

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS

If we want to have the characteristics of Jesus, I think we must look long and hard at Jesus' character. When defending himself against the religious leaders of his day (his enemies), He said this about his claim of being the Messiah:

John 10:25 - Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me"

HE says, what I say and what I do testify as to who I am.

A person of integrity is validated by their words and their deeds. If we are pure in heart we can be pure in action. Integrity is making our daily actions line up with our heart's values.

Let's be realistic – none of us will change unless we understand the value of change. Few of us will pay the price for an item in the store unless we are in agreement that the item is worth the price.

Let's look at computers. They almost all look the same on the outside, but some cost a whole lot more than others. What is the difference? The difference is what is on the inside. It is the power and the guts of the computer that dictate the price.

Integrity is a lot like a computer – what is on the inside is what counts.

If I am going to be a person of integrity then I must understand the value to determine if it is worth the price I must pay.

Integrity provides us with Protection (less fear)

Psalm 25:21 - May integrity and uprightness protect me, because my hope is in you.

When I have integrity I have protection. I have less fear and less stress because I do not have to look over my shoulder all of the time.

Integrity provides us with Security (greater confidence)

Proverbs 10:9 - The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out.

I can be confident that what I do is right and that it will prosper (though it may not prosper financially, it can prosper in other ways!) If you walk with integrity you do not have to worry about having a shaky foundation for what you do, it provides a firm foundation. Integrity provides us with Guidance (better decision)

Proverbs 11:3 - The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

In a society without moral absolutes anything goes. When people can choose what is right and wrong without having a standard, how do you decide which way to go? Eventually you will get caught in your duplicity. It will come back to bite you. If you live in integrity then your decisions are easier to make – your integrity guides you.

Integrity provides us with Hope and promises.

Job 4:6 - “Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?”

Hope for what? Hope that someday when I stand before God I will not be ashamed of how I lived and what He will say to me. Hope that I will be commended and not rebuked for my lifestyle and the testimony that I had while alive.

How can we become people of integrity? What can we do for change in our life so that we can experience the benefits of integrity and the blessing of God?

We can ask GOD to test our heart

Have any of you ever had an EKG? What is the purpose of it? It is a test of the condition of the heart.

This physical testing of the heart is what God needs to do to us in a spiritual sense. He needs to come in and find out the condition of our heart and fix it before major problems take over!

1 Chronicles 29:17 - I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity. All these things have I given willingly and with honest intent. And now I have seen with joy how willingly your people who are here have given to you.

You see, God is pleased with integrity and examines the heart to see if a person is full of integrity or full of bologna! What you believe in your heart will determine how you act when placed in a tempting situation,

We can study more to know what is true.

Throughout the Old Testament you will find the words: honesty, purity, truth, upright and complete all translated from the same Hebrew word meaning integrity – they are all synonymous.

If, therefore, we are going to live lives of integrity we must know what integrity looks like. That comes from spending time in the Bible with God.

2 Timothy 2:15 - Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth. (NASB)

We can apply God's word to our daily activities / work

Titus 2:7 in all things showing yourself to be a pattern of good works; in doctrine showing integrity, reverence, incorruptibility,

Psalms 15:1-2 - O Lord, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart.

Walking in integrity means integrating all of what God's Word says into our daily activities. It means that I become a doer of the word.

If we walk with integrity God can say "You are my son in whom I am well pleased".