

Put the Past Behind You

Written by Steve Marr
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One of the most difficult aspects of business, and life, is to put aside problems and concerns once the worst has happened. In the past, I've lost customers despite every conceivable step I took to keep the customer. I hate losing customers. It's not easy for me to shake off the disappointment.

David gave us an example in scripture after one of his children died.

“What is this you have done?” his servants asked. “While the child was alive, you fasted and wept, but when he died, you got up and ate.” David answered, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept, for I said, ‘Who knows? The LORD may be gracious to me and let him live.’ But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I will go to him, but he will not return to me.” (2 Samuel 12:21-23, Berean Study Bible)

Before the child died David did everything in his power to ask the Lord to intercede and save the child, but after the child died; David understood the reality. He determined no further action would help.

I have worked with many business owners who made serious mistakes or had significant tsunamis cripple a business. One aspect I need my clients to understand is that the past is the past. They can do nothing to correct what already occurred. If a client had done something sinful or had been slack in some way, I would encourage them to confess the shortcoming to the Lord, receive forgiveness, and move on.

“Adam” was a contractor who badly misquoted a job and lost \$60,000 on a major home renovation. Adam was so afraid to make a mistake in the future that he started adding additional money to quotations to cover him in the event he made a mistake. The result was that he consistently lost work because he over-priced. I encouraged Adam to put the \$60,000 mistake behind him and not compound the error by making new mistakes in over pricing resulting in no customers.

Another client, “Jake,” had an employee who embezzled significant funds from the business. Because of that, Jake became a control freak with finances to the point that he might as well

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have terminated his accounting person so he could do the work himself. I explained to Jake that he needed to move beyond his fear of embezzlement, learn from the painful experience, and institute appropriate review and accounting procedures that would eliminate the likelihood of embezzlement in the future while not micromanaging every aspect of accounting.

As we look beyond our painful moments and allow the Lord to heal us, we can step forward in faith and begin to overcome our mistakes, failures and difficult circumstances. It will make us better business leaders and better human beings.

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