



## How Do You Know God Can Trust You?

**Matthew 21:43: (NASB) *Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.***



Trust is a tricky thing. In some instances it comes to us with ease - as children we typically trust our parents above all others. As we become adolescents, we often lose that trust because we have replaced it with trusting our friends who are "obviously" much cooler and smarter than our parents. When we are adults, the door once again opens to trusting our parents because they have somehow become smart again! Now, let us look at trust from the other side - parents will or will not trust a child based upon what they see in them regarding maturity and integrity. A child really must earn their parent's trust and that usually takes time and evidence. It is the same way with God. We obviously should trust Him at all times and for all things.

The real question here is, can - should - God trust us? What must we do or be to warrant our Father in heaven truly trusting in us?

To address our trustworthiness before God, we will use the Parable of the Landowner which appears in Matthew, Mark and Luke. Matthew introduces this particular story as a second Parable Jesus uses to make a vital point about the shortsighted and untrustworthy actions of the Pharisees. We will view trust from God's eyes by looking at those God could *not* trust. By understanding what continually was wrong, we will know how to avoid falling into the same traps.

The context of the Parable is the day after the cleansing of the Temple and after the cursing of the fig tree. The crucifixion experience is getting close.



**Matthew 21:23-27: (NASB)** <sup>23</sup>*When he entered the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him while he was teaching, and said, by what authority are you doing these things, and who gave you this authority?* <sup>24</sup>*Jesus said to them, I will also ask you one thing, which if you tell me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things.* <sup>25</sup>*The baptism of John was from what source, from heaven or from men? And they began reasoning among themselves, saying, if we say, from heaven, he will say to us, then why did you not believe him?* <sup>26</sup>*But if we say, from men, we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet.* <sup>27</sup>*And answering Jesus, they said, we do not know. He also said to them, neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.*

In other words, they asked Jesus, "Who do you think you are?" Jesus begins teaching about spiritual authority by asking *them* a question. The Pharisees immediately huddled together to figure out what the best way would be to answer. Jesus knew this was a question they could not process with honesty or integrity. He was showing them by their question they had issues being trustworthy - this was a brilliant lesson! They concluded the answer was, "We do not know," not committing themselves to either position. Since they would not answer Jesus' question, he would not answer them either.



The "Trust Pillars" titles shown throughout are taken from David Horsager's article called, *The Trust Edge: How Top Leaders Gain Faster Results, Deeper Relationships, and a Stronger Bottom Line*. We have enhanced these with a spiritual application.



Mutton busting, What's Trust Got To Do With It, David Horsager, TEDxUMN

- Mom and Dad still live up at the farm. They run the farm; Dad's 85 now. But he kept calling and said, "David, when are you going to bring the grandkids up to the rodeo?" Because even though only 500 people live in Verndale, 2,000 people come every night to one of the biggest rodeos in Minnesota. People come from all over, so finally two or three years ago I said, "Dad, we will be there." We take the kids out of school, and we go early and we head up to Verndale. We get there and Dad's got tickets for us and we get to the short line, we get a great spot on the bleachers. Now if you haven't been to a rodeo for awhile, the first half of the rodeo the cowboys and cowgirls - they rope things. The second half of the rodeo - they get bucked off of things. But in the middle, it's your opportunity for the locals to get involved. They call it "Mutton Busting." This is where they let 5 to 8-year old kids see how long they can last riding a sheep. A big sheep.

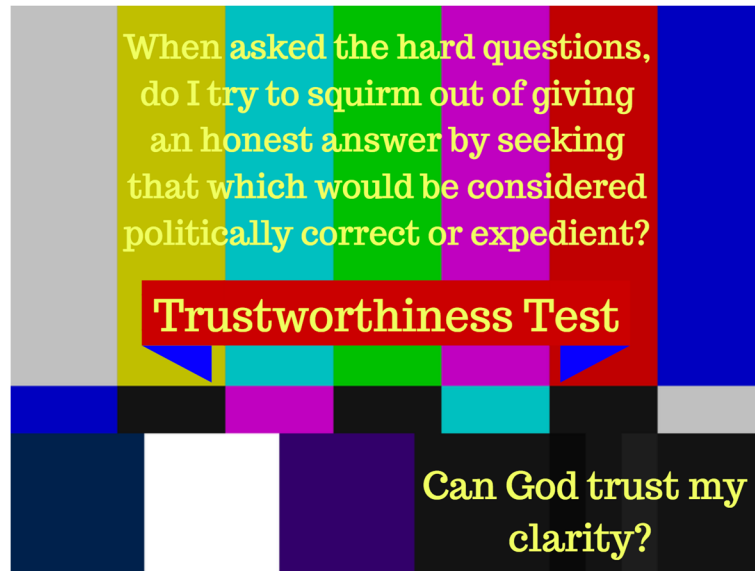


Matthew 5:33-37: (NASB) <sup>33</sup>Again, you have heard that the ancients were told, you shall not make false vows, but shall fulfill your vows to the Lord. <sup>34</sup>But I say to you, make no oath at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, <sup>35</sup>or by the earth, for it is the footstool of His feet, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great king. <sup>36</sup>Nor shall you make an oath by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. <sup>37</sup>But let your statement be, yes, yes or no, no; anything beyond these is of evil.



(Source: Biblical commentary by Albert Barnes) It appears...that while they professedly adhered to the law, they had introduced a number of oaths in common conversation, and oaths which they by no means considered as binding. For example, they would swear by the Temple, by the head, by heaven, by the earth. So long as they kept from swearing by the name Jehovah, and so long as they observed the oaths publicly taken, they seemed to consider all others as allowable and allowedly broken. This is the abuse which Christ wished to correct.

Jesus was looking at some of the ways the Pharisees made themselves look to be important. He was telling them they all knew it was nonsense - they would make the promise knowing they could break it. Power and prestige went to their heads.



