

APOSTOLIC PENTECOSTAL THINKING

A Guide to Biblical Strategic Thinking



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*A GUIDE TO BIBLICAL
STRATEGIC THINKING*

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Definition of Strategic Thinking in Greek

The term “strategic” derives from the Greek word στρατηγική (strategikē), which means “the art of the general” or “military command.” It emphasizes the planning and execution of actions to achieve a specific goal, often in the context of warfare or conflict. In a biblical context, strategic thinking involves discerning God’s will and aligning one’s actions with divine purpose to navigate challenges effectively.

Introduction



General George S. Patton, one of the most iconic military leaders of the 20th century, was not only a formidable battlefield commander but also a masterful strategic thinker whose insights and decisions shaped the

course of World War II. Renowned for his bold tactics and aggressive maneuvers, Patton understood that successful warfare extended beyond mere combat; it required a deep comprehension of logistics, enemy psychology, and the broader geopolitical landscape.

His ability to anticipate enemy movements, exploit weaknesses, and adapt to changing circumstances set him apart from many of his contemporaries. Patton's strategic brilliance was evident in pivotal campaigns, such as the rapid advances through North Africa and the liberation of France, where his innovative approaches often turned the tide in favor of the Allies. This introduction to Patton as a strategic thinker reveals not just a military leader, but a visionary who combined audacity with intellect, leaving an indelible mark on military strategy and history.

General George S. Patton, a prominent U.S. Army general during World War II, is known for his bold leadership and strategic insights. The phrase "We fought the wrong enemy" reflects a sentiment that has been attributed to him, particularly regarding the post-war situation in Europe and the relationship with the Soviet Union.

Context and Interpretation

1. Post-War Realities: After the defeat of Nazi Germany, Patton expressed concerns about the Soviet Union's intentions in Europe. He believed that the real threat to freedom and democracy came from the Soviet regime rather than the defeated Axis powers. His comments highlighted his frustration with U.S. policy decisions that seemed to favor cooperation with

the Soviets rather than confronting them.

2. Strategic Concerns: Patton was a strong advocate for a more aggressive stance against the Soviet Union. He felt that the Allies should have continued their military operations to push back against Soviet expansion in Eastern Europe. His views were controversial and went against the prevailing sentiment of the time, which sought to establish a cooperative post-war order.

3. Legacy of Division: Patton's statement can also be interpreted as a reflection on the broader ideological struggle that emerged after World War II. The Cold War marked a significant division between the West and the Soviet bloc, and Patton's foresight about the dangers posed by communism resonates with historical evaluations of that period.

Implications for Today

1. Understanding Enemies: Patton's sentiment serves as a reminder of the importance of understanding who our real adversaries are. In contemporary conflicts, it is crucial to recognize the underlying ideologies and motivations of those we face.

2. Strategic Decision-Making: The discussions surrounding Patton's views highlight the complexities

of military and political strategy. Decisions made during and after conflicts can have long-lasting consequences, and leaders must carefully consider their actions.

3. Lessons in Leadership: Patton's willingness to speak out against prevailing opinions demonstrates the importance of independent thought and the courage to challenge the status quo. Effective leadership often requires a willingness to take risks and advocate for what one believes to be right, even in the face of opposition.

Conclusion

General Patton's assertion that "we fought the wrong enemy" serves as a provocative reflection on the geopolitical landscape of his time and offers valuable lessons for current and future leaders. Understanding the complexities of international relations and the true nature of threats is essential for making informed decisions that promote peace and security.

"My solution to the problem would be to tell them frankly that if they don't clear out their stuff we're going to bomb them back to the Stone Age." (This reflects the Cold War nuclear strategy of "Mutually Assured Destruction")—Curtis LeMay (1940s-1960s)

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- Overview of Apostolic Pentecostal Thinking
- Importance of Strategic Thinking in a Biblical Context

2. Key Components of Strategic Thinking

1. Visioning

- Developing a clear, long-term vision of what success looks like.
- Understanding the broader context and implications of decisions.

2. Analytical Skills

- Analyzing data and information to identify trends, patterns, and insights.
- Evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT analysis) related to a situation.

3. Problem-Solving

- Identifying problems and challenges that need to be addressed.
- Generating creative solutions and evaluating their feasibility.

4. Decision-Making

- Making informed and timely decisions based on available information and analysis.

- Balancing risks and rewards when considering different options.

5. Scenario Planning

- Anticipating potential future scenarios and their implications.
- Developing contingency plans to address various possible outcomes.

6. Systems Thinking

- Understanding how different components of a system interact and influence one another.
- Recognizing interdependencies and how changes in one area can impact others.

7. Collaboration and Communication

- Engaging with stakeholders to gather diverse perspectives and insights.
- Clearly communicating strategic plans and objectives to ensure alignment and buy-in.

