

# **It's None Of Your Business!**

**How Serving Leaders view the organizations  
they lead**

**By Jon Byler**

The following is a compilation of a biweekly email newsletter series “It’s None Of Your Business.” These “Reflections for Serving Leaders” were written for serving leaders around the world to learn what it means to lead like Jesus. The issue number and date used are the dates for the original publication.

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# It's None of Your Business: Surrender it

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Leaders influence and impact the realm where they have authority. This may be at home, in their office or department, in the church they lead or in the business they operate. They naturally feel a sense of ownership of that entity, especially if they founded the organization or business\*. But serving leaders recognize that the business is not their business. They view their business as reflected in the following scriptures.

*The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it (Ps. 24:1, NIV).*

*'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty (Haggai 2:8).*

*<sup>6</sup> I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. <sup>7</sup> So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow (1 Corinthians 3:6-7).*

*For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not? (1 Corinthians 4:7).*

Serving leaders see themselves as stewards rather than owners, they surrender ownership of their business/organization and it deeply impacts the way they lead.

## ***Serving leaders surrender the organization by acknowledging God's ownership.***

God loudly declares that everything in the world is His! The land and the financial resources all belong to Him. This includes property deeds, bank accounts, property, equipment, etc. God allows His people to use His property for the time that they are alive. Serving leaders recognize that they are simply stewards of what He has entrusted to them. They seek to be responsible and faithful for what they have to manage whether little or much.

Some leaders see themselves as owners and work in the business to bring profit to themselves. They take full responsibility for all that happens and focus on success as they define it. But serving leaders acknowledge God's ownership. They are grateful for the opportunity to manage the organization and seek to do it with excellence. But they do not carry the weight and pressure of ownership. They find peace in being stewards.

## ***Serving leaders surrender the organization by acknowledging others' contributions.***

Paul openly acknowledged that his success was dependent on the contributions of others. He "planted" but Apollos "watered" and ultimately God was the one "making it grow."

Some leaders only recognize their own contributions and tie their effort to the success of the organization. They start early and stay late because they think that without their diligence the organization will fail. But serving leaders acknowledge that success is not the result of one person's efforts, but the work of a team. They gladly point out the contributions that others are making to the organization's growth and ultimately give God the credit for the healthy growth they experience.

## ***Serving leaders surrender the organization by acknowledging their gifts.***

Paul acknowledged that he planted seeds that produced fruit. But he also recognized that the gifts he possessed were a gift from God, not something he produced on his own. Some

leaders see themselves as superior to others and take credit for their own gifts. But serving leaders acknowledge their gifts as a blessing from God. They do not minimize how they are gifted, but they also do not take personal credit for that which they have received.

Remember, it's not your business! Serving leaders serve their organizations by surrendering ownership.

*For further reflection and discussion:*

- How do I view 'my' organization, as mine or God's? Do I feel pressured to make things happen and tie the success of my organization to my value as a person? How can I daily live in the reality that it all belongs to God?
- When I reflect on the success experienced in my organization, do I look first at my own contributions, or do I focus on the contributions of others? How can I acknowledge the contributions of my team this week?
- Reflect on Paul's words, "*What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?*" This week, how can I thank those who invested in my own growth and development? (Think about teachers, mentors, persons who opened doors for you, introduced you to significant relationships, those who believed in you before you produced results, etc.)

Until next time, yours on the journey,

Jon Byler

\*Note: In this series we'll use "business" to apply to any type of organization whether for profit or non-profit. The principles of this series apply to for-profit enterprises, non-profits (such as churches or NGO's) and any other domain of work and service. In the next issue, we'll examine how serving leaders shape the business.

# It's None of Your Business: Shape it

Issue #377, July 3, 2024

We saw in the previous issue that serving leaders recognize that the business\* is not theirs, they are stewards. Yet, stewards are not passive bystanders, they are active participants in the work of building and growing an organization. They are called by God to shape the organization as indicated in these verses:

*God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground" (Genesis 1:28, NIV).*

*[Leaders are] to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (Ephesians 4:12).*

*<sup>23</sup> Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, <sup>24</sup> 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).*

Serving leaders take these, and other scriptures, as their mandate to make things happen. God's original mandate for humans was to "Be fruitful and increase...fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over..." They are called to work hard with their whole heart in the place where God has allowed them to be a steward. Leaders are called to shape their worlds!

## ***Serving leaders shape the organization by building a kingdom focus.***

As stewards of a business or organization, serving leaders see their role as building the organization to accomplish God's purposes in the world. They see their organization as contributing value to the world through the services and products that they offer. Builders create homes where people can live peacefully in safety and security. Bakers make food that sustains the lives of those they serve. Bankers provide opportunities for investments and financial stability. Every honorable profession is a part of God's plan for a flourishing world! Some leaders are focused on building their own kingdoms, seeking to obtain wealth for themselves and their offspring. But serving leaders focus on a much larger picture. Serving leaders see their work as a small part of a much larger vision of what God is doing on the earth. They craft a vision statement of how they bring value to the world. Their mission is focused on building and serving others. Their values reflect God's heart for the way people should relate to each other. They build teams that demonstrate God's purpose for the variety of strengths He has given. They delegate power and authority in ways that reflect God's design for human development and flourishing.

