

INTEGRITY

LESSON 6: RED LETTER BUSINESS

The spiritual life is the life of Christ reproduced in the life of the believer by the power of the Holy Spirit in obedient response to the Word of God.

– DR. HOWARD HENDRICKS

CORPORATE SITUATION ROOM

Larry and Hank have developed a deep friendship over the 2 years they have been in the same CBMC group. Larry owns a growing company that needs more space and is interested in building a new headquarters. Hank has a construction company that is very successful in the commercial building market. They connect on the deal and quickly get started. Due to their trusting friendship and common bond through Christ they don't spend much time contractually and start construction immediately. The project starts very well and things are moving along faster than expected then the rain comes ... and the issue with the beam ... and the dispute with the window glazer ... and the developing crack in the floor. Larry and Hank hadn't really had to communicate too much as their people were doing the work as normal, but now they are forced into uncomfortable and contentious conversations and the finger pointing starts to ramp up. Now their relationship is very strained, and they are talking through legal counsel trying to settle all the delays and over-runs with the building. They no longer attend the CBMC group as they are consumed in this battle and wish they had never gotten involved with each other.

- Q. As their Christian legal counsel how would you advise them in this situation?
- Q. What are the leading contributors to their disagreements?
- Q. What role did their faith in Christ play in this outcome?
- Q. What are some ideas that would safeguard against this outcome?
- Q. As Christian brothers how should we engage in business with each other?

MATTHEW 5:33-37

³³ "Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'Do not break your oath, but fulfill to the Lord the vows you have made.'³⁴ But I tell you, do not swear an oath at all: either by heaven, for it is God's throne;³⁵ or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King.³⁶ And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black.³⁷ All you need to say is simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

Swearing or making an oath implies that you need to reinforce trust with the other party based on something beyond yourself. We see that God himself makes promises based on Himself but He knows the future and He knows us. Throughout history man has made promises like God but in reality has no control over the future or his own sinful nature for that matter. Jesus tells us here that as His follower and with His character we will just do what we say and that should be enough. We must guard against our tendency for making promises we cannot keep!

- Q. What oaths or promises have you made in your life? What form did they take?
- Q. What are the best ways to assure that your intentions line up with your actions?
- Q. What are the subtle ways we break trust?
- Q. According to this passage are contracts necessary? Why?
- Q. What part does a contract play in establishing a clear yes or no?
- Q. What beatitudes play a part in making promises?

RELATED SCRIPTURE

James 5:12

Numbers 30:1-2

Ecclesiastes 5:4-7

Proverbs 20:25

Proverbs 27:1

James 4:13-17