

FAITH TO BUILD

A Kingdom Business Blueprint



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alfanoministries.com

FAITH TO BUILD: A KINGDOM BUSINESS BLUEPRINT

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Published by Alfano Ministries International

alfanoministries.com

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INTRODUCTION

Why I Wrote This Book

I'm a businessman. Always have been. I was the kid writing book reports on Lee Iacocca while everybody else was writing about Curious George. I was the fat kid who won the school fundraiser not by running laps but by getting the highest bidders. I started my first business at twenty-one, owned restaurants, traveled the country, won awards, lost everything, rebuilt, lost it again, and rebuilt again. Business is in my blood.

But here's what took me a lot longer to figure out: business isn't just business.

Business is ministry.

For years, I lived a double life. I was a Christian on Sunday morning, and I was a worldly restaurant guy the rest of the week. I had fire on the inside of me, but I had no place to put it out except to my employees. The church never really knew what to do with me. They'd call me up, but it wasn't to preach. It was for free food and a donation. "Hey, Mr. Alfano, we're having a huge event." And I'd get excited. "Oh, you want me to preach at it?" "Oh, no, no, no. We want you to donate the food and give us a bunch of money."

That was my life in the church for years. A wallet with legs.

I wrote this book because I believe with everything in me that we are rapidly approaching the end of the age, and the gospel still hasn't reached the four corners of the earth. And it won't -- not unless we break out of the four walls of the church.

Matthew 24:14 says it plain:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come."

I always picture it like this: up in heaven, the horses are in the stables. They're putting the blankets on the backs, strapping on the saddles, getting dressed up. The army is ready to ride. The trumpeter is in the box, practicing, getting ready to let it rip. But what are they waiting for? They're waiting for the gospel message to be preached to the four corners of the earth. They're waiting for us.

There are people on this planet who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ. Some of them live in places missionaries can't enter. And some of them are sitting right next to you at work.

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We'll never get to the four corners of the earth unless we break out of the four walls of the church.

That's why I wrote this book. Business changes things. Business opens doors that church can't. And if we'll dedicate our businesses to the Lord, plug them into the Kingdom, and start treating our companies

like the pulpits they are, we can change the world. We can finish the job.

And then the end can come.

CHAPTER ONE

Raised by an Entrepreneur

My mom changed my life, and she did it from the kitchen table.

I was probably eight or nine years old when she got into a direct selling company. My dad was doing really well at the time -- he worked for a subsidiary of DuPont, selling mine safety equipment around the world. Good job, good income. But Mom got this little side gig doing home parties at night, and I watched her replace my dad's income on a part-time basis. And Dad was doing well. She

didn't just match him -- she doubled his income. Part-time.

That little business kept me at home, put me through Christian school, and totally changed the trajectory of my life. But more than anything, it changed my perspective. When you're raised by entrepreneurs, everything changes. The way you see the world, the way you think about problems, the way you think about money -- it all shifts.

In school, I would write book reports on what it means to be an entrepreneur. One of my very first book reports was on Lee Iacocca -- how he invented the Mustang and the minivan. Thank God, because I like my minivan. But while the other kids were writing about Curious George, I'm up there talking about Lee Iacocca and the turnaround of Chrysler. My teachers would call Mom and Dad in for parent-teacher night and say, "Hey, there's something wrong with your kid. He can't stop talking about starting businesses and making money."

I couldn't help it. Every time there was a door-to-door event at our school, I was always the number one winner. We did this

thing at my Christian school called the Maranatha Marathon, and I figured out pretty early that you could win by getting the most money -- it didn't matter how far you ran. And I was out of shape. I was a little fat kid. But I won the Maranatha Marathon because I only had to run two laps. I got it to where I was making something like two thousand dollars a lap. Meanwhile, this other kid, he was getting like a hundred bucks a lap, and he almost died running around the track. I figured it out: there's a more excellent way in life. You don't have to work hard. You just have to work super smart.

I always had the bug. I couldn't sit still. I couldn't be in a daycare center -- they'd call my mom and tell her I was acting up. Something in me needed to build, to create, to sell. I needed to work for myself. I wanted to be somebody.

So as soon as I could, I jumped in. I was twenty-one years old, and I joined my parents' business. I went to my mom and said, "Look, Mom, don't give me anything. Don't give me a leg up. Just sell me a kit like you would anybody else." It was sixty-five dollars.

I said, "I'm going to go start knocking on doors and meeting people."

My first day, I went out and made twenty dollars. I was so excited. I actually had a buddy go with me on that very first day. He quit on day two. Called me up and said, "Man, you made twenty bucks and I made nothing. My girlfriend's gonna leave me." I said, "Maybe it'd be better if she did." But he quit.

I persisted.

That December, we made twenty thousand dollars. Twenty dollars on day one. Twenty thousand by December. It was worth it. I pressed in.

And that set the pattern for everything that came after.

CHAPTER TWO

The Chef, the Restaurant, and the Fall

Things got rough in that first business. The corporate structure changed, everything started going sideways, and for a while I was staring down the possibility of losing everything. My checks were bouncing. Things were falling apart.

I was standing in line at the bank one day, and the Lord spoke to me. Clear as day. He said, "I want you to go to culinary school. I want you to be a chef and own a restaurant."

I said, "Okay."

One thing you have to learn early on as a Christian and a business person: anytime the Lord speaks to you, you've got to act on it. He's giving you divine direction for a reason. So I was standing right there in that bank line, and I picked up the phone. I called the local culinary school -- I used to work for them years ago as a recruiter -- and I got on with the dean. I said, "Listen, if it's cool, I'd like to come and have a meeting with you." Met with him. He said, "You can start tomorrow." I said, "No, I'll start on the next intake" -- which was two or three months out.

Then I called a buddy of mine who owned a restaurant. I said, "I'll come work for you for free."

Christina -- we were just getting married at the time -- she said, "You're crazy. You can't work for free. You need to make some money." So I called him back. "Can you give me anything?" He said, "I'll give you five bucks an hour."

Five dollars an hour. Basically free.

She got a job as a waitress. I did dishes. We scraped by. But I graduated eighteen months later, and I owned my own restaurant.

From there, we went to the top of that business. We opened a fine dining restaurant. I started traveling around the country. I worked in some of the greatest restaurants in the world. I won massive awards at events. I was with the best of the best of the best. I was on television, in newspapers. I was Chef Marc Alfano, and I was somebody.

Then 2009 came, and we lost it all.

This was the second major upset of my life. And this time it hit different, because my identity was in my title. I was Chef Marc Alfano. That was who I was. That was my whole identity. When we lost the restaurant, when everything crumbled, I didn't just lose a business -- I lost myself.

I came home, and it was devastating. We lost everything. I'm sitting on my back porch, and I'm praying: "Okay, God, what do You want me to do?"

