



Course 7, Session 4 Student Notes: Expansion, Enlarge the Tent

Growing the Customer You Already Have

Big Idea: Your most likely next customer is the one you already have. The steadiest growth comes from serving existing customers more deeply over time.

How to use these notes. These are yours to study on your own, before or after the session. Read each section slowly. Under every principle there is a **Notes** space to write what stands out to you, and a **Reflect** question to answer honestly in writing. Keep your Bible nearby. Take about 30 minutes, and end in prayer. Bring your notes and questions to the group.

Open in Prayer

Before you begin, pray this simple prayer, or your own: “Lord, You who told Your people to enlarge the tent and strengthen the stakes, teach me to grow from the strong center You have already given me, to serve the people I already have more deeply, and to grow them without ever pressuring them or selling them what they do not need. Amen.”

The Scripture for This Session

Read these slowly, out loud if you can:

- **Isaiah 54:2 to 3**, “Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left.”
- **Genesis 26:12**, “Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him.”

Reflect: If your very next best sale is almost certainly someone already on your list, someone you have already served and already earned trust with, would you spend your week differently? How?

The Big Picture

Most of us pour nearly all of our energy into strangers we have not met yet, chasing the next new name, while the people who already know us, already trust us, and already pay us sit quietly, ready to grow, and we barely speak to them. Last session we learned to rush a new customer to their first real win, because a customer who never reaches value drifts away. Tonight we take the next step on the right side of the bowtie. Once a customer has reached first value and is thriving, the question becomes how we grow that relationship faithfully over the years.

Scripture gives us the picture in a single command: enlarge the place of your tent. This session is about turning to face the people already inside your tent and learning to grow the relationship you already have instead of always running outside to find a new one. Done rightly, that is not only the kinder path, it is the steadier and more profitable one, and it is the way God Himself grows His people.

Principle 1: Growing an Existing Customer Costs Far Less Than Winning a Stranger.

Start with a number that quietly runs almost every healthy recurring business, even though most owners never think about it. It costs far more to win a brand new customer than it does to grow one you already have. Think about everything that goes into a new customer: the advertising, the outreach, the first calls, the explaining, the convincing, the earning of trust from zero. Now think about a customer who already knows you, already trusts you, already sees the value, and already sends you money every month. To serve that person more deeply, you do not have to earn trust from scratch. It is already there.

And yet most of us behave as though the only way to grow is to keep dragging in strangers, while we let the people who already love us go quietly underserved. That is backwards. The steadiest, most faithful growth in a recurring business does not come mainly from new names. It comes from serving the people already in your tent more and more over time. The warmest, most trusting, most likely next sale you have is almost certainly someone you have already served, someone quietly ready to grow if you would only turn and offer them the honest next thing they need.

Reflect: Be honest, how much of your energy goes to chasing brand new customers versus growing the ones you already have? What would change if you rebalanced it?

Notes:

Principle 2: Enlarge the Tent You Have. Do Not Abandon It.

Hear the word God gives His people in Isaiah 54. "Enlarge the place of thy tent ... spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left." Look carefully at that picture, because it is not the one we usually imagine when we think about growth. God does not say abandon your tent and go build a different one somewhere else. He says take the tent you already have and

enlarge it. Stretch the curtains. Lengthen the cords. It is growth outward from a center that already exists and is already strong.

This is exactly how a recurring business is meant to grow. Not by walking away from your current customers to chase new ones, but by deepening and widening what you already have, so it can hold more life. The people already in your tent are not yesterday's news. They are the strong center from which everything grows.

Amazon built one of the most powerful expansion engines in business history this way, not by endlessly chasing brand new shoppers, but by deepening its relationship with the customers it already had. A Prime member who started out buying an occasional book gradually found fast shipping, then streaming video, then music, then grocery benefits, more and more of life genuinely served in one place, and Prime members spend far more per year and stay far longer as a result. That is enlarging the tent in the modern world.

Reflect: Where are you chasing brand new customers while the people already in your tent sit underserved and ready to grow? Name one group you have been neglecting.

Notes:

Principle 3: Expansion Is Offering the Honest Next Thing. It Is Service, Never Squeezing.

Here is what expansion actually means in practice, and this is holy ground because it can be twisted. Expansion means offering your existing customers more genuine value over time, the next real thing they need: a higher level, an added service, a deeper help, the natural next step in their journey with you. A member who has outgrown the starter level and is ready for more. A client who started with one service and now genuinely needs a second. A student who finished the first program and is hungry for what comes after. When you offer that next thing, and it truly serves them, you are enlarging the tent and growing your revenue at the same time, honestly, because you gave more value and received more in return. The customer is better off, and so are you.

