needed provided I opened a bank account for the business. Hence my first business account was opened. The rest is history.
- I made sure that in exactly 90 days, we were ready to fulfil our promises to the client, the bank, and the supplier of steel.



Perseverance (Cont)

- My word to Christians is first of all to persuade you to dream, believe in your dream, believe in yourself that you can achieve the dream, and develop a level of boldness towards its fulfilment.
- Whenever we see opportunities especially in the form of community problems, we should evaluate them and if they're feasible as business projects, overcome any fears and boldly take them on.
- That was the story of how Capital Outdoor started. No experience, no money, no sector connections.



Perseverance (Cont)

What we had was:

- A deep hatred toward poverty and a determination to overcome it
- A determination to keep our word to all our stakeholders because business is essentially about keeping promises to everyone associated with you.

Perseverance (Cont)

What we had was:

Since those early years, we have learned a lot of business secrets and also unlearned quite a few on our way as a Christian business:

- a) The other major principle we learned is tithing. As we all know, tithing is a deliberate habit. For God promises us in **Malachi 3:9** a bounty of results in return.
- b) As believers, we must understand that God's promises are largely the same concerning His commands. Giving has the same results. Whatever religion one believe in, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, etc. "Give and it shall be given back to you . . ."

Any Christian who disregards this command does so at their own risk. Only then, can you sustain and grow your business as well as make a profit.

Principle 3: Business Sustainability

This hinges on the following pillars;

- Family
- Tax Compliance
- People Management
- Clients
- Relationship with your Bankers
- Legal



Business Sustainability (Family)

- As a Christian, my family is the first layer of my partners. The family here means your wife, children and other people closely knitted to you. These people should not only know some things about your business but everything.
- When you borrow or lend money, they must know. Are you dreaming of a new business? Let them know, ponder over it, evaluate and allow them to actually critique it first.

Business Sustainability (Family)

- When your children reach a certain age, for example, in their mid-teens, introduce them to the business even if it is just discussing it at the dinner table.
- Later on, they will accompany you to the office, to the bank, or when you go to negotiate any business deals with your customers.
- Unknown to them, they will be learning everything. They learn the art of strategy, negotiation, persuasion, and all manner of boardroom artistry, albeit in a passive way.



Family (Cont)

- Never hide your money from your family. This includes money in books of accounts, the bank and physical cash. Send them to pick money from your jacket or wardrobe until you introduce them to drawing it from the bank.
- If you do not do this, ladies and gentlemen, you will regret the day they take over the business and suddenly realize how much money you have left behind and are now saddled with the responsibility of managing the money and the business. We all know stories of family businesses that could not outlive the first and second generations.
- This family training will greatly bridge the gap you leave when you are either incapacitated or gone to be with your creator. This way, your business should survive.

Business Sustainability: Tax Compliance

- As believers, we should take the lead in the practice of tax compliance. This is not to say that taxes are easy to pay.
- Often times tax collectors behave in the most high-handed way to execute their work. Please excuse them, it is a systemic character trait.
- Their forerunners in Bible days arm twisted our Lord Jesus Christ over just a coin in taxes until He delegated someone to find a way to raise the money. Otherwise, His Ministry would be closed.
- You cannot be up to date all the time, but try to be as compliant as possible, especially in these hard times.

Business Sustainability: People Management

- At Capital Outdoor, we have found that lateral leadership works better for us than the alternatives.
- The most important lesson for us is that if everybody learns everything, we do not get operational gaps in times of inevitable absenteeism. It is a perfect bedrock for teamwork.
- As a company, we invest in our people's development to achieve better efficiency and exposure to trending best business practices

Business Sustainability: Clients

- As a Christian, how much do your clients trust you? How many of them have stayed with you for 2 years, 3 years, 5 years, or 10 years and beyond? If your score here is less than 60%, there could be a problem.
- How much do you keep your promises to them? If they remind you more than twice a year about promises you made to them, it is yet another problem.
- Do you deliver exactly what you promised and even more? Even during hard times when you are losing money? It is possible to fail on the targets, but we should be the first to go to our clients and let them know.



Business Sustainability: Relationship with your Bankers

- Bankers are the primary facilitators of business. For your business to be financed well, allow your bankers to know everything about the business. Let them understand your business curves throughout the year.
- This should help them create an appropriate profile of your performance so that in case you need their help even at short notice, they will be there for you.

Business Sustainability: Relationship with your Bankers (Cont)

- Let me comment on one Bible verse that Christians have greatly misinterpreted:

Deuteronomy 15:6;

that you shall lend to many nations and never borrow.

- We all know that the core income stream for banks is lending. I look forward to the day, believers will own our own bank. If we discourage borrowing and yet we borrow all the time from Banks owned by people of different faith, what message are we sending out with regard to our scriptures?

Business Sustainability: Relationship with your Bankers (Cont)

- In my view, there is absolutely no problem borrowing with an intention to pay because that is what the Bible also says;

“the wicked borrows and does not pay” Psalms 37: 21.

- This essentially means that the wise or righteous man pays when he borrows. So borrowing is not bad but the failure to pay.



Business Sustainability: Legal

- As believers, doing business, we must be mindful of the fact that the whole world does not operate on the same value systems as we do. Our outward trust antennae therefore has to be always raised and alert.
- This calls for robust legal protection through competent lawyers for your business. Do not leave everything to God when He has given you enough of His Holy Spirit to discern and test the spirits of men.



Closing Remarks

- In conclusion, I want to call on all African youth who are faith based entrepreneurs to eschew short term thinking, the craze for money for nothing, laziness, greed, and the idea that there is miracle for everything.
- If I must be very frank with you there is honour, dignity, and peace in hard work and what we call in business; sweat equity.
- As an Entrepreneur you should as much as possible be an open book for best business practices and a reference point for honest living.

Thank you.