People in my family came to me and said, "Marc, you need to get a job. You need to move on. Get on with your life."

I said, "No. I can't do that. I need to hear from the Lord first."

And that's the lesson, right there. You have to be willing to sit and wait and listen for the next step. For the next direction. Even when everybody around you is telling you to just take whatever's available and move on. Sometimes God's answer is, "Be still."

But what He showed me during that season changed me forever. He said, "If you put your identity in Christ, you'll never lose your identity." I lost my identity as a chef. But I never lost my identity in Christ.

"

*They can take my business,
but they can't take my
talents. They can take my
business, but they can't
take my anointing.*

You know, they say most millionaires and billionaires can lose everything and be right back on top in a few years. Why? Because they know how to do it. The knowledge doesn't leave. The anointing doesn't leave. Your identity in Christ doesn't leave. Everything

else is temporary. But who you are in Him?
That's forever.

CHAPTER THREE

Rebuilding from the Ashes

So there I was. Sitting on my back porch. Broke. Waiting on God.

And then Claudio called.

Claudio was a friend of mine, a restaurant guy, and he knew I made tiramisu. I'd won awards for it. He started calling me: "Marc, can you make tiramisu for my restaurant?"

I said, "Listen, Claudio, I'm trying to figure out what I want to do with my life. Just leave me alone. Quit calling me."

But Claudio was persistent. He kept calling. And kept calling. And finally I said, "Okay, fine."

I'll make you some tiramisu."

It started selling so fast we couldn't keep up. We sold him one pan; he sold it in three days. Came back for two more. Sold those in three days. Then he gave me his cousin's name, and we were in three states. Then we got into national distribution. We ended up in seventeen states, selling tiramisu to grocery stores and restaurants.

During that same season, I got offered a gig to go on the road with Kenny Chesney as his private chef. And I had to turn the whole thing down because they wouldn't hire my wife. But honestly, it wasn't just that. I had to listen to the Holy Ghost. He had something else in mind.

The tiramisu business grew. Our foundational verse for the company was John 10:10 -- "The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I have come that they may have life, and life more abundantly." We put "10:10" on all of our packaging. People would come up and say, "What is that? Is that like Heinz 57?" And I'd say, "No, no, that's a Bible verse," and I'd share the gospel with them right there in the grocery store aisle. We led so many people

to the Lord through that little scripture on a tiramisu label.

But then the Lord said to move on. I got into the energy business in 2012, retailing energy, and the business took off. I told Christina, "Let's close down the tiramisu business." We mothballed it. Our stores were literally crying on the phone. People wanted to buy my recipe. They'd say, "We love your product. You spent all this time building this national brand, and now you're just going to walk away from it?"

But that's what the Holy Ghost wanted me to do. So I did it.

Then one day, Christina came to me and said, "Hey, I want to go to Tampa. I want to go to Bible school."

Now, she'd been going to these meetings with Dr. Rodney Howard-Browne and Pastor Jonathan Shuttlesworth. The first one she dragged me to, I left after an hour and a half. Four hours later I texted her: "Are you coming?" She texted back: "I'm still in the meeting." I couldn't believe it. What is wrong with this guy? Can't he get to the point in four

hours? The church I went to was an hour, in and out.

But she went back. And then she went back again. And somewhere in there, she got the call on her life to go to Bible school. She came to me one day and said, "Marc, I want to go to Bible school."

I said, "Yeah, go for it. Whatever you want to do, honey. You've chased me around the country all these years."

About an hour later, I walked back in. "Hey, where's it at?"

"Oh, it's in Tampa."

I didn't know that part.

“

*If your dream is not so big
that you need God, then
you don't have a big enough
dream.*

”

But I'd already committed. I said yes. And here's the thing: I didn't know anybody in Tampa. I had family in Lakeland, but zero connections in Tampa. No job. No business.

No contacts. I was going to have to leave everything behind.

But the Bible says it, and I've found it to be true every single time:

"Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you."

That's the word the Lord spoke to me that summer. I was walking on the beach in Cape May, New Jersey, by myself, early in the morning. I'd set up all the beach chairs -- I like to get to the beach super early to get the prime real estate before a whole family of Italians sets up right in front of you with the Italian flag waving and the portable kitchen going. Every morning I'd get out there earlier and earlier.

I was walking and praying: "God, should I go to Bible school? Should I go to Bible school?"

And He spoke to me, loud and clear:

"Seek first My kingdom and My righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you."

Okay, God. I'm in.

We packed up and moved to Tampa with
nothing but a word.

CHAPTER FOUR

Kingdom Before Business

So we're in Tampa. Christina is in Bible school, and I'm the reluctant husband.

I would go with her on Sunday morning, but it was a grind. I mean, I still had a spirit of religion on the inside of me that needed to be burned out. My son would be crying: "Why is church so long, Dad?" And I'd say, "I don't know, buddy. I keep asking your mom the same question."

Sundays were rough. I'm just being real.

But somebody at the church gave a testimony once and said, "Don't stand too

close to the banks of the river, because you might slip in." That's exactly what happened to me.

I'm there. I'm plugged in, but not really plugged in. I'm showing up on Sundays, doing the bare minimum. Then they said, "Hey, we want you to come to House of Joy." I thought, that sounds safe. I'll go to a House of Joy.

And that's where I met this businessman named Troy. Great guy. He comes up to me and says, "Marc, welcome to Tampa. Look, I want to bless you and your wife with a gift card. Take her out to dinner." Totally welcomed me. And he wasn't a religious guy. He was a business guy. I thought, "Wow, this is awesome."

Troy connected me with Tony and then with Kingdom Business Fellowship -- KBF -- at the River Church. And that's when everything clicked.

I walked into that first KBF meeting, and I said, "Man, there's something different about this. These people are talking my language." They'd have different speakers come in, and I would listen and think, "This is what I need.

This is where I want to go. These people think differently."

See, growing up in church, the church never knew what to do with me. I was a businessman, but the only thing they ever wanted from me was free food and a check. "Hey, Mr. Alfano, we're having a huge event." "Oh, you want me to preach?" "Oh, no, no. We want you to donate the food and give us a bunch of money." That was the extent of how the church engaged my business gifts.

I had fire on the inside of me, but I had nowhere to put it. Except for my employees, and even that was compromised, because I was living a crazy lifestyle. I was in the church and in the world at the same time. Christian on Sunday, partying the rest of the week. That was the restaurant life, and I made an excuse for it. I was more of a hypocrite than a Christian, honestly.

But Kingdom Business was my place. I found my home.

One day I went up to the pastor and said, "Pastor, I really like Kingdom Business. If you ever start a business school, I'd like to go to it."

He said, "Well, Marc, maybe one day you could teach at one. But for now, you'd have to go to Bible school."