## ***Serving leaders shape the organization by building people.***

Most leaders are focused on shaping the business or organization they are leading for success or profit. Serving leaders shape the organization by building people. They understand that as they build people and create a healthy culture the organization will grow and succeed. They see their primary role as "to equip" people for work. Serving leaders shape the organization with a focus on the people.

## ***Serving leaders shape the organization by building a culture of excellence.***

Some leaders focus their organization towards profit and are willing to sacrifice quality when it appears to strengthen their bottom line. But serving leaders see themselves as stewards and all they do as an act of worship since they are “working for the Lord.” They honor God with the best product and service they can produce. They strive to create a culture in which people bring “their whole heart” to the task at hand. They expect and reward excellence.

Remember, it’s not your business! Serving leaders serve the organization by shaping it.

### *For further reflection and discussion:*

- How does my business or organization fit into God’s grand purposes for the world? How do our services/products make the world a better place? How effectively do I communicate this to the people inside and outside our organization?
- In what ways am I growing people in my organization? Do I provide salaries that allow people to grow and flourish? Do I align people with their own strengths and giftings? Am I continually delegating responsibility and authority that builds leadership capacity in my organization?
- How highly do we value excellence in the organization or team I lead? Are there areas in which we do not view our work as an act of worship to God and worthy of our best effort? How well does our work environment reflect God’s desire for beauty and order? What steps can I take this week to encourage and promote a culture of excellence?

Until next time, yours on the journey,

Jon Byler

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In the next issue, we’ll look at how serving leaders serve the business.

# It's None of Your Business: Serve it

Issue #378, July 17, 2024

Serving leaders surrender their business\* or organization and see their role as stewards. They shape the organization by focusing on the value they bring to the world, by developing people and creating a culture of excellence. They also serve the organization by taking time to work *on* the business. Many leaders spend nearly all of their time working *in* the business, doing the daily tasks that need to be done. But serving leaders find ways to step back and focus on strategic planning, building leaders and long-term development of the business. They consider scriptures like these:

*"Where there is no revelation [KJV "vision"] people cast off restraint (Proverbs 29:18a, NIV).*

<sup>28</sup> *"Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Won't you first sit down and estimate the cost to see if you have enough money to complete it? <sup>29</sup> For if you lay the foundation and are not able to finish it, everyone who sees it will ridicule you, <sup>30</sup> saying, 'This person began to build and wasn't able to finish' (Luke 14:28-30).*

*The plans of the diligent lead to profit as surely as haste leads to poverty (Proverbs 21:5).*

<sup>17</sup> *Moses' father-in-law replied, "What you are doing is not good. <sup>18</sup> You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone. <sup>21</sup> But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. <sup>23</sup> If you do this and God so commands, you will be able to stand the strain, and all these people will go home satisfied" (Exodus 18:17, 18, 21, 23, NIV).*

## ***Serving leaders serve the organization by clarifying direction.***

Effective organizations have clarity on vision, mission and values. Without clarity on vision people will "cast off restraint" or live carelessly. Leaders who spend all their time *in* the daily tasks that need to be done fail to provide the direction the organization needs to thrive. Serving leaders take time to work *on* the organization by clarifying vision, mission and values. They often spend time reminding people of these core elements that bring meaning and purpose to the daily tasks. This clarity results in purpose and meaning in the work and increases the engagement of the hearts of people in what they are doing. Only leaders can clarify direction.

## ***Serving leaders serve the organization by careful planning.***

Some leaders are so busy doing the work that they don't take time to plan for the work. They are too busy to "sit down and estimate the cost." But serving leaders recognize that part of their role as a leader is to ensure that plans are properly made and carried out. They look down the road and anticipate future challenges and make plans to prepare the organization for long-term success. Only leaders can ensure that adequate planning takes place in an organization.

## ***Serving leaders serve the organization by creating leaders.***

Moses was a classic leader trying to do all the work himself when his father-in-law gave him great leadership advice to develop leaders from the people. Some leaders focus on getting the work done through people. But serving leaders focus on developing the people

that they have. They understand that they will never have too many leaders in the organization and that only leaders can ensure that the organization is producing leaders.

Remember, it's not your business! Serving leaders serve the organization by working *on* it.

*For further reflection and discussion:*

How clear in my organization is our vision (why we exist)? Our mission (what we do that benefits the world)? Our values (How we relate to each other and those we serve)?

What do I need to do to make these directional pillars an integral part of our daily work?

Do I naturally focus on planning or execution? What does this indicate about who I need to work closely with on my team? Do we take enough time for strategic planning in our organization? If so, reach out to your team and thank them for their work in effective planning and point out how it benefits the organization. If not, when will I schedule time for this?

How effectively do I focus on developing leaders in my organization? What is my plan to keep developing leaders? What steps can I take to create an organization that focuses on developing leaders?

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