

Essentials to Leadership: Character Development

Lesson designed by: Bob Turner

Course description: Character Development – part 7

This course continues to discuss the biblical necessity of godly character. Each lesson dives into specifics about how we develop our character in ways that build credibility, respect, and the type of integrity to lead God's people.

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Listed a minimum of five ways we can build credibility as leaders.
- B. Studied two biblical examples and discussed how each established credibility.

Outline of the class:

- A. Divide the class into groups of four. Ask each group to spend 10 minutes to make a list of ways to build our credibility as leaders.
- B. After the task is finished, ask each group to share one area that builds credibility and continue to go around the groups until everyone has completed their list. Make a list of these answers on the whiteboard. Here are a few suggestions to add, if needed:
 - 1. Develop good relationships with people.
 - 2. Be honest, authentic, and develop trust.
 - 3. Hold ourselves to a standard of excellence, setting the example.
 - 4. Provide tools and resources so others can do the job better.
 - 5. Help followers achieve their personal goals.
 - 6. Develop others into leaders (customize a strategy for each person).
 - 7. Add value to others.
 - 8. Be patient (it takes time to develop credibility).
- C. Two more biblical examples provide a basis for the work we will do in today's class on credibility.
 - 1. David – discuss what David did to build his credibility and what happened that caused him to lose it.
 - a. Read the text in 1 Samuel 17 and 2 Samuel 11
 - b. Ask the class to list out areas from these passages that contribute to the previous discussion.

2. Barnabas – discuss the character of Barnabas that established his credibility among the apostles and what happened to cause him to lose it.
 - a. Several texts to consider: Acts 4:36-37; 9:27-30; 15:2-12; 15:36-41; Galatians 2:13
 - b. Ask the class to list out areas from these passage that contribute to the discussion.
- D. Ask the class as a whole about how the situation with David and Barnabas help us think about the credibility we need in the church today, especially in relationship to leading.
 1. Consider how credibility is gained.
 2. Consider how credibility is lost.
- E. John Maxwell’s material on credibility is a good supplement to this lesson. Here are a few more of his thoughts.
 1. “You cannot separate the leader from the case he promotes. The two always go hand in hand.”
 - a. Think about this as it relates to leadership in the church, vision, goals, and plans.
 - b. Also, consider how leaders communicate this to the congregation.
 2. “Without credibility it is impossible to develop sustained leadership. People may walk into the room with you, but if you do not have credibility, they will not stay in the room with you.”

Conclusion:

- A. Credibility is not only vital to our leadership, we must continually work on maintaining that credibility if we hope to lead the Lord’s people to greater places.
- B. The numerous biblical examples we find help us see how credibility can be gained and how it can be lost. We must focus on doing whatever is necessary to ensure our credibility as God’s leaders.
- C. Next week, we will move into a new direction. Our focus turns to the area of strategic planning for the church.

Recommended Reading:

Maxwell, John. *The 21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*

Maxwell, John. *The 21 Indispensable Qualities of Leaders*