I went back to my chair, sat down, and something shifted. I turned to Christina and said, "Give me my transcripts. Help me find my school records. I'm signing up. I'm going to Bible school."

And I did.

That summer, walking on the beach in Jersey, God confirmed it. And then I graduated, and everything changed. I got connected with Vollara, went to the top -- Platinum Five Ambassador -- and started helping Bible school students make six-figure incomes. That was the word God put on my heart. He said, "This will set the Bible school student free. It'll give them flexibility and mobility to go out and preach and do what they need to do, but it'll fund their ministry."

And that's exactly what happened.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Joseph Blueprint

If you want a biblical model for what it looks like when God anoints somebody for business, look no further than Joseph.

Joseph had a business mind from birth. His father saw something on him -- that's why he put the coat of many colors on him. Now, Joseph obviously ran out and ran his mouth a little too quick. Told everybody about his dreams, about the sheaves bowing down. How many of us have done that? "Man, I'm anointed! I'm appointed! Look at me!" You go out and start running your mouth, and all of a sudden things go bad for you. But that's okay,

because God's going to use that to get you where you need to be.

We all know the story. He gets sold into slavery. But even as a slave, he was the best. The guy was anointed. He was a servant, but he operated with excellence. If you're in a cleaning business, be the number one cleaning business in the country. If you're running an Airbnb, make sure it's the nicest Airbnb on the planet. Whatever you do, you do with excellence. Dot every I, cross every T. That's what Joseph did.

Then they threw him in prison, and he was the best prisoner. He was promoted in the prison. He had rights that other prisoners didn't have. He had favor in the prison. You can have favor at the bottom.

When I lost my restaurant, I was at the bottom. But I had favor at the bottom, because the Lord showed me: "If you put your identity in Christ, you'll never lose your identity." Joseph understood that.

But here's what I love about the story. For a long time, Joseph was doing everything in his own power. The arm of the flesh. He was working it, working it, working it. Slave --

working it. Prison -- working it. And then came the moment with Pharaoh.

The fat cows and the skinny cows. Pharaoh's dream. Nobody can interpret it. They bring Joseph in, and he interprets the dream. But then he does something I think is one of the most important moments in the entire Bible for business people: he writes down a strategy, hands it to Pharaoh, and says, "Here's the plan. Find somebody else to do it. It's not going to be me."

That's when he graduated. That's when God said, "Now I can use you." He was looking for Joseph to get out of His way. And that's when Pharaoh said, "No, it's going to be you." He took off the signet ring and put it on Joseph's finger. Made him number two in all the nation. Gave him his daughter as a bride.

One plan from God -- just one plan given to one person -- and it flipped a nation overnight. The wealth of the entire world came into Egypt. During the famine, as the nations got hungry, they brought their money to Egypt. All because of a strategy that God downloaded into one man's spirit.

How many of you know we could flip this country overnight? Literally overnight. One dream, one idea from God, and everything changes.

Now fast-forward. Joseph dies. Everybody forgets about Uncle Joe. The Israelites end up in slavery. Then Moses comes along with his mandate: "Let my people go." And when Pharaoh finally gives in, Moses tells the people, "Before you leave, go door to door. Ask for everything." Gold, silver, linens, purple cloth, threads. And the Bible says they came out loaded.

You can be a slave today and loaded tomorrow. What changed? It happened overnight. The hand of God came on the place. And it can happen for you the same way.

But here's the lesson. When they got out into the wilderness with all that wealth, some of the people took the gold and built an idol. A golden calf. And this is a major lesson for business people: if God gives you something, but you turn that something into an idol and it becomes about you, that's where you went off the rails.

It happened to me in the restaurant business. It became about us. "Look at us. We made it to the top. Look at all the newspaper articles." We built a golden cow. And you know what happens when you do that? You make God very angry. Sometimes you have to drink the bitter water with the gold in it.

But then there was another group of people who took the exact same wealth and built the Tabernacle. Same gold. Same silver. Same fabric. Different purpose.

Why would you need purple linens and gold and silver in the wilderness unless God had a plan for it? He's got a plan for the wealth your business is creating. When we say we're raising up multimillionaires to fund the end-time harvest of souls, that's one hundred percent correct.

As a business owner, I have to attach my business's wealth back to the house of God. That's His heart. It all comes back to Him. If your business is building an idol to say, "Look at me, look at all my stuff" -- listen, there's nothing wrong with stuff. God wants us to be blessed. He already has a mansion waiting for us; He doesn't want us to be broke. But if that

blessing becomes more important than the call God has on your life to reach the lost? Forget about all that other stuff.

I'd rather people be broke and go to heaven than be rich and go to hell. But you know what? God says there's a few of us out here He can trust. Because He knows our mandate is to build the house of God.

CHAPTER SIX

Your Business Is Your Pulpit

Let me ask you a question: How many days a week do you go to church? One? Maybe two? How many days a week do you go to work? Five? Six? Some of you, seven?

So where do you have more influence -- at church or in the marketplace?

The marketplace. Every time.

As a boss, people respected me. As a restaurant owner, I could sit with a celebrity who came into my place for dinner. Somebody you'd never get close to in the real world -- surrounded by bodyguards, can't get near

them. But when they sat in my restaurant, I could walk out, pull up a chair, sit at the table, and have a face-to-face conversation. That's influence.

I had thirty employees. Over the course of a year, hundreds of people would go through our business. Most of them were unchurched. Think about the restaurant business -- a lot of people hooked on drugs and alcohol. Messed-up people looking for something. And I had access to them, and they had access to me.

The whole idea, for me, was to use my business as my pulpit. As a business owner, I'm the pastor of my business. I don't go around telling people I'm their pastor, but that's the responsibility I carry. I mentor, I challenge, I share the gospel. And when people get saved in my business, I say, "Here, go to this church. Get plugged into this ministry. Serve the house of God. Make sure you're paying your tithe. But then you need to be here Monday through Friday, where I'm going to mentor you, challenge you, and get you out there winning souls."

The church grows. The business grows. Everybody wins.

“ Your gift is somebody else's miracle.

We were in Trinidad not long ago, and people said, "Marc, you really need to come to Venezuela. There are churches there, people who want to hear the gospel." So we're at the airport, and Christina starts talking to a guy behind her who worked for the U.S. Embassy. She says, "We're thinking about going to Venezuela." He goes, "For ministry? They won't let you in. You're U.S. citizens, there's a lot of tension. Your chances are pretty slim."

I said, "What about for business? What if I was just going there for business?"

"Oh, well, if it's for business, that's a different story."

Do you hear that? The business world can reach places the church world can't get into. A communist country won't let in a missionary, but they'll welcome a businessman. "What are you here for, sir?" "I'm here for business. I build sales teams. I'm here to check out a manufacturing plant." Which a lot of times is the truth. I'm not lying to get into a country.

