

From the Handbook for Business, the Bible

42: Pay close attention to your herds

It's a well-known fact that businesses spend a lot of money attracting, nurturing and retaining customers. It would appear that the 'attract' phase is the easiest because to a large extent it has been automated with phones, social media, marketing blitzes and a degree of loyalty.

It's the 'nurture' and 'retain' phases that are hardest to get right; not only because people are becoming harder to please, they are being lured away by smarter advertising by competitors.

But the truth is, many businesses lack the attitude and systems to ensure customers are kept onboard. They take their customers for granted, doing little to nurture or retain them other than at the point-of-sale. One of our Handbook principles is that serving begins when customers walk-out, not when they walk-in; in other words, serving doesn't end when the transaction ends.

What Bible principle can be applied here?

Prov 27:23, *"Be fully aware of the condition of your flock and pay close attention to your herds"* NOGV

...In business, the flock or herd are your **customers** without which, you have no business

...The command is to be '*fully aware*' & '*pay close attention*' - not just take an occasional look

...It's been said, '*the greatest business asset is its customers*' - but you'd have to wonder at times

As the business owner, or rather trustee for the real owner, your role is to ensure His customers are cared for as if He was personally serving them. Further, you need to understand...

...The desire to **serve** others is the fruit of a servant's heart & reflects God's unconditional love

...**Service** and **servicing** are not the same - the former is an POS event; the latter, a lifestyle

...Customer **service** is a head/transaction thing whereas **servicing** is a heart/relationship thing.

WHY do customers leave a business and go elsewhere?

No doubt there are many reasons; a **1999 survey** found **68%** left because they **weren't valued**:

...Then a **2022 survey** found **63%** left because they felt they **weren't appreciated**

...Another in **2023** found **68%** left due to **staff indifference** towards them.

Interesting, over 24 years, 2/3rds of customers walk away for basically the same reason - lack of care...a key theme we've helped business owners deal with in these Handbook sessions.

WHAT can business owners do to stop losing customers?

There are so many ways you can prove to customers you care and desire to serve; but it starts with the right heart condition namely, you're there to serve not just flog stuff & make \$\$!

Here are some ideas for you to implement...

- 1: Keep in touch via email, phone calls, even visits (e.g., post-sale follow up)
- 2: Understand and share in their frustrations & problems so they feel, "*you value me*"
- 3: Resolve issues fast, especially complaints & queries, ensuring they're happy with the result
- 4: Keep your promises; indeed, build trust by deliberately making a promise, then keeping it
- 5: Make sure your team is onboard with these principles and highlight them in staff training.

Counsel: *You must pay close attention to the your 'herd' - your most valuable business asset, customers. Consider the results of those 3 surveys again and see why some customers are likely to leave you and go elsewhere... Then do the OPPOSITE. It's not rocket science! It doesn't involve big \$\$; rather, it's about loving & staying connected to people at heart level.*