



CEO Devotional – September 16, 2013
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Three Days

The modern picture of a successful executive is one of confidence, decisiveness, action, and speed. We are conditioned to believe that patience is a weakness, thoughtfulness a fault. But what does the Bible say? Can we listen carefully to the Word and develop a skill set based in Scripture that delivers superior results in our decision making?

I recall an early leadership experience where I was a newly minted executive and eager to show the organization my capabilities. Faced with a complex and potentially damaging situation, I put on my business cape and dashed headlong into the fray. Of course my immaturity, impatience, and overconfidence led to disastrous results. My desire to seem decisive prodded me to act hastily and ill-informed. After the fallout from customers, colleagues, and my boss, it was time for some introspection on what I was doing. Candidly, at the time I sought out business literature for answers, and it took years to realize that Scripture held an amazing key to human trials and decision making.

While reading the Bible over many years, I started to recognize a pattern of the importance of “three days.” The number three is mentioned hundreds of times in the Bible both as measurement as well as time. Specifically, a three-day period is prominent from Genesis through resurrection in the New Testament. But more than a coincidence or literary device, what is the Bible telling us repeatedly about a “three day” period and the role it plays in our lives?

The broad theme of “three days” can be broken into five specific areas (“The Third Day Motif,” Patterson & Travers):

1. Information and Instruction: the timing provides direct instruction from God as in Genesis 31:22 and I Samuel 29:1-11
2. A Waiting Period: the timing provides a proper time of preparation for action as in Joshua 2 and Judges 20
3. Prayerful Preparation: the timing is used to ask God’s will as in Esther 4 and Genesis 22
4. Purity and Healing: the timing is used to cleanse our soul as in Hosea 6
5. Resurrection: the significance of day three is finally revealed in significance as Christ rises on day three and does not immediately ascend to heaven but returns to His ministry.

So we see from Scripture that three days is a beginning, middle, and end to a specific circumstance. We also see commonality across the Scripture that each day is unique and important. Day one is trial, tribulation and confusion. Day two is discernment, preparation, and consideration. Day three is revelation, fulfillment, and action.

If we have the discipline to apply this Biblical model to our toughest life decisions, we can see clearly God’s cadence in our leadership. We can use day one to recognize our human condition and to realize that shock, fear, confusion, anger, and hubris often accompany a trial or tribulation. We can use day two to ask for discernment, direction, purity, healing, and preparation in dealing with the issues at hand. And finally on day three, we are raised above the tribulation and are spiritually ready to take action in accordance with God’s will.

While we may not always proceed through the process perfectly, recognition of God’s desire and permission to take three days in our decision making will serve us well as we serve Him well. May our work always find its origin in Christ and through Him reach completion.