

# Building Good Will, Favor and Trust

## Creating a Relational Tool Box—part 7

August 1, 2021

Growing relationships are built using our three “tools” for the week: by creating good will, creating and giving favor, and by building trust.

### **DAY 1: Creating Good Will**

1. Growing relationships are based on creating good will with people.

*Prov. 11:27 He who seeks good finds good will...*

2. What do you think good will is?

3. Solomon says that seeking good “finds” good will from others. In other words, seeking good naturally *results* in receiving good will from others.

*Prov. 11:17 A kind man benefits himself (good will).*

4. What, then, is good will?

Good will is “believe-ability” about your goodness.

5. People see others on a scale from believe-ability to skeptical. That is true for your words, attitudes, actions and intentions.

6. Because of our fallen nature, we all have some level of realistic skepticism about everyone. (Only the naïve or what Proverbs calls the idealistic “simpleton” would think otherwise). No one is perfect, everyone disappoints us in some way.

7. But when you “seek good” as Solomon tells us, you create a sense of good will. Your good will “account” goes up. People’s skepticism of you decreases. They sense you are a “person of good will”—your intentions are in the right place and for the right thing, for higher purposes, instead of “You’re just interested in your needs. It’s all about you.”

8. People give you the benefit of the doubt—the benefit of the doubt about your motives, your actions and your words. They “know your heart.” They know what you’re trying to do.

*Prov. 14:9 Fools mock at making amends for sin, but good will is found among the upright.*

9. Good will can be created even through our sin! If we confess our sin to God and those whom we have sinned against, and if we make amends for our sin, we can still create good will. This is fantastic news! It means we don’t have to be perfect to create good will! Even when we fail people will see the *good* way we deal with our sin.

10. What creates bad will? When people see we our general pattern is for our own self-interest, first, when our real motives are different than what we claim, when we go back on our word, when we don’t follow through and when we don’t seem to make a good faith effort.

11. What strikes you about creating good will?

## DAY 2: Finding Favor

1. When you think of someone “finding favor” with another person, what comes to your mind?

2. What’s the difference between “good will” and “finding favor?”

a. Seeking what is good, creating good will results in receiving good will. Your “*believe-ability*” with others increases. People cut you some slack, they give you the benefit of the doubt.

b. “Finding favor” is one step beyond “believe-ability”. People give you something.

3. Good will has to do with someone’s *attitude* toward you. Finding favor has to do with someone’s *actions* toward you. “Doors of opportunity open.” People want to do something for you, to benefit you, to help you, to join you in some cause or enterprise.

4. We can find favor with both God and man.

*Luke 2:52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature, and **in favor** with God and man.*

*Luke 1:30 But the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary; you have **found favor** with God.”*

*Acts 2:46b They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and **enjoying the favor of all the people**. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

*Acts 7:9b But God was with him 10 and rescued him from all his troubles. He gave Joseph wisdom and enabled him to **gain the goodwill** of Pharaoh king of Egypt. **So Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt and all his palace.***

5. God rescued Joseph from prison. Notice, Joseph gained both the goodwill of Pharaoh and also received “favor” from Pharaoh: release from prison and a gigantic “promotion!”

*Prov. 13:15 **Good understanding wins favor**, but the way of the unfaithful is hard.*

6. Understanding is the topic of message #2 in this “Tool Box” series. It is hugely important in deepening relationships, building trust, and winning favor. Here, we win favor by our wisdom and understanding about people, problems, dilemmas, troubles, etc. We gain favor with people by our sensibilities and good judgment, by how something ought to be handled. Winning favor means we gain the *confidence* of others.

*Prov. 10:32 The **lips of the righteous** know what **finds favor**, but the mouth of the wicked only what is perverse.*

7. Winning favor comes when people sense we are living “rightly” AND that is reinforced by how we talk. The opposite is what is “wicked” and “perverse.” When someone acts in a way that is perverse (“something doesn’t sound right about this; it doesn’t jive”) they lose favor.

8. What strikes you about finding favor?

### DAY 3: Building Trust

*Exodus 18:21 But select **capable** men from all the people—men who fear God, **trustworthy** men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens. <sup>22</sup> Have them serve as judges for the people at all times...*

1. There is no greater character foundational trait for relationships than trust. Relationships can never deepen without trust. Relationships can only proceed to the extent that you trust someone.

2. What do you think it mean to trust someone?

3. When we say we trust someone we are saying that we trust someone's character, their moral judgment, and their ability to follow their moral judgment. They become "trustworthy."

4. Trust is not given to anyone. Trust is something you have to build. Trust has to be earned.

5. Trust is *not* something you can call on people to do. If you have to say, "You just need to trust me" you are being naïve. People *already trust you up to the level at which you've demonstrated trust-ability*. It is naïve to trust someone more than they have demonstrated trustworthiness.

#### What creates lack of trust?

6. Married couples equate being trustworthy to being faithful to their vows. It's easy to assume that if you are faithful to your vows then you have earned being "completely trusted." But that's not how trust works. Being trustworthy to your vows is *one* application of being trustworthy.

