

# FOCUS ON FAITH

## OF COURSE I CAN BE TRUSTED

The story goes that when Michelangelo was painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, he spent endless hours lying flat on his back perfecting the minutiae of the frescoes.

One day, after Michelangelo came down weary and tired from the scaffolding, a friend curiously asked why he spent so much time on something that couldn't be seen in detail from ground level. "Who'll know whether or not it's perfect?" he asked. Michelangelo simply replied, "I will."

Of course not all of us are such perfectionists. Michelangelo would have a fit if he saw the quality of my efforts at internal decoration – and that can be seen from ground level and in close-up! But I wonder if there is a lesson for us here.

How many of us have a tendency to 'cut a few corners', tell a few 'white lies', embroider the truth a little, or just not fulfil what we promised to do? I mean would you want to buy a second hand video from an 'Only Fools and Horses' Del Boy character or a car from his mate Boycie? Don't we expect people to tell us the truth and be honourable in their dealings with us?

***'Do unto others as you would have done unto yourself'*** is a common expression that has its roots in the Bible. And if you read Matthew's Gospel chapter 7 you'll see that Jesus certainly didn't pull his punches with those who were listening. He talks about judging and being critical of others when we know we're not always *'whiter than white'* and of people who take advantage over others by conning them or being *'economical with the truth'*. I think I know what Jesus would make of the internet scams and 'get rich quick' swindles of our day and age!

**Trust is built on a foundation of truthfulness, honesty and integrity**

Jesus also said, ***"Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much"*** – Luke's Gospel chapter 16 verse 10.

So what does this mean for us?

- Firstly, it starts where I am. Can I be trusted with what I have and what I do? The next time something goes wrong at work will I try and find an excuse or put the blame on someone else? When that juicy titbit of gossip comes my way that I know isn't quite right, will I challenge it or pass it on?
- Secondly, it should become an aspiration. I need to make it my ambition to be trusted; to believe I can hang in there when all around me is tumbling down

and not succumb to compromises that benefit just me.

- Thirdly, it's now or never. Temptations are all around us and it's easy to fall into those little traps. Life is lived one second at a time and unless I'm wary, it will be easy for me to be drawn into things with which I shouldn't become involved.

Trust is the basis of all relationships and it's often in the *'little'* things of life that we make the biggest impressions. And trust is built on a foundation of truthfulness, honesty and integrity – qualities that are developed only through tests we have to pass on each occasion.

Regretfully at times I have let people down. But thankfully I can (and do) believe God recognises I don't always get it right and He's willing to forgive me when I return to Him and ask for His strength and guidance. But the rub is that trusting God can offend my sense of independence and there's certainly the issue of vulnerability when I have to ask others to forgive me for acting in my own self-interest.

However, we ***can*** trust God to keep His promises and that's the key in all of this. God is faithful and always keeps His end of any bargain. In order for us to become trustworthy ourselves we have to firstly trust Him that He will help us.

So that leaves us with a choice. To carry on the way we're going or to ask for God's help every day and demonstrate that we can be trusted. Its time to choose God's way!



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For information on local Christian churches and contact details, log on to [www.lifting-jesus-higher.org.uk](http://www.lifting-jesus-higher.org.uk). And if you think there's something we can help you with or you have a question on faith issues, drop me an email using the link on the website. I'd love to hear from you.