

Hey, just what is the organizational strategy that your workplace is executing? Is pretty much everyone at work well-informed, on-board, in harness together regarding the plan? Is the plan unfolding smoothly?

For that matter, just what is the organizational strategy your church is executing? Is pretty much everyone at church well-informed, on-board, in harness together regarding the plan? Is the plan unfolding well? Frankly, in my experience, observation, and research very few organizations—from businesses to nonprofits to churches—have an actual strategy that the leadership has made clear and that the rank and file folks are cheerfully endorsing, executing, and fulfilling. That helps to explain why most all organizations are in the process of failing. Basic history shows us that. But truly great organizations craft real strategies designed to foster and sustain greatness. And if there is no strategy at all, you know what happens: failure!

Look, Whitestone episodes are all about pursuing the very best organization practices by the very best persons in charge of those organizations. So, to get to the very top level, let's take a look at strategic dimensions of God's realms...His intent, real outcomes and His future promises! But to do that, we have to start with the framing of a meaningful definition of a *strategy*. So here we go with that.

*A particular organization's strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve overarching and enduring aims.* Let's do another take of that: *A particular organization's strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve overarching and enduring aims.* Now, since God Himself is perfect and omnipotent, we can now start looking to His intents and His plans. And we have two places to discern that: first, the Bible and, second, observations from history and real life. We'll look at both Bible and history in this and later episodes.

So, looking at God's economy, we first seek cues from the Bible as to God's overarching, enduring aims. We don't have to look far. Here's a core message: one of God's key strategic intents—His aim—is to maximize the number of folks that He is reconciled to and will have fellowship with, both now and forever! So, John 3:16 is likely the most well-known Bible verse ever for good reason: it's really good news for every person on earth! And it definitively helps reveal God's intent. Here it is in the ESV: "For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life."

So there we have not only the breathtaking scope but the *enduring* part of God's strategy: that word "*eternal*" works as an adjective to help define God's aim for each person...*every whoever...yes, the whole world* is afforded God's grace per the Spirit's flawless inspiration in John 3:16. Yes, God is clear about just how many *whoevers* He wants to have eternal life.

The Apostle Paul writes in 1 Timothy 2 that "...God our Savior...desires all people to be saved..." and that "Christ Jesus...gave himself as a ransom for all..." And the Apostle Peter wrote this in 2 Peter 3:9: "The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance." That's right, *the Lord is not wishing that any should perish*. That's all because of His character: yes, "God is love" (1 John 4:8,16)—and of course, He deployed His character at the Cross!

Now, that's quite a *strategic intent*—yes, God has an overarching and enduring aim there! And it's quite clear: *whoever in the whole world* chooses to call upon the name of Christ will spend eternity with God! Now there are earnest groups of folks who count themselves true believers whose heartfelt inclination is to limit God to a smaller number of people than the whole world that Jesus actually did indeed die for on the Cross. But the Bible clearly points to the fact that the Cross is open to all who would choose to repent and come for eternal life and fellowship with God. Yes, *that's* God's awesome, overarching, enduring aim!

But how will that be manifested? Well, in the Kingdom of God! In fact, every born-again believer today has been transferred to the Kingdom of God's Son (Colossians 1:13). So, here we are, citizens of the nation where we were born *and also citizens of the Kingdom*. Isn't that amazing? So then...why isn't everything perfect in our world right now? Because, as theologians fashion it, the Kingdom of God is "already and not yet"...that's right, already here in the midst of believers but not yet fully consummated. That

consummation will happen as shown in the last few chapters in the Book of Revelation. But what about *now*? What about all the strife...the wars...the many problems of worldly kingdoms and imperfect people? Yeah, we're all too aware of what we deal with every day. But...how does all that fit into God's strategy?

