

Living with Integrity - June 21, 2023

When something is well built, we say it has structural integrity.

Earthquake - a building with excellent structural integrity survives.

If building collapses, say didn't have the integrity to withstand the impact.

People, like buildings, need integrity to survive. Integrity will be exposed:

Prov. 10:9 – *“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.”*

Ex: Lance Armstrong. Alex Rodriguez. Pete Rose. Jim Bakker.

They couldn't withstand the stress, impact of life's pressures.

Their lack of integrity led to **reputation** damage. **“Witness”**

Prov. 28:18 – *“Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered, but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall.”*

God doesn't care if we're the best. He's interested - being the best witness.

He'd rather us live right, than rich. Champion? Seeking the wrong prize.

2 Tim. 4:8 – *“And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return.”*

Integrity is who we are when nobody is watching.

3 Warning signs of Integrity Issues:

- keeps secrets . . . hide things we do, how we live, etc. No prob white lie.
(people see us as **deceptive**, a.k.a. **not honest**)
- fails to do what they say they're going to do . . . don't keep promises
-- defined as **“one who over-promises and under-delivers”**
(people lose confidence in us, **not reliable**)
- have the “do as I say, not as I do” mentality . . . in other words, have high expectations for others, but not themselves. Selfish behavior.

Integrity = living life in private same way we live in public (talk about living).

Integrity = **integrating** our faith. Walking & talking in the way of Jesus.

Prov. 20:7 – *“The righteous walk in integrity— happy are the children who follow them!”*

3 keywords that describe people w/Integrity

1 - Integrity translates to “honesty”

- **Matt. 22:16** – “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are a **man of integrity** and that you teach the way of God in accordance *with the truth.*” **NIV**
- Other transl - “Teacher,” they said, “we know that you are truthful and teach truthfully the way of God.”
 - **Integrity equates with honesty.**
 - If you know someone is dishonest, hard to believe anything...
 - Our reputation for Honesty will control our witness for God.
 - **Prov. 14:5** - *An honest witness does not deceive, but a false witness pours out lies.* God can't lie.
 - Ex: Man fired. Knew he meant it.

2 – Integrity is also reliability.

- To be a person of integrity means s/he is a person/word
 - We do what we say & say what we do. No doubt!
 - If we say we'll show up, we do. Some are non-committal.
- God is reliable. He is our example.

Psalm 145:13 - *“The LORD is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does.”*

 - The gospel is shared thru reliable people: **2 Tim. 2:2** - “You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.”
 - To be God's best witness, we must be reliable.

3 – Integrity is also authenticity

- If you authenticate a document – you prove it is genuine, true, valid.
- Our words/actions authenticate our faith.

Acts 2:22 - *“Fellow Israelis, listen to these words: Jesus from Nazareth was a man authenticated to you by God through miracles, wonders, and signs that God performed through him among you, as you yourselves know.”*

- We knew who Jesus was by how He lived.
 - People will know we're Christians by how we live. Integrity matters.
 - If we live w/o integrity, we're not authentic; we're hypocrites.
 - **Matt. 23:27-28** – Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites & whitewashed tombs . . . “on the outside you appear to be righteous, but on the inside you are full of hypocrisy and wickedness.”

James 1:22 – “Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves.”

Integrity is doing what the Bible teaches. Living to please God. Integrating our Faith in our lives.

- It's not a matter of nobody will know . . . God knows.
- Cheating . . . short cuts . . . anything to win/rich – not pleasing to God.
- Want to know how close your walk is w/ God? Evaluate your Integrity.
 - Integrity tells us who is in charge of our lives . . . us, or Master.

Song of the week – “Honestly” – The City Harmonic

Hurricane Season has begun. No meeting in person – July 5 (2 weeks)