

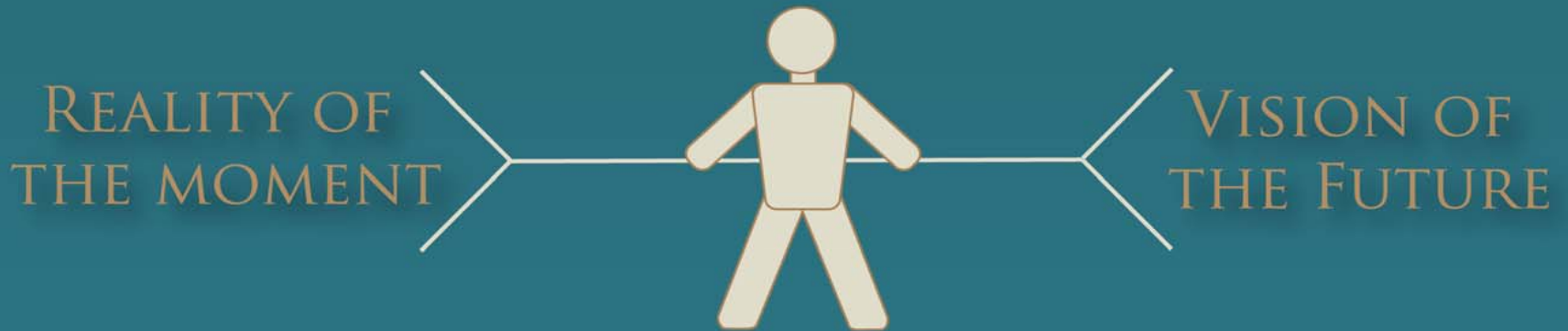
An Attitude of Acceptance

E. LeBron Fairbanks

“Leaders need two things-
character and strategy.
If you can only do one,
drop strategy.”

General Norman Schwarzkopf

The Joy and Pain of Leadership



PAIN

“Accept one another then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.”

Romans 15:7

Acceptance is...

- The ability to communicate value, regard, worth, and respect to others.
- The ability to make people feel significant, honored, and esteemed.
- At the heart of leading with a servant heart

An Attitude of Acceptance

is shaped and nurtured by three convictions:

- Who we are as people of God
- What we are to do in the work of God
- How we live together as a family of God

Conviction #1

Acceptance of Others is rooted in a
VISION FOR MINISTRY

We are, as Christians...

- Brothers and sisters in Christ
- Members together in Christ's body
- A fellowship of God's people
- A microcosm of the Kingdom of God on earth
- A community of faith
- A sacramental community in and through which the grace of God flows



The People of God
are called and Spirit-empowered
To incarnate HIS healing,
guiding, sustaining, and
reconciling work....

The relationship between the ministry of the pastor/teacher and the ministry of the community of faith whom he/she leads.

GRACE - Ephesians 2:8-9 We were dead. By grace through faith...now we are alive! God first loved the world. God initiates all activity for reconciliation and enables His children through grace to participate with Him in His ministry.

CHURCH - Ephesians 2:19-22 By grace we are incorporated into God's family and become: The People of God, The Body of Christ, and The Fellowship of the Spirit.

MINISTRY - II Corinthians 5:18; 9:12 The Church's mission is the continuing ministry of Jesus, the ministry of reconciliation..."As the Father has sent me, so send I you." God acts in the world through His People. The ministry of reconciliation is made known through the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS - I Corinthians 12:4-5 The ministry of reconciliation is expressed by each member of the church through specific concrete ministries as he/she exercises spirit given gifts and fulfills his/her calling (vocation) in the church and in the world through the enabling power of the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

Resulting in spiritual growth and Christian maturity.

Moving inactive Christians to the ministry of reconciliation.

Some are gifted as apostles, pastors, teachers, and evangelists.

Outside the Faith Community

To equip God's People

With an understanding of what it means to be the People of God, how to live together as the family of God, and what we are called to do with our lives.

And to discover, develop and utilize their Spiritual gifts and to fulfill their calling or vocation in life.

for a lifestyle of devotion ↑, caring →, learning ← and relating. ↻

through relating the gospel and faith to crucial life concerns

Producing maturity within the believers.

For works of service and the ministry of reconciliation in the world.

Conviction #2

Acceptance of Others is rooted in a
PASSION FOR FORMATION

“Christian leadership is humble service to others, in a community of faith whose head is Christ,...for the purpose of enabling (or forming) them, through visioning, collaboration, and example, to live their lives under the Lordship of Christ, and to understand, accept, and fulfill their ministry to each other, their vocational calling and their mission to the world.”

E. LeBron Fairbanks

“Leadership is known by the personalities it enriches, not by those it dominates or captivates.”

