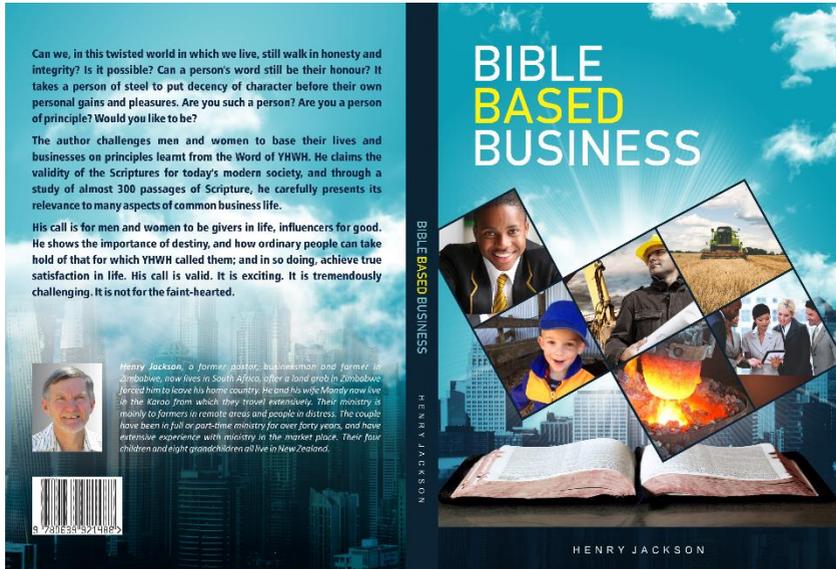


Herewith **chapter 2** of my book

Bible based business



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Should you, however, wish to acquire the book itself, it may be ordered from Magda Du Plessis. She can be contacted at the following address:

Email: dieboomzas@gmail.com

Cell number: (+27) 823213236

Chapter 2

MAKING THE RIGHT DECISIONS EVERY TIME!

Making the right decisions every time depends on certain vital criteria which must totally become part of our lives. Please note that having only one of these criteria is not sufficient to guarantee correctness in our decision-making. All these criteria must be exercised with good balance. They are as follows:

Personal relationship with YHWH

I find that YHWH promises over and over again in His Word that He would guide us by His Holy Spirit. Being led by the Holy Spirit is a natural *'by product'* of a good and regular prayer life. It is not just a desperate cry for help in a difficult time. It is rather a living relationship with Him Who is all Wisdom; He Who knows the end from the beginning; and He Who wants to become personally involved in our lives.

Let Jesus become your personal Friend. Let us note just a few verses of Scripture in this regard:

Isa 30:21 *"And your ears will hear a word behind you, 'This is the way, walk in it,' whenever you turn to the right or to the left."*

Rom 8:14 *"For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God."*

John 16:13 *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth ...”*

John 10:27 *“My sheep **hear My voice**, and I know them, and they follow Me”*

Jer 33:3 *“Call to Me, and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”*

I believe that a part of the spiritual benefits which we enjoy as Christians, is that we can call on YHWH for guidance in our everyday circumstances. He has promised that He would guide us, and He does; not grudgingly, but willingly. He does not want us to stumble and fall. I do not intend to provide a full study on Divine guidance in this book. There are many excellent books on the subject and I would encourage the reader to get hold of some of these. In particular, Kenneth Hagin has written some splendid booklets that are easy to read and understand.

I should, however, just mention that one of the principal methods which YHWH uses to guide His people is through the *‘still small voice’* of guidance in the spirit of man. Right deep inside – that *‘gut feeling’*.

Man is made up of three parts – spirit (the inner man where conscience presides), soul (emotions, will, and reasoning power), and body (the physical house in which we live). The spirit and soul of man will live on forever even after the body dies. It is in this spirit – man’s spirit – that YHWH dwells through His Holy Spirit, and it is here that He primarily speaks to us. (Just a note of caution – the Holy Spirit will never give any guidance which is in conflict with the

teaching of the Scriptures. So, be sure to check the guidance that you have received with the teaching of the Scriptures.)

Two Scriptures spring to mind immediately:

Prov 20:27 *“The spirit of man is the lamp of YHWH, searching all the innermost parts of his being.”*

To use modern day terminology, you could say the spirit of man is the *‘light bulb’* of YHWH. YHWH switches on this light bulb of illumination in man’s spirit –when we suddenly say, *“Of course, I see it!”* We have a saying today, *“I see the light!”* That’s it exactly! Suddenly we have that inner illumination of knowledge. How? We do not quite know, but we suddenly just know what we should do, even though we might not have any reasons for it.