8. Adaptability and Flexibility

- Being open to adjusting strategies based on new information or changing circumstances.
- Embracing change as a constant factor in strategic planning.

9. Resource Management

- Identifying and allocating resources (time,

personnel, finances) effectively to achieve strategic goals.

- Understanding the importance of prioritizing initiatives based on strategic objectives.

10. Long-Term Focus

- Keeping an eye on long-term goals while managing short-term tasks and challenges.
- Balancing immediate needs with future aspirations.

11. Steps in Strategic Thinking

1. Define the Objective

- Clearly articulate the goals and desired outcomes.

2. Gather Information

- Collect relevant data, insights, and perspectives that inform decision-making.

3. Analyze the Environment

- Assess internal and external factors that may impact strategic choices.

4. Generate Options

- Brainstorm potential strategies and courses of action.

5. Evaluate Options

- Analyze the pros and cons of each option, considering potential risks and rewards.

6. Select a Strategy

- Choose the most viable option that aligns with the vision and objectives.

7. Develop an Action Plan

- Create a detailed plan outlining steps, timelines, and responsibilities for implementation.

8. Monitor and Adjust

- Continuously assess progress and make adjustments as needed based on feedback and changing circumstances.

12. Cognitive Characteristics of Effective Leaders

- Strategic Thinking
- Long-Term Planning: Thinking several steps ahead and developing strategies.
- Situational Awareness: Quickly assessing changing situations for informed decisions.
- Analytical Skills
- Problem Solving: Analyzing complex problems and devising effective solutions.
- Risk Assessment: Weighing benefits against potential drawbacks.
- Leadership and Decision-Making
- Decisiveness: Making quick, informed decisions in high-pressure situations.
- Team Coordination: Inspiring and leading diverse groups toward common goals.
- Emotional Intelligence
- Interpersonal Skills: Understanding and managing emotions effectively.
- Conflict Resolution: Navigating conflicts and maintaining morale.

- Adaptability
- Flexibility: Changing strategies based on new information.
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- Encouragement to cultivate these skills for personal and communal growth.
- Final thoughts on navigating complexity and achieving long-term goals through biblical principles.

Expanded Exposition of Key Figures

1. Moses

- Role: Prophet and Leader
- Key Battles: Exodus from Egypt, Crossing the Red Sea
- Exposition: Moses is central to the narrative of Israel's liberation. His leadership is marked by divine encounters and strategic planning, particularly in the face of Pharaoh's resistance. His reliance on prayer and God's guidance highlights the importance of seeking divine wisdom in leadership.

2. Joshua

- Role: General and Successor to Moses
- Key Battles: Conquest of Jericho, Battle of Ai
- Exposition: Joshua's leadership exemplifies faith in action. His unconventional strategy of marching around Jericho shows that obedience to God can lead to miraculous outcomes. His ability to inspire the Israelites demonstrates the importance of vision and unity in achieving goals.

3. Gideon

- Role: Judge and Military Leader
- Key Battles: Defeat of the Midianites

- **Exposition:** Gideon's story illustrates divine empowerment and the effectiveness of faith over numbers. His strategic reduction of forces emphasizes that God can achieve victory through the humble and the weak, teaching lessons about reliance on divine strength.

4. Samson

- **Role:** Judge and Warrior
- **Key Battles:** Defeat of the Philistines
- **Exposition:** Samson's life is a complex narrative of strength and weakness. His final act of bringing down the temple symbolizes the potential for redemption and the importance of staying true to one's divine purpose. His story serves as a warning about the consequences of straying from God's commands.

5. David

- **Role:** King and Warrior
- **Key Battles:** Defeat of Goliath, Battles against the Philistines, Amalekites, and others
- **Exposition:** David's rise from shepherd to king is a testament to God's anointing and favor. His military successes, particularly against Goliath, showcase the power of faith and strategic thinking. David's leadership is marked by his deep relationship with God, exemplifying the importance of worship in

leadership.

6. Nehemiah

- Role: Governor and Rebuilder
- Key Battles: Rebuilding of Jerusalem's walls
- Exposition: Nehemiah's leadership in rebuilding Jerusalem after exile highlights the importance of vision, community involvement, and prayer. His strategic planning and ability to inspire others underscore the value of collective effort in achieving restoration.

Conclusion

The prophets and generals of the Old Testament exemplify strategic thinking, leadership, and reliance on God in the face of challenges. Their stories carry profound metaphorical meanings that resonate with contemporary believers, urging them to trust in God's guidance, embrace faith over fear, and recognize the power of collective action. Through these narratives, readers can glean insights into effective leadership and the importance of aligning one's actions with divine purpose, reflecting the essence of Apostolic Pentecostal thinking in the context of biblical strategic leadership.