

Faithfulness in leadership, marriage and business builds a stable leadership.

No country will ever realise the dream of socio-economically stability without faithful stewardship.

Leading and living a life of mutual respect, love and peace begin at personal realisation that “I should be trustworthy in all stewardship responsibilities bestowed upon me”. All leaders, when assuming leadership, whether politically or religiously, have this swearing-in promise: “*I will be faithful...*,” Such promises reverberate with inaugurations, inductions, coronations, enthronements, etc.

To be unfaithful to what you have sworn to do is a breach of the solemn promise to the community and, generally speaking, to the country. In the case of those in political office their salaries are paid through taxes. In business it is the shareholders, and in churches the congregants.

Such a breach should, therefore, result in suspension, impeachment, dismissal or excommunication. We should also remember that faithful stewardship requires that our moral character must meet the expectation of the office we occupy and, and that we should respect the people we lead. We must also be faithful to acts of justice, care for the poor, feed the hungry and desist from lies, theft, bribery and sexual favours while serving people. Faithfulness is the premium of effective, productive and stable society.

If the community’s conscience is not raised to the multifaceted effects of unfaithfulness, the society will not only be hopelessly failing the living, but generations to come. For this reason, if there is something that should get the families, churches, villages, cities, young and old, and in fact all communities engaged in the quest for building peaceful society, it is restoration of *faithfulness*.

Can we pause for a moment, and think, how beautiful this country would be, if all of us were to be faithful, in families, at work, in churches and in society? We could not be witnessing so many divorces (with a recorded increase of 21998 in 2012 to 25326 in 2016), murders (where police minister once said that a surge in murders has turned South Africa into a place that “*borders on a war zone*”), suicides (where, according to the World Health Organisation, teenage suicide occur every 40 seconds and an attempt is made every three seconds). To that we can add the alarming rate of rapes of children and women, and a litany of other crimes.

Whenever we witness fires burning in the streets because of unsatisfactory service delivery; whenever we hear about a newly born child picked from waste; we must realise that someone has not been faithful either in commitment to relationship or in leadership of handling of resources of our country. While we may welcome the many commissions of enquiry, the fact is that they are being paid for by taxpayer’s money – funds which could be better spent on uplifting the poor.

King Solomon once said, kindness and faithfulness keep a king safe. Through kindness his throne is made secure. Similarly, Marcus Cicero contended, “*Nothing is more noble, nothing*

is more venerable than fidelity. Faithfulness and truth are the most sacred excellences and endowments of human mind."

We also know that unfaithfulness in marriages occurs in the form of infidelity. Marriage betrayal in the form of infidelity has become a fashion. The rising number of divorces, and the pain this causes partners, and more particularly, the children is, in most part, due to unfaithfulness. Role models that are exemplary in marriages are waning by the day. Such diminishing role models of faithful marriages have sometimes led to a growing adoption of a cohabitation lifestyle which is an arrangement by two people not married but living together, in many cases disregarding their traditional and religious standards.

Similarly, fraud in the business, and in whatever manner we can think of, is just no different from marriage infidelity. Unfaithfulness to the people we should be accounting to stems from an empty mind whose low esteem needs to be healed. Cheating, whether in business, marriage or leadership, is a piercing betrayal of the compass of human consciousness that maintains society on a stable course. All communities must restore faithfulness to human obligation, trust and to the duty to care and sustain the welfare of our society.

In our beautiful metro for example, the restoration of faithfulness can heal both from the worrying tensions of relationships and from drug haven and unabated maiming of innocent people we have come to witness lately.

The Book of Jude 1: 17-23 implores all of us to remain faithful in our walk with the Lord. Verse 17-23 notes, they said to you, *"In the last times, there will be scoffers who will follow their own ungodly desires. These are people who divide you, who follow mere natural instincts and do not have the Spirit. But you, dear friends, by building yourselves up in your most holy faith and praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in God's love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you eternal life. Be merciful to those who doubt; save others by snatching them from fire; to others, show mercy, mixed with fear- hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh."*

Faithfulness builds the people of God, keeps us in God's love, ensures eternal life with peaceful coexistence and developing community.

Can we then remain so faithful that at the end Jesus will say, *"well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness"*

Rev Dr Jacob Freemantle

Bishop of Grahamstown Synod in The Methodist Church of Southern Africa