

Former US President Dwight Eisenhower asserted, "The supreme quality of a leader is unquestionable integrity." Confusion develops when no one knows where the leader stands or what the organization stands for. This leads to conflicts, indecision and rivalry. These problems are prevented when the leader, and the organization have a strong sense of direction, of right and wrong, and **the honesty and courage to act on these values.**

Source: Kouzes, J., Posner, B. (1995). *The Leadership Challenge*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Honesty has everything to do with "telling the truth" and avoiding lying. But what does God say about honesty?

Col 3:9—Paul told the Colossians not to lie to each other, in keeping with the Ninth Commandment.

1 Tim 2:2—The Apostle Paul admonished Timothy to encourage the brethren to pray for their leaders, so that they could lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all Godliness and **honesty** (KJV).

Luke 8:15—Christ admonished us to have an **honest** and good heart (KJV).

Acts 6:3—When the apostles ordained seven deacons, they were men of **honest report** (KJV).

2 Cor 13:7—Paul admonished the Corinthians to do what was **honest** (KJV).

John 18:37—Christ noted to Pilate that everyone who is **of the truth** would hear His voice.

2 Tim 4:3—Paul also warned Timothy that in the end times, people who would be deceived would not desire leaders who espouse the truth, but rather leaders who would tell them "what they want to hear."

Isaiah 30:8-13—God promises to punish Israel because of their dishonesty and lack of moral character.

Phil 4:8—Think on things that are truthful.

### The Challenge of Ethical Leadership

Living a life of strong ethics is a considerable challenge. Situations we encounter every day tempt us to take the "easy way out," to compromise, and to bend our principles. The failure to identify, develop and live by high ethical standards is the undoing of individuals and the demise of organizations and nations. We are not born with a sense of morality—it must be taught and developed. This is why God commanded parents and grandparents to teach their children His ways always (Deut 4:9-10, Psalm 78:5-8).

"If people can't trust the word of their leaders, whom can they trust? If leaders lie or handle the truth carelessly, what kind of example do they set for those they lead?"

Youssef, M. (1986). *The Leadership Style of Jesus* (p. 75). USA: SP Publications.

## V. Conclusion

God expects His leaders to develop and maintain His character. We are commanded not only to "be perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect" (Matt 5:48), but to also allow Christ's mind to be in us (Phil 2:5) and walk as Christ walked (1 John 2:6).

Developing and maintaining godly character in Satan's world is a "full time job" for a Christian. We must constantly struggle to overcome and involve our Father in Heaven in this process. And we must NOT become lax in using the tools that God put at our disposal (prayer, Bible study, fasting and meditation).

"It [character] develops from the consistent application of moral values and ethical behavior throughout one's... career."

Source: Puryer, E.F. Jr. (2000). *American Generalship* (p. 360). Novato, CA: Presidio Press, Inc.

Only through the regular use of God's spiritual tools can we maintain a close relationship with our Creator and develop more of His character, ultimately making us more useful leaders of His people.

Additionally, godly leaders never compromise truth and what is right. They live a godly life EVERY DAY. For the character of a leader, compromise is a harbinger of failure. Successful godly leaders constantly strive to overcome and when they do fall short, repent whole-heartedly, and get back on the path to the Kingdom of God.