

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

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

Introduction: The ENTRUSTED Leader

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BIBLE VERSE(S): Matthew 25:14-30

ONE SIMPLE TRUTH: God will ENTRUST all YOU need to lead according to his desires and intentions.

APPLICATION: Becoming "*the Type of Leader God Desires YOU to Be!*" Requires faithful service to God's investments in YOUR life!

God desires and intends to use you as a leader. God has already begun preparing you to lead others in his own unique manner. Furthermore, according to his timing, God will ENTRUST to you all you need to lead according to his desires and intentions. Becoming "*the Type of Leader God Desires YOU to Be!*" requires faithful service to God's investments in YOUR life!

I believe what a person does defines him or her as a leader. Priorities and actions truly reveal the type of leader one is. By contrast others define a leader by descriptors such as title, rank, authority, skills, or personality. I do not believe any of these attributes adequately convey the degree to which a person might be capable of leading others.

A person's title tells us what to call someone as a result of his or her leadership position. We all have encountered individuals who possess impressive titles but remain clueless when it comes to leading others. Rank informs us how an individual stacks up when compared to others, but rank does not make one a leader. What a person has power and responsibility over conveys the scope of one's leadership authority. Unfortunately, the landscape of many organizations is littered with the collateral damage of bosses who abuse authority in the name of being a strong leader. Many people have the good fortune

of being born with skills and abilities that set them apart from others. Others acquire such skills and ability through education and hard work. History proves that skills which make one an individual star performer do not always translate into the ability to lead others. The world contains many charismatic personalities. These types of people can convince others to run through walls and jump off bridges. Just because someone has a persuasive personality, however, does not mean he or she will lead others in a selfless and positive fashion, or towards a common goal.

A person's priorities and actions define them as a leader not his or her title, rank, authority, skills, or personality. Ultimately a person's priorities and actions find their origin within one's core values. How someone leads others proceeds from what resides deep inside his or her inner nature. A person's leadership behavior ultimately reveals the orientation of one's heart which can only be on one of two points: self or God!

My definition of a leader focuses action. Leading others requires a combination of appropriately developed skills and core values that produce Biblically sound leadership behaviors. The next twenty-one lessons in *The ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook*, three for each of the seven core values, each address how Biblically sound leadership behavior might apply to the life of a follower of Jesus Christ who leads in the marketplace.

In addition to the link between a person's core values and leadership behavior, my definition of a leader also contemplates the concept of being "ENTRUSTED". The purpose of this lesson is to explain in more detail why I use this term in regard to a leader, who claims to be a follower of Jesus Christ. Hopefully when you have completed this lesson you will understand why I have chosen the term "ENTRUSTED Leader".

Below you will find my definition of an ENTRUSTED Leader. Take some time and read it slowly and carefully. Consider the different terms I use for they have been thoughtfully selected for a reason. Future lessons in The ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook will reference this definition periodically.

An ENTRUSTED Leader is a person of vision who faithfully serves the investment God has “entrusted” in one’s life by using skills, character, and compassion to guide others toward a common goal while upholding an ENTRUSTED Leader’s Core Values.

I believe an entrusted relationship exists between God and a leader. God entrusts a leader with valuable assets which enable one to lead others. God expects a leader to faithfully serve this investment. The privilege and opportunity to lead others involves a sacred bond of trust between God, the leader, and the followers. God created and loves every follower. He entrusts followers into the care of a leader. God rises up leaders to serve his plans and purposes in marketplaces all over the world. A leader has the opportunity to positively or negatively impact the lives of followers. A wise leader approaches the responsibility of these relationships with a humble and selfless attitude.

The ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook targets followers of Jesus Christ who lead in the marketplace. My concept, however, of an ENTRUSTED Leader can be applied to a much broader audience. I believe the definition of an ENTRUSTED Leader stated above applies to any and every relationship where one individual guides another. The breadth of the leader-follower relationship know no end and spans from a parent informally volunteering to coach a child's athletic team to a Chief Executive Officer formally overseeing the activities of a global organization. This definition of a leader, an

ENTRUSTED Leader, speaks to all family, marketplace, social, neighborhood, and volunteer relationships.

Whether you recognize it or not, numerous assets designed to aid your leading of others currently reside at your disposal. The vault of your life already holds many deposits which serve to enable you as a leader. The reservoir of your life continually receives a flow of valuable possessions intended to prepare you as a leader. God always ENTRUSTS, in accordance to his desires and intentions, everything a person needs to lead. You may not think of the assets of your life this way, but God does.

To fully appreciate the privilege and responsibility of being entrusted, a leader must recognize the difference between a possession ENTRUSTED and present GIVEN. When a person gives a present to another he or she does not expect the gift to given back at some time in the future. The receiver takes possession of the present and ownership of the gift transfers from one to another. The one receiving a gift stands free to do whatever he or she desires with it. Typically, the giver of the present does not tell the receiver what he or she wants done with the gift. The receiver has no responsibility to report back to the giver what one did with the gift.