The next pillar is compassion. Compassion toward whom or what?



Kids not buying it, *What's Trust Got To Do With It*, David Horsager, TEDxUMN

- So, it's almost time for this halftime and the big announcer down by the American flag: "Everyone, it's almost time for Mutton Busting. I'm going to read off the names." He pulls out the hat, "those of you families and kids that put your names in the hat, I'm just going to read off your names. The first eight names that I pull out, come on down here to the bull gate and we'll get started." He starts reading off the names: Billy, Susie, Vanessa Horsager, Isaiah Horsager. I look over at my stoic Norwegian father. He just smiled. My two kids, they look up at me in terror. I put my arms around Vanessa, and I say: "This is going to be fun." We walk around the bleachers, all the way around the American flag, all the way over to the bull gate, and there's a lady there to tell us how this works. "Okay kids, here's what you do, now you just get on the sheep and the sheep takes off and you'll fall off but don't worry, the whole arena is sand. It's like a big giant sandbox. This is fun." (Story teller laughs sarcastically) My kids are not buying it.



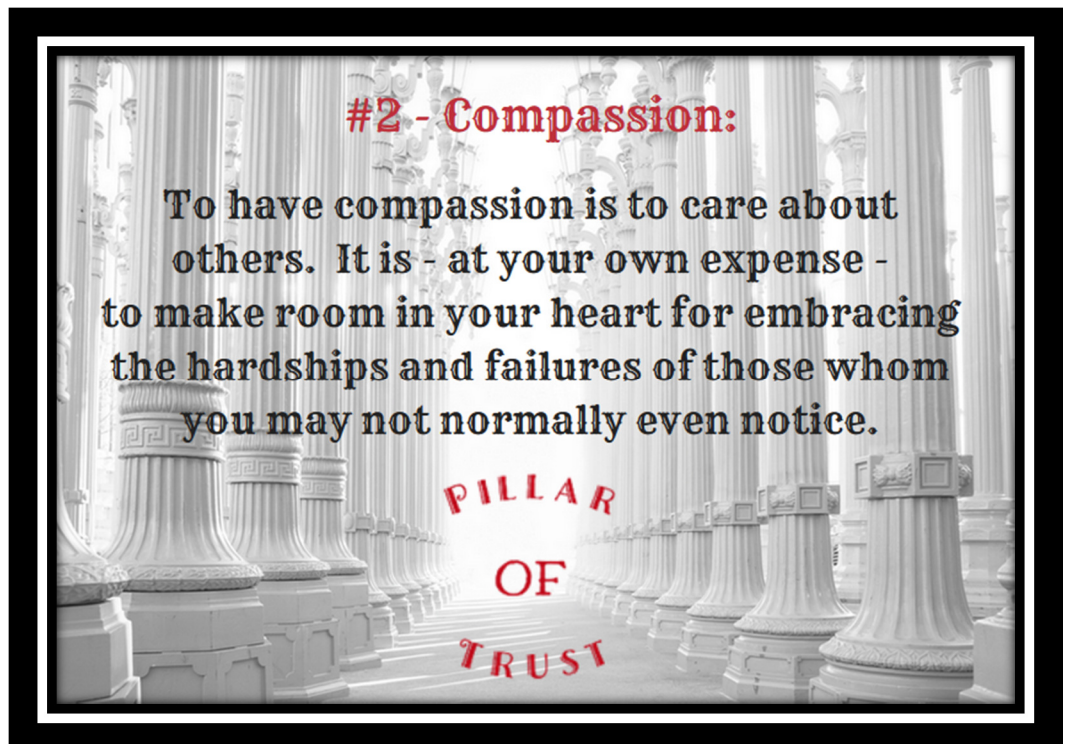


Continuing with the context, here is the first Parable presented plus its meaning all in one:

Matthew 21:28-32: (NASB) <sup>28</sup>But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, son, go work today in the vineyard. <sup>29</sup>And he answered, I will not; but afterward he regretted it and went. <sup>30</sup>The man came to the second and said the same thing; and he answered, I will, sir; but he did not go. <sup>31</sup>Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, the first. Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you. <sup>32</sup>For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even feel remorse afterward so as to believe him.

This short story was directed to the Pharisees. In answering the question, they condemned themselves, as they were pictured by the second son who was unreliable and not a man of his word. The first man did what he said but complained. He did not want to do what was right at first but eventually did. That is why the sinners of that day, those who were not following the Law, were described by Jesus in a more positive light, "They may not get it now, but they WILL get it."

Why did the Pharisees feel no remorse? They had no repentance for their position. They did not care about "sinners," the people who came around to do the will of God.



Can God trust ME? If you are a person with compassion, you have the potential to be trustworthy.



**Matthew 5:43-46:** (NASB) <sup>43</sup>You have heard that it was said; you shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. <sup>44</sup>But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. <sup>46</sup>For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?

The kind of love and compassion Jesus directs us to is not natural - and it is certainly not easily attainable - because it requires a *commitment to be a willing target of ridicule*. That is where compassion shines - when others are *not* compassionate. You reach out to draw them higher, to do something for them. Having compassion for your enemies is even more difficult.



Compassion can be misplaced. Sometimes people purposely do wrong and expect compassion and a continual helping hand. Sometimes compassion involves showing someone the right way to get out of the situation without enabling them to continue their wrong actions. God does not want us to contribute to someone else's wrongdoings.

**Now the main parable - let's begin by identifying some of the characters:**

**Matthew 21:33-34:** (NASB) <sup>33</sup>Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vinegrowers and went on a journey. <sup>34</sup>When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vinegrowers to receive his produce.

Landowner = God.

**The previous parable already explained who the landowner represented:**

**Matthew 21:28:** (NASB) Son, go work today in the vineyard.

**Matthew 21:31:** (NASB) Which of the two did the will of his father? They said, the first. Jesus said to them, Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you.

