

MONDAY MANNA

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NOT PROVIDING PRINCIPLES WE CANNOT IMPLEMENT

By Robert J. Tamasy

Recently I had the opportunity to spend time with Albert, a longtime friend who served as a leader in CBMC for many years. He was guest speaker at a retreat, and discussed some of the things he'd learned about applying biblical principles in his businesses, as well as his personal life.

One of the life-changing insights Albert said experience has taught him is, "God will never give you a principle in His Word that you cannot implement." He added, "When you follow biblical principles, you can never go wrong."

This was not an empty declaration. My friend proceeded to cite example after example of times when, even if it seemed counter-intuitive, he chose to follow guidelines from the Scriptures and discovered to his delight that they worked as promised. Albert was not saying that heeding biblical principles is always easy, or that outcomes will always be as we hoped. But as he commented, "A loving father will never ask you to do something that is not good for you – and the Lord is our loving Father."

This started me thinking: What are some of these principles from the Bible that God gives, assuring us He has established them with our best interests at heart? Books could be written about this topic, but here are some examples that came to mind:

We do not work just for ourselves. We start our careers typically thinking in terms of "my work," "my job." The Bible teaches, however, the work we perform is part of our divine calling, and the talents and giftedness we possess, and even opportunities that come our way, are from God. *"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).

There is no harm in having to wait. Many of us are action-oriented people, and having to wait for goals and desires to be realised tests our patience to the limit. But if we find ourselves having to wait, God has a good reason for it. *"Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for Him"* (Psalm 37:7). *"Be still and know that I am God"* (Psalm 46:10).

Difficulties in life can be stepping stones for spiritual growth. When we encounter hardships, we are prone to explore alternatives for escaping the circumstances. But it is often the crucible of adversity that teaches us the greatest lessons from God and leads to spiritual maturity. *"...we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us"* (Romans 5:3-5).

You cannot out-give God. Generosity does not come naturally for many of us. We cling to our paychecks and profits, reasoning, "It's mine. I earned it." We act as if giving to others, even worthwhile charitable causes, could result in our running out of resources for ourselves. But 2 Corinthians 9:7 states, *"God loves a cheerful giver."* Jesus also taught we need not worry about not having enough: *"Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you"* (Luke 6:38).

© 2017. Robert J. Tamasy has written *Business at Its Best: Timeless Wisdom from Proverbs for Today's Workplace*; *Tufting Legacies*; *coauthored with David A. Stoddard, The Heart of Mentoring*, and edited numerous other books, including *Advancing Through Adversity by Mike Landry*. Bob's website is www.bobtamasy-readywriterink.com, and his biweekly blog is: www.bobtamasy.blogspot.com.

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Reflection/Discussion Questions

From your own experience, how do you react to the statement, “God will never give you a principle in His Word that you cannot implement”? Can you think of any times when that did not hold true in your life?

If you agree with the following statement, “When you follow God’s principles, you can never go wrong,” what are some other principles that come to mind that you have found working effectively when put into practice?

Looking at one of the principles cited, why is it so difficult for most of us to have to wait before seeing something come to fruition?

Have you experienced firsthand how God can use adversity or hardship to teach us, as well as to shape us into the people He wants us to be? If so, give an example – and explain what you learned through the process.

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more about the principles it presents, consider the following passages taken from the book of Proverbs alone:

Proverbs 11:23, 11:25, 12:1, 14:29, 15:22, 17:14, 21:5, 23:19-21, 26:10, 27:17, 28:20