But business opens doors that wouldn't normally open.

Now, a lot of people don't understand this. There's a religious mindset that says keep business over here and keep the church over there. Don't mix them. I actually preached in a church one time, and somebody came up to me afterward and said, "I can't believe you teach business in a church. Don't you remember what Jesus did when they were selling goods in the temple? He flipped over the tables."

I said, "Yeah, they were selling corrupt offerings. That's a little different."

But that's a religious mindset. "You can't talk business in the church. You can't talk politics in the church." And that's exactly what the devil wants. The devil wants the church to be quiet. Stay in your box. Don't come out. The minute we start spreading out and taking ground in the marketplace, the enemy gets nervous.

I was on a business call not too long ago. Straight business call with business people. At the end, this guy says, "Hey, Marc, I hear you're a reverend. Can you close us in prayer?"

I said, "Sure. But what do you believe God for? What's going on with you right now?"

He tells me about some health issues. Says the Lord is putting him through a test.

I said, "Hold on. Before we go any further, let me clear a few things up. God's not putting you through a test. The thief is stealing, killing, and destroying you. You're supposed to have an abundant life. You need to stop confessing negative over your life and start confessing positive."

The Lord started dumping out scriptures for this guy. I said a prayer, and we got off the phone.

A few weeks later, his son calls me. "Are you sitting down? You're not going to believe what I have to tell you. My dad was in kidney failure. He had a feeding tube in. But when you prayed for him, he wrote down every scripture you gave him. Every day he'd get up, read those scriptures, and confess that he was healed."

He goes into the doctor -- the same doctor who gave him the negative report -- and they run the test. Kidneys are perfect. Nothing wrong.

The doctor says, "Let me run this test one more time, because there's got to be something wrong with the machine."

And his dad says, "No. I've been healed by Jesus." And he starts pulling out all the scriptures.

That was a business call. Most business people would have just said, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust, bless this food and these people, amen," and moved on. Because they don't want to offend anybody.

I say let's start offending some people. The more I push, the more I see breakthroughs. Your business is your pulpit. Use it.

CHAPTER SEVEN

God's Way vs. Caesar's Way

Proverbs 14:12 says,
"There is a way which seems right to a
man, but its end is the way of death."

The world has a way that seems really right. It seems attractive. It seems beautiful. But in the end, it leads to death.

I was teaching in kids' church one time, and I don't even know how I got on the subject, but I started talking about Elvis Presley. How he was so anointed and gifted, but he went after the things of the world, and

it ended in death. Then I talked about Whitney Houston. Grew up in the church. Sang the gospel. So anointed. But she went the way of the world, and it ended in death.

Their idea of fame and fortune was twisted. They went the wrong way. Because the enemy is attractive. Everybody thinks the devil has pointy horns and a pitchfork and a red tail. But he was beautiful. And if he walked through your door right now with an opportunity, a lot of people would jump all over it. If you don't have discernment, you'll take it. It looks so right. It seems so attractive.

Even Jesus had the opportunity to take everything from the devil. The devil couldn't offer it to Him unless he had access to it. He has access to things he wants to give you. We have to be very careful not to take them, because that way leads to death.

Mark 12:17 lays it out:

*"Render to Caesar the things that are
Caesar's, and to God the things that are
God's."*

Two systems. The world's way, which is Caesar, and God's way. You can live one way

or the other.

Here's a good illustration. That money we pass around, that paper currency -- do you know that the same fabric a hundred-dollar bill is printed on is the same fabric a one-dollar bill is printed on? Same ink. Same machine. The hundred has the same intrinsic value as the one. It's just got a different picture on the front. And people live their entire lives chasing after something that literally has zero value. Zero.

Matthew 6:24 says,

"No one can serve two masters. For either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will be loyal to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and Mammon."

You can't do both. One or the other. God's way or the world's way.

So what is God's way? God's way is seedtime and harvest. God's way is giving. "Give, and it shall be given unto you, good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over." His currency isn't paper. His things are tangible. Seeds. Gold. Silver.

Diamonds. He's laid up these treasures and hidden them in the earth.

Isaiah 45:2-3 says,

"I will go before you and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of bronze and cut the bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that you may know that I, the Lord, who call you by your name, am the God of Israel."

His treasures are bigger than paper money. A lot of people think their wealth is their bank account. They base everything on their bank account. But that's not where real wealth lives.

I used to work auctions. Estate sales. And you'd go into these homes and see everything a person spent their whole entire life collecting. Fine china. Baseball cards. Cookware. Their prize possessions. And at the auction, they'd say, "Let's start this whole rack of china at a hundred dollars." Nobody bids. "Fifty? Twenty-five? Five dollars? Who will give me five?" Somebody raises a hand, and the whole rack goes for sixty bucks. A lifetime of collecting -- sold for pennies.

You can't take it with you. It's absolutely worthless in the end.

Here's another one. In Pittsburgh, where I'm from, there was this big mall called Century 3 Mall. As kids, that was the place to go. Then they shut it down around 2020 or 2021. Today, there are urban explorers going through it. The roof is caved in. Water is pouring through the ceiling. Tiles falling out. There's grass growing up through the parking lot. Somebody put all those years, all that effort, all that money and resources into that structure, and in just a little bit of time, it decayed back to what it came from. Because it's a thing of the world. Not a thing of the Kingdom.

But then go visit the Billy Graham Library. People invested their time, their talents, and their money into that. Billy's gone. And guess what? His message still goes out. The Word of God still goes out. That investment never comes back void.

When you invest in the things of the Kingdom, it expands. It grows. You take it with you into the next world.

The enemy wants to use money to steal your soul. God wants you to give that money to loose and free your soul. The faster you learn that, the faster your breakthrough comes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Seed Principle

Jesus said it in John 12:24-25:

"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life."

Now, that's Jesus talking about His own death. But it has everything to do with giving, too.

Think about a seed. Have you ever really looked at one? An acorn -- the seed for a massive oak tree -- is just this tiny little thing.

Dried out. Looks completely useless. But there's a universe locked inside it.

I had a friend named Reno. He came from Italy years ago, and he smuggled in some tomato seeds. Family heirloom seeds, ancestral stuff. He grew this massive garden with these beautiful giant tomatoes. I owned a restaurant at the time, and I said, "Hey, Reno, can I have some of your tomatoes?" He said sure, but he was weird about the seeds. These were sacred to him.

I asked him, "Just in case -- if I wanted to save a few seeds, how does that work?"

He said, "Oh, you just spread them out on a piece of wood and let them dry. Then you pick them off and plant them."

So I got all excited. I got this big piece of plywood, wrote "Reno's Tomatoes" on it, smeared a bunch of tomato seeds across it, and stuck it in my basement on top of an old freezer in Pennsylvania. And I forgot about it.

