

Starting and Running Your Own Christian Business

Many Christians desire to start their own businesses, but only a small percentage of believers actually venture out to become entrepreneurs. There are several obstacles that discourage or prohibit individuals from starting their own businesses, but the main obstacle is fear. Truthfully, many believers fear what's on the other side of success. The top five reasons (or fears) many believers have are:

1. **They Fear Becoming Wealthy.** Believe it or not, a LOT of people are afraid of wealth. Why is this? It's mostly because wealth represents change, and many believers don't want to change their lives or embrace new lifestyles. They simply want enough money to maintain the lifestyles they've chosen for themselves. Additionally, we can't truly embrace what's outside of our understandings until our understandings have been stretched. We understand how to manage a certain amount of money, and we understand how to manage a few thousand over what we're accustomed to having, but the thought of managing “way more than enough” money is too much for the average believer.
2. **They Fear Losing Their Lifestyles.** It goes without saying that whenever you start and run a business, your lifestyle is going to change if you are properly investing in your business. This means that you will be required to make sacrifices, and these sacrifices are oftentimes substantial enough to impact your life and your mind. Some people just aren't willing to give up the perks and pleasures that they enjoy today because they see entrepreneurship as a risk (see number three); whereas, their manifested lifestyles (to them) are full of guaranteed paychecks, a few uncomfortable setbacks, and an overcoming that usually arrives during tax season.
3. **They See Entrepreneurship as a Risk.** The average believer wants to start and run a business, but is afraid of the risks involved, especially where his or her investments are concerned. This means the average believer is controlled and led by fear; oftentimes, because they have a wrongful relationship with money.
4. **They Have a Wrongful Relationship With Money.** The average believer has a wrongful (dependent) relationship with money, to the point where they trust money, but try to spend God. In other words, many Christians today will ask God for money because they trust the money, and they will return to Him again and again asking for what they believe to be their “help” or “hero”. This, of course, is an idolatrous relationship with money, and anytime one has a wrongful relationship with money, they will put money ahead of God, and God will never hand someone the very thing in which they idolize.
5. **Fear of the Unknown.** Let's face it. When we start and run a business, we are not only expected to learn a lot, we are required to keep learning if we want to stay afloat. This means that we have to change our minds by overwhelming our brains with new information. New information ordinarily takes us into new realms of understanding; places where we find ourselves unable to relate to the people we are currently entertaining (friends and family). This means that we will find ourselves in seasons of loneliness, and for the average believer, the road ahead (without

familiar faces) looks too dark; therefore, they aren't willing to walk by faith. Instead, the average believer chooses to walk by sight.

You'll notice that New Year's Eve is often a noisy day; a day when many souls decree and declare that the present new year will be the year that they start or improve their businesses. Truthfully, this declaration is usually a religious decree; something people say repetitiously because many people think that some magical powers are present on New Years Eve that will inspire them to finally start their businesses, and of course, this isn't true. We can have the information and the desire to start a business, but if we don't actually put our faith into action, what we know will go to waste. Remember... faith without works is dead.

But what if you want to finally start and run your own Christian business?

Here are ten tips for starting and running your own Christian business.

1. **Create a business plan.** Studies have found that individuals with business plans are 75% more likely to start and run successful businesses.
2. **Create a schedule for yourself.** You have a system that you are accustomed to, and if you don't create a schedule for yourself, you will slowly merge back into your system. Create a schedule and follow it consistently. Penalize yourself anytime you don't follow your schedule and make sure the penalty is steep enough to hurt your feelings. For example, you can give \$100 to a charity every day that you don't follow your system.
3. **Stop talking and just do it.** Don't say that you'll get started next week, because chances are, you'll forget or get too busy. Start now. You can start by writing your business plan, ordering your business cards, signing up for a tax identification number, researching the laws as it regards to businesses in your state, and so on.
4. **Do not lean to your own understanding.** With a business, there will be many decisions that don't make sense, especially in financial dealings. Needless to say, you won't always understand every idea that God gives you, nor will you be able to comprehend (with your limited understanding) the impact that one decision can make.
5. **Go ahead and purchase your website's domain name if you don't have one already.** The goal is to get financially involved in starting and running our businesses because we will often value anything we've put money in, but we won't take anything seriously that was handed to us freely or anything we haven't invested in.
6. **Submerge your mind with information that relates to starting and running a business.** You need to do this everyday. Buy books from successful business owners, listen to audio messages from entrepreneurial gurus and watch television shows that give you valuable tips for running a business. It's like learning a new language. If you don't submerge your mind in new information, it will default back to what it knows.
7. **Research like businesses.** Check out businesses that offer the same or similar products or services, and look for ways that you can differentiate yourself from them.
8. **Come up with a catchy slogan.** By the way, if you aren't creative, hire someone to write a

slogan for you. Don't throw together a few Words that rhyme and call it a slogan. A catchy slogan not only helps buyers and potential buyers to remember your business, but it also helps to set the tone for your business's branding.

9. **Set a monthly budget for your business.** The average business fails because the business owner is too cheap or too fearful to invest in his or her business. Set up a minimum monthly budget and make sure that you are ALWAYS investing in your business.
10. **Do what you love the most.** Another reason many business owners fail at starting and running new businesses is because they are trying to become successful launching or running with someone else's idea. What God has for you is for you, just as what God has for them is for them. Ask God to show you your purpose or give you a skill. Anything that you love to do will be something that you will find success in. Don't become discouraged if you aren't making money immediately, and definitely don't allow yourself to think that a particular field is a goldmine just because you see someone who is successful in that field. All too often, believers abandon their own fields to pursue the fields of others simply because they want to sow a few seeds, wait a few days and reap bountiful harvests. This impatience has caused many believers to end up sharing in the world's portion: A stressful nine-to-five, working under a power-obsessed boss, and earning barely enough money to survive with.

You can start, run and be successful at leading a Christian business, but you've got to be willing to take the risks, make the investments and stand out on faith. Additionally, you have to be willing to allow yourself to be God's chess piece: A person HE can move at will. That way whenever opposition tries to corner you, God will move you to a safer place. Sometimes, God will move you away from familiar faces, remove you from your comfortable jobs and place you in unfamiliar settings where you have no choice but to depend on Him or to panic. That's why you need to “faith-up”, or in other Words, get into the Word of God until your faith stands taller than your fears. Don't wait until the new year to get started on an old assignment. Start today.

By Tiffany “AnointedFire Buckner”