

## *Christians Honoring Business Deals*



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Recently I was on an airline flight and struck up a conversation with the man seated next to me. I asked him what he did for a living and he told me that he was a contractor. With my being in the construction industry myself, this gave us common ground on which to start a conversation. We talked about the recent increases in material cost and how that has impacted the industry. We agreed that construction was still a great profession and that many young people were "missing the boat" by not taking a hard look at construction as a career. The conversation was progressing well until he asked me what I did in the construction industry.

When I informed my fellow passenger that I worked with a company that did Architectural and Construction Management exclusively for churches, the conversation took a turn that I wasn't expecting. My new contractor friend immediately replied, "How in the world do you work with churches?" He went on to tell me that even though he was a Christian and regularly attended church, he had "sworn off" ever doing work for another church.

When I asked him why he had made such a decision, he explained that a few years ago he had done a project for a local church and it had not been a good experience. He said that after being asked by the church to make several concessions to his original bid, a contract price was finally agreed on and a contract was signed. During the course of the project, however, the church decided they could save a little money if they used a different contractor so they stopped paying him and hired a different contractor to finish the project.

He went on to say that he ended up never getting even the money that was owed to him for the work he had already completed, let alone the loss he suffered from not being able to complete the project. But perhaps the most unsettling statement he made was, "I have worked for all kinds of people in all kinds of businesses and church people are the most unfair people I have ever dealt with."

What a sad commentary on church business dealings. It seems that the fairest people to do business with should be churches, but sometimes that does not seem to be the case. As Christians, we should remember the words of the Apostle Paul to the church at Galatia, "...an agreement made between two persons is firm. After that agreement is accepted by both people, no one can stop it or add anything to it." (Gal. 3:15 NCV).