Fifteen years went by.

During that time, Reno died. He's in heaven now. And his seeds -- his actual garden, his

tomato plants -- they're gone. Extinct.
Nobody has them anymore.

We're moving one day, and I'm cleaning up the basement, and I find this board. I look at it and read the words: "Reno's Tomatoes." Old, shriveled, dried-up seeds stuck to a board. Fifteen years. Totally dead.

I said to Christina, "I'm going to burn this thing." I was heading to the burn pile.

She said, "Why don't you try to plant one?"

So I grabbed a cotton ball, put it in water, stuck one seed inside, put it in a little plastic baggie, and set it in a warm spot. Came back after a week, all excited to see my seed, and opened it up. Nothing. Just a seed sitting in a wet cotton ball. Nothing happening.

I told Christina, "I'm going to throw this away."

But something in me said, "No. Just wait."

So I left it. Another week or two went by. I totally forgot about it. Then I was walking through the kitchen, and I saw that little bag, and I opened it up. And out of that seed was this tiny little green sprout.

Fifteen years on a board in a basement.
Dead as dead could be. And there was life in it.

My dad had a big garden -- he's Italian too -- and I said, "Dad, can you grow this for me?" He said, "Absolutely." He grew me a tomato plant, and off that one plant came a ton of tomatoes. Then he took the seeds from those tomatoes and planted a full garden the next year. Just Reno's red tomatoes. Then he dried me a big bag of seeds, and I still have them. In fact, I just grew one this year down in Florida. Took one seed from my dad's shelf in Pennsylvania, planted it, and sure enough -- here comes a tomato.

One seed. Fifteen years dead. And it produced a garden. And that garden produced bags of seeds for years to come.

There's life in your seed. But a lot of your seed is sitting in a bank account somewhere, dried up and dead. Just like that board was sitting in my basement. A lot of your seed is some tied-up asset you're waiting on for a rainy day.

The Lord says unless a seed dies and goes into the ground, it can't produce. It has to go

into the ground. And then it can produce multiples.

Here's the thing about perspective. Some people see an acorn. I don't see an acorn. Some people see an oak tree. I don't see an oak tree. Some people see a forest. I don't see a forest. What I see is an industry. I see paper mills. I see lumber yards. I see houses being built. All from that same seed.

It's all about your perspective on the seed. What is your faith telling you your seed is going to do? Is it going to produce one little plant? One tree? A forest? Or an industry that affects a nation?

Let's say your paycheck is five hundred dollars, and your tithe is fifty. What is fifty bucks going to do to move the Kingdom of heaven?

Everything. It's everything.

Because Jesus said unless you die to your life here, you can never really have life. And when people get offended about giving, it's because they think the preacher just wants their money. "That preacher just wants my money. He spends all this time talking about giving so he can get rich." No. He's talking

about giving to set you free. It has nothing to do with how much he can bring in. It's giving to set you free.

God doesn't want your money. You know what He wants? He wants you. He wants a hundred percent of you. But guess what? You already sold yourself to your boss. You took the most valuable asset on the planet -- your time, your life -- and you traded it for a salary. Twenty-five dollars an hour. Fifty thousand a year. Whatever it is. You sold your life to the lowest bidder.

So God says, "Okay, you've already given your life to your boss. Then give me what you traded your life for." The money is a symbol of the sacrifice. He doesn't want your money. He wants your heart. But you already sold your life, so the money is what's left.

When you're able to release it, He sees your heart. And when He sees your heart, He's willing to give you something in return.

CHAPTER NINE

Sow Where You Want to Go

I always say the tithe is the thermometer. You can look at your tithe and it tells you the temperature of your life. If your tithe is low, that's where you're at.

But the offering? The offering is the thermostat. You can crank that thing up. You can start pouring into it and moving it up. Where do you want to go? What do you want to be? What do you want to do?

“The tithe is the thermometer. The offering is the thermostat.

You can't sow like you sowed when you were broke and expect to break through rich. It's not going to happen. You have to sow where you want to be in life.

“Sow where you want to go, not where you're at.

When we graduated Bible school, my last tithe was fifty dollars. The very next week, my tithe was five hundred. A hundredfold increase. And it just kept getting bigger. I can't outgive God, because every time I give, He gives me more. And then I give more. And He gives me more. It never stops.

Let me tell you the Europe story, because this is where it all came together for me.

When we launched Alfano Ministries International, I was sitting in the upstairs of my house, at my computer, typing out the mission statement. I said, "Okay, we're Alfano

Ministries International." And I'm still upstairs in my office. Nothing international about it yet. But I'm speaking by faith.

The Lord kept putting Europe on my heart. I said, "Yeah, but I don't have the funds for Europe." That didn't matter to Him. He said, "I want you to go to Europe."

And the arm of the flesh kicked in. I started trying to figure it out myself. But first, I started to speak it by faith. For almost a year, I was saying, "We're going to Europe. We're going to hit eight or nine countries. We're going to travel, we're going to preach, we're going to do this."

Then in our business, we won a company trip. They called and said, "Congratulations! You're going to Stockholm and Copenhagen." I said to Christina, "This is awesome! My plane ticket's covered. That saves us a ton of money." I started booking meetings all over Europe. Called everybody: "Hey, we want to come." "Oh, yeah, come to Ireland! Come to Italy!"

Then the company called me. And the guy was just talking and talking, and I said to my wife, "They're canceling the trip." Because the guy doesn't just call to chat for twenty

minutes. Sure enough: "Only four people won, so we're going to postpone."

My heart dropped. Now what?

Christina's faith was stronger than mine in that moment. She said, "We're going anyway. How can we preach faith and giving if we don't live it ourselves?" She was right.

So I got out my credit card, because I had some money in the bank but I figured I'd use the American Express. And the Lord said, "Buy the tickets now." I'm sitting there -- "Why do I have to buy them now?" "Buy the ticket now. Buy the ticket now." So I sat at my computer and bought the tickets.

The next day, my accountant called. "Hey, this is what you owe in taxes." Boom. All my money, gone.

If I hadn't bought those tickets the day before, I never would have bought them. Now I'm out on the water. The free trip got canceled. The government took the rest of my money. And I've got plane tickets to London with no money in the bank.

We kept pressing in. The company ran a promotion, and we ended up earning an

ounce of gold. "Well, that's a start," I thought. Christina said, "Let's give it."

An ounce of gold. Gold had just hit over two thousand dollars an ounce. And she wants to give it away.

I fought it. "That could be a down payment on something. I earned that. These people don't need my gold." But Christina said, "We need to sow it into a global missionary -- someone who's doing what we want to do. Sow where we want to go."

Finally the Lord just slapped me around, and I gave in. I walked up to the person at church, and Christina literally fell out on the floor next to me when she saw me pull the gold coin out of my pocket. The people around us were like, "Is she all right? Who shook her hand?" She fell out because she couldn't believe I was actually doing it.

