

## Faith v. Fear

Faith or fear. These appear to be the options, for you individually, and for Christ the King Community Church as a whole. In life, these are the two different driving forces. There is an invisible line that divides them. One of the greater decisions a church can make is deciding which side of the line they want to be on.

On the fear side you take a defensive posture. You view people as potential threats. You spend a great deal of energy preventing the worst. You put in place a lot of policies and protocol to keep bad things from happening to good people.

On the faith side you take an offensive posture. You view people as the prize. You spend a lot of energy promoting the best. You put in place a lot of leaders to make sure good things are happening to bad people.

You know when you are on the fear side of the line when you keep hearing words like no, accountability, process and authority. You know when you are on the faith side of the line when you keep hearing words like yes, support, story and empowerment.

Every ministry must pick a side. At CTK we have made a decision to walk in faith, instead of fear. We have decided to not put the energy of our organization into protecting ourselves. Instead we have decided to put the bulk of energies into reaching out, knowing that we will have to be responsive to messes as they occur (which they most certainly will). This decision – to be responsive instead of protective – frees up significant time and energy for the mission.

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In 1999, on the 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the “original” CTK (in Bellingham, Washington) I stood up in a staff meeting and commended the founding pastor, Steve Mason. I said, “Steve, you have been a remarkable leader. I think most people are impressed by your faith in God. But what impresses me is your faith in people. Believing in people takes way more faith than believing in God.”

Has Steve’s faith in God and people paid off? I’d say so.

The same year that I made that statement, 1999, CTK in Bellingham “launched” CTK in Skagit Valley (now CTK International). In the last 8 years, CTK has gone from one location to a mini-movement, with locations in a number of counties, states and countries. Today tens of thousands of people are walking in the same grace that I experienced.

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One of the questions I routinely get is, “With so many small groups and Worship Centers out there, how will you find out if people are teaching false doctrine, or straying morally?” The answer is simple: “People love to tattle.” How did Paul find out about the moral dysfunction at Corinth? It was reported to him. We don’t need to go looking for trouble for it to appear. Years ago, when we had a small group go “sideways” theologically, someone in the group placed a call to me almost immediately and let me know what was being espoused. I was able to deal immediately with the error, and “cut out the cancer.”

While we can’t prevent bad things from happening, we can be responsive to issues as they arise, and we anticipate that they will arise. We subscribe to the “2% rule.” The 2% rule says that out of every 100 groups we start, two will go sideways in a big way. This is based on our actual experience. Out of the first 100 small groups we started, 2 of them went sideways; one theologically, and one relationally. Knowing the 2% rule, we face choices as a church. Do we a) invest our efforts into trying to prevent the 2% from happening through extensive reporting and meetings (in which the 2% will still happen – we’ve just burned up a lot of energy trying to stop it), or do we b) put our efforts into reaching out, but prepare ourselves mentally and spiritually for dealing swiftly, truthfully and gracefully with issues as they arise? At CTK we have chosen b). Instead of organizing to keep the 2% from happening, we have chosen to put our energies into reaching out. As a friend of mine likes to say, “If you use your hands to cover your butt, it doesn’t leave you any hands to do the work.”

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I have found that by trusting people until they prove themselves unworthy of that trust, a lot more happens.

Jim Burke

I bring you the gift of these four words: I believe in you.

Blaise Pascal

Even an overdose of trust that, at time, involves the risk of being deceived or disappointed is wiser, in the long run, than taking for granted that most people are incompetent or insincere.

Warren Bennis

It is better to trust and sometimes be disappointed than to be forever mistrusting and be right occasionally.

Neil Maxwell

Trust brings out the best in people and literally changes the dynamics of interaction. While it is true that a few abuse this trust, the vast, vast majority of people do not abuse it, but respond amazingly well to it. And when they do, they don't need external supervision, control, or the "carrot and stick" approach to motivation. They are inspired. They run with the trust they were extended. They want to live up to it. They want to give back.

Stephen M.R. Covey

Better trust all and be deceived,  
And weep that trust, and that deceiving,  
Than doubt one heart that, if believed  
Had blessed one's life with true believing.

Frances Anne Kemble

It is happier to be sometimes cheated than not to trust.

Samuel Smiles