7. Trust is like a bank account. You only have as much money in the bank as you've put in. It doesn't matter how much *you* think is in the bank. What matters is how much the banker thinks you have in the bank. To appeal to your husband or wife with, "Honey, you just need to trust me," is naïve. It's like saying to your banker, "No. I know how much I have in my bank account. You just need to trust me."

8. Your level of trust is a product of the amount of trustworthiness you have both deposited and withdrawn from your trust bank account.

9. You make good deposits in your trust account when you are faithful to your vows. On the other hand, if you fairly frequently tell "white lies" you're making withdrawals from your trust account. If you cut corners on your hours at work you're making withdrawals from your trust account. If you cheat on your taxes you're making withdrawals from your trust account.

*Prov. 11:13 A gossip betrays a confidence, but a **trustworthy** person keeps a secret.*

10. To gossip is to make withdrawals from your trust account.

You're only as trustworthy as your track record.

11. What strikes you about building trust?

## DAY 4: Queen Esther: Creating Favor, “Finding” Favor

1. The Old Testament Hebrew word for favor is *chen*. The root word means to show favor, be gracious or to extend favor. Its deepest meaning is in finding acceptance.
2. To find favor is to be treated well.

### The story of Esther

“King Xerxes looked with favor upon Esther...”

3. The time is 483-473 B.C. The story occurs in the city of Susa, the capital of Persia, when Persia was the dominant world power. God’s people are in exile there.
4. Haman is the number two leader in Persia. Everyone bows down to him, except one—Mordecai, a Jew, who will only bow to God.

*Esther 3:5 When Haman saw that Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor, he was **enraged**.<sup>6</sup> Yet having learned who Mordecai's people were, he scorned the idea of killing only Mordecai. Instead Haman looked for a way to **destroy all Mordecai's people**, the Jews, throughout the whole kingdom of Xerxes.*

5. His fury grew such that he planned a way to exterminate all the Jewish people in the entire Persian realm, which stretched from Egypt to India! The king agreed to his plan.

6. When word hits the street the Jewish people are devastated. It is a law that cannot be rescinded, even by the king himself! Mordecai, Esther’s uncle sends word to Queen Esther that she must talk to the king. This was not as easy as you might think. Here is her response.

*Esth. 4:11 "All the king's officials and the people of the royal provinces know that for any man or woman who approaches the king in the inner court without being summoned the king has but one law: that he be put to death. The only exception to this is for the king to extend the gold scepter to him and spare his life. But thirty days have passed since I was called to go to the king."*

*Esther 4:13 Mordecai sent back this answer: "Do not think that because you are in the king's house you alone of all the Jews will escape. <sup>14</sup> For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to royal position for such a time as this?"*

7. Esther responds with courage and a plan of action.

*Esther 4:16 "Go, gather all the Jews to be found in Susa, and hold a fast on my behalf, and neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. I and my maids will also fast as you do. Then I will go to the king, though it is against the law; and if I perish, I perish."*

(We will resume this story tomorrow...)

8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

## **DAY 5: Esther earns and wins favor; how does she do it?**

1. After the three-day fast Queen Esther lingers just outside the king's hall. King Xerxes sees her and invites her in! He asks if she has anything he can provide for her.
2. She did not "barge in," but her lingering provided space for the King to do the inviting.
3. Before Esther is to make her appeal to King Xerxes to do something about the monstrous law she creates favor.

*Esther 5:8 **If the king regards me with favor and if it pleases the king to grant my petition and fulfill my request, let the king and Haman come tomorrow to the banquet I will prepare for them.** Then I will answer the king's question."*

4. List at least four ways she creates favor with King Xerxes.

5. Esther asks that she may host a banquet in which both the king and Haman attend. She then surprises the king by asking to host a second banquet in which both the king and Haman will attend. At the second banquet, Esther lays out the dastardly deed that Haman has planned.

*Esther 7:3 Then Queen Esther answered, "**If I have found favor with you, O king, and if it pleases your majesty, grant me my life--this is my petition. And spare my people--this is my request.**"<sup>4</sup> For I and my people have been sold for destruction and slaughter and annihilation. If we had merely been sold as male and female slaves, I would have kept quiet, **because no such distress would justify disturbing the king.**"*

6. Notice, she still does not assume her appeal will be heard or acted on. She is still creating favor at the **beginning** of her appeal and at **the end** of her appeal.

*Esther 7:5 King Xerxes asked Queen Esther, "Who is he? Where is the man who has dared to do such a thing?"<sup>6</sup> Esther said, "The adversary and enemy is this vile Haman."*

7. The king is enraged and temporarily leaves the banquet hall.

*Esther 7:8 Just as the king returned from the palace garden to the banquet hall, Haman was falling on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king exclaimed, "Will he even molest the queen while she is with me in the house?"*

8. Haman is executed and the law to exterminate the Jews is rescinded.

*Prov. 13:15 **Good judgment wins favor,** but the way of the unfaithful leads to their destruction.*

*Prov. 3:3 Let **love and faithfulness** never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart.<sup>4</sup> **Then you will win favor** and a good name in the sight of God and man.*

What strikes you from today's devotional?