

*The* **ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook**  
***“Barnabas”* Edition**

*Seven Core Values that Impact Every Leader-to-Follower Relationship:*  
HEART-MISSION-APPROACH-STABILITY-LIFESTYLE-FORTITUDE-WORLDVIEW

**Prologue: The ESSENCE of Leadership: Relationships**

By

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## **Prologue: The ESSENCE of Leadership: Relationships**

Relationships can make or break a leader! The health and vitality of a leader's relationships with followers often determine one's success or failure. Leadership moves from theory to practice only in the context of human relationships. If asked to characterize leadership in a word, I would have to say: "Relationships!" A person cannot be developed or evaluated as a leader apart from followers; for without followers, a person has no one to lead. The Leader-to-follower relationship constitutes the ESSENCE of leadership.

*The ENTRUSTED Leader* approach to leading promotes healthy and vital leader-to-follower relationships. The primary responsibility for creating and sustaining vigorous relationships resides with the leader. Followers naturally respond to how a leader approaches them. An Entrusted Leader views all relationships as opportunities to serve others, not be served by them. The Entrusted Leader approach presupposes that others will follow voluntarily as the leader seeks to serve, nurture and guide them. The selfless attitudes and actions of an ENTRUSTED Leader promote the growth of healthy and vital leader-to-follower relationships.

Solomon clearly understood the wisdom of evaluating a ruler based on how people responded to a leader's approach:

*"When the righteous thrive, the people rejoice;  
when the wicked rule, the people groan."  
(Proverbs 29:2 NIV)*

**Do followers rejoice or groan in response to your approach to leadership?**

The manner in which a follower responds to a leader's approach accurately characterizes the vigor and functionality of the leader-to-follower relationship. Rejoicing indicates healthy and vital relationships, while groaning indicates weak and dysfunctional relationships. An ENTRUSTED Leader selflessly applies God's truth and wisdom to all circumstances, resulting in followers who rejoice. Conversely, followers groan under the oppression of a leader who ignores God's Word, wields power and authority, and orchestrates all circumstances to benefit self. The evaluation of a leader's effectiveness cannot be separated from how would-be followers relate and respond. Relationships with would-be followers will make or break a leader!

God desires and intends to use every follower of Christ as a leader. Those who choose to follow the path of leadership blazed by Jesus Christ can rest assured that God wants to use them to positively influence the lives of others through healthy relationships. God calls every follower of Christ to the role of a leader. The leaders who God intends to use come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes: a single parent leading an only child, a CEO leading a multi-billion dollar company, a teacher instructing a classroom of students, a coach developing a team, an elected official serving constituents, a pastor discipling a church, a friend encouraging a friend, just to name a few. God calls followers of Jesus Christ to lead others.

Furthermore, in His timing, God will ENTRUST to a Christ follower all required to lead others according to the Lord's desires and intentions. God uniquely creates and specifically endows every follower of Christ with certain skills and abilities. Wise leaders recognize the presence of intelligent design in the makeup of their talents. One might argue that the single most important function of a leader involves faithfully investing

God's entrusted talents into the lives of one's followers. The author coined the term *ENTRUSTED Leader* in order to capture the essence of an approach to leadership available to anyone who recognizes God's entrusted talents and desires to faithfully invest them into the lives of other people.

A vast network of potential followers encircles every follower of Christ who leads others. This follower network provides a leader with a vast array of relational investment opportunities. Followers come in many forms. The most obvious include people for whom a leader has primary responsibility, such as: a direct report at work, a child in a family, a student in a classroom, a player on a team, or the constituency of an elected official.

Sometimes, however, others not directly under a person's authority also choose to follow. For example, a superior may find that a wise course of action involves defaulting to a subordinate's lead in a given situation. In the same way, many circumstances arise where a friend chooses to follow a peer's leadership voluntarily. The potential network of followers extends beyond those under a leader's direct line of authority and proceeds outward in all directions to everyone with whom the leader has a direct and/or indirect relationship.