Col 3:15 *“And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts ...”*

What does He mean here? Well, simply put, the heart of man is the spirit of man, and if this is at peace, that person will know. Have you ever been about to make a decision and felt uneasy about the decision? Logically, the thing which you want to do might seem to make good sense, but somehow, without any logical reason, you just feel uneasy about it. You just don’t have peace.

Don’t do it! No matter what the pressure, just don’t do it! You don’t have peace, and peace must be the measure for guidance.

Some time ago we needed to purchase a new vehicle for our company and I was offered a good pick-up truck for Z\$95,000. We had just received a large payment from a long outstanding account in South Africa, and so we had sufficient

funds to pay for this. We asked for an AA report on the vehicle and the report was excellent. Every logical indication was in favour of the purchase of this vehicle, and it looked so good!

I **really** wanted to buy it! While we were standing looking over the vehicle, my associate whispered into my ear, “I think this is a good buy, go for it!” But I felt uneasy. I just could not figure out why, but I was. Nevertheless, because my associate, who is usually much more conservative than I am, said that I should go for it, I gave my decision. “*We will take it,*” I said. The owner went off to get the paperwork cleared and I went back to my office. I still felt so uneasy.

About fifteen minutes later, the owner phoned me from town to say that one of the offices that he had to go to, had closed early, and he would only be able to complete the paperwork the next day. I felt this was my last chance. I apologised to him and asked if he would mind if I withdrew my decision. He agreed and I was relieved.

You see, the Scripture says that,

Prov 6:2 *“If you have been snared with the words of your mouth, have been caught with the words of your mouth,*

3 *“Do this then, my son, and deliver yourself; since you have come into the hand of your neighbour, Go, humble yourself, and importune your neighbour.*

4 *“Do not give sleep to your eyes, neither slumber to your eyelids;*

“Deliver yourself like the gazelle from the hunter’s hand, and like a bird from the hand of the fowler.”

I knew this Scripture and knew that I immediately had to follow its instruction. As soon as I obeyed the Scripture, I felt at peace, and I knew that I had made the right decision not to buy that vehicle.

About two days later I received an urgent phone call from the bank with regard to the payment which we had received from South Africa. They had sent a cheque as they had done previously. Unbeknown to us, between the last payment and this one, the South African exchange control had made certain rulings, and this form of payment was no longer acceptable. So the money which we thought we had, was no longer there. I would have been in an extremely embarrassing position. But YHWH protected me through that still small voice. Don’t ever ignore that voice of guidance!

A few weeks later, I was offered another vehicle that suited our needs exactly, and it cost Z\$30 000 less, and what is more, sufficient finance had by then become available. I am so glad that I made the right decision in the end. I have experienced this guiding voice of the Holy Spirit many times in my life. The times that I have been obedient to it, I have prospered. The times when I have ignored it, I have been adversely affected.

YHWH is interested in every detail of our lives. He is real and wants to be involved in our lives. We can, with confidence, share the most intimate details and problems of our lives

with Him, and He listens to us and helps us. Don't try to go it alone in your life. Sure, you might be able to handle some things, but sooner or later the waves will be too big for you to cope with.

Know that YHWH is only a prayer away. He wants to have a constant personal relationship with us where He can guide us and direct our footsteps every step of the way.

Psalm 37:23 *"The steps of a good man are ordered (directed) by YHWH; and He delights in his way."*

Do not make hasty decisions

The decisions that I have made hastily, have invariably proved to be bad decisions. The ones which I have pondered over and took a long time to make, have proved to be good decisions. This is clearly in line with the Scriptures.

Prov 19:2 *"... He who makes haste with his feet errs."*

Prov 14:16 *"A wise man is **cautious** and turns away from evil, but a fool is arrogant and **careless**."*

When it comes to making big decisions, especially those which are likely to change the course of your life or others' lives, I strongly advise that earnest prayer be made for at least a month or two before making a final decision. Be careful to apply the principles of Scripture and not just 'pot luck' guidance as some do. 'Pot luck' guidance is when a person opens the Bible at random, puts his finger on a Scripture, and reads that as guidance. Usually the Scripture is twisted out of all proportion in order to fit it into the plan

which he has already laid out, no matter what anyone might say. Such guidance is far closer to spiritualism and will invariably lead to disaster in the end.

