

LESSON 10 Devotional

Promise Keepers

Esteban Kolsky, CEO of thinkJar, conducts an annual customer satisfaction survey. Upon reviewing the results, he discovered that 66% of customers who switched brands did so because of poor service.

At the core of customer service is a promise. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines a promise as, “a legally binding declaration that gives the person to whom it is made a right to expect or to claim the performance or forbearance of a specified act.”

When a customer buys your product or service, they are giving you money in exchange for your promise to provide that service or product to their satisfaction. Dissatisfaction comes when their expectation of what that promise should look like is not met.

Unfortunately, promises, or what the Bible frequently calls “covenants or vows,” are not as honored today as they were in biblical times. Vows made in the Bible were considered solemn promises made to God, even if verbally made to another person. Numbers 30:2 says, “If a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath to bind himself with a binding obligation, he shall not violate his word; he shall do according to all that proceeds out of his mouth.”

An example of how important promises were in biblical times is a story found in Joshua chapter 9. Joshua and the Israelites were told by God to go into the Promised Land and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land. They began by wiping out Jericho and the nation of Ai, but when they did, the surrounding people became fearful and set out to thwart their plans.

Specifically, the Gibeonites living nearby could see that they were destined to be next, so they decided to try to save themselves through deception. They packed up some old bread, old torn wineskins, worn out sandals and clothes, then rode into meet with the Israelites to convince them that they lived far away. They requested that a covenant be made sparing their families in a distant country, in return they agreed to become servants of the Israelites.

Although the Israelites tested the Gibeonites claims, they made one big mistake, they didn't ask the Lord. Three days later the Israelites discovered they had been deceived.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As a group read Joshua 9: 16-21, then answer the following questions.

- 1. Why didn't the Israelites decide to destroy the Gibeonites for their deception? How would you have felt about that decision?

- 2. God commanded the Israelites to destroy all the people in the Promised Land. Why do you think Joshua decided that their covenant to the Gibeonites took precedent over God's command?

- 3. Considering this story, how careful should you be before making promises to your customers? When you do make promises to customers, how diligent should you be in honoring them?

- 4. Your company's marketing materials and sales conversations set expectations for your customer as to what they should expect. Are there any steps you need to take to assure that you customer promises are kept?