Every person in a leader's network of followers represents a potential "relational" investment opportunity. A "financial" investor balances variables such as available assets, risk, potential returns, and a mix of investment opportunities (stocks, bonds, precious metals, real-estate, etc.) to build a financial portfolio. Most financial investors strive to achieve a maximum return on investment (ROI) within the bounds of such variables. Likewise a "relational" investor should strive to achieve a maximum ROI on

the talents entrusted to their life by God. A leader can only realize a superior return by investing these talents in the lives of followers. When reading *The ENTRUSTED Leader*, consider how every truth and principle discussed might find an application within the context of a leader-to-follower relationship.

A leader has many talents available to invest in followers, such as: time, energy, wisdom, compassion, experience, knowledge, and expertise. In order to calculate a “relational” ROI, one must consider how these invested talents benefit the follower(s), not the leader. Once relational investing becomes a leader’s goal, the leader sees results in the form of followers who feel empowered and enabled to reach their full potential. The leader who makes serving followers a top priority has taken the first step of creating the healthy leader-to-follower relationship necessary for others to grow, produce, thrive, and REJOICE!

How and where a person chooses to invest God’s entrusted talents starts with the orientation of one’s heart. If a leader’s heart orients on self, the leader will invariably use followers to selfishly gain personal fame, fortune, and power. If a leader’s heart orients on God, then the leader will invest one’s talents in opportunities consistent with God’s will and invariably strive to serve and positively impact the lives of followers. Every leader has a choice of two diametrically opposed orientations of the heart: Self or God/Others.

The orientation a person’s heart shapes one’s core values. In turn, these core values, which reside deep inside one’s heart, invariably come to the surface of one’s life in the form of actions and attitudes. Core values find expression in how a leader treats followers. A close examination of a person’s core values will reveal the true orientation

of one's heart and shed light on the motivation behind one's attitudes and actions. To change one's attitudes and actions as a leader, a person must be willing to honestly evaluate one's core values and realign the orientation of one's heart to God/Others if necessary.

A leader can apply most, if not every, truth and principle found in the Bible to relationships. Scripture has much to say about a person's relationship with God and one's relationships with other people. The Bible truthfully reveals how the Creator desires and intends His creation to relate to Him. The Bible also truthfully reveals how God intends and desires His creatures to relate to each other. Sin has distorted our view of both our vertical relationship with God and our horizontal relationships with other people. Consequently, only the Bible provides us a reliable source of information for how we should relate to God and others. When the truth of the Bible governs the leader-to-follower relationship, the followers: REJOICE!

Consider the Ten Commandments as an example. The first five commands govern a man's relationship with God. The second five commands govern a man's relationship with others. The leader who applies these commandments to one's life will relate well to God and others.

**A Man's "Relationship" with God: Commandment 1 – 5:**

<sup>3</sup>“You shall have no other gods before me.

<sup>4</sup>“You shall not make for yourself an idol...

<sup>5</sup>You shall not bow down to them or worship them;...

<sup>7</sup>“You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God,...

<sup>8</sup>“Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy...

## **A Man's "Relationship" with Others: Commandment 6 -10:**

<sup>12</sup> "Honor your father and your mother,..."

<sup>13</sup> "You shall not murder.

<sup>14</sup> "You shall not commit adultery.

<sup>15</sup> "You shall not steal.