ENTRUSTED possessions differ from a present GIVEN in a number of significant regards. When a person entrusts a possession to a trustee the owner fully expects the asset to be returned at some time in the future. Ownership of the entrusted asset does not transfer to the trustee even though possession does. The owner typically conveys instructions along with the transfer of possession and expects the asset to be used accordingly by the trustee. Normally an owner expects the asset to be used to generate an increase or return while in the possession of the trustee. The owner reserves the right to

repossess the asset and entrust it to another if the trustee does not follow the instructions or generate the owner's desired return on the investment. A wise trustee keeps in mind that the owner expects an accounting of how one invests and manages an asset while in his or her possession.

So you may be thinking: What does the difference between a gift and an entrusted possession have to do with being a leader? Consider the implications of Romans 13:1 in the context of being a leader. "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God." (NIV) If you possess leadership authority, then recognize that God established this authority and "entrusted" his possession to you for his purposes. God did not "gift" this asset to you to be used as you see fit. You do not own the leadership authority you possess, God does.

God rises up leaders in every arena of human endeavor and entrusts to them leadership authority. Every Marketplace Leader received his or her opportunity to lead others from a being greater than themselves. All authority and opportunity to lead finds its origin in God. The sovereign ruler of the universe entrusts and recalls the authority to lead according to His purposes. Consider the case of Saul, the first King of Israel. In First Samuel 15:23 Samuel says of Saul: "... Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king. ..." (NIV) Saul knew the purposes and limitations that came with being entrusted the authority to lead Israel. Saul foolishly chose to ignore these limitations and use the authority entrusted to him by God for self centered reasons. Saul did not faithfully serve God's intentions and desires. Consequently, God repossessed the leadership authority entrusted to Saul and entrusted it to another: David.

Jesus told his followers a story about a master who entrusted his possessions to three servants. This story, commonly called The Parable of the Talents, can be found in Matthew 25:14-30. This parable resides within Jesus' teaching often referred to as The Olivet Discourse which spans all of Matthew twenty-four and twenty-five. Read both of these chapters and then answer the following questions of The Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30.

Questions of the Biblical Text (Matthew 25:14-15)¹

The central character of this parable is a man who in verse fourteen we learn three important facts about: (fill in the blanks)

1. The man is about to depart on a _____
2. The man called together his _____
3. The man _____ his property to _____

Questions of Interpretation

Is there a significant difference between a possession entrusted and one given as a gift?

Who initiated the entrusted relationship: the owner/master or the trustee/servant?

Do servants have the right to ignore the instructions of their master and do as they please?

Questions of the Biblical Text (Matthew 25:16-18)

What two things did the man entrusted with five talents do and how quickly did he act?

1. _____
2. _____

How quickly did this servant act on his master's instructions? _____

What did the servant with two entrusted talents do? _____

¹ Unless otherwise noted the questions listed in *The ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook* are based on: *The Holy Bible: New International Version* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996, c1984)

What three things did the man with one talent do?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Questions of Interpretation

When God entrusts his possessions which enable a person to lead others; Do you think:

God expects his possessions to be put to work according to his intentions?

It is ever OK for a servant to use God's possessions for one's own desires?

It is ever OK for a servant to use the master's assets for selfish purposes first then for the master's purposes once the servant's goals have been accomplished?

It is OK to hid God's entrusted assets in a hole and not use them as God intended?

Questions of the Biblical Text (Matthew 25:19-23)

How long was the master gone? _____

What did the master do when he returned from his journey? _____

What did the servants who were entrusted five and two talents bring to their master?

What did the servants who were entrusted five and two talents report to their master?

What two words did the master use to describe these servants? _____ & _____

What did the master commend his servants for doing? _____

What future promise did the master give his faithful servants? _____

What reward did the master share with his faithful servant? _____

Questions of Interpretation

Reread verse 21a. What do you think the theme of this parable is? Write it in one word!

Who determines the basis by which faithfulness is judged: the master or the servant?

Questions of the Biblical Text (Matthew 25:24-30)

What two excuses did the servant with one entrusted talent give for hiding his master's money in the ground? (Fill in the blanks)

1. The servant viewed the master as a _____

2. The servant said that he felt _____

What two words did the master use to describe this servant _____ & _____

What did the master do with the one talent this servant returned? _____

Where did he instruct this servant be thrown? _____

Questions of Interpretation

Is it ever acceptable for an entrusted servant to ignore the instructions of a master?

Can you think of possessions that God has entrusted to you?

