

MONDAY MANNA

5 July 2021

BECOMING A PLAYER IN THE ETERNAL GAME

By Rick Boxx

Author Simon Sinek, in his book, *Infinite Game*, says he believes the business world for too long has been stuck chasing what he calls a “finite game.” When business leaders simply pursue profits from quarter to quarter, or fiscal year to fiscal year, they are chasing a finite solution, rather than a lasting purpose, he writes.

Sinek contends that what business leaders should be pursuing is what he labels a “just cause.” If we realise what is the greater cause or purpose for our businesses, rather than profits, it will change how we make business decisions. He is saying that even in the highly competitive, ever-changing marketplace, there must be a sense of mission greater than rewarding stakeholders with increasing financial returns.

This is not to say that profits are unimportant. They are vital for sustaining our businesses. There is no question about that. However, for those of us who are followers of Jesus Christ, the ‘infinite game’ – our eternal game – should be played primarily with one purpose in mind: to glorify God. If we pursue profits exclusively, we may miss out on the rewards of eternity.

The Bible has much to say about this. Here is a sampling of the principles it teaches that we can easily apply to the 21st century workplace:

It makes sense to follow God’s design. Psalm 139:14 declares that we each are “*fearfully and wonderfully made*,” and by implication, the businesses we build and develop are an extension of that. For this reason, we would do well to seek to discover what are God’s intentions for us – and for our work. “*For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do*” (Ephesians 2:10).

It makes sense to consult the guidebook. When we buy a product, we often receive a user guide. When we are hired for a job, we often receive an employee handbook. In sports, athletes receive a playbook. And in the Bible, we find God’s guidebook for how to live – and how to work. “*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

It makes sense to seek the highest returns. Profits come and profits go; some years generate more financial returns than others. But if you knew where to find the greatest rewards, would it not make sense to pursue those? “*Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving*” (Colossians 3:23-24).

It makes sense to keep the right perspective. Many people have invested most of their time, energy and resources in the quest for profits and rewards that are fleeting, here today and gone tomorrow. Then they find themselves asking, “Is that all there is?” Why not focus on what we can least afford to lose? “*What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?*” (Luke 9:25).

What the Scriptures teach us is that by pursuing godly, eternal rewards, profits likely will follow. Therefore, it makes sense to pursue eternity, not profits.

Postal Address:

PO Box 8168,
Woolloongabba, QLD, 4102

ABN: 42 005 622 515

Office Address:

Suite CBMC,
Sung Do Lawyers,
14 Annerley Road,
Woolloongabba, QLD 4102

Email:

admin@cbmcaustralia.com.au

Phone:

07 3172 9365

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

What do you think of the idea that most people in the business world are caught up in an endless pursuit of a “finite game”? Do you agree that the bottom line for any business – or for any business or professional person – should amount to more than profits? Why or why not?

How about the concept of pursuing instead an “infinite game,” goals and objectives that will make a difference for eternity: What do you think that means? And what difference would it make to begin each day with that perspective?

This “Monday Manna” cites a Bible passage that says we are ‘God’s workmanship.’ What do you think this means – and what are its implications for how we approach our work and how we operate our businesses?

Do you have a sense that God has a very personal interest in you and your work, or do you regard your personal life – including your spiritual beliefs – as separate from how you function each day in the marketplace? Explain your answer.

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages:

Proverbs 12:11, 18:9, 22:29, 27:18

Matthew 6:19-21, 25-33

1 Corinthians 3:9