God is the Father in the first Parable and this second one immediately follows. The theme of both Parables is God is in charge. His hired help takes care of the vineyard.



### **Vineyard = (Spiritual) Israel:**

**Isaiah 5:7: (KJV)** *For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

Israel is often represented as a fig tree, representing the natural or earthly house of Israel. The vineyard represents the spiritual part of Israel. (The faithful followers of Jesus who receive their promised heavenly reward. Originally this path was offered to the Jews, but they rejected the message as a nation, and it went out to the Gentiles.)

(Source: Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary) Vineyards were hedged or fenced as protection from wild animals. (Song of Solomon 2:15) In each vineyard a tower was erected and a guard placed to protect the vines from robbers. (Matthew 21:33)

Vineyards were important and generally set up with a similar layout. They had watchtowers, a wall built around them to keep out animals and competent people were needed to tend them.

These are among the last teachings Jesus would give to the Pharisees before his death. They had not been worthy of God's trust. They were supposed to be responsible stewards but failed again and again. (Please see the Bonus Material for an Old Testament parable of a vineyard.)

**Back in the day, what kind of occupation was a vine grower?  
Menial labor or much more than that?**



Jonathan: I would like at this time to thank our very own Julie from CQ Rewind for joining us on this very important topic on being trustworthy. Welcome, Julie!

Julie: **Luke 16:10: (NIV)** "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." This is a big deal because the Bible is full of examples of God telling us *there is great power in small things*.

I know that Rick appreciates sports analogies, so here's one: My husband plays hockey and was always told, "What you do in practice, you do in the game."

Jonathan: What are some areas in our life we need to be careful about?

Julie: Well, I can think of three big ones: our information, our opportunities and our time.

Jonathan: What do you mean by "our information"?

Julie: This goes back to the recent programs on gossip, lying and forgiveness - what we do with what we know. Can we keep someone's confidence? Can we resist telling a secret even if it is true? This is how we show respect to both the listener and the one the juicy story is about.

Jonathan: I think it is especially important to keep confidence in our marriages and keep private issues between you and your spouse. Now what about "our opportunities"?



Julie: It is important we are trustworthy with our opportunities, because God promised the faithful followers of Jesus will receive "glory, honor and immortality."

Jonathan: Romans 2:7.

Julie: That's right. Immortality means not having to rely on any external source for life. God does not just hand out immortality to anyone - can you imagine having beings that even He could not destroy if they turned against Him? The Apostle Paul told us specifically we are running for that prize of immortality - it isn't just given to us. This is so important - God absolutely must be able to trust us - that our characters are so perfected that we will do the right thing when no one is looking and regardless of the personal consequences or gain to us. We are given opportunities every single day. The big question - are we tuned in to be able to recognize them? Are we taking advantage of them?

Jonathan: Maybe an example of that would be visiting someone in the hospital or nursing home or giving someone a ride to Bible study.

Julie: Exactly! Or maybe something as easy as writing a card of encouragement! We don't all have the opportunity to do a really big thing like become weekly Christian radio hosts like you two but there is always a way to serve the Lord in other ways - you just have to watch for - and sometimes create your own opportunities.

But one thing I have learned volunteering with Christian Questions - God's work WILL go forward with me or without me. If I let the opportunity go by, someone else will get the blessing.

Jonathan: And Julie, I think you are a great example of taking opportunities like you did by initiating CQ Rewind and all the extras you do for the Christian Questions website.

And lastly, let's talk about opportunities with time, although we probably recognize it easier as the opposite - wasting time! Time is so easy to waste and we don't get it back.

Julie: Our hours might be dedicated to family, school or employer, but all the minutes in between belong to us. We all find a way to do what we really want to do. Maybe you make the commitment to listening to Christian Questions for two hours on Monday nights instead of watching the big game. Maybe we can read a Scripture first thing when we get up BEFORE we check our phone for emails. Maybe we step away from social media and show God that we can spend our time more profitably - that we can be trusted with the time He has provided for us.

Jonathan: So, this week we want to think about being more trustworthy with our information, our opportunities and our time!



**Don't let Go, What's Trust Got To Do With It, David Horsager, TEDxUMN**

- *Now, they know how to do this in Texas and Oklahoma and Canada, but in Minnesota they are just learning because those kids would get on a sheep*





*and sit there like this: The sheep would take off and the kid would fall off. I had seen this before. Vanessa, she's one of the last to go. I said, "Vanessa, you can't do it like that. Vanessa, you've got to take those dangly eight-year old legs and wrap them around the belly; you've got to pinch your heels as tight as you can. Vanessa you can't sit up like this; you've got to lay down. You've got to Velcro your belly to the wool. You've got to wrap your arms around the neck. You've got to dig your fingers into the wool, and whatever you do Vanessa, don't let go!" (Laughter) I'm a great dad!*