Well, the writer to the Hebrew Christians gave us a very powerful truth in just one key phrase that helps us more fully grasp God's strategic intent: "Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken..." (Hebrews 12:28) Again, we need to recall that this phrase was first given here to *Hebrew Christians*...and these words were inspired by the Spirit right around the specific time of the dramatic fall of Jerusalem and destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D. This was a vastly traumatic time for observant Jews, and the ultimate result was that Jews were dispersed around the world. *Jews found their world shakeable!*

But that's only one highly traumatic event in God's economy! The Bible reveals all kinds of traumatic events over time...yeah, all kinds of "shaking" going on. Let's review a few. Before Satan tempted Adam and Eve in the Garden, Lucifer (who became Satan) rebelled against God and fell from heaven. Yeah, God's economy was shaken! And Adam and Eve disobeyed in the Garden...thus, God's economy was shaken! Humanity continued to rebel in dramatic ways: Cain murdered Abel...and sin reigned widely and resulted in the Great Flood and death to all but Noah's family...Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers...in turn, Israel was enslaved in Egypt for 400 years...the nations of Israel and Judah did not follow God—both nations were sacked, and the first temple was destroyed. Yes...*God has allowed His economy to be shaken!*

*But then*...the Kingdom of God's Son was manifested at the Cross. And we believers know *we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken!* Yet, ever since that time, God has still allowed His creation to be shaken by the sin and folly of humanity: wars, atrocities, murders, molestations...you name it. Yes, God is allowing His creation to be shaken...but, in response, His good news for all—the gospel of the unshakeable Kingdom—is to be proclaimed and embraced...then enjoyed with gratitude both now and forever! (Hebrews 12:28)

You see, it seems clear that Lucifer was generously occupying a version of God's economy in heaven that was ideal...yet he still rebelled! Adam and Eve were generously handed a version of God's economy on earth that was ideal...yet they still disobeyed the one rule God gave them! Yes, these versions of God's economy were shakeable! *But then*...God lovingly gave humanity His Son in a unique fashion so that every person can be redeemed from their sins...but each must come to God from a position of repentance!

So, God's economy is now manifested in the Kingdom of His Son (Colossians 1:13), and it is increasing with redeemed citizens whose standing in the Kingdom is based entirely upon their agreement as to their inability to be there apart from Christ. That repentance works to create the true gratitude exhorted to the Hebrew Christians: "...*Let us be grateful...!*" And take note...our woes and disappointments are often due to our focus on the kingdoms of this world! Yet those disappointments also play right into the unshakeable character of God's Kingdom—and thus our *eternally-anchored gratitude!* And just why is the Kingdom of God unshakeable *forever*? Surely a key is that we can never, ever forget the foundation of Christ and Him crucified—the *very anchor of unshakeability!* Yes, when the Kingdom's beneficiaries can only enter by confessing personal failure amidst God's redeeming love...well, grateful worship will lastingly abound!

The Bible narrative *stuns*: the economies of untested or unrepentant creatures are shakeable...*but the Kingdom of repentant and redeemed creatures anchored by the crucified, sacrificial Christ is unshakeable!*

So, let's go back to our definition of strategy: *an organization's strategy is a plan of action designed to achieve an overarching and enduring aim.* Yeah, God's Kingdom strategy was conceived as a *plan* from the foundation of the world and was manifested in *action* at the Cross. And God is clearly waiting to ensure the gratitude of all the current *and coming billions of people* who would repent and be grateful in ongoing humility for Christ and His unshakeable Kingdom! *That, my friends, is the only perfect strategy in all history—God's utterly unique strategy of a plan and action fulfilling an overarching and enduring aim! That merits intense learning relevant to all of our realms of life...now and forever! Now that's crazy good!*

## *A&A: Application & Action*

1. Remember that New Testament teaches that “there is no condemnation in Christ” ...but, still, “the laborers in the harvest are few.” Why is that? So, as a citizen of the Kingdom of God, are you completely committed to your Jesus-appointed roles in the intent and core aim of God and His Kingdom? When it comes to those we spend the most with, what would their assessment be about that? Discuss.
  
2. Does the strategy of your workplace enterprise wisely factor in redeeming others and any resulting gratitude? Sort through the difference between what might be considered an untested “perfect” strategy and a realistic “redeeming” strategy...then discuss.
  
3. Living amongst the realities of a fallen world, do you have a fruitful personal strategy of helping and redeeming others? Share and discuss.