

CLASS 16

Building and Maintaining Trust

CLASS OVERVIEW

In this class we will review:

- The meaning and definition of trust.
- Why a leader must be trustable.
- How to develop others' trust.
- The importance of being able to trust your brethren.

Opening Group Questions:

- Why must people be able to **trust** their leaders?
- What happens when leaders lose or never develop the trust of their followers?

"The more consistent we are in our behavior over time, the more other people of integrity will know they can count on us."

Lawrence, B. (1999). *Effective Pastoring* (p. 124). USA: Word Publishing.

I. Introduction

"Leadership surveys show that trust is the single most important factor on which followers evaluate a leader" (Chaleff, I., (1995). *The Courageous Follower* (p. 27). San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.).

As the word itself implies, being "trustworthy" involves being "worthy of" one's trust. Synonyms for the word trustworthy include: accurate, always there, authentic, believable, credible, dependable, ethical, exact, honest, honorable, level-headed, mature, principled, responsible, righteous, rock, saint, sensible, steadfast, tried, true, trustable, truthful, unflinching, upright (*Roget's Thesaurus* online).

Trust is:

- "a subtle state between two people formed from an assessment of each other's internal motives and external actions—if either are questionable trust does not gel" (Chaleff, p. 28).
- "confidence earned from others through an intimate observation of our character and actions over an extended period of time" (Lawrence, p. 124).

"If you are a leader who combines high ethics with a genuine concern for others, persona competence, and fairness in the exercise of power, you will inspire trust. Without trust, the contract between you and your followers collapses. Your ability to make a difference will be greatly diminished" (p. 65).

Bethel, S.M. (1990). *Making a Difference: Twelve Qualities That Make You a Leader*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

II. Biblical Examples of Trust

MICAH 7:1-7

1 Tim 6:17—We are not to trust in uncertain riches but *in the living God* who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

* Micah 7:5—Do not put trust in a friend—the context of this verse indicates that in the end-times, people will be so "bad" that no one will be able to be trusted.

Matt 7:20—We will know God's people (and those not of Him) by their fruits.

Mark 10:24—People who trust in riches have great difficulty entering the Kingdom of God.

→ 1 TIM 6:17

- X John 5:45—The Jews trusted in the word of Moses and his teachings (rightly).
- 2 Cor 1:9—We should NOT trust in ourselves, but *in God*.
- X Phil 2:24—Paul trusted *in the Lord*.
- Psalm 18:2—David also put his trust *in God*.

→ John 5:45-47 *believing God implies believing his word.*

Paul's Example of Building and Maintaining Trust:

1 Cor 11:1—Paul asked the Church to imitate him, as he imitated Christ.

Paul's request was for the Church to observe his behavior and follow him—putting their trust in him to lead, as well as following his example.

2 Cor 10:7-18—Paul “gently” outlines his authority in an effort to retain the trust of the brethren, and to demonstrate his “fruits.”

2 Cor 11:22-33—Paul reviewed his sufferings and trials for the truth.

2 Cor 12:5-10—Paul shared the story of his physical infirmity.

Paul recounts these events to make himself appear “real” and “human” to the Corinthians. He used these examples to build their trust, by showing that he too had to suffer and overcome. These were situations that illustrated Paul's fruits—the only real indications that we are given of someone's conversion.

III. Trust-Building Actions (Handout 1)

Source: Lawrence, B. (1999). *Effective Pastoring*. USA: Word Publishing.

Group Question: What can a leader do to win the trust of those he or she serves?

A. **Grow in character**

When leaders are observed growing in grace and knowledge, the brethren are more likely to follow suit. They are also more apt to trust, because they see leaders “walking the walk.”

1 Tim 4:15—Paul admonished Timothy to grow in such a way that his progress would be evident to all.

1 Tim. 4:12-16

B. **Deal with Character Flaws**

Our character flaws are usually evident to more people than just us. As we examine ourselves and see flaws, we must deal with them and change. As we make changes for the better, people will begin to trust because they see us personally overcoming, with God's help.

X 1 Cor 11:27-31—We should examine ourselves and work to change.

