**REBUILDING BROKEN TRUST**

Sunday School Lesson 12

*FORMER THINGS*

Proverbs 25:19

4/24/2022

**Introduction:** In our first lesson on rebuilding broken trust, we noted some important points about where our trust ought to be. The first thing that we noted is that the trust of every believer must be in the Lord far above any person. The second observation is that the trust of every believer is not to be blindly given out to any person. The third point to remember is that the trust of every believer is in God’s Spirit working in any person. Unfortunately, we were unable to have enough time during our Sunday School hour to look at the last observation in the lesson. Let’s go ahead and consider that observation right here in the introduction before we move on to new objects in today’s lesson. The trust of every believer is in the truth above any person. Despite what the world would have us think, we must remember that there is absolute truth in this world. Society would have us not be able to trust anything, but the believer knows that there is trust in God and the Truth. We have the Spirit of Truth dwelling inside of us. He is there to help guide us in the way of truth. I believe that the Holy Spirit will help us in trusting others. We know that we have to interact with those in the world who are unbelievers, and it is hard to know who and what to trust among this world. The Lord has not left us without help when it comes to determining where our trust belongs and where it doesn’t.

1. **THERE MUST BE HEALING OF THE PAIN THAT COMES FROM BROKEN TRUST.**
2. **Notice that there is always pain and disappointment in broken trust (Proverbs 25:19; Psalm 5:11; 22:5; 41:9; Judges 20:36).** As we noted last week, the Bible regards confidence in an unfaithful man as having confidence in a broken tooth or foot out of joint. If you have ever experienced either of these, you know how painful they can be. I have personally bitten down on food while having a broken tooth, and I can personally attest that it is a very unpleasant experience. Likewise, when you trust in someone who breaks that trust, there is pain and great disappointment that accompanies that broken trust. The book of Judges speaks of men who put their trust in the wrong place. They had to deal with the painful consequences of that decision. On the other hand, the Bible shows us that putting our trust in the Lord is not painful because He never breaks that trust. Those who put their trust in the Lord shall not be confounded. They will not be ashamed of where they placed their trust. The pain of broken trust can be so painful that it often inclines an individual not to trust again. While this is not the right answer to the problem, it just shows exactly how hard it is to deal with broken trust.
3. **Notice that there must be time for healing of both the broken trust and the broken heart (Proverbs 25:19; Psalm 28:7; 147:3; Luke 9:41; 24:21; John 14:9; Philemon 10-18).** Probably the best example of this in Scripture is the account of what happened with Onesimus. He was a servant who had wronged Philemon and broken that trust between them. At some point, Onesimus believed the Gospel, and he became friends with Paul. The book of Philemon is a letter written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to Philemon to help him understand his need to trust Onesimus again. Notice that this letter was not written as soon as Paul came into contact with Onesimus. Church history records that Onesimus continued with Paul for some time before Paul felt led of the Spirit to record the letter to Philemon. There was time that was needed for that broken trust to heal. The same could be said of what happened with John Mark and Paul. The course of time healed the broken trust and the broken heart. It is important that we understand the broken heart aspect of trust. Broken trust causes internal pain. Thankfully, the Lord is able and willing to heal the broken heart. We must seek out healing from the Lord.
4. **THERE MUST BE HONESTY OF THE PAST IN ORDER TO REBUILD BROKEN TRUST.**