Dr. Harold Reed

Ask Yourself

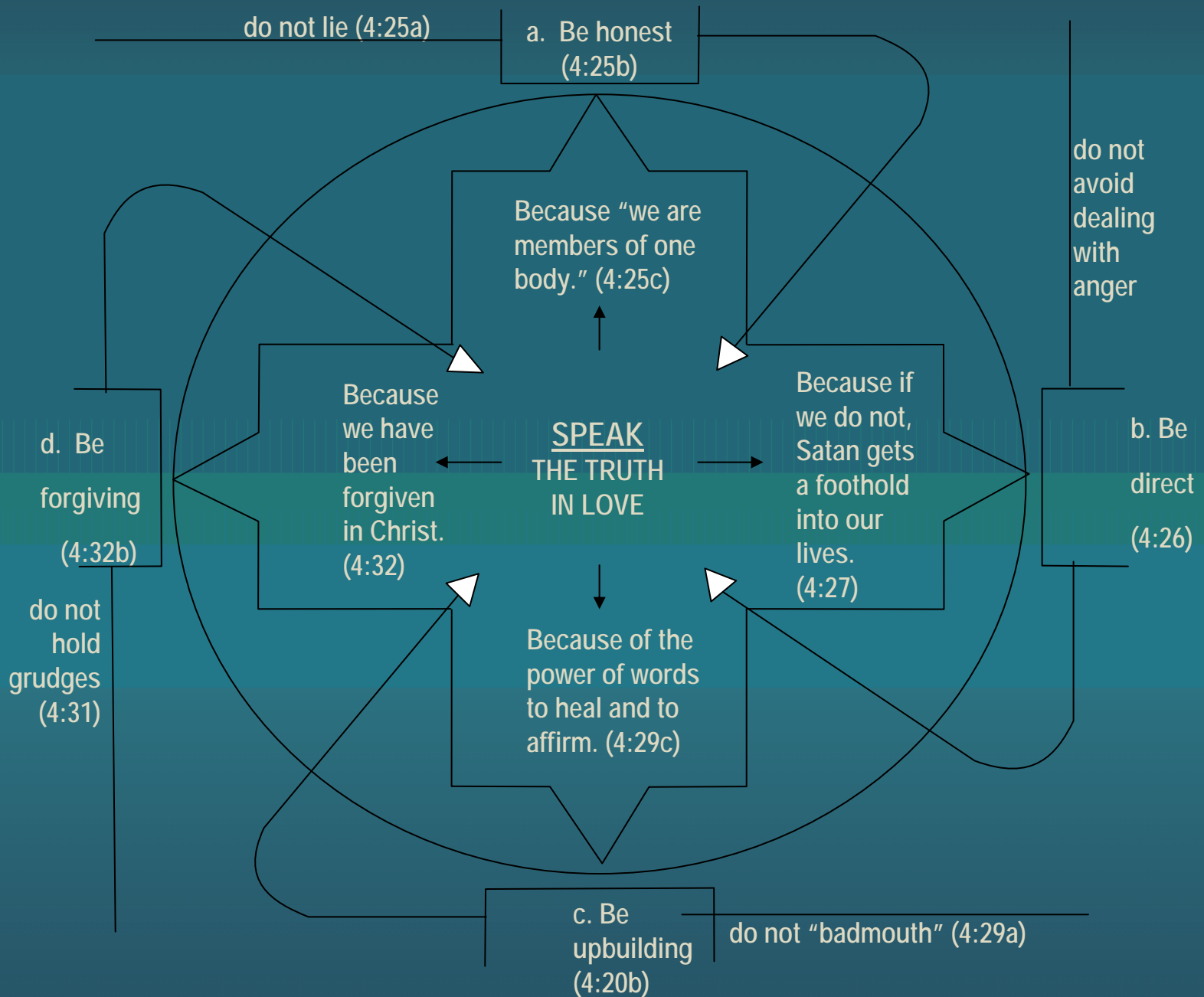
- How can *my* ministry of servant leadership enable *others* to fulfill *their* ministry to each other and *their* mission in the world?
- Are the people being served growing as Christians?
- Are they themselves becoming servants?

“Walk Worthy...

- Be humble,
- Gentle,
- Patient,
- Supportive of one another...

Through speaking the truth
in love.”

Ephesians 4:1-3,15



This Conviction allows us to be...

- Honest with Believers
- Immediate in Dealing with Conflict
- Up-building with our words
- Forgiving, even when others do not forgive

EPHESIANS 4:25-32

“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.

