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MONDAY MANNA
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TOTAL TRUST TAKES TIME

By Jim Langley

There was a time when a simple handshake was as good as a contractual agreement signed by two or more parties. For the most part, those days have been gone for a long, long time. In fact, even signed contracts are often broken and contested more than we might imagine.

As a result, in the 21st century workplace we must address an increasing general lack of trust in both our professional and personal lives. Over my 50-plus years of working experience in business, I have seen a dramatic shift in how business and personal interactions and agreements are perceived.

Total trust takes time. There is no shortcut to building and maintaining trust, so I believe we must get back to the basic principles presented to us in the Book of books, the Bible, which I trust completely. It teaches how we should be concerned with the well-being of others, as well as our own interests.

During my career in the insurance business, I have experienced firsthand the value of seeking a “win-win” approach in all my business dealings. Participating in team sports early in my life helped me develop such thoughts conceptually. However, the greatest impact has come from learning, understanding, and following the precepts found in God’s Word.

The prophet Isaiah had a good grasp of the concept of trust nearly 3,000 years ago. The timeless words of the Old Testament book of Isaiah continue to ring true today. Isaiah 2:22 advises, “Stop trusting in man, who has but a breath in his nostrils. Of what account is he?” That sums up why total trust takes time. Humankind’s problem is sin, including the universal tendency to focus on self. Then, in Isaiah 12:2 we see the contrast: “Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord, is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.” It is not a mistake that Isaiah repeats His name twice. Nothing was more important to the 8th century B.C. prophet than God Almighty.

“Where do you place your trust?” I am not saying no one deserves to be trusted, but we need to be wary of who receives our trust – including ourselves – and consider personal motives. Apart from a life surrendered to God and His control, we may discover that we are not totally trustworthy, or even capable of trusting our thoughts and actions.

Even if we have a right relationship with our Father in Heaven, we still must deal with our sin nature – which some translations of the Bible call “the flesh” – for as long as we are here on this planet. How can we learn to become more trustworthy, and more trusting of others? I have

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found it helpful to surround myself with a small group of godly men who have demonstrated, over time, that I can trust them for help and counsel me in working through important life decisions. I have learned to rely on my wife's wisdom and insights for dealing with many personal decisions as well.

One of my favorite verses in the Scriptures speaks to the issue of trustworthiness. In Psalm 20:7, King David of Israel declares: "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God." That is where I have been placing my trust for years, and God has never let me down. If you have not already done so, please consider placing your trust in the Lord, who sees, knows, and controls all that exists. He has been dealing with His creation since its very beginning – and doing it well.

© 2022, all rights reserved. Jim Langley has been writing for more than 30 years while working as a life and health insurance agent. In recent years, his passion has turned to writing about his relationship with God. His goal is to encourage others to draw near to Him as well. A long-time member of CBMC, he started writing "Fourth Quarter Strategies" in 2014.

Reflection/Discussion Questions

1. How would you assess the level of trustworthiness in the marketplace in general, based on your experience?
2. Do you find it easy – or difficult – to trust colleagues and coworkers, as well as people with whom you regularly transact business? Explain your answer.
3. If you can think of someone in whom you have been able to place a high level of trust, what are some of their traits or characteristics that you feel make them trustworthy?
4. When people say, "Trust God," what does that mean to you? How would you describe your level of trust in God – if at all? What factors have influenced your ability to do as the verse from the Psalms says, to "trust in the name of the Lord our God"?

NOTE: If you have a Bible and would like to read more, consider the following passages: Psalm 25:1-5; Proverbs 3:5-6, 22:17-19; John 12:35-36; Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 4:1-4

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