# From Our Pastor
# December 2, 2017

Sabbath Greetings to Everyone!

The issue of public trust is absolutely relevant. It is a cornerstone of a functioning nation based on individual freedom. The Founding Fathers wrote about filling the office of the presidency with those whose ""reputation for integrity inspires and merits confidence."

During the past month we have heard daily reports of sexual harassment scandals by those in positions of power or influence. It began with accusations about a candidate for the US Senate, and has spread to the entertainment industry, media, members of congress, and entertainers, just to name the most obvious. More reports are coming daily as women are encouraged to finally report what has been done to them. It is as if decades of covering up disgusting behavior is being made public. Who knows how far this will go? One sure result is that trust in our institutions and public figures has been reduced again.

The truth is obvious: Character matters. Personal character is reflected in our words, actions, treatment of our fellow humans, work ethic, judgment, and understanding of our role and responsibilities. Sadly, in the Pop Culture of the past 50 years, character has not been taught or passed on to children as it should have been. "Celebrities" of society have, more often than not, been examples of self-destructive behavior, addictions, immorality, and dishonesty. Youth have been allowed to admire these entertainers, athletes, and musicians and want to be like them. Just to prove my point, do an internet search for "Musicians and Entertainers who have died young." You will be amazed at the hundreds of well-known names and causes of their deaths.

Character is essential for those who govern or have influence. When Moses needed to introduce some organizational structure in Israel, he was advised, ".. you shall select from all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place such over them to be rulers ..." (Exodus 18:21)

Notice the four essential qualities of those who have positions of responsibility: 1. Have the ability 2. Fear God 3. Men of Truth 4. Hating covetousness

These qualities can be summed up in the word CHARACTER. Character has been explained as "doing what is right when no one is looking" and "doing the right thing no matter what the consequences." If our leaders, politicians, and celebrities had these four qualities of character there would be no liars, corruption, or abuse of people or power. People would trust their leaders. Embarrassing revelations and disgusting news reports would be a thing of the past.

Our society has chosen, in most cases, to give authority and influence to people based on their personality, appearance, and talent. Character has been ignored. We see some of the result in recent news. The tip of the iceberg has been exposed.

In the coming Kingdom of God here on earth all those who are given responsibility will have proven that they have the four qualities of character. As Jesus Christ promised, many will hear these words:" 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

If you desire to hear those words someday, determine to become a person of real character now.

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