

Growing Wealth?

Yesterday I was coming home from Delaware with my wife Heidi and daughter Brighton, we stopped at Chick-fil-A next to the Deptford Mall. At the drive through window I noticed a kid I knew from our area, about 45 minutes away outside of Atlantic City. So we started talking.

This is a kid I used to see about once a week. I was a part of building PATMOS PARK (a skate park at Shore Fellowship Church) and Chick-fil-A in Mays Landing, NJ fed us every Wednesday for 2 years for FREE. During this time I would pick up the meals, talk to Kendal and tell him about the Lord, he was a cool kid. I could see his eyes light up when we talked about business. I would often ask him about his goals in life. He would tell me he liked business. He knew a lot about how to move up in Chick-fil-A and talked about maybe running a store one day. I would give him those 4th quarter 30 seconds left on the clock "you can do talks." I could see his eyes light up and we would get lost in time talking for a while and then realize we both where late, him getting back in the store and me bringing food back to hungry volunteers.

I really loved the heart this kid had, always smiling and super helpful. Well PATMOS PARK got built and life moved on. And I haven't seen Kendal in about a year and a half. Well needless to say I was happy to see him as I sensed he felt the same way.

So we pulled the mini-van into the parking lot of the mall to eat (because my wife was concerned I would drop sauce in the car while driving).

The parking lot was almost empty, we parked in the back staring at this huge mall with national store logos taking up most of our view. I started thinking how the majority of companies work 24/7/365 or I should say 48/14/730 to gain wealth to ultimately pass it on. (You know you never see a U-Haul following a hearse).

Then I thought about Chick-fil-A, and how they run their stores. We can learn a great lesson here:

1. UNDERSTANDING WHO GOD IS IN COMPARSION WITH WHAT MONEY IS

They honor God through being closed on Sunday's (and losing money It would seem.) One thing you can read in the old testament is a protocol of how God set up business. He told us to work for 6 days and rest on the seventh. Not for Him but for us. He also said a farmer should work the ground for 6 years and let it rest on the seventh.

Here are their facts of Chick_fil-A's last performance breakdown about a year ago.

“Currently the nation’s second-largest quick-service chicken restaurant chain in sales, Chick fil-A’s business performance marks the 39th consecutive year the chain has enjoyed a system-wide sales gain – a streak the company has sustained since opening its first chain restaurant in 1967. It took the chain 33 years to reach \$1 billion in annual sales (in 2000) and only six years to surpass the \$2 billion sales mark.”

2. FOCUS ON WHAT MATTERS

They reward stores not give them. My friend Adam who ran the Hamilton Mall store told me that when they were considering him for a store the big guys in Chick-fil-A took him to a super luxurious business and showed the group around. He told me it made him feel like he was on his way. Then they took the group of candidates to a poor orphanage where a family has accepted the call to take care of kids who have had it hard. He told me it really woke him up.

3. INVEST IN PEOPLE & COMMUNITY

They invest in people’s futures by growing people from inside the ranks. My friend Adam did not go to college but now runs a free-stander. This is a big deal for someone that may have a blank on the “College Education” part of a resume. Operators make 3 to 5 times what an average small business owner makes. This builds more generous people because of the grace (unmerited favor Chick-fil-A gives). I believe this is one reason Adam fed PATMOS PARK for two years straight. He was investing in his community by building one of the best free bike and skate parks on the east coast, also built on volunteer labor. Talk about seeing a community come together.