But hear the warning plainly, because the world's version of this goes rotten fast. Expansion is not squeezing. It is not pressuring a happy customer into buying things they do not need just to lift your numbers. The moment you start selling your existing customers what serves you at their expense, you have stopped enlarging the tent and started exploiting the people in it. The biblical test is simple and searching: does this next offer genuinely serve the customer, is it the honest next thing they actually need? If yes, offer it with confidence, because withholding it would be its own failure of service. If no, do not touch it, no matter what it would do for your revenue. Faithful expansion always leaves the customer more helped, never more used.

Reflect: What is the honest next thing one of your best customers would genuinely benefit from? Hold it up to the test: does it truly serve them, or mostly serve you?

Notes:

Principle 4: Strengthen the Stakes First, and Watch Whether Customers Grow More Valuable Over Time.

Notice the order of God's instructions in Isaiah 54, because it is deliberate and wise. Before He talks about breaking forth on the right hand and on the left, before any outward growth at all, He says strengthen thy stakes. Lengthen the cords, yes, reach wider, but strengthen the stakes first. A tent that stretches wider without stronger stakes collapses in the first strong wind. In business terms: do not chase expansion while your existing customers are underserved and your foundation is weak. Keep your current customers genuinely thriving, deepen the relationship, make the stakes hold, and only then stretch the tent wider. Growth built on a neglected base falls down.

There is one number the people who study recurring revenue watch above almost all others, and it measures exactly this. They call it net revenue retention, and here is what it really asks: are your existing customers worth more to you over time, or less? Picture a business that never signs a single new customer for a whole year. If, at the end of that year, the customers it already had are worth more than they were at the start, because they grew, expanded, and deepened, that business is healthy and enlarging its tent. If those same customers are worth less, shrinking and drifting, then no amount of new names at the front door will save it, because the tent is leaking faster than it fills. A business whose customers expand year over year breaks forth on the right hand and on the left, growing from a strong, well kept center, exactly as Isaiah said.

Reflect: Are your existing customers, on the whole, worth more to you over time or less, and why? Is your base strong and well served, or are you reaching for new growth on a shaky foundation?

Notes:

The Story: Enlarge the Place of Your Tent (Isaiah 54:2 to 3)

Read the passage. "Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited." God is speaking to a people who felt small, barren, and forgotten, and He tells them to get ready for growth so large they will need a bigger tent to hold it. But the how is the whole lesson.

First, He says enlarge, not abandon. Your growth is meant to come from what you already have, extended and deepened, not from constantly discarding your current customers to chase a shinier crowd. Second, notice the order: strengthen the stakes before you stretch the cords. Keep your existing customers thriving before you reach for more, because expansion on a neglected base collapses. Third, notice the promise: "thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left." When you enlarge faithfully from a strong center, the growth is not

narrow or fragile, it spreads in every direction. That is the quiet math of net revenue retention lived out in Scripture. And catch the last line, “make the desolate cities to be inhabited.” Faithful expansion fills empty places with life. When you grow the right way, deepening real service to real people, you are not just adding revenue, you are bringing more help and value into the world. That is what enlarging the tent is for.

Reflect: Where is God asking you to enlarge and strengthen what you already have, the customers, relationships, and gifts already in your tent, rather than always reaching for something new?

Notes:

Put It Into Practice

1. Build a customer ladder. Pick one type of existing customer you already serve. Write, in one line, what that customer buys from you today. Under it, write the honest next thing that customer will naturally need as they grow, the next level up, the added service, the deeper help.

2. Apply the service test. Hold your expansion offer up to one searching question and write your honest answer: “Does this genuinely serve the customer, or mostly serve me?” If it fails, cross it out and find one that passes.

3. This week’s assignment. Reach out to one current customer this week, not to upsell aggressively, but to ask, genuinely, what they need next, and then listen. Come like someone enlarging a tent to hold family, not like someone squeezing a stranger. Ask how things are going, where they are headed, and what would help them most right now. Write down what you hear. Very often the honest next offer is sitting right there in their answer.

Go Deeper (Optional)

- **Read:** *The Membership Economy* by Robbie Kellman Baxter, and *The Forever Transaction* by the same author on relationships that deepen over time.
- **Listen:** the *Winning by Design Podcast*, any episode on expansion or net revenue retention.

- **Study:** Isaiah 54:1 to 5; Genesis 26:12 to 14.
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Close in Prayer

“Father, thank You for the people You have already entrusted to us, the customers who already know us, already trust us, and are already in our tent. Forgive us for chasing strangers while neglecting the ones You have given. Teach us to enlarge faithfully, to strengthen our stakes before we stretch our cords, to offer real value and never a squeeze, and to grow from a strong center that reflects Your own way of growing us. Let every enlargement of our tent hold more life and more help for the people we serve, and provide steadily for the mission. In Jesus’ name, Amen.”

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