

Have You Heard of the New Kingdom Invasion?

Before Jesus left the earth, He charged His disciples with these parting words, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20). These words have echoed through the centuries as new believers and disciples picked up the baton and ran their race to fulfill the Great Commission.

Most believers feel that pull to heed that call but remain unsure what that looks like for them. For years, answering the call meant either serving the church in some capacity or abandoning a comfortable lifestyle and committing to go to a faraway land. In the last few decades, these narrow ideas of kingdom service have been challenged, even upended, with the phrase “marketplace ministry” as God calls believers around the world to launch businesses to glorify Him. I did it, and so can you. Allow me to share my story of God making my way perfect as I pursued the path of the entrepreneurial spirit—and how you can embrace a similar call.

I have always been curiously drawn to the Lord. As an 18-year-old, I vividly remember hopping and skipping on my way to church on a Friday night for Bible study. I felt compelled to serve Him. I applied only to a Christian university because I wanted His Word at the center of my education. No one else prompted me to take this path—it was my decision.

With this as a backdrop, I affirm the value of marketplace ministry. It took me years to embrace it as my reality, but I am so thrilled that God was patient with me as He guided me to

my destiny.

I must admit that my initial reason for launching a business was not about glorifying God but meeting a need in the marketplace. The desire to launch my own company came as an interruption that I did not even perceive as a remote thought. Living life restlessly, I was pursuing my newfound passion for design. I had just left a high-tech job at the largest technology company in the world. I had worked on assignment with Fortune 100 companies, guiding them to operational excellence while simultaneously wearing myself down with constant travel, long hours and disrupted vacations. While visiting family in the Caribbean, I cut a vacation short to fly to Europe to train business leaders on new software that I had to learn on the red-eye flight there. I landed and went straight into the office to begin work.

From Adrenaline to Anointing

This lifestyle of striving became my normal, week in and week out. I even received an award for “excellence in worst working conditions.” A senior director ran into me on a late-night assignment at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City and saw me in a cramped office, working with the directors to implement a whole new set of business processes. That scenario led to my winning the award, but I did not even realize it was late or the office was cramped. I was just pushing to get the job done.

I realized I needed a change when I pushed too far and had nothing left to give. My divine destiny was calling me into uncharted territory and I needed a bridge to get there.

That bridge was interior design. Who knew that this accounting and IT major had a love for design? However, I was so serious that I left my high-paying job and enrolled in interior design school for an entire year before destiny again came calling—this time, in an epic, impactful dream.

The dream occurred the way it does in the movies, where the character fitfully awakens and bolts up from the bed. It was so intense that I shook my husband awake and recounted the entire dream to him. A tumultuous vision full of spiritual warfare, it eventually manifested two weeks later at the doctor's office. While I waited for a diagnosis, the doctor voiced the exact words communicated in my dream. After picking up my jaw from off the floor, I became depressed, then determined to fight. This began my journey to healthy living that culminated in my very own "only pure goodness" beauty brand: Janelle Beauty.

The story of Janelle Beauty and its meteoric rise, fall and raising from the ashes can be summed up in one phrase: "from adrenaline to anointing." This phrase, which is the title of my third book, underscores how I went from self-reliance to God-reliance.

As a type A personality, I relied a lot on self-effort and the "hustle and grind" business model, in which if you want to get something done, you must do it yourself. I built Janelle Beauty on adrenaline with a sprinkling of prayer. I gave a lot of lip service to the idea of "kingdom first," but I could not stop pushing myself since I operated purely out of self. I loved God and knew He blessed me, but as a go-getter, I almost always rushed ahead of Him. I would make a declaration to trust in God, then promptly turn around and say yes to an opportunity that looked great but missed the mark of the declaration I had just made. The incredible patience the Lord had—and still has—with me still seems amazing.

Moving from adrenaline to anointing began when I started hitting brick walls and things were not working out as I anticipated. I also started to have great distress and oppressive thoughts. I eventually realized that I was not like every other CEO in the world system—accountable only to stakeholders, customers and shareholders. I was also accountable to God. I belong to Him and when I walk outside

His counsel and guidance, I become vulnerable to an onslaught of spiritual warfare.

From Bondage to Freedom

The Lord led me back to my book *30 Days to Peace, Provision and Protection* and told me He had allowed me to write that book as a blueprint for my life. This was all I needed to move from adrenaline to anointing. I dug in, and immediately chains began to fall.

As I surrounded myself with the Word of God, my heavy burdens lifted and this Scripture became a reality: “Now I will take the load from your shoulders; I will free your hands from their heavy tasks. You cried to me in trouble, and I saved you; I answered out of the thundercloud and tested your faith when there was no water at Meribah” (Ps. 81:6-7, NLT).