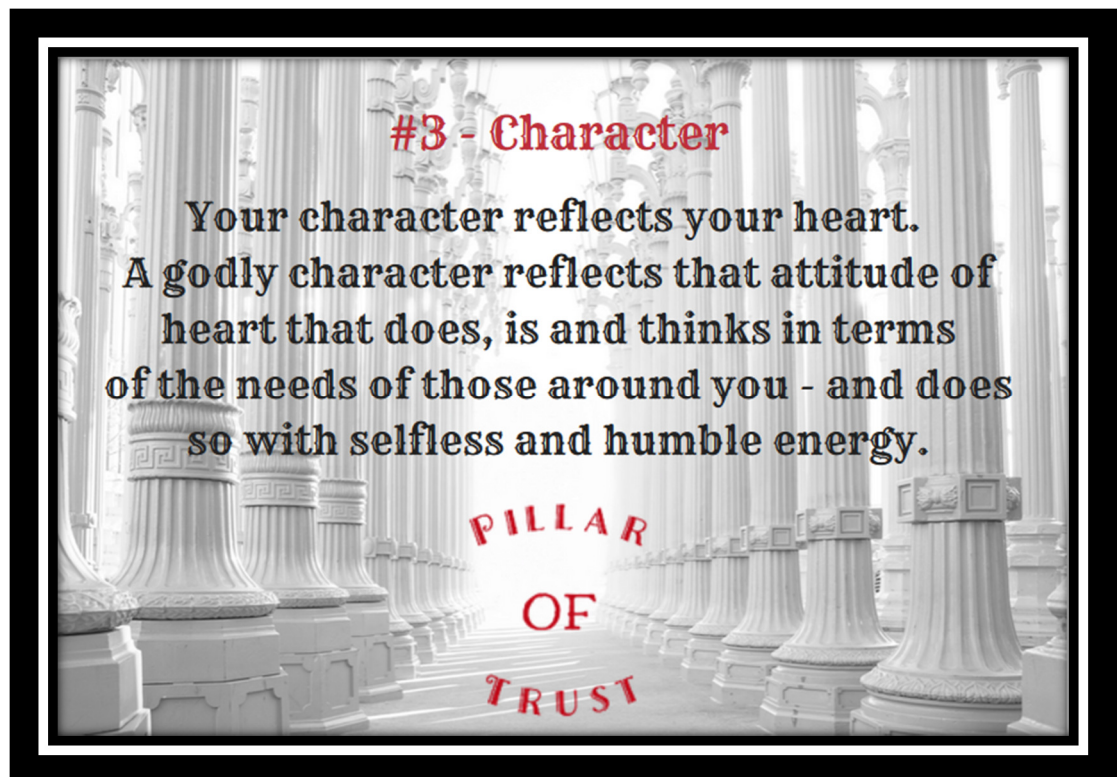
**Matthew 21:33-34:** (NASB) <sup>33</sup>Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a wall around it and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and rented it out to vinegrowers and went on a journey. <sup>34</sup>When the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vinegrowers to receive his produce.

**Vine Grower/Husbandman = The Pharisees (easy to figure out - Jesus tells us in verse 45.)**

**Matthew 21:45:** (NASB) When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they understood that he was speaking about them.

(Source: McClintock and Strong Biblical Cyclopedia) Husbandman - one whose profession and labor is to cultivate the ground. It is among the most ancient and honorable occupations.

To have such a position as this is to be engaged in a work that requires great trust, which can only be fulfilled when one has the character to earn that trust.

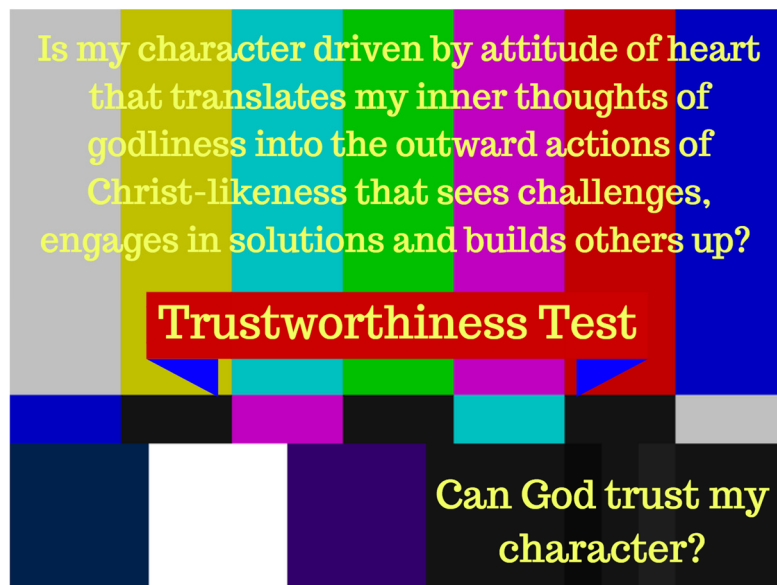






**1 Samuel 16:6-7:** (NASB) *<sup>6</sup>When they entered, he looked at Eliab and thought, Surely the LORD'S anointed is before Him. <sup>7</sup>But the LORD said to Samuel, Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature, because I have rejected him; for God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*

Samuel was looking for the next king, as Saul was rejected (**1 Samuel 15:26**). Eliab had the look of a tall, powerful man. But God wanted the right heart, and David had a character God could trust, for God knew his heart. David made a lot of big mistakes but always found his way back to God, because his heart was sound. His character was trustworthy in spite of those mistakes. That should be a great encouragement for us.



**Matthew 21:35-36:** (NASB) *<sup>35</sup>The vinegrowers took his slaves and beat one, and killed another, and stoned a third. <sup>36</sup>Again he sent another group of slaves larger than the first; and they did the same thing to them.*

In this Parable, the owner checks up on those he put in positions of responsibility for his vineyard, but they have no character whatsoever. They are not doing what they are supposed to be doing. This brings us to another area where the Pharisees were wrong.

**As an example, Stephen was given an opportunity to speak before he was stoned to death:**

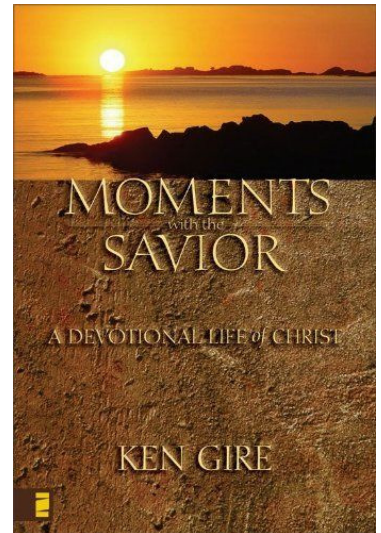
**Acts 7:51-52:** (NASB) *<sup>51</sup>You men who are stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart... <sup>52</sup>Which one of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? They killed those who had previously announced the coming of the righteous one, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become.*

Stephen prophetically speaks to his audience just like Jesus did to the Pharisees before his crucifixion. They were not godly and therefore God would not be able to trust them.



