



Clanking Chains: When Roberts Speaks Equus Horses Voluntarily Join-Up & Follow-Up; Apostles Join-Up when Jesus Implores, "Follow Me"

- 46) Marvin Roberts did not utilize benevolence in his breaking of horses and his methods were anything but gracious acts. However, God's grace trumped his severity toward both them and his son Monty. God often uses the wrath of man to praise Him (Psalm 76:10).
- 47) Marvin Roberts's cruelty to the animals motivated Monty to seek a better way to train horses. His desires were fulfilled. In 1948 at the age 13 he began to decipher the silent language of the mustangs that roamed the high desert north of Battle Mountain, Nevada.
- 48) What Monty observed there led him not only to a better way of training horses but he also discovered the principle that benevolence is the primary function of authority supported by severity when necessary.
- 49) His understanding of the silent equine language of Equus revealed that benevolence is more effective than severity. Its application enabled him to tame a wild mustang in thirty minutes as compared with three weeks under the torturous conventional method.
- 50) He accomplishes this feat without ever touching the horse until the conclusion of the process when the animal voluntarily accepts a bridle, saddle, and rider.
- 51) Roberts calls his system Join-Up. Monty explains how it works in:

Roberts, Monty. *Horse Sense for People*. (New York: Penguin Books, 2000), 13-16:

The point of my method is to create a relationship based on trust and confidence, a relationship by which the horse wants to Join-Up, be part of a team and wear the same color jersey. Most conventionally broken horses form an adversarial relationship with the people they work for and, though they may agree to perform, it is with reluctance. Any environment that is based on fear and punishment will achieve performance, but not innovation. You can force people and horses to cooperate, but you cannot force optimum performance. The desire to perform can only be achieved through intrinsic motivation. (p. 13)

When starting the fresh horse I will not hit, kick, jerk, pull or tie to restrain him. I request that he perform certain maneuvers, but I must not force or demand. The horse is the quintessential flight animal and when any pressure is applied to the relationship, he will almost always choose to leave rather than fight. I have chosen to follow a nonconfrontational route, and my intention is to cause the animal to accept the saddle, bridle and rider with a minimum of trauma. I regularly do public demonstrations where I take a young horse who has not been saddled, bridled or ridden and attempt to have him accept all this in approximately thirty minutes. (pp. 13-14)

I bring the horse into my round pen where I introduce myself in the center of the circle. I offer the horse an opportunity to leave me. I square up to the animal and snap my eyes directly on to his—what I call "eyes on eyes." The horse, viewing this as a predatory gesture, flees. I track the horse as he proceeds around the perimeter of the pen so that my shoulders are square with him at all times. My eyes pierce his. In his language this means, "Go away."

My message to him is, "You made the choice to go away and that is fine, but don't go away a little, go away a lot." Horses have a flight distance of approximately a quarter to three-eighths of a mile. After that, they feel compelled to negotiate with their predator, as it could be dangerous to continue fleeing because they run out of energy. Once this distance has been achieved, their tendency is to request a truce of some sort. (p. 14)



I remain eyes on eyes and shoulders square, but I watch closely for gestures of negotiation—gestures that make up part of the language of Equus that I've deciphered over time. The first one I virtually always see is that he will lock on me the ear closest to me. It will point in my direction. This means, "I respect you. I don't know who you are or what you are up to, but I will show you respect and attempt a negotiation." Second, he will come off the wall and try to come close to me, near the middle of the pen. I remain shoulders square, eyes on eyes, which effectively keeps him away. The next gesture I usually observe is that he licks and chews—language, in effect, that conveys he does not fear me and believes I will not hurt him. The fourth and last gesture that I wait to receive is when the horse drops his head down near the soil and allows it to bounce along. This says, "If we could have a meeting to renegotiate, I would let you be the chairman." (pp. 14-15)

With all four of these gestures in place, I take my eyes away from his eyes, turn slightly away from him and set my shoulders on a forty-five degree angle to the body axis of the horse. This means that he is entitled to come to me, to make a choice to be with me rather than to go away. I stand virtually motionless as he approaches and reaches his nose out, most often nudging me in the back. This is the moment of Join-Up, when the horse has chosen to accept me.

I turn slowly, eyes cast down between his front legs, my shoulders round, fingers closed and wrist bent. I reach up and rub him between the eyes. This is his reward for joining with me. Usually after a few seconds of rubbing, I walk away and the horse will follow me. I call this Follow-Up. I can literally walk a serpentine pattern in the round pen and the horse is happy to follow close to my shoulder. I stop and turn slowly to stroke him once again, reaffirming our new relationship. Soon we will be partners doing great things.