Commentary

FAITHFULNESS captures the central theme of the Parable of the Talents. This story underscores a servant's responsibility to faithfully use ENTRUSTED possessions. In particular, Jesus taught this lesson to his disciples to prepare them for faithful service in the age between his first and second comings.

To fully appreciate the force of Jesus' teaching one must remember that the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30) is part of the Olivet Discourse (Matthew twenty four and twenty five). The Olivet Discourse contains a lengthy teaching by Jesus

on the events surrounding end times and his second coming. The disciples asked the question: When? Jesus changed the question to: What? What should a disciple be doing during the absence of the master?

This discourse contains two parables. First we find the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13). READINESS summarizes the central theme of this parable. A disciple should be ready – attentive and prepared – for the master’s arrival. Second we find the Parable of the Talents and the central theme is FAITHFULNESS. A disciple should faithfully serve the instructions associated with property entrusted by the master when he departed.

As the story goes a man left on a long journey. Before his departure he called three of his servants and “entrusted” his property to them. To one servant the man gave five talents, to another he gave two, and to the third he gave one. The servants with five and two talents put their master’s money to work immediately and doubled his investment. The servant with one talent, however, went away hid his master’s money and the asset earned nothing.

The Greek term for “entrusted” found in Matthew 25:14 is the third person singular form of the verb *paradidomi*. In his enhanced lexicon Strong defines *paradidomi* as follows: “**1** to give into the hands (of another). **2** to give over into (one’s) power or use. **2A** to deliver to one something to keep, use, take care of, manage.”² In the New Testament the term “entrusted” carries the idea of being given something of great value to take care of or to use in accordance with the giver’s purposes. Entrusted possessions

²James Strong, *The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible : Showing Every Word of the Test of the Common English Version of the Canonical Books, and Every Occurrence of Each Word in Regular Order.*, electronic ed. (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship., 1996), G3860.

are not gifts. An entrusted asset is not a loan that can be freely used as long as it is returned intact and according to the loan provisions. Something entrusted is still owned by the giver and is to be used specifically according to the instructions of the owner.

In the Parable of the Talents the master eventually returned from his long journey. He called his three servants together and asked for an accounting of the property he had entrusted to them. The servants with five and two reported their results. The master replied: “Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!”
(Matthew 25:21, 23, NIV)

The servant with one talent reported to his master that because of fear he had not put the entrusted talents to work as his master intended. This servant confessed that he hid the entrusted possessions in the ground for safe keeping, thereby earning no return. The master replied: “You wicked, lazy servant! ... you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest. Take the talent from him and give it to the one who has the ten talents.”
(Matthew 25:26-28 NIV)

The obvious moral of the Parable of the Talents can be summed up in one word: Faithfulness. A master expects his servants to “faithfully” use the possessions entrusted to them according to the owner’s desires and intentions during his absence. The spiritual moral of the Parable of the Talents is less obvious, but can still be summed up in one word: Faithfulness. Jesus left on a long journey when he ascended into heaven. Jesus expects his followers to “faithfully” use the possessions entrusted to them according to God’s desires and intentions during his absence. This biblical truth has a very practical

leadership application. As modern day marketplace leaders our goal must be to faithfully serve what God has ENTRUSTED to us which enables us to lead others!

Applications

God will ENTRUST all you need to lead according to his desires and intentions. This you can count on! Becoming the type of leader God desires and intends you to be requires your faithful service to his investments! A fair question at this point is: How does a marketplace leader faithfully serve what God has ENTRUSTED? I believe there are three steps one should consider in this regard.

The first step involves recognizing God's entrusted investments in your life. Some of these possessions you may think of as yours when in reality they actually belong to God. The next step focuses on discovering what God desires and intends for you to do with the possessions entrusted to your care and keeping. The third step can be summed up with Ephesians 4:1 where the Apostle Paul urges us to: "... live a life worthy of the calling you have received." (NIV) The leadership behavior that emulates from the seven core values of an Entrusted Leader is a starting point for leading in the marketplace in a manner worthy of our calling as a follower of Jesus Christ.

Step One: Recognizing what God has entrusted to you.

The Bible reveals many of God's valuable possessions entrusted to a born again marketplace leader. It is our responsibility to recognize them as such. Many leaders take some or all of these possessions for granted or view them as gifts. Some prideful leaders go so far as to take credit for what has been entrusted to them by grace. Other busy leaders fail to recognize the assets already at their disposal. God entrusts us so we can lead as he intends and desires. An ENTRUSTED Leader recognizes that God has

invested his property in his or her life and orders the priorities of his or her leadership behavior accordingly. Consider the value of the following in regard to leading others.