At that point, what did I have to lose? No money in the bank. Tickets to London booked -- and I wasn't even scheduled to preach in London. No meetings booked in London. I just figured I'd fly into London because our pastor was going to be there, and from there we'd work our way around.

Then, about two weeks before the trip, there's a fire conference at church. Pastor Ben gets up and starts talking about how when they went to the next level, they sowed their whole bank account. I'm sitting there thinking, "Oh, man. Why does he have to preach that? Not tonight."

But I didn't want to miss what God had for me. I looked at Christina, showed her the banking app, and said, "I'm emptying the whole bank account." And we gave it all. Every penny. Into the London crusade.

Let me tell you something: when you take that step out of the boat, that's when all the miracles start to happen. Cut loose the safety nets.

The very next day, I got a call from somebody who wanted to meet. Counseling session. At the end, they wrote us a check. I didn't ask for it. Then another text came through with another check. Then a Cash App notification. The money started coming in from everywhere.

But here's the thing: God didn't drop twenty-five thousand dollars into my bank account and say, "Have a great trip." He would

get me to the next city. I'd be at a meeting, praying, "Lord, I need a train ticket. I need a hotel. I need to figure out how to get to the next place." And my phone would beep. Cash App. Just enough to get to the next city.

City by city. Step by step. He was faithful every single time.

And you know what was wild? The money from one country didn't always work in the next. People would give me Irish money, and I'd take it to England, and they wouldn't accept it. Same UK, different banks. That's how fake the world's money is -- you can't even take it across a border.

But God was there every step of the way.

We were in Northern Ireland -- Belfast -- and the evangelist there told me, "Irish people don't give. They're cheap. They're tight." He asked me to preach. So what do you think I preached on? Giving. Seedtime and harvest. And I could see people's faces. Somebody got up and walked out. I'm thinking, "I'm losing them."

But a lot of people started to lean in. At the end, the evangelist's wife came up to Christina. She said, "Can you pray for me? I'm

the one in the ministry who handles the finances. I'm so tired of calling people for money. I'm worn out. I'm stressed."

Christina started praying. She pulled me over. We came into agreement: "This is broken tonight. You're never going to have to beg again. The money is going to come in."

The very next day, the woman comes in and says, "You're never going to believe it. I got two phone calls this morning. Eighty thousand came in. And what I learned was that everything you were preaching wasn't your message -- it was our message. What you brought us was what God had for us."

Why? Because I was obedient. God said, "Go preach this." I said, "To stingy people? In a place that was literally killing Protestants twenty years ago?" He said, "Go." And somebody grabbed hold of it. Somebody got their breakthrough.

"

If it's comfortable, it's not a breakthrough.

Whenever it hurts, whenever everything in you is screaming "no" -- that's when you know you're on the edge of something big. Just do it. Do it quick, and watch your breakthrough come faster.

CHAPTER TEN

The Gold Coin and the Promise

This story starts in 1997. I was sitting at a red light in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. McKnight Road. It was raining. It was dark. I was all by myself in my car, and the Lord spoke to me: "You're going to have a son. His name is going to be Gianni."

The light turned green. I drove off. And I held that word in my heart.

Christina and I got married in 2000. And I'm carrying this promise on the inside of me. Year after year after year -- nothing. No baby. I remember watching every Mother's Day, the

disappointment on my wife's face. "All the mothers, please stand up." And I'd look over and she's crying. Year after year, because the desire of our hearts was to have children. When we first met, I said I wanted four kids. And here I am with none.

Then 2009 came, and I lost my business. We're going through bankruptcy, total chaos. I had a little bit of health insurance, so I said, "Let's go get a checkup." We went in. The doctor said, "It's impossible for you to have children unless you spend about ten thousand dollars for in vitro fertilization."

I said, "Listen, doc. I need a miracle either way. I just went bankrupt, so I need a ten-thousand-dollar miracle just to pay for the procedure. But the difference between God blessing me with a baby and me paying ten thousand dollars is that one of those comes with a promise attached. And you just put doubt into my life. So I'm going to believe God for His promise that we're going to have a child. That's it."

Then an evangelist comes to town. Young guy, just getting his ministry off the ground. He announces, "Tomorrow night is miracle

seed night. I want you to sow a seed, but I want you to attach your faith to it. Put something on the line. Believe God for a miracle."

I was so fired up. "This is it. I'm going to attach my faith." And then I remembered -- I'm bankrupt. We lost our business. We have nothing. But I wanted to give something big. Something that mattered to me.

The Lord reminded me that when I lost my business, I was selling everything I had on eBay, and I'd been buying gold and silver coins. He said, "Give Me a gold coin."

An ounce of gold. A couple thousand dollars at the time. My rainy-day money. The one thing I had left.

I said, "That can't be from the Lord." And I started to rebuke it. "No, no. That's my safety net."

So the next night, I brought two silver coins instead. Thursday night, I walked up to that bucket with two silver coins in my pocket, all fired up. "I'm attaching my faith to these two silver coins. I'm believing God for my breakthrough." I dropped them in the bucket. Boom. Boom. Those heavy coins hit

the bottom, and I heard the Lord say, clear as day:

“

Thank you for the tip. But I asked you for the gold.

Great. Now I owe gold and two silver coins.

The next night, I came in packing my gold coin. It's in my pocket, and everything in me is burning. You know it's from the Lord when it hurts like that. He's testing your heart. He wants to know: where is your heart? Is it with Me, or is it with that coin? Is your faith in that piece of metal that can't produce anything?

In the end times, the streets of heaven are paved with this stuff. It's nothing to God. He doesn't want the gold. He wants my heart. But my heart was attached to that coin.

I went up to the evangelist. I said, "This is for you. Don't say a word." Turned around. Walked away. I didn't want him to look at it because I might have second thoughts. I might go back and say, "Hey, can I get that back?"

That night, the evangelist is preaching fire. He says, "I want everybody to come to the

front who's believing for a miracle." I went up there. I'm standing there, believing for my miracle. And he passes me. Goes right by. Doesn't say a word. Passes me again. Still nothing. Third time -- passes me again.

I'm thinking, "Didn't he look at it? Does he not know what I gave?"

An usher walks up. "Sorry, you need to sit down. You need to make room."

I said, "I'm not going anywhere. Not until I get a word from this man."

And right when I said that, the evangelist stops. Looks at me from about three feet away. Points his finger at me and says:

“

You're getting it all. The money and the kid. All of it.

I went face-first onto that floor.

