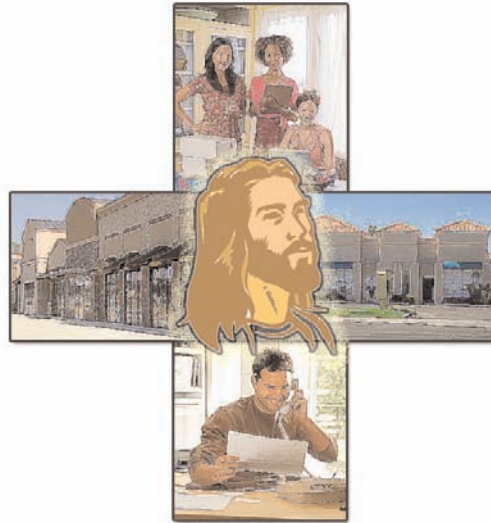


# Operating A Small Business-Ministry To Extend God's Kingdom

Followers of Jesus Prayerfully Discovering A Need  
and Establishing A Christ-centered Business-Ministry To Meet It

Lesson 6

## Your Business As A Ministry



## Ministering From Your Business

*A business* discovers what people need  
and seeks to make a profit through meeting that need.

*A ministry* encounters a need and seeks to alleviate it  
through compassion and relief.

*A business-ministry* serves our Father through discovering needs and establishing  
a profit-making enterprise that helps His children provide for themselves.



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## The Guiding Principles of a Christ-centered Business-Ministry

“Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matthew 6:33)  
“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12)

### Lesson 6

## A Business-Ministry Owner Whose Lord Is Jesus

### *Suggested Guidelines to Consider*

In this last lesson we want to review what we’ve discussed in previous lessons and offer you some considerations that will help you in your service to our Lord Jesus. Just keep mind that each of the points we’ve shared in this series of lessons must become your *way of life* as you:

- Bring glory to our Father by seeking first His righteousness in your motives and practices, and extending His Kingdom as the primary motive for your business-ministry.
- Exercise biblical authority by:
  - including* the people or things that contribute to peace and harmony in your business-ministry, and *excluding* the people or things that rob your business-ministry of peace and harmony;
  - commending* the actions and attitudes that contribute to the peace and harmony of your business-ministry, and *correcting* the actions and attitudes that rob the peace and harmony of your business-ministry.
- See yourself as our Lord’s servant to those inside and outside your business-ministry.
- Treat others with His love and compassion.
- Uphold communal righteousness.
- Establish biblical applications (*halakhahs*).
- Seek His guidance (*rhema*).
- Trust in our Lord’s presence whenever two or three confirm His Word or guidance.
- Ensure that you and those who work with you are free of demonic strongholds.
- Provide a quality product or service you’d want yourself.

We noted that an owner who brings people into a business-ministry is much like a shepherd/teacher of a Hebraic home fellowship. You’re a *gatekeeper* who purposes to keep the wolves out and allow in the employees who will walk righteously in Christ with you.

The concept of “fellowship” within Christendom has become a watered-down description of people getting together for any reason—pot luck dinners, going to a movie, playing baseball. But our Father has a much narrower view of *authentic fellowship*. His same criteria for fellowship apply to a home fellowship and business-ministry as well.

### Our Father’s criteria for *biblical fellowship with others*

1. Your fellowship with others must spur you on to glorify our Father and Jesus through praise, worship, work, and living testimony (1 Corinthians 10:31).
2. Your fellowship with each other must spur your growth in Christ-likeness (see Philipians 2:12).
3. Your shared fellowship must spur you toward repentance and the narrow gate (Matthew 7:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:12).
4. Your fellowship as extended spiritual family must spur you to reveal Jesus to the lost in your daily lives (2 Corinthians 5:18,19).

A home fellowship or business-ministry must provide for these vital purposes with each other. Please remember this: Our Father holds the members of a home fellowship family and a business-ministry *communally responsible* for one another. One person who is holding onto unconfessed sin hinders the prayers of all the others since a body whose Head is Christ is answerable for each body part.

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Mutually staying repentant and purposing to live uprightly is a biblically mandated pre-condition for being the family of Jesus and for having your prayers heard by our Father!

The biblical standard of communal righteousness should be applied to four specific areas:

1. When you **worship** with others (Psalm 24:3-4; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18).
2. When you **pray** with others (1 Peter 3:12).
3. When you **study the Scripture for application** with others (Matthew 18:19-20).
4. When you **partake of the body and blood of Jesus** with others (1 Corinthians 10:16-22; 11:28-31).

In other words, these four areas of *biblical fellowship* are reserved for those who are walking in the righteousness of Christ before our Father and with each other through repentance, hiding no unconfessed sin. The owner and each employee must understand that the blessings of our Father are dependent on upholding communal righteousness as an expression of love for Him and for each other. If your business-ministry camps on this one truth, watch what He does beyond your wildest dreams!

### A Business-Ministry Owner Whose Lord Is Jesus

#### 1. Develop a Kingdom-focused Mission Statement

Below are some recommendations for you to consider in your mission statement. I purpose to:

- Reconcile potential employees, customers, and other business owners to our Father as guided by the Holy Spirit (2Corinthians 5:17-20).
- Help those who follow Jesus become more like Him as His Spirit works in and through one

another (2 Corinthians 3:17,18; 1 John 4:17).

