

together, and that's how we should use our power. Love does not throw its weight around. God does not want mechanical obedience; he wants friends, partners, willing servants. Paul talks sometimes about being the "slave" of Christ, but you can tell by everything else he says that what he means is that he is Christ's willing servant on all occasions.

Leadership that throws its weight around does not build trust and a sense within the organization that all opinions, judgment and initiative are valued. The model of leadership for the church, and therefore for the world in general, is the persuasive, loving authority of a God for whom healthy and productive relationships are everything. That quality is part of God's nature; in the redemption of the world through the cross, God is talking to God's self, the Son to the Father, and the Holy Spirit is offering to God's creatures, especially us, a participatory role. Heaven is reaching out to us and bringing us along—if we choose. And that is how we should treat one another, for the healing of the world.