How did he even know? I never told him what I was believing for. But God knows every desire of your heart. He knows your innermost thoughts. *Seek first the kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you.*

The next week, the evangelist leaves town. He's preaching in a whole other city, and I'm watching him online. The whole time he's preaching, he's got his hand in his pocket. He'd been going through some struggles as a young evangelist -- questioning whether he was supposed to be doing what he was doing. And then he pulls out that gold coin -- my gold coin -- and he holds it up and says, "God showed me something. He said, 'I own all the silver. I own all the gold. I own the cattle on a thousand hills.' This is what I'm supposed to be doing."

And I realized: the answer to that evangelist's prayer was that coin in my pocket. God was looking for me to release something to set somebody else free. That's how it works. God wants to get it to you, but He has to get it through somebody else.

I could have been stubborn. I could have said, "No, I'm not giving that gold coin. That's my only investment. That's the only thing I have." But I released it. And your gift is somebody else's miracle.

Now, we didn't have a baby the next day. Christina didn't wake up pregnant the next

morning. None of that. As time moved on, we lost our restaurant, I started the tiramisu company, and the business started to expand. From one state to three states to sixteen states. The money started flowing. Remember, he said, "You're getting it all -- the money and the kid."

The business was growing. One day I took Christina out to dinner at a friend's restaurant in Pittsburgh. Phenomenal chef, great food. But she complained the whole way home: "The food was terrible tonight. Didn't taste right." I said, "Are you kidding me? That was amazing." But she wouldn't let it go. "Something was off."

The next morning, she's still complaining. And I looked at her and said, "Maybe you're pregnant."

"No. No, Marc. I'm not taking another one of those tests. I'm tired of that. Do you know how many we've thrown away?"

But I said, "Let's just do it." We stopped at the grocery store on the way to the tiramisu shop. She ran in, bought the test -- embarrassed because she didn't have her wedding ring on and didn't want anyone to think anything. We went back to the factory.

She went into the bathroom, came out, and said, "It's positive."

I said, "No. Go take it again."

She said, "Marc, it's either one or the other. There's no 'take it again.' It's the real deal."

My mind was totally blown. And then I went out, looked at the calendar, and saw the date.

October 10th. Ten-ten. John 10:10.

The same verse on every tiramisu package. The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy, but I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly.

God doesn't just hear you. He orchestrates the details. Things we'd never think of in a million years, He's got figured out. We go around saying, "What's taking You so long, God?" But He's working on a timeline that makes everything come together perfectly.

My son's name is Gianni. John, in Italian. And I looked up what it means: "a child born to parents later in life." If I'd had him in 1998 when I first heard that word at the red light, that meaning wouldn't have been fulfilled. It wouldn't have been a prophetic word realized

over all that time. But God waited. And in His timing, it was perfect. Our son travels with us now. He goes to the nations. He preaches. He's got the fire of God on the inside of him.

But that's not the end of the testing.

After all of that -- the gold coin, the miracle baby, the business -- God kept testing my heart. Kept testing, kept testing.

In the year 2000, we were in Italy, and I bought a really nice gold bracelet. This thing had a special attachment to my heart because I was with my friend Reno when I bought it -- the tomato seed man. It reminded me of him, reminded me of that trip. It was personal.

And I noticed something. Every time Pastor Debbie Rich would come to our church and preach, I would take that gold bracelet off and lock it up in my car. Because I knew what was coming. She was going to preach about the alabaster box, and I was going to feel convicted, and I was going to give this thing away and be driving home crying.

So every time -- off the wrist, into the jewelry box, locked in the car.

One time, I almost forgot. "Oh, man, she's here tonight -- let me hurry up and lock it up."

But then came the day I forgot.

I was sitting in church. Pastor Debbie was preaching. And I looked down at my wrist, and there it was. My heart started pounding. "Oh, no. I forgot to take it off. This is the test. God's going to get me."

I'm sitting there praying: "Please, God, don't do it. Anything but that. I'll write You a check for five thousand dollars, but I'm not giving this bracelet."

And then I felt it. Strong. Unmistakable.

"Give it."

So I made a deal with God. I said, "Okay, show me who." He showed me a guy across the auditorium. "That's the one."

Next test. I said, "Okay, I'm going to the restroom, and if he's in the lobby on my way out, I'll give it to him." I figured I was safe because the guy was on the other side of the room.

I jumped up, made my move, headed for the door. And as I'm walking out, here he comes. Walking right toward me.

I unlatched the bracelet. Put it in my hand.
I'm walking straight at this guy, looking right
at him. Got about twenty yards away.

“

Keep it. You passed the test.

I jammed it in my pocket. Shook the man's
hand. I haven't worn it since.

Because it doesn't have my heart anymore.
I could give it away a hundred times now. But
God wanted to know one thing: are you
willing?

Sometimes He just wants to know if you'll
do it. And once you're willing to give it, it'll set
you free in every area of your life.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

One Person Changes the World

People come to me and say, "What does one person matter? I go to work every day. If I don't tell that person at my job about the Lord, what difference does it make? It's just me. I'm just one person."

Let me tell you about one person.

There was a man named Edward Kimball. A Sunday school teacher. He was passionate about getting kids saved. One day, he walked down to a shoe shop where a young man was working -- back in those days, kids could work young -- and he led that kid to the Lord.

That kid's name was Dwight L. Moody.

D.L. Moody became one of the greatest evangelists in history. And Moody ended up leading a man named Frederick B. Meyer to the Lord. Meyer became an evangelist himself. He came to America, to Northfield, Massachusetts, and gave a message where he's quoted as saying, "If you're not willing to give everything to God, then you need to be willing to be made willing."

In that meeting, a man named J. Wilbur Chapman became an evangelist.

Chapman starts preaching, and a guy named Billy Sunday gets saved in one of his meetings. Billy Sunday -- one of the great evangelists of the early twentieth century. He leads thousands to Christ. He goes through Charlotte, North Carolina, and has this massive revival. And the city gets so fired up they say, "We need more of this." So they set up the next big meeting with an evangelist named Mordecai Ham.

Mordecai Ham comes to Charlotte, North Carolina. Has his revival. And sitting in the back row is a sixteen-year-old kid named Billy Graham.

Billy Graham gets saved. Gets fired up for the Lord. He goes on to preach the gospel to more people than any human being in history. In the early 1970s, he travels to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and holds a crusade in a stadium. My mother is in that stadium. She gets saved.

And as a result, I'm here today.

It's not just me. It's everyone I've ever reached, everyone they've reached, and everyone who will be reached because of them. And it all traces back to one Sunday school teacher who reached one kid at a shoe shop.

One person.

That's why the parable of the two workers at the mill haunts me. Two people working side by side. They've been together for years. One gets taken, one gets left behind. And the one who's left is going to think: "Why didn't he ever tell me? I worked with this guy all those years. He was a deacon at the church. He showed up every Wednesday and every Sunday morning. But when I was struggling, when I was going through stuff, he never said anything to me about Jesus. Not once."

