

The power of trust

This article is from the "Among Friends" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, churchofgodbig sandy.com. It was posted for the weekend of March 19-20, 2011.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—On Jan. 22, 2011, I gave a sermon titled "The Power of Trust."

I began the sermon with the following three concepts.

- Although I definitely believe that our ultimate trust should be in God, I believe it is psychologically healthy for us to learn to trust other people—at a certain level.
- Are you teaching your children to be careful about the people they should choose to trust?
- Are you teaching your children to trust you?

Next, I proceeded to show a pyramid of the ideas of liking a person, respecting a person and trusting a person.

Of those three ideas, the least important is liking a person. You can like a person without respecting and trusting him.

The next level is respecting a person. You can respect a person without fully trusting him. Even if you do not respect an individual, it is emotionally healthy for you to look for some respectable facets about that person—to help you avoid bitterness.

The ultimate part of a relationship is trusting a person. God does not expect you to mindlessly trust everyone. In fact, you have probably discovered that trust is earned. (For the record, just as Christ was willing to die for people He did not trust, we also will be kind to people who have not earned our trust.)

We all know that we can trust the Father and Son. However, I hope that you can also name physical people whom you can trust in this life.

As we end this article, let's focus on the things we can do to improve our relationships.

- Are you likable?

It is important for us to show ourselves friendly (Proverbs 18:24).

We would also be wise if we decided to be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger (James 1:19).

■ Are you respectable?

We should seek to live a life of integrity (Proverbs 11:3; 19:1).

When Tabitha (Dorcas) died, the people showed their love and respect for her (Acts 9:36-41).

■ Are you trustworthy?

The Bible has some great reminders of people who proved themselves trustworthy.

Jonathan was a trustworthy friend to David (1 Samuel 20:1-42).

Priscilla and Aquila had a history of being trustworthy friends to Paul (Romans 16:3-4).

One of my favorites was Onesiphorus. When Paul was having severe trials and people were avoiding him, Onesiphorus went out of his way to support him (2 Timothy 1:16-17). Onesiphorus was a trustworthy friend to Paul.

How many people have learned to trust you?