**Destiny of the prophets, Jesus in the Temple, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**

- *God had sent prophets to Israel to point out the holes in their spiritual walls and the places where weeds had overgrown their hearts. But the prophets were not well received. Elijah was relentlessly pursued by Ahab and Jezebel. Zechariah was stoned to death in the temple under the reign of Joash. Jeremiah was imprisoned and later stoned. Isaiah was mocked and later sawn in two by order of Manasseh. Amos was beaten to death with a club. Generation after generation God kept sending His servants to the vineyard. But generation after generation those servants were beaten, treated shamelessly, wounded and thrown out.*



#### **#4 - Contribution**

**To contribute is to bring results on some level.**

**This is a sound, provoking ground  
for the building of trust. Contribution -  
especially on a consistent basis -  
indicates an "all in" kind of attitude.  
Such an attitude will always foster growth.**

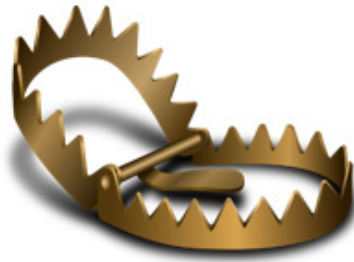
**PILLAR  
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TRUST**

#### **Compare the contributions of Elijah and the people of Israel:**

**1 Kings 19:10:** (NASB) *He said, I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.*



# TRUSTWORTHINESS TRAP:



To what and whom am I contributing on a regular basis? Do I use "the cause" as a cover for contributing to "my own cause"? What growth does my contribution foster? Can God trust my contributions?

 People standing and cheering, *What's Trust Got To Do With It*, David Horsager, TEDxUMN

- *They open the bull gate. That sheep takes off out of there. People are saying, "Look at the little kid! Can you believe it? She's still on." You know, that sheep runs all the way across the arena to the far corner where all the sheep are gathered to dump off their kids. That's what sheep do; they gather together and they laugh. (Laughter) First sheep that it sees - it butts it right in the side. BAM. She goes "Ahhh!" but she holds on. The sheep doesn't know what to do, so it takes off around the arena. She's a little bit sideways now, but second time around the arena, Verndale, Minnesota, 2,000 people standing up, screaming and cheering. Stoic Norwegian has a tear; it's his granddaughter.*

She is scared to death but holds on and trusts what her dad told her!

Matthew 21:37-39: (NASB) <sup>37</sup>But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, they will respect my son. <sup>38</sup>But when the vinegrowers saw the son, they said among themselves, this is the heir; come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance. <sup>39</sup>They took him, and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

The vinegrowers not only wounded and killed slaves who came from the landowner to get a report, but now they even killed his son. Their reaction was of disdain instead of respect. This pictured the Pharisees having Jesus crucified.



A caller from Connecticut suggests trust is so rare these days. There is more gold out there than trust! Acts 10:31 - Cornelius was chosen by God and Peter objected. God trusted Cornelius because of his compassion - he gave alms. Why did God pass by Aaron and choose Moses to deliver his people? Aaron was three years older. God felt Moses could be trusted for the mission.

Cornelius was worthy of trust. He was not part of the nation in favor with God at that time, but he did everything to please God.

Just a few weeks after Jesus performed his greatest miracle, the raising of Lazarus, the effects upon the "vinegrowers" of Jesus' day were sadly predictable:

John 11:49-51,53: (NASB) <sup>49</sup>But one of them, Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, said to them, You know nothing at all, <sup>50</sup>nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish. <sup>51</sup>Now he did not say this





on his own initiative, but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation... <sup>53</sup>So from that day on they planned together to kill him.

Caiaphas the high priest led the way for the trapping and extermination of Jesus! He was untrustworthy because he had his own agenda and not God's.

**Just the day before telling the Parable of the Landowner, Jesus had cleansed the Temple, resulting in a strong reaction from the Pharisees:**

**Mark 11:15-18:** (NASB) <sup>15</sup>Then they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; <sup>16</sup>and he would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. <sup>17</sup>And he began to teach and say to them, Is it not written, my house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations? But you have made it a robbers' den. <sup>18</sup>The chief priests and the scribes heard this and began seeking how to destroy him; for they were afraid of him, for the whole crowd was astonished at his teaching.

 **Jesus' own obituary, Jesus in the Temple, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**

- *The parable teaches two things about God's patience. It is long-suffering. And it has its limits. God's judgment comes only after generations of His showing patience to the nation. He had sent Israel one prophet after another, until at last, He sent His own beloved Son to reason with them. But after that fateful Passover week in Jerusalem, His patience reached its end. The parable is like no other Jesus has told. It is the only one that contains his own obituary. Imagine how he must have felt as he told his followers of his fate. What profound grief. What pain for the nation that had rejected him.*



**Galatians 6:1-2:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.





We all make mistakes and need to be compassionate when others make theirs.

## TRUSTWORTHINESS TRAP:



True competency is easily confused in our thinking with ambition, especially selfish ambition. Why do I see myself as competent - is it because of how I feel or is it because of how I apply what I have learned to the glory of God? Can God trust my competency? Is it worth His trust?



A CQ App user from Illinois suggests a way to be trustworthy to those around us: In the past, whenever I would offer help to someone and they accepted, I found myself sometimes feeling resentful about having to carry it out, usually because I didn't actually have the time or the means, but I offered anyway never imagining they would actually take me up on it!