- Collectively study the Word of God and apply its principles to daily living.
- Encourage employees to rely on the spiritual gifts within them to serve others as followers of Jesus.
- Establish and support Christ-like relationships with employees, their families and others connected to the business (1 Timothy 3:4-5).
- Cooperate with other Kingdom-minded business owners to extend the Kingdom of God locally and beyond (Acts 1:8).

#### 2. Kingdom-based Treatment of Others

- Each human being is made in God’s image, and our Lord Jesus died on the cross for each one. In this light, a distinctive of the workplace is to support the dignity of employee and customer alike. Employees are not inanimate objects like a piece of equipment. The Hebrew word *avodah* can mean both worship and work, and it’s through work that a follower of Jesus gains greater sense about his or her life in the Kingdom. Work-related decisions must respect the feelings of workers about the significance of their work.
- Your business-ministry should do everything possible to meet the needs of people in a timely, courteous and helpful manner. You are committed to developing and providing a peaceful atmosphere for our employees. As an owner, serving your employees is not an imposition on your time; it’s a God-given purpose you are responsible to provide.
- A work environment that enables every employee to reach the highest possible level of service to our Lord Jesus and to others is a priority for you as a business owner.
- In return, employees are expected to put forth maximum effort and initiative in their job

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performance and in achieving business-ministry goals. In reality they each work for our Lord Jesus.

- Ensure that you are collectively dedicated to a process of constant improvement by continuously seeking ways to enhance the operations of the business-ministry and better serve the community. Owner and employees need to work together and seek new ideas and suggestions from each other to achieve this end.
- The process of discussing and confirming situations and decisions with two or three also upholds employee dignity. When a decision affects others, it's helpful to discuss with them the issues involved *before* a decision is made. Personal dignity is enhanced when the business-ministry owner maintains a spirit of trust and decisions are made with as much consultation and collaboration as possible. This doesn't absolve the owner of final responsibility for the decision, but this process promotes a wise decision with broad support. *“For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisers make victory sure”* (Proverbs 11:14). *“Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed”* (Proverbs 15:22).
- A good method of wise decision making includes each employee contributing to the decision-making process about any work situations directly involving them.
- Each employee should be allowed to speak without coercion but with a corresponding obligation of responsibility and accountability.

### 3. Basic Assumptions of Kingdom-Oriented Compensation

- Compensation decisions should be based on the essential mission of the business-ministry, taking into consideration the needs of employees for livelihood.

- The biblical basis for compensation should be clearly articulated.
- Decisions regarding compensation should be just and uphold the employee's dignity.
- Discussions of compensation should foster participation, communication and mutuality.
- Compensation should be based on a reasonable work week.

### 4. Hiring People for a Business-Ministry

- The selection process for hiring new employees involves making an informed decision about whether an individual meets the criteria you've established for being part of your business-ministry. If this decision requires the cooperation and confirmation of others, that extra effort should be made. As a gatekeeper, avoid bringing people into your business-ministry who will create undue tension or impede your ability to meet the Kingdom-minded goals you've established.

### 5. Providing Guidance and Feedback To Employees

*“Where there are no oxen, the manger is empty, but from the strength of an ox comes an abundant harvest”* (Proverbs 14:4).

*“Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds”* (Proverbs 27:23).

The success of an enterprise is based on the quality of work of its people. As we noted in a previous lesson, 97% of problems you encounter will be interpersonal. So the more people who work together not only enable the business-ministry to accomplish more but also have the potential to be relationally messier. And like a diligent shepherd, the owner must pay particular attention to the emotional “condition” of employees.

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- Frequent impromptu feedback to employees in a business-ministry is far more effective than infrequent scheduled meetings. Feedback on performance is not only a way of letting an employee know how well he or she is doing, but is also a way of encouraging communication with the owner about the employee’s perception of the business-ministry. As a result, the employee will take greater responsibility for personal contribution to the success of the enterprise.
  - If the employee needs to improve, set measurable goals and follow up frequently until he or she meets the new level of performance. As an owner you’re responsible for employee training and for providing the resources needed for employees to do their best.
  - As you close a feedback session, be sure to include the following:
    - Briefly summarize the discussion.
    - Emphasize areas of employee strength.
    - Discuss areas of any improvement needed.
    - Offer statements of hope, vision and gratitude.
    - Pray together when possible.
- Listen carefully and without distraction.
  - Conclude the discussion and determine what will happen from that point. Explain clearly your expectations for improvement, including precisely what changes you will be looking for in behavior or performance.
  - Monitor the employee's performance and progress after the meeting.
  - If there remains a major difference between you and the employee, turn to two or three others you’ve established in advance for your business-ministry to hear both sides. (This is a potential opportunity for the shepherd of your home fellowship to get involved in resolution.)

## Conclusion

We know we haven’t discussed every feature of conducting a business-ministry in these lessons. But,

- if you will trust the Spirit of our Lord Jesus in you,
- Who loves the people you interact with far more than you,
- and Who knows the Father’s desire to provide for His children through your success,
- He will guide you into everything that is necessary to serve Lord Jesus and extend His Kingdom.

You may want place this passage in a prominent place in your business-ministry:

***“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).

## 6. Providing Correction To Employees

- Do not reprimand employees in the presence of other people or in a public place.
- Determine the appropriate time and place for a meeting to discuss a behavior or performance issue.
- Investigate an incident or infraction thoroughly regardless of how the situation appears at first glance.
- Allow the employee a chance to respond and explain the incident or behavior.
- Present your prescribed steps to the employee in a slow, calm manner. Describe precisely what your concerns are, and what changes in behavior you expect to see from the employee.