

Fourth Quarter Strategies – Saturday, September 24, 2016

I first came across the term “synergy” during a graduate course at Claremont Graduate School in 1975. These days the concept has become pretty much mainstream in business circles. It also has applications in many other disciplines, but I prefer to stick with the impact of the concept in human behavior. A synergy occurs when the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. For example, when two or more people or organizations combine their efforts, they may well accomplish more together than separately. It is also possible to experience “negative synergy” where two or more people or organizations working together may actually accomplish less than what might occur by working separately. I’ve seen both scenarios during my fifty-plus years of working life. As a Christian businessman, I can best speak to this subject from my personal experience and observing the experience of others who walk with Christ day by day.

You see when you truly follow Christ you are no longer alone. You have the Holy Spirit living in you. As Christians we can easily lose sight of this biblical principle and it’s good to refresh our minds with the truth that can so easily be blurred by the lies of the Deceiver (Satan). We can get caught up in the ways of the world in our business dealings and general concerns for ourselves and our families. In 2 Timothy 1:7, Paul instructs Timothy, “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” (NIV) So, as spirit-filled believers we need to navigate through the trials of daily life knowing that we are not alone. We can have a beautiful “synergistic” relationship with our Father in Heaven and fellow believers. For me at least, I find great solace knowing I’m not alone in whatever lies ahead.

Certainly one of the greatest synergies available can occur in the family. My wife, daughter and I are dealing with an interesting opportunity God has placed in our path recently and all I’ll say about this new circumstance is this. We are all in one accord and are confident that we are in God’s will as a family and we’re simply looking forward to the wonderful blessing he’s bestowing on us in these coming weeks. There’s no decision to make other than accepting His will for our lives. Life’s decisions in business and personal matters can be so simple if we remain in touch with Him as we go through each day. One of my life verses follows from Ecclesiastes 4:12 and reads, “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not easily broken.” (NIV)

I can speak on negative synergy from some personal business challenges in the past. As a long-time insurance agent with a major insurance carrier, I have to follow the policies and procedures of the company. That has never been a problem since their focus has always been to put the client first. What has been challenging at times is perceived pressure from local management to meet quotas in order to be considered an integral part of the “local team” and being recognized for a job well done. For many years my motto has been “Here to serve” and having an attitude that whatever business comes my way is in God’s hands. As a young aspiring agent in Beverly Hills I received ample recognition for being a leader in our general office in those early days of my career. Over the past 25 years, being a leader in the office has no place in my business model. I’m simply here to serve my Lord and my clients!

In ending this discussion I’d simply like to share that the Christian walk is meant to make life easier as we go through the trials that we all face. To me and my family, we cherish the fact that we know that He is with us and we call upon Him and recognize His presence in all we experience. I highly recommend you consider doing likewise.

Here to serve,

Jim Langley, CLU

Passages to Ponder: 2 Samuel 5:10; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:6-7

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2 Samuel 5:10 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁰And he became more and more powerful, because the LORD God Almighty was with him.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 New International Version (NIV)

⁹Two are better than one,
because they have a good return for their labor:

¹⁰If either of them falls down,
one can help the other up.

But pity anyone who falls
and has no one to help them up.

¹¹Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.
But how can one keep warm alone?

¹²Though one may be overpowered,
two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

Acts 1:8 New International Version (NIV)

⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

Ephesians 1:13-14 New International Version (NIV)

¹³And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

2 Timothy 1:6-7 New International Version (NIV)

⁶For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. ⁷For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.