I think sometimes we offer help but we don't really mean it - we just want to APPEAR gracious and helpful. And our attitude can quickly turn sour if the other person accepts that help and we weren't being sincere in our offer.

So, I figured out a way to determine if I really mean what I say or if I'm just trying to "look good." It's called "workshopping." It means that BEFORE I ever offer my help, I really think hard about if I can carry it through if they take me up on it. If in my heart when I imagine the other person actually accepting the offer, I feel immediately burdened or stressed, I know the help I'm offering is NOT sincere and I should not open my mouth. I'm just going to have a bad attitude about doing it, and since God loves a cheerful giver, I want to avoid that at all costs.

If, however, I role-play the situation in my mind where the other person accepts my help and I genuinely feel GOOD about delivering what I promised, I know I can definitely go ahead and offer my help. And the person receiving that help can fully trust that I mean what I say and that I'm genuinely happy to do it.

**How do we connect with God and others in a way that lends toward God trusting us?**



**Won't get off, What's Trust Got To Do With It, David Horsager, TEDxUMN**

- *Third time around the arena, the clowns come out. Clown: "Little girl, you can let go now. You can..." SHE WILL NOT LET GO! Finally, they get the sheep stopped in the corner, but she won't get off. The announcer didn't know what to do. 2,000 people screaming and cheering. The Rodeo Queen's getting off her perch, walking toward the middle with a trophy for the kid that lasted the longest. But, she won't get off.*



### What do the Pharisees think should happen to the vinegrowers?

Matthew 21:40-41: (NASB) <sup>40</sup>Therefore when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers? <sup>41</sup>They said to him, he will bring those wretches to a wretched end, and will rent out the vineyard to other vinegrowers who will pay him the proceeds at the proper seasons.

*He will bring those wretches to a wretched end - The Pharisees revealed their own future.*

### Here is the end result of not being worthy of God's trust:

Matthew 23:37-38: (NASB) <sup>37</sup>Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. <sup>38</sup>Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!



The Pharisees were connected to their own pride and hypocrisy. God cannot and will not trust us if we do the same.

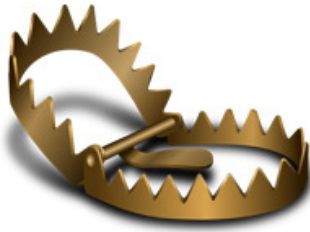
### An example of a real connection - Paul leaving Ephesus:

Acts 21:10-14: (NASB) <sup>10</sup>As we were staying there for some days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. <sup>11</sup>And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands, and said, This is what the Holy Spirit says: In this way the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles. <sup>12</sup>When we had heard this, we as well as the local residents began begging him not to go up to Jerusalem. <sup>13</sup>Then Paul answered, what are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but even to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>14</sup>And since he would not be persuaded, we fell silent, remarking, the will of the Lord be done!

With connection and trust comes a fierce loyalty.



## TRUSTWORTHINESS TRAP:



Are my connections genuine? Do I have a traceable respect and interest in the appropriate people for appropriately godly reasons, or am I just connected to what is ultimately my own agenda? Can God trust my connection?

*To be trusted is a greater compliment than to be loved. — George MacDonald*



An App User from North Carolina says: Hi guys, once again, thanks so much for the topic. If we are serious about our relationship with our Heavenly Father it's really all about what we do for Him not the other way around! Awesome lesson. Love you guys! Beth

Matthew 21:42-43: (NASB) <sup>42</sup>Jesus said to them, Did you never read in the Scriptures, the stone which the builders rejected, this became the chief cornerstone; this came about from the Lord, and it is marvelous in our eyes? <sup>43</sup>Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people, producing the fruit of it.

Jesus here gives the Pharisees prophetic reasons and warnings as to their fate resulting from their decisions. Notice how he is not simply relying on the works he did in the Father's name but is heavily relying on the inspired words of the prophets.

Psalms 118:22-23: (NASB) <sup>22</sup>The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief corner stone. <sup>23</sup>This is the LORD'S doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.

John 1:11-13: (NASB) <sup>11</sup>He came to his own, and those who were his own did not receive him. <sup>12</sup>But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name, <sup>13</sup>who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

God seeks those He can trust. If He cannot trust me, He will find someone else to do that job. It is not about ME; it is about God and His will.

**What does the missing of the fulfillment of prophecy by the Pharisees mean to us?**



**You said never let go, What's Trust Got To Do With It, David Horsager, TEDxUMN**

- "Is there a Dad here?" I'll never forget it. I walk out into that arena, I walk over to my daughter, I pick up my daughter, 2,000 people stay screaming and cheering, and I will never forget what she said in my ear: "Dad, why did the clown say, "Let go?" You said, "Never let go." (Laughter) I'm grateful she trusted me, but she also trusted herself. And, as important, she knew who not to trust. Don't trust clowns, they're scary. (Laughter) Trust is a choice. Every time you choose it, or choose against it, it has benefits or consequences. Imagine what would happen if you could be that person that was trusted by everybody every time.

Put trust in the right people! And ALWAYS put trust in God.



**2 Corinthians 11:23-28: (NASB)** <sup>23</sup>*Are they servants of Christ? - I speak as if insane - I more so; in far more labors, in far more imprisonments, beaten times without number, often in danger of death. <sup>24</sup>Five times I received from the Jews thirty-nine lashes. <sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, a night and a day I have spent in the deep. <sup>26</sup>I have been on frequent journeys, in dangers from rivers, dangers from robbers, dangers from my countrymen, dangers from the Gentiles, dangers in the city, dangers in the wilderness, dangers on the sea, dangers among false brethren; <sup>27</sup>I have been in labor and hardship, through many sleepless nights, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. <sup>28</sup>Apart from such external things, there is the daily pressure on me of concern for all the churches.*

Paul was attacked by personal enemies and remained trustworthy to God. He was not boasting by telling his experiences. He wanted to explain what he had been through so we could trust him and draw strength and faith from those trials.

