Could I Sell a Christian View of Planning?

“Now listen, you who say, Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money. Why, you do not even know what will happen tomorrow. What is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. (James 4:13-14)"

Wayne came across this scripture earlier in the morning while preparing for his upcoming Bible study session that night. It wasn’t even what he was looking for; it just happened to be on the same page as the assigned scripture. However, it stuck with him all morning. At lunch, he also noticed the following statement from a book he was reading:

“Business is risky and it doesn’t matter how brilliant you are, or how accomplished your forecasting model may be, none of us can predict the future with certainty, and none of us has perfect knowledge of all relevant facts. (Business Success based on Biblical Principles by Robert Fullerton, 2015)”

“What amazing pieces given my new business venture,” Wayne mused on his drive home.

Planning had been a basic element in Wayne’s life as it is for many of his age. In high school, his goal was to go to college but with little idea of where that would take him. Once in college, he literally agonized over what he should major in and where that major would ultimately lead him in terms of a career. Having gone onto graduate school, Wayne took a job in banking which provided the foundation for the next fourteen years of his professional life. Looking back on his thirty-seven years, very little of his professional life development came out as “planned.” When graduating from high school, he had told all who expressed an interest that he wanted a career in medicine. Medicine to banking. Wow! As Wayne reflected, he thought of how different these career paths would have been and how much events and choices, not planning, have influenced his life.

While brought up in Christian home, he does not remember much of his parents exercising their faith as a routine part of their lives. His early zeal for applying his faith came while a member of a Christian student group in college. However, this faith subsided after college as he focused his efforts on his career. At that time, he had not linked his faith in Christ with decisions needed for his professional advancement. Surely, the notion that God is in control was never a reality in his thinking. It is just in the past three years, as part of a men’s Bible study, that this thought has taken hold.
Having established himself in a niche market of advising private business owners at the bank, Wayne is now in the process of starting a new business to capitalize on this expertise. He has developed a consulting practice that focuses on providing insight to business owners on how and when to exit their firm. Somewhat ironically, the core focus of his new practice is planning. The service focuses heavily on forecasting and strategic planning. The unique aspect of his product is the coordination of both the business and personal goals of the owner into a combined plan. This requires the client to provide first a set of projected financial statements for his/her company. Coupled with this is a personal financial plan that focuses on both the client’s projections while he/she is with the firm but also what level of financial needs exists after exiting it. Wayne then develops a coordinated strategy from this data to examine the feasibility of the client reaching intended financial goals. He has spent the past two years completing the attendant software to assist this process.

As of last Friday, the proverbial rubber met the road. His first client. Wayne has scheduled a preliminary meeting with a prospective client for Wednesday. The client, who owns a large construction company, contacted Wayne based on the advice of a common Christ following friend. According to the friend, this new client is not a believer and knows nothing of Wayne’s Christian view. He just needs very practical advice as he approaches retirement from the firm.

Wayne asks you, as a longtime friend, “I never realized that my profession may also open up the opportunity to witness for Christ. However, any such witnessing must be in the context of valuable, practical advice for my prospective client. You are both a businessman and a Christ follower. What do you find in the Bible that helps you as you consider planning issues?”

ASSIGNMENT

What advice on planning would you give to Wayne to use with his new client based solely on Biblical insight? Examine Scripture with the focus on insight it provides on planning one’s future. This insight in Wayne’s case is specific to planning for his client. That should be your primary focus.
My Scriptural Research:

Group Scriptural Research:

Decisions / Recommendations:

Primary Scriptural References: