

From the Handbook for Business, the Bible

40: Look not behind thee

Recently I ran into a bloke I hadn't seen in 36 years! Back then he started a business that was very successful in the 1st year. He had been wage-earner, so glad to be his own boss and be in control of his future. That is, until the first tax bill arrived...and in those days, included provisional tax!

I remember the rage and the decision he made literally on the spot in my office - "*that's not fair, we'll fix the tax problem*" and he did by shutting the business down and going back on wages.

He was paralysed in one sense looking back to the 'safe' days when he would go to work, 8am - 5pm each day; get paid (after-tax, of course); go home; repeat - daily, weekly, yearly; then retire.

The tax issue could have been resolved with some spending adjustments, a cashflow budget and a deal with the ATO. But he wouldn't hear of it; his exact words still ring in my ears - "*I'll fix em!*"

Seeing him after all that time, I thought, what could he have achieved had he not quit? But he did, choosing to look behind. *An interesting update: he would soon qualify for a part-pension!*

What lessons can be learnt from this failed business venture?

1: Businesses don't fail, people do. This bloke was not suited-to or prepared for business ownership - he should have either not left his job, obtained good advice or learned resilience.

Q: *How does his story make you feel about your business and your role as owner/leader?*

* If you feel 'underdone' lacking answers, get help, seek counsel, starting with the Handbook

2: Our verse for today, **Genesis 19:17** involves Lot's wife fleeing with her family from Sodom as the city was being destroyed by the LORD. They had been warned...

"...Escape for thy life; look not behind thee...lest thou be consumed" (i.e., die) - KJV

* Her heart was stuck behind in Sodom as she chose to 'look behind' she died as a pillar of salt

Q: *Do you find yourself looking back to a time where there may have been less stress, less fear less problems, rather than looking forward with solutions...and a better future?*

* Again, get help if needed; search the owner's manual, the Bible; you will find the answers.

How can business owners avoid the temptation to look behind?

There are many principles, strategies & tactics (TMS lists over 100); but for today these 3...

First, rekindle the vision that led you into business; chances are, it's been lost in the haze over time; **Prov 29:18** declares, '*without a vision, people perish*' - **so, look forward, not back!**

Second, stir your mind to uncover the reason your **past** appeals more than the **future** you dreamed of or your **present** pain; it's likely to be one or more concurrent issues you don't understand or can't fix...but they can be fixed with the right attitude and some help.

Third, get your thinking right - you're a child of God; a joint-heir of the kingdom with Jesus... what a privilege! You're not a victim; no one is to blame; you are responsible for what happens and the decisions you make and remember you're still learning, so it's all part of your training.

Counsel: *Lot was warned of the consequences of looking behind - he would be consumed. Other versions say, 'swept away, perish, destroyed or killed' - I'm sure you get the picture of the risks involved - looking back & dwelling on the past are losing strategies; don't go there!*