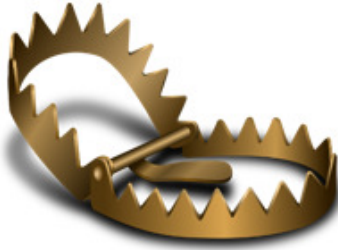
The Apostle met with danger in every turn of life. This was the proof he was committed and worthy of God's trust, which is why he was trusted with writing half of the New Testament! His mind was one dimensional in what he did - serving God. Even after making mistakes, he kept moving forward.

He had personal enemies, physical challenges and spiritual responsibility. He felt the weight and necessity of performance with the churches. This is why he was worthy of such deep and abiding trust from God.





# TRUSTWORTHINESS TRAP:



Commitment is similar to competency in that it can easily be misdirected towards selfish ambition. Such misdirection can blind us to truth and therefore blind us to what should be our true purpose - being humble followers of Christ. Can God trust my commitment?

It is way too easy to be committed to selfish ambition and tell ourselves it is commitment to God.

It can happen not only on a personal level but on a congregational level as well. Look back at the reign of Papacy during the Dark Ages. Their commitment was to the church papal system. In that commitment, they scared, tortured and killed people. That was not following the footsteps of Jesus. It was not godly...but it WAS being committed...to the wrong thing! The terror was driven by the selfish ambition of power. Do we fall into that trap?

Even good people God uses can fall into this trap, like Saul who became Paul. He persecuted Jesus' followers and did vile things in the name of God.

## Back to the Parable:

**Matthew 21:44-46:** (NASB) <sup>44</sup>And he who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; but on whomever it falls, it will scatter him like dust. <sup>45</sup>When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they understood that he was speaking about them. <sup>46</sup>When they sought to seize him, they feared the people, because they considered him to be a prophet.

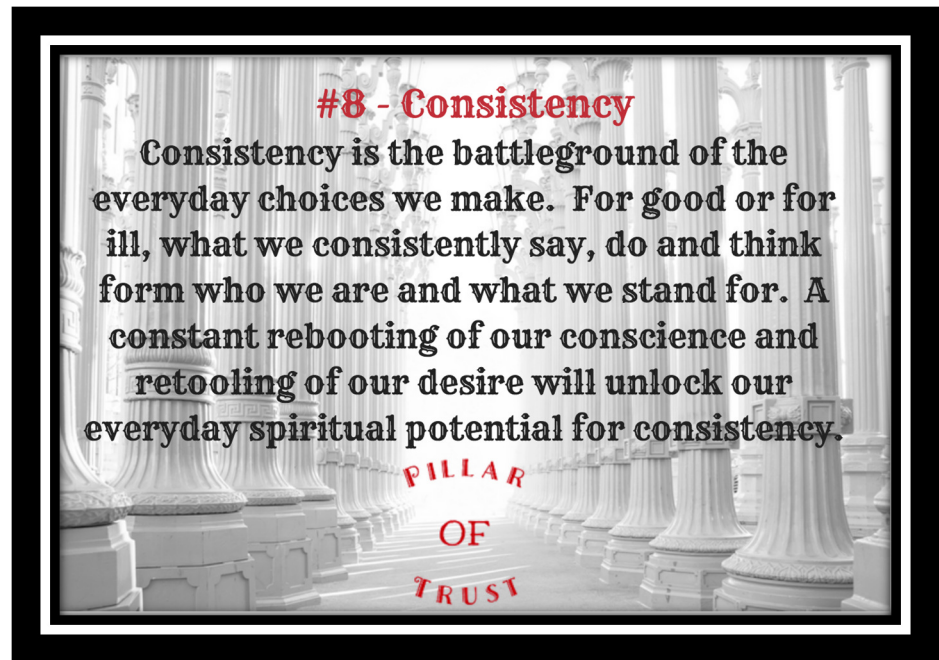
## One more prophetic allusion:

**Daniel 2:34-35:** (NASB) <sup>34</sup>You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. <sup>35</sup>Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

There is a deep sadness to the consistency that the Pharisees continually displayed.

 **Jesus' faithfulness to us, Jesus in the Temple, Moments with the Savior, Ken Gire**

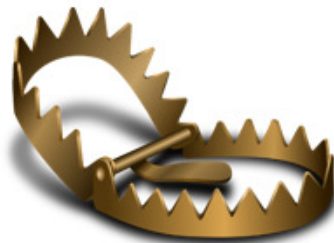
- Yet still, in spite of all the raw feelings churning inside him, the Savior was early to that courtyard, reaching out to the few vines that were reaching out to him. Clearing away the weeds that had overrun their lives. Feeding the roots that were struggling for deeper soil. Encouraging the budding fruit on their eagerly branching faith. All this the Savior did, knowing full well that in a few days the wicked tenants would throw him outside of the city walls and have him brutally killed. Such is his faithfulness to his Father's vineyard...and to those in it who are eager to grow.



Philippians 3:12-14: (NASB) <sup>12</sup>Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. <sup>13</sup>Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, <sup>14</sup>I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

The Apostle Paul showed us a model of consistency regardless of what was happening around him. He kept his attitude focused on his objective.

## TRUSTWORTHINESS TRAP:



What truly drives my consistency? Is it a selfless and spiritual focus or is my consistency driven by ego or laziness or expediency? Does my consistency drive me towards God or towards my own futile and spiritually fruitless endeavors? Can God trust my consistency?

Learn to be worthy of God's trust. What am I doing today so God can better trust me so I can be a better representative of Jesus to those around me?