This passage refers to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt. Steeped in hopelessness, they were burdened with the toil of harsh slavery. Working hard for little pay is a bad condition, but working beyond hard for no recompense or hope of recompense because another human being owns you is an unimaginable state of bondage. As a descendant of slaves, I cannot comprehend what my forefathers went through. But I am grateful that there is a God who hears when we call and rescues us.

Today, we still have slavery of all kinds, but most of us in the Western world are slaves to the economy or to our vices or addictions. We may be like the men in David’s army, bound by debt, discontent or distress, but as God delivered them, He can deliver us. He can and will remove the burdens from our shoulders, and, as it says in other versions of Psalm 81:6, He will set our hands free from the basket.

The “basket” here represents hard labor and toil that He has not ordained for us. Setting us free from the basket thus indicates granting rest from hard labor. He speaks this today

when He says in 1 Peter 5:7, "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you" and when He declares in Matthew 11:28b, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest."

From Empty to Filled

Once God has removed the burdens, He instructs us to open our mouths wide, and He will fill them: "For it was I, the Lord your God, who rescued you from the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it with good things" (Ps. 81:10).

It may not be evident at first glance, but this declaration is a call to place a demand on God by God Himself. He promises to answer in the affirmative. He also expects us to make our requests in recognition of His abundance, hence the statement, "Open your mouth wide." Ephesians 3:20 assures us God can do super abundantly over and above all we dare ask or think. It is as if He is challenging us to make the greatest request we can make.

He benchmarks His ability to perform by reminding us that He was the one who brought the Israelites up from the land of Egypt in a spectacular display of His might and power. It is as if He is saying, "*You know* what I can do in your earth realm; now go ahead and open your mouth wide, and I will fill it."

The mantle of marketplace minister or kingdom business leader carries the call to fund the work of the kingdom of God here on earth. God wants us to open our mouths wide and be filled to be blessings to others. God has already revealed what that looks like for me, but I believe it looks different for everyone.

Running a business is hard work—dare I say, even brutal work. Your entire being—mental, physical and emotional—is caught up in the process of moving your business forward. These promises from God were fundamentally game-changing for me as I learned

to depend on Him to carry me forward.

As believers, we are walking epistles of His love and concern. We get to carry His glory into the marketplace and show a different way of doing business—a living way. Extricating my mindset from the grinding pursuit that was so prevalent in my corporate career was a process of constantly renewing my mind to rest in His Word. It is only from this position that His glory will rest on us and, by extension, on our businesses.

From Passion to Destiny

Janelle Beauty grew without outside funding but with a lot of bumps and turbulence to a multimillion-dollar beauty brand. The bumps and turbulence may still be there, but perfect rest fills my spirit because He is now leading the way. He is carrying me as His glory surrounds me. I am walking in my destiny as I trust Him to lead the way and take my business to heights unknown.

I believe God may be calling you to start your own business. If you are hearing that call, here are three keys to remember as you step forward in His assignment:

Identify your passion. Most of us can easily determine the things we're passionate about. They're the things we spend most of our time thinking about, those that frustrate us, those for which we'd love someone to invent a solution. These triggers get most entrepreneurs excited and launch them headfirst into building a business around their passion. But when it comes to starting a business God has called us to, we need to test the spirit of the idea to ensure it's not just a "good idea," but a "God idea." We have a finite time on earth, and we get distracted so easily. That's why we must kick the tires on our passion to get the green light from God that He is in it.

Determine if your passion aligns with your purpose. The best way to start the process of getting a green or red light from

God is to determine if your passion aligns with your purpose. I had a difficult time figuring this out in my own life. I had a career in technology, but I pivoted to design. Then a frustration arose that I had to solve to meet my own need—and so I started a business. To be honest, I did not stop to check with God about whether my new business aligned with my purpose. I jumped in headfirst and asked questions after. We had early success and then crashed and burned in a spectacular way. I saw full-time ministry as my purpose and I could not figure out how a beauty company aligned with that purpose. When you take the time to dig deep and ask the Lord for His guidance and He gives you the green light—even if your passion and purpose seem misaligned—you will need to trust Him to show you the alignment in His timing.

Stick to it. This is the most important step. The trials and obstacles will come, but if you work out the first two steps, you will have the fortitude to stick it out. Most importantly, if you make God your CEO, He will do the heavy lifting while you stand. Whatever you do, do not quit.

If God has called you to launch a business that will expand His kingdom, I pray you will allow Him to guide you fully. Shift gears away from your adrenaline and start operating out of the anointing He has placed on and in you. The world will watch in wonder as you bring Him glory through your destiny in marketplace ministry.

READ MORE: Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you about how He works in the marketplace when you check out .

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