We've got blood on our hands. We're going to be held accountable for the souls we never told.

The Bible says in 2 Timothy 1:7:

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind."

We have the answer to the world's problem. Joseph had the answer. He exercised it, and it created generational wealth.

Deuteronomy tells us that God gives us the power to create wealth to establish His covenant. And the Bible says a good man leaves an inheritance for his children's children. Not just his children -- his children's children.

How many of us have done that? Warren Buffett can leave an inheritance for his children's children. Donald Trump's grandchildren are set for life. Why? Because they're following principles. Some of them might be straight-out heathens, but they've tapped into biblical principles of giving and sowing that create wealth.

The church says, "No, no, you can't touch wealth." But the Bible says, "I give you the power to create wealth to establish My covenant."

It's time we wake up to this.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Just Start

People always ask me, "Marc, what should I do? I don't know what business to start. I don't know what my calling is."

Here's my advice: make sure it's something you have a heart's desire to do. If you're starting a business in a field you absolutely hate, don't do it. Just because somebody at church said you'd be great at construction doesn't mean you should start a construction company -- especially if you're ninety-five years old and you can't lift a hammer. Stick with something you're actually good at. Something you have an anointing for.

Like me -- I love to cook. Will I ever open another restaurant? Probably not. But cooking is in my blood. It's something God gave me.

And don't always believe what other people tell you. In the restaurant business, I hated it when I'd ask someone how the meal was and they'd say, "Oh, I loved it!" I'd think, "Come on, just be honest. Something had to be wrong." So I started giving anonymous surveys. Put them in a box on the way out. That's when I got real feedback. Because people don't want to hurt your feelings. We live in a culture where you can't hurt anyone's feelings anymore.

But here's the real key. Are you ready?

Just start.

My son, Gianni, loves watches. I said, "Johnny, why don't you start your own watch company? We could find a supplier. You've got a great name -- Gianni! Come on. You could make G-Lexes or something." He said, "That's funny, Dad. But I don't have the money to get started."

I said two words: "Who cares."

“Who cares. That'll set you free.

"Who cares" is my tagline for life. My wife knows it. "If I make all this money, I'll have to pay a bunch of taxes." Who cares. "Gas is four dollars a gallon." Who cares. When I was in school, kids used to call me fat. I'd say, "Who cares. I don't really care." And that set me free.

You can't worry about what everybody thinks about you. God puts a mandate on your life. Start moving forward. And as you move, the pieces start coming together. He's waiting.

“Faith is standing on a high dive over an empty swimming pool. I'm praying, "God, bring the water." And God says, "No - - jump, and I'm going to bring the water."

As long as He's behind you, you can't fail. Literally. You cannot fail. Don't let other people tell you what you should be doing,

where you should be going, how you should be living. If your mandate came straight from God, nothing is going to stop you except God.

And don't despise the days of small beginnings. I was in Shuttlesworth meetings when there were twenty-five people in the room, and he was up there giving it everything he had. That wasn't too long ago -- my son was a baby, and he's only eleven now. Look what God did with that ministry since those small-room days. Why? Because he didn't despise the small beginning. He didn't say, "Oh, man, there's only twenty-five people here. Nobody cares."

I preached in a community center not long ago to four people. Four. But I preached like there were four hundred. Because the message God put on the inside of me needs to be heard. All it takes is one person scrolling the internet who hits that meeting online and says, "This needs to be heard in our city." And the doors start opening.

I made a deal with God. I said, "I'm not making any phone calls. I'm not going to be a self-promoter. Jesus didn't self-promote. There was no internet, no social media. He

wasn't calling people saying, 'Can you book my hotel? Can you pay for my travel?' None of it." I said, "If God wants it to be heard, He's going to send it. I just have to be willing."

That's it. Just be willing. And just start.

When I was in Buenos Aires, Argentina, I had a businessman pray over me. This guy had made millions of dollars because of a word from the Lord. He was bankrupt, sitting in a warehouse full of sewing machines in California, praying. The Lord said, "Go to Las Vegas. Go to the ski show." He went. Somebody walked by and said, "I don't know why I'm telling you this, but there's a booth at the end with amazing material. Go check it out." He went. Bought the material for half a million dollars -- negotiated down from a million. Went back to California and sat on a pile of material and sewing machines. Then Oakley Sunglasses called. They needed a bag for every pair of glasses, and his material was perfect for cleaning lenses. The rest is history.

This man sat me down and prayed three things over me. He said, "I'm going to anoint your ears to hear -- so you'll hear things in the spirit that most people won't hear. Things that

are coming. Things that will happen before they happen, so you can make adjustments." Then he said, "I'm going to anoint your eyes to see -- to see into the spirit, to see things coming at you." Then he said, "I'm going to anoint your mouth to speak only the words God puts in it."

My life has never been the same.

There were twelve of us in that meeting. Early morning. Nobody wanted to get up. But I was hungry. I was there first. And I said, "If anybody gets this anointing, it's going to be me."

You've got to be hungry for it. You've got to say, "I'm willing, God. I want it."

Just start.

CLOSING

The Marketplace Mandate

Here's what I want to leave you with. If you're in business, dedicate that business to the Lord today. Say, "I'm giving my business over to You. I'm giving my life over to You. I'm going to tithe from my personal income and from my business income because there's no difference -- it's all Yours."

Be the pastor of your business. You don't have to call yourself that, but carry the responsibility. Take it seriously. You are the shepherd of the people who walk through your doors every day -- your employees, your

customers, your vendors. They're watching you.

Make your business a beacon for the community. A place where the hurt, the lost, the dying, and the destitute can come in and get healed, saved, and set free.

Then plug those people into your church. The church grows. Your business grows. Everybody wins.

And then -- the most exciting thing of all:

"And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all nations, and then the end will come." --
Matthew 24:14

We'll never get to the four corners of the earth unless we break out of the four walls of the church. The marketplace is the mission field. Your business is your pulpit. Your product is your platform. Your employees are your congregation. Your customers are your harvest.

Stop waiting for permission. Stop waiting for the money to show up before you jump. Stop looking at the empty pool and being afraid.

Jump.

He'll bring the water.

And then the end can come.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Marc Alfano is an evangelist, entrepreneur, and the host of the *7K Revelation Podcast*. From launching his first business at twenty-one to owning award-winning restaurants, building a national tiramisu brand, and eventually graduating from Bible school and launching into full-time ministry, Marc has spent his life at the intersection of faith and

the marketplace. He and his wife, Christina, travel internationally, preaching the gospel and equipping believers to use their businesses as platforms for the Kingdom of God. Marc is the founder of Alfano Ministries International.

alfanoministries.com

FAITH TO BUILD

A Kingdom Business Blueprint

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-- Matthew 24:14



For more from Marc Alfano, visit
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