*So, how do we know God can trust us?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

*And now even more to think about...  
only in the **Full Edition** of CQ Rewind!*





*Trust is the lubrication that makes it possible for organizations to work. - Warren Bennis*

*When the trust account is high, communication is easy, instant and effective. - Stephen R. Covey*

The "Trust Pillars" titles shown throughout are taken from David Horsager's article called, "The Trust Edge: How Top Leaders Gain Faster Results, Deeper Relationships, and a Stronger Bottom Line." Mr. Horsager's comments are shown below in black. We have enhanced these with a spiritual application, shown in red and discussed in detail throughout this program.

**The Eight Pillars of Trust formatted for  
those who are striving to be trustworthy Christians:**

**Pillar 1 - Clarity:** People trust the clear and mistrust or distrust the ambiguous. Be clear about your mission, purpose, expectations, and daily activities. When a leader is clear about expectations, she will likely get what she wants. When we are clear about priorities on a daily basis, we become productive and effective.

Clarity always fosters trust - for us to be worthy of God's trust, we must not only think and profess but live a life of clarity in His service.

**Pillar 2 - Compassion:** People put faith in those who care beyond themselves. Think beyond yourself, and never underestimate the power of sincerely caring about another person. People are often skeptical about whether someone really has their best interests in mind. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is not just an old saying. It is a bottom-line truth. Follow it, and you will build trust.

To have compassion is to care about others. It is - at your own expense - to make room in your heart for embracing the hardships and failures of those whom you may not normally even notice.

**Pillar 3 - Character:** People notice those who do what is right ahead of what is easy. Leaders who have built this pillar consistently do what needs to be done when it needs to be done, whether they feel like doing it or not. It is the work of life to do what is right rather than what is easy.

Your character reflects your heart. A godly character reflects that attitude of heart that does, is and thinks in terms of the needs of those around you and does so with selfless and humble energy.

**Pillar of Trust 4 - Contribution:** Few things build trust quicker than actual results. At the end of the day, people need to see outcomes. You can have compassion and character, but without the results you promised, people won't trust you. Be a contributor who delivers real results.

To contribute is to bring results...and this is a sound proving ground for the building of trust. Contribution on a consistent basis indicates an "all in" kind of attitude.

**Pillar of Trust 5 - Competency:** People have confidence in those who stay fresh, relevant, and capable. The humble and teachable person keeps learning new ways of doing things and stays current on ideas and trends. According to



one study, the key competency of a successful new MBA is not a specific skill but rather the ability to learn amid chaos. Arrogance and a “been there done that” attitude prevent you from growing, and they compromise others’ confidence in you. There is always more to learn, so make a habit of reading, learning, and listening to fresh information.

Competency is much more than knowing the right answers or knowing the objectives or understanding the vision. Competency is implementing those answers, performing the objectives and living the vision.

**Pillar of Trust 6 - Connection:** People want to follow, buy from, and be around friends—and having friends is all about building connections. Trust is all about relationships, and relationships are best built by establishing genuine connection. Ask questions, listen, and above all, show gratitude - it’s the primary trait of truly talented connectors. Grateful people are not entitled, they do not complain and they do not gossip. Develop the trait of gratitude, and you will be a magnet.

True connection can only happen when real communication is working both ways. Connection is established through respect and interest in another and it builds an environment where trust absolutely flourishes.

**Pillar of Trust 7 - Commitment:** People believe in those who stand through adversity. People trusted General Patton, Martin Luther King, Jr., Mohandas Gandhi, Jesus and George Washington because they saw commitment and sacrifice for the greater good. Commitment builds trust.

Commitment is standing true through adversity, doubt and failure. It is being willing to step up one more time, being willing to be challenged one more time and being willing to get up off of the mat one more time. Commitment attracts trust.

**Pillar of Trust 8 - Consistency:** In every area of life, it’s the little things - done consistently - that make the big difference. If I am overweight, it is because I have eaten too many calories over time, not because I ate too much yesterday. It is the same in business. The little things done consistently make for a higher level of trust and better results. The great leaders consistently do the small but most important things first. They make that call and write that thank you note. Do the little things, consistently.

Consistency is the battleground of the everyday choices that we make. For good or for ill, what we consistently say, do and think will form who we are and what we stand for. A constant rebooting of our conscience and retooling of our desire will unlock our everyday spiritual potential for consistency.





Here is another look at the untrustworthy shepherding of Israel's leadership from the Old Testament.

**The pronouncements against the *shepherds of Israel* is very appropriate in defining misuse of leadership:**

Ezekiel 34:1-2: (NASB) <sup>1</sup>*Then the word of the LORD came to me saying, <sup>2</sup>Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy and say to those shepherds, Thus says the Lord GOD, Woe, shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not the shepherds feed the flock?*

**Who has been the primary focus of the shepherds?**

Ezekiel 34:3-4: (NASB) <sup>3</sup>*You eat the fat and clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the fat sheep without feeding the flock. <sup>4</sup>Those who are sickly you have not strengthened, the diseased you have not healed, the broken you have not bound up, the scattered you have not brought back, nor have you sought for the lost; but with force and with severity you have dominated them.*

**What does it look like the motivation was of the shepherds?**

Ezekiel 34:5-6: (NASB) <sup>5</sup>*They were scattered for lack of a shepherd, and they became food for every beast of the field and were scattered. <sup>6</sup>My flock wandered through all the mountains and on every high hill; My flock was scattered over all the surface of the earth, and there was no one to search or seek for them.*

**What was the result of the shepherds' efforts? We see that even in those ancient times when God's chosen people were a nation, there was serious corruption in their spiritual leadership.**

**The Old Testament Vineyard Parable with a slightly different lesson:**

Isaiah 5:1-7: (KJV) <sup>1</sup>*Now will I sing to my well beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: <sup>2</sup>And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. <sup>3</sup>And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. <sup>4</sup>What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? <sup>5</sup>And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: <sup>6</sup>And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. <sup>7</sup>For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*

**The vineyard was destroyed because those who cared for it did a bad job.**