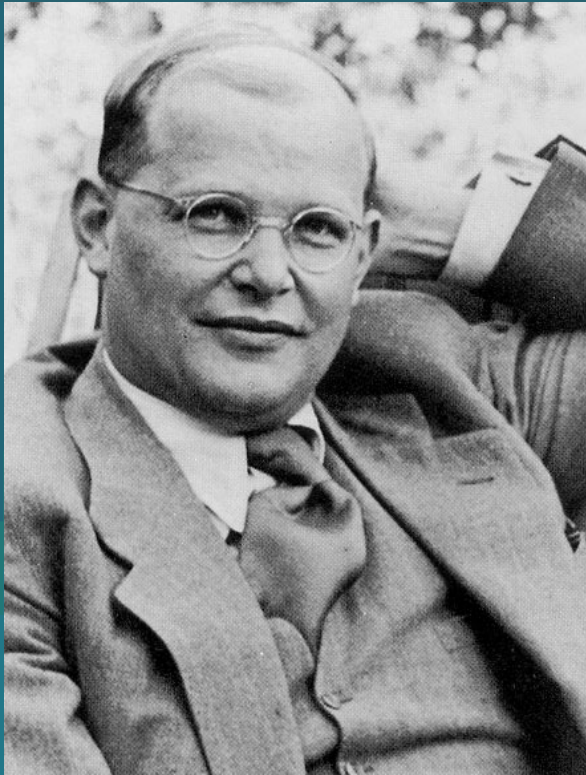
He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”

Conviction #3

Acceptance of Others
is rooted in an

OBSESSION FOR COMMUNITY



Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Life Together: The Classic Exploration of Faith and Community

Expressions of Ministry

- 1. Holding One's Tongue*
- 2. Meekness*
- 3. Listening*
- 4. Active Helpfulness*
- 5. Bearing (Supporting)*
- 6. Proclaiming*
- 7. Authority (Leadership)*

Six Important Lessons

1. Good and godly people often see things differently

2. Many issues over which we experience conflict are culturally based and not a violation of scripture

Six Important Lessons

3. Differences that divide us have the potential to alienate members of the body of Christ and to impact negatively the work of God in our communities
4. Acceptance of our brothers and sisters in Christ who differ with us is to love, respect, and honor them as God love them

Six Important Lessons

5. Acceptance of others implies that we can learn from them

6. We must find ways to communicate acceptance to those who have not bowed to the Lordship of Christ

Luke 6:40

*When a student is fully trained he
will become like his teacher.*

I Love You

I Accept You

I Respect You

I Need You

I Trust You

I Serve You

I Forgive You

*Is not an “obsession with
community” risky?*

Will there be misunderstandings?

Abuses? Betrayal? Pain?

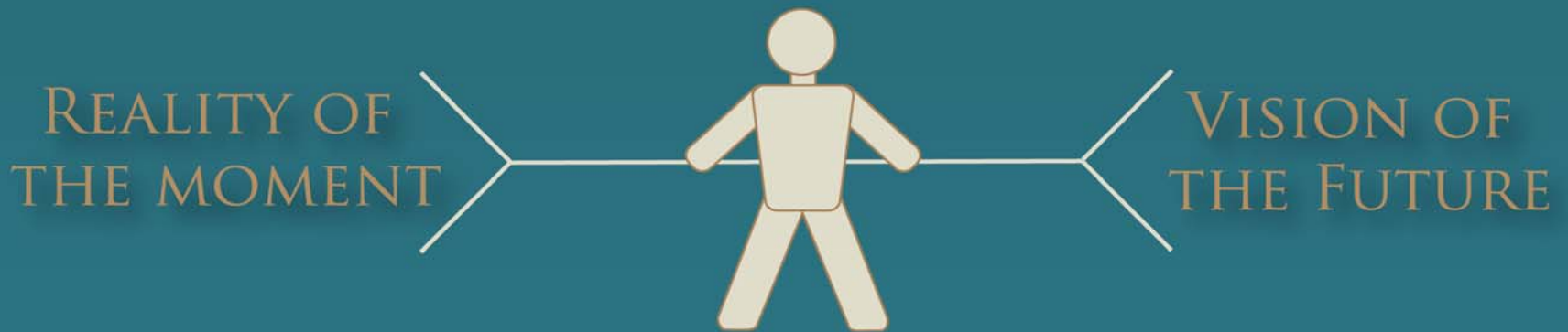
Is it worth it?

Convictions → *Create* → An Attitude of Acceptance

- Who we are as people of God
- What we are to do in the work of God
- How we live together as a family of God

- A Vision...
- For Ministry
- A Passion... for Formation
- An Obsession... for Community

The Joy and Pain of Leadership



*JOY and
PRAISE!*

“THE MOST IMPORTANT ATTRIBUTE OF A LEADER IS NOT KNOWLEDGE OR TECHNIQUE BUT WHAT THE LEADER BRINGS IN HIS/HER PRESENCE. AND THE PRESENCE HE/SHE NEEDS IS A NON-ANXIOUS PRESENCE.”

Edwin Friedman Foundation

LEADERSHIP IN THE AGE OF THE QUICK FIX: A FAILURE OF NERVES

When you encounter the “reality” of good and godly people differing and colliding with you:

Acceptance *1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10* Rejection

Remember, what John 3:16 is to the unbeliever, Romans 15:7 is to the believer.

“ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER
THEN, JUST AS CHRIST
ACCEPTED YOU, IN ORDER
TO BRING PRAISE TO GOD”