

1. Planning—thinking deeply about our future work—is legitimate and wise. Don't just "go with the flow" while claiming to be spontaneous or Spirit-led. (Someone once said, "Only dead fish go with the flow.") Don't be hasty. Take the time to plan before you move into action (**Proverbs 11:14; 12:5; 14:8,15; 21:5**).

2. Planning should be done with help from many advisors and counselors. Our initial ideas can be way off the mark. We should carefully assess our human and material resources before we begin. We need to know our own strengths and weaknesses as leaders.

(**Proverbs 11:14; 12:11,15; 13:16; 14:12; 15:22; 18:15; 20:18; 24:3, 5-6; 27:23-27, 28:19, 31:10-3**).

3. Planning needs to be sequential. We must figure out what needs to be done, first, second, third and last. Paul teaches the same truth in 1 Corinthians 3—one servant plants, another waters and GOD gives the increase so that others can reap. Paul built churches as an expert builder, starting with a good foundation. Jesus' three-year ministry followed a clear and logical heaven-sent plan (**Proverbs 24:27; 31:10-3**).

4. Self-discipline is essential to reach our goals. The undisciplined worker will dissipate his energy and waste his time (**Proverbs 12:11;13:4; 25:28; 31:10-31**).

5. Planning must be followed up with concerted, unified, effort. "Sooner or later all this great strategic planning stuff degenerates into hard work." Don't chase fantasies. Mere talk must eventually give way to action

(**Proverbs 12:11; 13:4; 14:23; 28:19; 30:27**).

6. Delegating tasks to the right people is very important. Be careful who you recruit and hire (**Proverbs 25:19; 26:10**).

7. Skill is needed on the part of those helping to bring our plans to fruition. This means that we must develop our skills as leaders and we must equip others for skillful ministry (**Proverbs 22:29; 24:3, 5-6; 31:10-31**).

8. To succeed abundantly we must invest, take risks. Purchase more oxen (even if they make a mess in the barn) (**Proverbs 14:4; 27:23-27; 31:10-31**).

9. We should constantly question our own motives, desires and idols. God knows our hearts and He will bless us according to the purity of our hearts (**Proverbs 16:2-3**).

10. The sovereignty of God will always be a huge factor in the outcome of our plans and efforts. God's purpose will prevail. While we have cause for confidence in God's blessing of our work, there is no place for boasting in our plans or our efforts...ever (**Proverbs 16:9; 19:21; 21:30-31; 27:1**).

God commends planning which follows these principles. He will bless pure-hearted, prayerful, planning which seeks to glorify Him.