

From the Handbook of Business, the Bible

28: You plant much but harvest little

Some years ago, I worked with a husband/wife team of landscape gardeners. They had a fairly simple business model, but the problem, and reason they sought my help was, they weren't making any money! So much so, that one had to get a job to enable them to pay the bills!

It turned out, they had two sources of income: a design section that created plans on paper; and a landscaping section that went onsite to construct the end product.

One of my first questions to the cash-strapped owners was, 'where do you make your money?'

Their response was fairly typical, "don't know; it's an all-in-one business...jobs come in, we meet with clients, turn their ideas into a 3D design and once accepted, our team goes ahead and constructs it."

When we dug down into their figures it was clear they were losing money bigtime on the construction side; what money they were making came from design & consulting work.

They made a tough decision: to get out of the construction side and focus on the design niche. Business boomed. And they got an unexpected bonus: design work came from other landscapers as they were no longer competitors!

What Bible verse can be applied to their situation?

Yes, **Haggai 1:6** declares, "You plant much but harvest little. You have scarcely enough to eat...your income disappears, as though you were putting it into pockets...with holes" *The Living Bible*

We can align this ancient warning with a modern business, i.e., YOURS:

- * Farmers keep planting crops knowing 'something' is depleting the harvest
- * The problem eludes them, they seek no help, but push on, going through the motions
- * Although there is a lot of money flowing in, it disappears just as quick, leaving little in kitty.

What can a struggling business owner learn from the landscapers and Haggai's warning?

I have 3 tactics that will immediately improve your business...

First, if your harvest is little there is a reason, find it:

- * Drill down into the products/services/customers you sell - what is your best/worst harvest?
- * Focus on planting more into the best crop and winding back or exiting the worst.

Second, check to see if you spend too much time doing the wrong work:

- * Likely in the area where the losses are being made because it demands so much attention
- * As leader, your main work is strategic, focusing on the future, opportunities & threats.

Third, learn the best marketing secrets and tactics:

- * For a collection of these, go to www.themarketingspirit.com.au - click the 'On Radio tab ...There are all our 2022 session notes and some from previous years, many on marketing
- * And go to the **105.1 Life FM** website - listen to this year's Handbook for Business podcasts.

What would Jesus say: If you choose to do nothing, there can be no change or improvement - you will keep planting much, but harvesting little!