Naturally, I should balance this statement by adding that I do believe that YHWH can and does give guidance to His people through specific Scriptures. This, however, comes as a revelation such as a word of knowledge or a vision or a clarity of understanding.

The Scripture uses the Greek word *ῥημα* (Rhema) in a number of places; the word means ‘a specific word for a specific occasion’. This is in contrast with the Greek word *λογος* (Logos) which refers to the entirety of the word, such as the whole Bible or a whole sermon.

The *‘Rhema’* would then be a part of the sermon which really touched my heart, or a specific Scripture which spoke to me. This comes as an inspiration from YHWH and is quite different from opening the Bible blindly and choosing any verse to *‘speak to us’*. It is rather a direct result of a vital personal relationship with YHWH, where we get to know His voice of direction in our lives as He speaks to us from His Word.

Godly counsel

One might ask, “What about those who do not yet have the experience or the knowledge of the Word of YHWH? How can they be sure that they are making the right decisions? And what if I am still unsure, and the decision involves things that are not so clear in the Word of YHWH? What

should I do then?" YHWH has provided an excellent answer to this. I believe that no-one should be without this means of guidance. What does the Scripture say?

Prov 11:14 *"Where there is no guidance, the people fall, but in the abundance of counsellors there is victory."*

Prov 15:22 *"Without consultation, plans are frustrated, but with many counsellors they succeed."*

Prov 20:18 *"Prepare plans by consultation..."*

Prov 24:5,6 *"A wise man is strong, and a man of knowledge increases power. For by wise guidance you will wage war, and in the abundance of counsellors there is victory."*

Wise counsel is a significant and often repeated principle in the Scriptures. From an early age, children are encouraged to follow the counsel of their parents and not rebel against it. Many of the Proverbs are words of a father to a son. Even the older people need counselling.

King David gathered his counsellors around him, and even in the New Testament, we see the elders of the church gathered for counselling meetings. Solomon warns,

Prov 18:1 *"He who separates himself seeks his own desire. He quarrels against all sound wisdom."*

Those who think they don't need wise counsel, and want to 'do their own thing', are just asking for trouble and failure.

In my business, I had gathered around me, a board of directors who were godly men and were successful in their own right. It is no good asking counsel from a person whose

own life is a failure! He will be like a *“blind guide leading the blind”* (Mat 15:14), to quote the Words of Jesus. They will both fall into the ditch!

What a blessing these men have been to me! I would strongly advise every Christian man to make himself accountable in some way to at least three or four godly leaders, with whom he can have constant fellowship and whom he can trust.

I should also add that we should be careful about who we enter into agreements with, especially close business associations. The Scripture says:

Amos 3:3 *“It is impossible for two to walk together unless they be agreed.”*

In fact, the Scripture gives some stern words of caution for those who are about to enter into any kind of agreement.

2Cor 6:14 *“Do not be bound together with unbelievers; for what partnership have righteousness with lawlessness, or what fellowship has light with darkness?”*

15 *“Or what harmony has Christ with Belial, or what has a believer in common with an unbeliever?”*

The Old Testament uses interesting examples to make us understand a piece of Scripture better.

Deut 22:10 *“You shall not plough with an ox and a donkey together ...”*

Why not plough with two types of animals? They are obviously of different strengths and temperaments, and one

would pull harder and better than the other, causing the ploughman to praise the one, and hate the other. It would be unfair towards the weaker of the two, and the whole ploughing exercise would be totally unsatisfactory.

It is the same with a union between a believer and a non-believer. Their values are entirely different. Their *modi operandi* are also entirely different. Such a union can only lead to extreme frustration, and usually it is the believer who is dragged down to compromise his principles rather than the non-believer being lifted up.

This is not to say that we cannot have close friends who are not Christians. No, otherwise, how will we win them over to the Lord? He is rather speaking of close associations such as marriages, or partnerships such as many businesses have. Be careful of those type of partnerships. If they were not detrimental, the Scriptures would never have warned us against such partnerships!

For those who have already become involved in such unequal relationships, I believe that it is important that you honour your word to the other partner. However, as soon as possible you must lay down clearly (preferably in writing) what you believe and what the principles are by which you intend to live and work. Be open and communicate clearly. It will save a lot of heartache later.