Psalm 139:13-14 tells us that God created each person uniquely and distinctly. Ephesians 2:10 says: “For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (NIV) God carefully crafted you with a purpose that he contemplated in advance. God brought you into this world exactly as he desired so you could serve him in a manner that no other human ever created could. Your opportunity to impact and lead others stands unprecedented and unparalleled in all of creation. As funny as it sounds; God has entrusted all he created you to be – to you!

God has endowed your life with natural skills and abilities. Passages such as Exodus 31:1-10 illustrate how God distributes skills to each individual he creates to serve his purposes. “Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘See, I have chosen Bezalel ... and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts ... Also I have given skill to all the craftsmen to make everything I have commanded you ... They are to make them just as I commanded you.’” (NIV) Before God commanded Moses to build the Tabernacle and its furnishing he entrusted the skill and ability to fashion them to individual craftsmen. God expected these craftsmen to faithfully serve his purposes when the opportunity arose. Whatever you are good at can be attributed to God’s provision in your life. God desires and intends to use the skill, ability, and knowledge he has entrusted to you as you lead in the marketplace. A wise leader takes careful stock of one’s life in order to clearly recognize those assets entrusted by God.

Step Two: Discovering what God desires and intends you to do with his assets.

God has a universal plan for the redemption of mankind that includes every Christian in the body of Christ. The Bible says God has an individual plan for every born again follower of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:10, Jeremiah 29:11). These individual plans work together to accomplish the larger universal plan.

Discovering what God desires and intends for you to do as an individual starts with a clear understanding of God's universal plan. The Bible stands alone as a Christian's only reliable and authoritative source for gaining this understanding. As we begin to understand God's larger universal plan we can more clearly see how God desires and intends to use what he has entrusted to us as individuals to accomplish this plan.

Consider for a moment how one aspect of God's universal plan of the redemption of mankind impacts us as an individual marketplace leader. Jude 3 tells us that "the faith" has been "entrusted" to the "saints". The Greek word in Jude 3 for "entrusted" is *paradidomi* the same Greek word used in Matthew 25:14. Every leader who claims to be a follower of Jesus Christ has been entrusted with the good news of Jesus Christ. This investment extends to the lives of all the saints, not just professional ministers. The accomplishment of God's universal plan has been placed in the hands of all the saints. Unlike the servant who hid his master's valuable possession because he was afraid, God expects us to invest his property in the lives of those we lead and produce a return.

Think of the limitless opportunities you have as a marketplace leader to extend the love and grace of the gospel to those you lead. Have you ever considered the possibility that God has entrusted you an opportunity to lead in the marketplace to be his ambassador? Have you ever considered that there are people you lead that have no other

connection to the good news of Jesus Christ other than you. Many of these people will never go into a church or entertain a pastor. They will, however, listen to you! They will, however, watch how you lead others!

God's Word reveals his universal plan. God's Word reveals many of the assets he has entrusted to the saints that enable them to accomplish this plan. The process of discovering God's individual plan for one's life starts with the Bible. Discovering what God desires and intends you to do as a leader with his entrusted assets requires study of God's Word.

Step Three: Lead in the marketplace in a manner worthy of your calling.

The lessons contained in *The ENTRUSTED Leader's Workbook* center on teaching a marketplace leader the seven core values that produce Biblically sound leadership behavior. The goal stands to encourage a marketplace leader to take ownership of these core values and apply them to his or her life as a leader. Once these core values are adopted and applied a marketplace leader is well on the way towards leading in manner worthy of the calling of Christ and faithfully serving what God has entrusted. The next twenty-one lessons provide an explanation how a marketplace leader might apply these seven core values:

1. A HEART willing to do all God asks.
2. A MISSION for leading characterized by a faithful commitment to multiplying followers of Jesus Christ that supersedes all other marketplace endeavors.
3. An APPROACH to leadership characterized by denial of self and serving others.
4. The STABILITY for leading created by applying a balance of skills, character, and compassion.
5. A LIFESTYLE that is beyond reproach and publicly demonstrates faith, hope and love in the marketplace.

6. The FORTITUDE for leading build on faith in the love and sovereignty of God and the discipline of prayer.
7. A WORLDVIEW founded on absolute truth and the words of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion: The ENTRUSTED Leader

God will entrust all you need to lead according to his desires and intentions. I use the term ENTRUSTED to define a leader because I truly believe each follower of Jesus Christ who leads in the marketplace has been entrusted by God with everything he or she needs to fulfill God's purpose for one's life. Becoming the type of leader God desires and intends you to be requires faithful service to God's investment in your life.

Each marketplace leader must stop and ask questions such as: Am I using opportunities associated with my position of leadership as God intended? Am I faithfully serving God's desires and intentions? What am I investing my life in? God allows each of us to decide where, when, and how we invest the valuable assets he ENTRUSTS to us. We will, however, have to give an accounting to where, when, and how we invested God's assets. My goal is to hear the master say to me "Well done my good and faithful servant."