



Dr. Shikoh Gitau – Qhala
God's Innovation Formula

Good morning, good afternoon and good evening. My name is Doctor Shikoh Gitau. I'm the CEO of Qhala. Qhala is a digital innovation lab based in Nairobi, Kenya in Africa.

I'm very excited about this conversation today and thank you for taking the time to be part of this conversation. I want to talk about **innovation as God's formula**. When talking about innovation, we always think about Silicon Valley, we think about technologies, the computer s

science majors, we talk about people who are billionaires. But what does innovation mean to the church and for the church? What does innovation mean for you in the mission field? I want to talk about **where innovation come from** and **how can I apply it in my church**.

When you go back to the very beginning, Genesis 1. Genesis 1 actually gives us the formula to innovation. It's not computer science, it's not rocket science. It is a very simple formula that God gave to us and I summarize it into three points. It is about **preparation**. It's about **building and scaling** and **commercialization**. And when you read the Bible, you see these other themes through and through. And as I point out to you, I would love for you to be able to point out for yourself where God has said, **be able to prepare, be able to build, be able to scale** and **be able to commercialize** and it's everywhere from the beginning to the end.

My favorite part of the Bible as a creator, as a builder, as an innovator is Genesis 1. And Genesis 1 starts with, "In the beginning God created -in the beginning the earth was empty and void and with no form. And when you think about that, that's what God had to work with, and in many times when we think about innovation and think about your mission field, you are given something to work with, and usually it has no form. It's a lot of chaos. There's no plan to it. Actually, it's something that you might have ignored because you can't see what value can create out of it. Because innovation is about creating of value. So I start with Genesis 1 because I always say, I mean, what kind of chaos was that? Because we know the earth was flowing -in earth. And when you visualize that, you realize that there was a lot of things that just were not in place and what God started by doing this put things in place, preparing, managing the spaces. And what I love is when He says, "Let there be light." And that's the first thing that you speak. You speak to light. You speak ideas into being. You see opportunities, -because light and what innovation is about -a light bulb- is you see opportunities. And that is the light that God spoke into the earth. Let there be light. Think of it as a light bulb.

And then the second thing is, they think, okay, what's the next thing? There's too much water. Let's separate water. There is a bit of water on the ground and there's a bit of water in the sky. Let's separate

that. And the sky was formed. Okay, a bit of organization, and then the next thing is a bit of -too much light- let us like, break this up. Let there be something to rule the day and something to rule the night. And let there be some ground. With all of this happening, you can see a bit of planning. And organization brings a bit of opportunities and with land being available, and skies being available, and the sea being available, there's a lot of opportunities to do stuff. And that's what -when you're looking at where you are at and when you look at yourself, because I always say innovation has to start with yourself. You have to innovate yourself. You have to be able to disrupt yourself. Look at opportunities that were obvious and dismissed or if there were no obvious opportunity, but just a bit of organization, you're able to find opportunities. And for me, this is why I love the Bible. It's when there was a bit of land, God said let vegetation grow, and then let there be fish, and birds in the sky, and all things are looking starting to look up. And when all these things were done, then let there be animals, something had to feed the other. So animals came by because they had something to eat. Vegetation was there. They had something to eat. And yet, my favorite part of the Bible is when God said, let us create man in our own image. Just create man in our own image and likeness. We always grace over that verse of the Bible and we use it a lot because we want to be able to use it for the powerful affirmations that we give ourselves in the morning, or you're having an affirmation of someone in the Bible, but this is the part where actually innovation was actually given to us by God. That particular verse in the Bible is where innovation -and I believe its Genesis 1:26- is where innovation was actually given to us by God. Because God said, "Let us create man in our own image..." not only in our own image, "...in our own likeness." And likeness means, in our own behavior and mannerism. And the beginning of the Bible, the first 26 verses was God creating and innovating. So God did put creation and innovation in us. So we are able to create and bring things to life. We're able to organize. We are able to build and able to commercialize.

And you ask me, commercializing skill, what does that mean? When God said be fruitful and multiply, we talk about skill being able to use this product in multiple places, in different languages, in different geographies, in different age structures, that is skill. But also, skill means being able to be used by a lot of people. So when God says, 'let us -be fruitful and multiply,' means, "Scale up, guys. Scale up, fill up the earth." Yeah, that is being able to scale.

And how does commercialization come in place? Humans were the only people, the only creation that God said, "Subdue the earth." "Make the earth create after its own." I mean, He gave us rulership over all the creation. And that's commercialization. It's adding value. God said, I have gotten to this place in creation, next part is you to co-create with me. And when you think about that, you think you need these special abilities? And yes, this Bezaleel, who is one of my favorite characters in the Bible, I believe he's in Exodus, the chapter is 31. And Bezaleel was a guy God created with skills in him to be able to be an artisan and a designer, being a creative [man].

So God creates us with all these things in us. And when we look at people like Bezaleel, when we look at someone like Solomon, when we look down the Bible to people like Luke. Yes, Doctor Luke -as people call him- is God giving this ability to be able to create and create new things. And I believe all of us, if we ask God to secret things, He's able to give us. And that's the formula, the creation formula, that is the innovation formula that God has given us. It is not something outwardly. It's something that God -it's in the Bible. And if you look at all the things when the temple was being created, the first Temple -the Tabernacle in Exodus- and later on when Solomon was doing it, and later on the different portions of the temple, there was a formula -its planned.

Be able to build. Be able to scale. Be able to commercialize. Always add value. And that's my takeaway. When you're looking at your mission field, look at those opportunities that are often dismissed and plan, organize them, then be able to build something out of them. Be able to scale them and be able to commercialize. And commercialization does not mean just making money out of it but being able to add value. Thank you very much for being part of this conversation and I hope to hear more from you and a lot of questions, you're welcome to send them to me. Thank you very much and God bless! Bye.