Have clear, written agreements. Communicate clearly and fully at the beginning of any agreement. Once you have completed a verbal agreement, go over the main points again by saying,

“Just for clarity let us be sure that we understand each other clearly. Our points of agreement are as follows, one ..., two”

THEN ENSHRINE THE AGREEMENT IN WRITING. Do not leave an agreement to, *“I thought you meant”,* or, *“It was obvious that this is what you meant.”*

Prov 13:20 *“He who walks with wise men will be wise, but the companion of fools will suffer harm.”*

Make sure that you regularly work closely with wise men, and you yourself will become wise.

Biblical principles

In addition, and **of equal importance**, to being guided directly by the Holy Spirit, is the fact that we should always follow the principles laid out in the Word of YHWH. Let me make a bold statement:

The Holy Spirit will NEVER guide anyone in a decision which is contrary to the principles of the Word of YHWH.

Such an action would make Him contradict His own Word and become a liar - and YHWH cannot lie. The Word of YHWH therefore provides a vital checklist for any guidance which any might claim to have had.

Notice that I have used the phrase, *‘the **principles** of the Word of YHWH’*. I use this deliberately. I have often come across people who claim that they have received guidance from the Scriptures and they quote chapter and verse. A

common 'guidance' has been, "YHWH has told me to move to another country", and they quote YHWH's word to Abraham to get out from Ur of the Chaldeans and "go to the country which I will show you" (Gen 12:1).

This was used by many Christians during the Rhodesian war years, and thousands of people 'took the gap' and left for South Africa or other greener pastures. Now, almost sixteen years later, during the troubled times in South Africa, many of these same people want to 'take the gap' again, and move back to our country, but many are refused entry. For many of these people, life took a bad turn and they realised that they had made a terrible mistake. Some gave up everything they had and never recovered from their losses.

As I have mentioned before, to open the Bible, read a verse, and take the message of that verse as guidance could be quite misleading, especially if we are already feeling strongly about a subject. We want confirmation for our OWN IDEAS without a WILLINGNESS TO SUBMIT to any other idea or direction. I am not saying that YHWH cannot speak to a person through specific verses of the Bible. However, I do believe that we should use the **principles** of the Bible as guidance, **not individual obscure verses** which can often be misquoted and therefore misused by those who do not know their Bibles well enough.

What do I mean by using the PRINCIPLES as a form of guidance? Simply this: we could, for example, observe that the Bible often speaks against bribery and corruption. If therefore, someone makes me a lucrative offer, which involves any kind of bribery or underhanded dealing, what

should I do? No matter how good the outcome might seem to be, no matter how good the prospects of the offer, I will under no circumstances accept the offer or get involved in such a business deal.

If a great opportunity comes my way, necessitating an untruth on my part in order to get such an opportunity, then I would rather let the opportunity pass. If a business deal involves cheating, destroying another business man or woman, revenge and hatred, unfairness and the withholding of monies rightfully due to anyone, I do not want any part of such a deal. Thus I am guided by the **principles** of the Word of YHWH which guide me towards integrity in every step I take.

Biblical principles that are firmly established in our lives, are **like railway tracks** which keep us headed in the right direction, through the storms of life and through the night when we sometimes do not know where north, south, east or west is, and we cannot see the light at the end of the tunnel. These principles need to be firmly established, as early in life as possible. I wish to lay down some of these vital principles which I have found to be anchors of the soul, and from which, YHWH willing, I intend never to deviate. Once we have placed our lives firmly, and by faith, on these tracks, I sincerely believe that we will become successful in life.

I will list a number of these principles from the Scriptures, which deal with many aspects of business. Take note of them, and order your life according to them. You will benefit greatly from them and your life will be enriched as you become a stately cedar, standing upright against all the

storms and winds that want to blow you over. Don't bend to those winds. Many will see your stance and take courage from it. May we have a forest of cedars like you, standing firmly for the truths of YHWH's Word!

The principles I list in the following pages are by no means an exhaustive list, but they do constitute some main principles which we need to know with regard to business. I must stress that the fulfilling of only one or two principles, with a blind disregard for the others, will not realise the success that we desire. If we wish to reach the full potential which YHWH has planned for us, there are no shortcuts.

We must live our lives by ALL these principles without exception. Here, then, are some of the most profound principles which I have discovered from the Scriptures. Study them carefully and put them into action in your life. Listening - without action - is a total waste of time and of no benefit whatsoever! Act on these principles. Let them be a guiding light in every decision you make. We study some of these principles in the next chapters.

Chapter 3 will follow next week – “Faith in Almighty God”