

# How to Become Trustworthy

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

A. Psalm 15:1-5

B. The Little Boy Who Cried "Wolf!" by Aesop: There once was a shepherd boy who was bored as he sat on the hillside watching the village sheep. To amuse himself he took a great breath and sang out, "Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is chasing the sheep!" The villagers came running up the hill to help the boy drive the wolf away. But when they arrived at the top of the hill, they found no wolf. The boy laughed at the sight of their angry faces. "Don't cry 'wolf', shepherd boy," said the villagers, "when there is no wolf!" They went grumbling back down the hill. Later, the boy sang out again, "Wolf! Wolf! The wolf is chasing the sheep!" To his naughty delight, he watched the villagers run up the hill to help him drive the wolf away. When the villagers saw no wolf they sternly said, "Save your frightened song for when there is really something wrong! Don't cry 'wolf' when there is NO wolf!" But the boy just grinned and watched them go grumbling down the hill once more. Later, he saw a real wolf prowling about his flock. Alarmed, he leaped to his feet and sang out as loudly as he could, "Wolf! Wolf!" But the villagers thought he was trying to fool them again, and so they didn't come. At sunset, everyone wondered why the shepherd boy hadn't returned to the village with their sheep. They went up the hill to find the boy. They found him weeping. "There really was a wolf here! The flock has scattered! I cried out, 'Wolf!' Why didn't you come?" An old man tried to comfort the boy as they walked back to the village. "We'll help you look for the lost sheep in the morning," he said, putting his arm around the youth, "Nobody believes a liar... even when he is telling the truth!"

1. Samuel Johnson once pointed out, "We are inclined to believe those whom we do not know because they have never deceived us."
2. Sadly, this is an accurate commentary on some of the persons in our lives; perhaps, we are this kind of person in others' lives.
3. Sometimes, the longer we know someone, the more distrustful we become as a result of what they have or have not said and done.

C. The principle is trustworthiness - Luke 16:10-12

1. Trustworthiness is not based on any single moment in our lives, but on the legacy of reliability we have accumulated over time.
2. Many believe that being trusted is a right; trust is never a right; it is a condition that is earned.
3. "Don't you trust me?!" Some are quite offended when not trusted without an established pattern of good works.
4. Have we shown a pattern of dependability and reliability in the past?
5. Why would one expect a person who is often late to be on time for a critical appointment?
6. Why would one expect the truth from someone who has shown himself to be willing to lie if he thinks it will benefit him?
7. "Trust is built with consistency." (Lincoln Chafee)
8. "Whoever is careless with the truth in small matters cannot be trusted with important matters." (Albert Einstein)

- D. God set the standard of trustworthiness - 1Kings 8:56
  - 1. Joseph modeled that standard for all of us - Gen. 39:7-9

## **I. GOD IS FAITHFUL**

- A. He proved His faithfulness in keeping His promises - Heb. 10:23
- B. He has shown us His steadfastness - Heb. 6:17-19
- C. We can confidently commit our lives to Him - 1Peter 4:19
- D. His children must be just as trustworthy - 3John 5; Rev. 2:10

## **II. TRUE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IS WORTHY OF TRUST**

- A. In Business
  - 1. Stewards are required to be faithful - 1Cor. 4:2
  - 2. Not just when someone is looking - Eph. 6:5-8
  - 3. God cannot tolerate a dishonest business man - Prov. 11:1
- B. In Marriage
  - 1. A component of love is a love for truth - 1Cor. 13:4-8
  - 2. Marriage is a covenant to be kept - Mal. 2:13-16
- C. In Speech
  - 1. Faithful in word, in conversation - 1Tim. 4:12
  - 2. Letting our yes and no mean precisely that - James 5:12
- D. In Service to God
  - 1. Faithful men - 2Tim. 2:2
  - 2. Another name for Christians is the faithful - Col. 1:2
  - 3. The faithful servant - Matt. 24:45-47
  - 4. Jesus rules over the faithful - Rev. 17:14

### **Conclusion:**

A. To all of ancient China, the Great Wall seemed an excellent way to gain security and protection from invaders. So at great expense and loss of life, it was finally built. But within a few years after its completion, it was breached three times by the enemy. It was breached, not by failure of the wall itself, but by the bribery of the gatekeepers. It was the human element that proved to be the weakness in the Great Wall of China. What collapsed was not the stone, but the character of men. The test of a wall, or an oak tree, or a man is: How sound is the heart?

- 1. It is critical that we develop trustworthiness; without it, we are nothing.
- 2. As we trust in God - Psalm 9:10, 56:3, 13:5
- 3. So must we become trustworthy to all others - Psalm 15:1-5