

RECAP FROM LAST MEETING (2-3 min)

ANNOUNCEMENTS (1-2 min)

PERSONAL FAITH STORY (3 min)

Ask someone to share a brief faith story about how they see God working in their life this week.

PRAYER (8-10 min)

Split into groups of two or three.

LESSON (30 min)

Spend five minutes on these two questions:

1. How has a leader in your work setting demonstrated love in a protective way toward you?
2. How did it impact you personally and professionally?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7. God's type of love protects. That is, it watches out for others. It withstands difficulty. And, if there is a shortcoming or fault in the loved one, love has the ability to cover it (see Proverbs 10:12). Love is not based on selfish desire or even mutual benefit; rather, it seeks the benefit of the other person. Love aims to give rather than receive.

Our greatest example of love is God the Father's love for his Son, Jesus Christ. But when God commissioned His Son to save mankind, He did not "protect" Him from personal tests of deprivation, temptation, torment, betrayal, and ultimately, merciless execution. These trials He endured for the greater purpose of the mission: to pay the price for past, present and future sins of mankind, offering the solution and salvation to those who accept Christ's sacrifice for our sins.

The Father entrusted His Son to do the job, sacrifices included. The "protection" Jesus could count on was that God the Father could always be relied on: "I am not alone, for My Father is with Me..." "Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and He will put at my disposal more than 12 legions of angels?" (John 16:32; Matthew 26:53).

To protect people under your authority, one of the most loving things you can do is to prepare them for the challenges that lie ahead. Challenges that are inevitable, but not yet obvious to one less experienced. The best-prepared employees will embrace and overcome obstacles on the path to success, thanks to their obedience and the self-confidence you instilled in them by training. Hebrews 5:8 speaks of Jesus in this way: "Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered."

GROUP DISCUSSION

- How have you demonstrated this practice in your work setting toward those you lead or influence?
- What would be some specific things you could begin doing now to enhance your use of this practice as a management principle?
- What would be some potential obstacles? How could those obstacles be removed?
- What help or accountability do you need from this group? Who in the group might be the best person to hold you accountable?

CLOSING PRAYER (5 min)