Once I have my horse traveling on a positive path, then all I have to do is reward him for his positive actions and put him to work if he does something negative. For a horse, work is running away from a predator. (p. 15)

Once the horse is on that positive path, the balance of the procedure is academic. Before I ask him to accept certain responsibilities, I must earn his trust by showing him I am not a predator. To that end, we work our way through a series of goals. One is to massage with both hands those areas most often attacked by predators—high on the back and low into the soft flanks. I stroke the horse and then walk away, so that he becomes aware that I have no agenda to cause him pain. I pick up and put down each of his feet, then once more walk away to achieve the same result. After that come the saddle pad, saddle, bridle and rider.

If he says no to the saddle, he goes back to work, which means I gently but firmly push him away from me and require him to run around the perimeter of the round pen once more. The same goes for bit and the other goals I choose for the horse. Often, placing the bit in his mouth causes the horse to forget about the saddle and think about this new item of tack—it causes a diversion. (Such a diversionary tactic can, we all know, be useful in dealing with reluctant children. If they are focused on a negative problem, then diverting their attention to something else is often a swift and effective way of turning a negative into a positive one.)

At no time is there a need to inflict pain or use violence. It will only cause the horse to want to fight me and is, without any question, counterproductive.

At this point, I have essentially accomplished my aim to have the horse accept the saddle, bridle, and rider. The horse is not traumatized and elects to stay with me. And to my mind, this is the secret to true leadership. An effective leader must create a situation whereby people chose to stay with him or her rather than go away. (p. 16)

- 1) The intent of the benevolent method is to build a relationship based on trust and confidence. Parents should desire to receive willing cooperation from their child. Consistency of benevolence expressed by the rewards of unconditional love and severity expressed by the ramifications of dependable discipline will win the child over to a spirit of cooperation.



- 2) The objective is for the child to place his complete trust in his parents' leadership so that when they make known to him a policy, standard, or desire he will willingly and confidently follow.

Children learn through **νοουθεσία, nouthesia**: coaching; enforced by **παιδεία, paideia**: correction and punishment; and motivated by **χρηστός, chrēstos**: benevolence. This results in **ἐκτρέφω, ektrephō**: nurturing to maturity.

- 3) Our Lord never forced anyone to comply with any of His policies, standards, and mandates. The most striking example is His relationship with Judas Iscariot.
- 4) You will recall that when it became certain Judas would betray Him the Lord gave him a last chance for Rebound but upon realizing that Judas was locked-in negative, Jesus said to Judas in:

John 13:27b - "What you do, do quickly."

- 5) However, as Judas was accomplishing his treacherous mission at Gethsemane, the Lord continued to exhibit benevolence:

Matthew 26:49 - And immediately Judas went to Jesus and said, "Hail, Rabbi!" and kissed Him.

v. 50 - And Jesus said to him, "Friend, do what you have come for." Then they came and laid hands on Jesus and seized Him.

- 6) This fulfilled the prophecy written by David in:

Psalms 41:9 - Even my close friend, in whom I trusted, who ate my bread, has lifted up his heel against me."

- 7) The Lord never coerced, berated, or used violence against His disciples in order to win their allegiance. Instead He invited them to Join-Up with the summons "Follow Me."
- 8) We see the Lord use this benevolent approach toward all those He invites to join-up with His ministry:

Matthew 4:18 - Walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen.

v. 19 - And He said, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men."

v. 20 - And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him [**ἀκολουθέω, akolouthēō: to walk the same path**].

v. 21 - And going on from there He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets; and He called them.

Matthew 4:22 - And they immediately left the boat and their father, and followed Him.

Matthew 9:9 - And as Jesus passed on from there, He saw a man, called Matthew, sitting in the tax office; and He said to him, "Follow Me!" And Matthew rose and followed Him.



John 1:43 - The next day Jesus purposed to go forth into Galilee, and He found Philip. And Jesus said to him, "Follow Me."

John 10:27 - "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."

John 12:26 - "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am there shall My servant be; if anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him."

- 9) Those who willingly follow will learn more quickly and be more efficiently and successfully corrected. Even though willing, the follower will not always do the right thing, the sinful nature will see to that.
- 10) But the child who willingly follows the leadership of his parents will gradually come to develop a deeper relationship with them. They will first love them as parents who protect and provide but this will later become a love that is manifest by service and sacrifice.