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1. **Notice that a willingness to confess the wrong decisions of the past is a clear sign of repentance (Acts 19:18; Mark 1:5; 2 Corinthians 12:21; Revelation 16:11; James 5:16; 1 John 1:9).** Repentance is the turning that comes as a result of regret or remorse. When we look at this matter of building back trust, we must understand that honesty of the past is necessary. If we are not even willing to confess the wrongs which we have done, can we truthfully say that we are remorseful over the past and the trust that we have broken? The proper order for building back trust is to confess your sins to the Lord first. Secondly, you confess your faults to that person who you have wronged. Thirdly, you seek forgiveness from the wronged party for that which you have done. Finally, after asking for forgiveness, you begin the road down the path of reconciliation and rebuilding trust with others. If you skip a step in the process, do not be surprised if you are unable to find restored trust from others. You need to be honest with them about the past and the wrongs that you have done against them.
2. **Notice that while the truth can be painful to hear, one cannot build proper trust through partial honesty (dishonesty) of the past (Prov. 28:13; Gal. 4:16; Phil. 4:8; 2 Corinthians 8:21; Acts 6:3).** Sometimes, the truth can be very painful for us to speak and to hear. It might seem like it would be easier for everyone for the truth to just stay concealed. Yet, we know that this is not the right answer. Covering things up is just another form of dishonesty. The Bible says that the man that covereth his sins shall not prosper. Any hope of that working out otherwise is false and misplaced hope. I’ve certainly seen the struggle with this particular issue. There is a fear by the offended party that truly confessing the full measure of the wrong might lead to an unrepairable trust dynamic. We must have confidence that telling the truth is always the right course, and our confidence is that God will reconcile that relationship in whatever manner is best for both you and the other individual. This isn’t the easy route, but it is the right thing to do. In the end, you can be sure your sins will find you out anyways.
3. **THERE MUST BE HONESTY IN THE PRESENT IN ORDER TO REBUILD BROKEN TRUST.**
4. **Notice that the offending person must understand how absolutely critical it is to continue in honesty as trust is rebuilt (Psalm 101:7; 120:3; Proverbs 6:19; 14:5; Ephesians 1:13; 2 John 1:2).** As we observed in the last point, truth is absolutely critical to trust. Can you trust someone who does not tell you the truth? I think we all know the answer to this. Consequently, if a person is truly seeking to rebuilt trust in a relationship, then he must understand how essential it is to continue in honesty. While there is no believer who is perfectin word or deed, we are expected to be lovers of the truth. As mentioned in the introduction, the believer’s trust is in the truth. If we have damaged the trust of others toward us by dishonesty in actions or words of the past, we must recognize that the only way for trust to ever be rebuilt is for others to be able to at a minimum rely on us to tell them the truth. If we fail in this area, we must act quickly to confess it to the Lord and then acknowledge that failure to the person who has been wronged. The truth is always the answer to rebuilding trust with others.
5. **Notice that honesty must be seen in actions that are consistent with our speech (1 Peter 2:12; Hebrews 13:18; 1Thessalonians 4:12; Romans 13:13).** Truth is not just saying what is true, but it is also doing things that are consistent with what we have said. The Bible talks about walking in truth, and It tells the believer that he is to live honestly. One of the big issues with broken trust is that the offender is often known to make promises or statements that he does not back up in action. While he might think that he is not lying, the Bible regards this as dishonesty in action. I’ve personally met and counselled with several individuals who are struggling to give trust back to a loved one, and the major theme is almost always about how trust can ever be given back to a person who just constantly is dishonest in his dealings. The offender must understand that you can speak the truth constantly, but if you do not live the truth, you will not be trusted. It doesn’t matter how many times you “come clean” about what you have done. What decision are you going to make today? Does it match what should be done?
6. **THERE MUST BE HOPE IN ORDER TO REBUILD BROKEN TRUST.**
7. **Notice that the offended person should have hope that the Lord can restore an individual and trust can be reasonably given to them again (Hebrews 11:1; 2 Corinthians 10:15; 1:7; Acts 28:20).** The Bible tells us that faith is the substance of things hoped for. That means that faith and trust are connected with hope. We understand that every person in this world that we trust is imperfect. There is no person who is a finished product. There is a measure of hope that accompanies every decision of trust that we make. We hope that a person will do right by us. We hope that they will be honest with us. We hope that they will obey the Lord. As we observed last week, a person who trusts in flesh will be subjected to disappointment. Yet, if a person gives up on hope in others, they are not just giving up in hope for that person. They are giving up in hope that God can do anything with them. Do we not serve a God who is in the business of changing people? We must provide a path of hope for those who have wronged us.
8. **Notice that the offending person should have hope that the Lord will help them to be the person that can be trusted by others (1 John 3:3; 1 Peter 3:3; Ephesians 2:12).** Sometimes, the offender also struggles with this matter of hope. I’ve met individuals who are convinced that they can never build back the broken trust that they have caused. They do not see a path of hope. Maybe they do not believe that the Lord can change them. They have been overcome by besetting sins, and they feel very defeated. If you have broken someone’s trust, understand that the Lord can help you to build that trust back. That, of course, starts with the Lord performing a change in you. That must be your first priority. You can try to fix it with the means and methods of society, but that fix is not lasting. We have the hope of faith in righteousness. That does not mean that we will be perfect during this life, but the Lord can help us to produce the fruits of the Spirit that give confidence to other believers around us.