1 Cor. 11:31; 2 Cor. 13:5

C. **Live the Truth**

Christ repeatedly condemned the Pharisees because of their hypocrisy—they preached one message and did not follow it themselves. As we are seen *living what we preach* and doing what we say, trust in us will begin to grow.

Matt 23:27-28
Luke 4:4—Live by every word of God.

1 John 2:6—We ought to walk just as Christ walked.

D. **Repent and Be Humble**

God's people also appreciate leaders who are humble and willing to admit when they are wrong, and are willing to change.

Isaiah 66:2—God looks on the humble.

Acts 2:38—We should all *continue* to repent as we did at baptism.

E. **Love and Serve**

People care about those who care about them.

X 1 Peter 5:5—Be subject to each other and clothed with humility.

X John 15:13—Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends.

1 John 3:14—“We know that we have passed from death to life, because **we love the brethren...**”

X Matt 22:39—Love your neighbor as yourself.

Galatians 5:13-15

Rom. 12:9-10, 21

F. Ask for Help

When we acknowledge our limitations by asking those in the congregation to occasionally help us, it not only involves them in our lives, but it also allows them to serve us. We trust others to help us and this builds their trust in us in return—trust reciprocates trust.

X 1 Thes 5:25—Paul asked the Church at Thessalonica to pray for him, Sylvanus and Timothy.

X Hebrews 13:18-19—Paul asked the Hebrews to pray for him so that he would be able to return to them sooner.

Phil 2:22—Paul allowed different people to serve *with* him, including, in this case, Timothy.

Eph. 6:18-19

G. Draw on Members' Gifts

Asking others to serve according to their gifts or skills and background is important. It makes them feel involved, demonstrates your trust in them, and helps them feel connected to the work and the Church.

Rom 12:3-8—We all have different gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Rom 16:1-2—Phoebe (the deaconess) was a helper of many and served the Church in Cenchrea.

Acts 6:1-7—Deacons were ordained in order to help care for the widows and Church affairs.

H. Lead by Serving

X Gal 5:13—By love, serve each other.

X 2 Tim 1:13—Fold fast the pattern of sound words that you were taught.

Mark 10:45—Christ Himself came to serve and lead through His service—"not to be ministered unto but to minister." *Mark 10:35-45*

X Matt 20:27—The greatest among you must first be your servant.

"When we communicate our vision in appropriate ways and do not have hidden agendas, which reflect a self-serving power play on our part, we build trust."

Lawrence, (1999). *Effective Pastoring* (p. 136). USA: Word Publishing.

Seven Actions Guaranteed to Earn Trust:

1. Always be on time.
2. If you make a promise, keep it.
3. If you start something, finish it.
4. Remember to say *please* and *thank you*.
5. Spend time together—getting to know and develop relationships with the brethren. (*communicate*)
6. Focus on purpose—the purpose of our calling.
- X 7. Build faith memories—spend time together building memories that relate to the Church and the truth of God.

Make sure what you say is true.

Adapted from: Lawrence, B. (1999). *Effective Pastoring*. USA: Word Publishing.

IV. Conclusion

Godly leaders have learned to trust God.

~~True and effective godly leaders are worthy of trust—they are "trustworthy." They consistently exhibit fruits of obedience to God—overcoming, weathering the spiritual storms, being steadfast in the truth and keeping their eyes focused on the Kingdom of God. Godly leaders learn to trust God's people, who in turn will begin to trust them. Godly leaders are humble and desire trust for godly reasons. Godly leaders are able to earn and maintain the trust of the brethren.~~

Godly leaders prove themselves worthy of trust.

Godly leaders build mutual trust with others who are trustworthy.

Optional Homework for Next Class: (choose one assignment to complete)

- With your spouse and/or other Church members, discuss why it is important for a leader to delegate responsibilities to and among other individuals.
- What are several reasons for delegation?
- Do a brief Bible study and identify examples of Bible leaders who set good examples of delegation.
- Additionally, come up with at least five different ways that leaders can share or delegate some of their responsibilities.