<sup>16</sup> "You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

<sup>17</sup> "You shall not covet your neighbor's house... wife, ... manservant or maidservant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

(Exodus 20:3-17 NIV)

*The purpose of The ENTRUSTED Leader aims to expose leaders, who desire to follow Jesus Christ, to what the Bible teaches in regard to seven core values that impact every leader-to-follower relationship. The seven core values of HEART, MISSION, APPROACH, STABILITY, LIFESTYLE, FORTITUDE, and WORLDVIEW, shape the behavior of every leader, even those who have never thought about these values. The Bible addresses other core values important to mankind. The ENTRUSTED Leader focuses on these seven because they share the common trait that each one finds expression in the attitudes and actions of a leader. A wise leader asks: Are my core values consistent with Biblical truth, or has sin deceived me into following my own selfish desires? The ENTRUSTED Leader exists to help a follower of Jesus Christ answer this question honestly and truthfully.*

Many people, who claim to be a follower of Jesus Christ, approach their role as a leader unaware that their leadership attitudes and actions emanate from core values that will not stand up to the scrutiny of Biblical truth. The reality of this distressing state of leadership inspired this author to write The ENTRUSTED Leader. Two motivations in particular fueled this effort.

The first motivation for writing comes from a sense of anger that many followers of Christ use secular, authority based models of leadership to pursue the American dream

(myth) of prosperity, material gain, happiness, success, and security. These leaders blindly waste their lives and God's entrusted talents on investments intended to ingratiate themselves instead of how God intended, which makes serving others the top priority. Unfortunately, these misguided investments often find reinforcement because these leaders achieve some measure of worldly success and mistake material gains as an indication of God's blessing or endorsement. Additionally, in defense of these misguided leaders, their pastors, teachers, and mentors have failed to teach them that how and why they seek to lead others may be contrary to Biblical truth. The pace of this pursuit has left many leaders burned-out, stress-out, and dysfunctional when relating to followers, family, and friends.

The second motivation for writing comes from a sense of sadness that so many followers of Christ fail recognize the potential for eternal significance and purpose that resides in every opportunity to lead. Many of these leaders have a limited view that opportunities to serve God only exist for professional ministers or those who volunteer through a church or para-church ministry. Nothing could be further from God's truth. God calls every follower of Christ to lead and minister to others. God only calls a few into the ministry vocationally or professionally. The Lord calls the rest of us to serve on the frontlines of our everyday lives at home, work, or in the community. Every leader-to-follower relationship has the potential for eternal significance and purpose. I personally do not believe in random chance meetings. I believe every person that crosses my path offers a divine appointment. Wherever you live right now, I believe God has put you there to lead and serve others as He intends and desires. This realization brings meaning to every opportunity to lead and every leader-to-follower relationship.

By writing The ENTRUSTED Leader, I hope to inspire Christ followers who lead to faithfully serve the portfolio of investments entrusted to them by God. These investments include all the talents and opportunities for leading another person one possesses. This book does not target church leaders and professional ministers although I am sure they too can find application of these core values. This book focuses on the laity of the church who consider themselves followers of Jesus Christ and desire to lead as God intends and desires. My mission focuses on mobilizing a generation of skilled leaders who will adhere to Biblical core values, apply Biblical practices of leadership at home, work, and society at large, and leverage every opportunity of leadership to multiply followers of Jesus Christ.

Leader-to-follower relationships constitute the essence of leadership. Investing in these relationships brings meaning and purpose to a leader. Although, faithfully serving God's entrusted investments might make one a more effective temporal leader, the only lasting return on investment must be calculated in terms of eternal significance and purpose. Investing the talents of one's life can receive no greater return than to do so according to God's criteria for entrusting you with His valuables. For the leader striving to follow Christ, one's vast network of leader-to-follower relationships provides the marketplace for investing all God has entrusted.

Heavenly treasures must become the goal of such investing, not earthly prosperity. Relationships will ultimately make YOU or break YOU as a leader both on earth and in heaven. How you handle the relationships entrusted to you by God will stand as an indication of the orientation of your heart.

*“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth,  
where moth and rust destroy, and  
where thieves break in and steal  
But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven,  
where moth and rust do not destroy, and  
where thieves do not break in and steal.  
For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”*

(Matthew 6:19-21 NIV)

**Discipleship focused leadership can maximize a leader’s eternal investment  
in every leader-to-follower relationship entrusted by God.**