

SESSION: INTEGRITY IN ADMITTING WRONGDOING AND SEEKING GOD’S FORGIVENESS

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Session Purpose

In the first session, we looked at integrity before failure—how leaders are tested under pressure, in waiting, and in moments when they are tempted to move ahead of God. This second session asks a different question: what does integrity require after failure has taken place?

Here the focus is not on avoiding wrongdoing, but on admitting it honestly, responding to correction rightly, and returning to alignment with God through genuine repentance.

Opening Reflection Questions:

- What does integrity require after failure has taken place?
- How do leaders usually respond when wrongdoing is exposed?
- What is the difference between remorse and repentance?
- Can a leader still walk in integrity after serious failure?
- What does genuine return to God look like?

1) INTRODUCTION: PICKING UP DAVID’S STORY

David’s story now turns. The man who showed restraint with Saul later failed with Bathsheba and Uriah. That turn is important because it reminds us that integrity must be measured not only by what a leader does under pressure, but also by how a leader responds after sin has been exposed. David is not presented here as a flawless model, but as a sobering case study in both collapse and repentance.

That brings us to the next stage in David’s life: failure.

2) DAVID IN FAILURE (2 SAMUEL 11)

a) Unfolding Issue

- i) David’s failure unfolds progressively—what begins as a glance develops into sin, deception, and ultimately destruction.
- ii) Leadership failure rarely occurs suddenly; it develops when internal issues go unaddressed.

b) Leadership Lesson

- i) _____
 - (1) David’s position did not protect him.
 - (2) Leadership increases responsibility, but not immunity.
- ii) _____
 - (1) What begins internally eventually becomes external.
 - (2) Lack of accountability accelerates failure.

iii) _____

(1) Lust → deception → abuse → destruction.

(2) Leadership failure is rarely sudden, but rather gradual.

c) **Reflection:** What patterns in your life need to be confronted before they escalate?

David's failure is not the end of the story. It becomes part of a larger pattern Scripture shows us about how God forms integrity in leaders.

And that turn did not happen automatically. In 2 Samuel 12, God sends Nathan to confront David, reminding us that repentance is often awakened through truthful, grace-filled confrontation.

INTEGRITY PATHWAY (BIBLICAL FRAMEWORK)

This pathway is not a rigid formula or a universal sequence every leader must follow. It is a descriptive pattern we often see in Scripture as God forms integrity in leaders. Growth depends on response at each stage, not simply experience.

Pressure → Process → _____ → _____ → _____ → _____

Note: Integrity is not formed by merely experiencing these stages, but by responding to them rightly. People can get stuck, regress, or repeat stages, and failure itself is not a required step in leadership development.

CRITICAL TURNING POINT: RESPONSE

The defining moment in the pathway is response. Not everyone who fails repents.

Worldly sorrow focuses on consequences and self-preservation. Godly sorrow leads to repentance, transformation, and restored alignment with God.

Failure does not have to be the final word in integrity; response to God is the decisive issue. Yet response must be understood seriously, because repentance does not erase consequences or automatically restore every leadership role in the same way.

If failure is not the final word, then the crucial issue becomes response.

3) DAVID'S RESPONSE (PSALM 51)

a) **Genuine Repentance**

- i) Psalm 51 provides a detailed model of genuine repentance, while 2 Samuel 12 shows the confrontation that brought David to that point.
- ii) Psalm 51 reveals that true integrity requires brutal honesty about who you are before God, not merely doing the right things outwardly.
- iii) David acknowledges his sin clearly, recognizes that it is against God, admits his internal condition, seeks transformation, commits to renewed purpose, and embraces brokenness as the posture God desires.
- iv) David’s repentance does not begin with image management, but with being brought into the light by God through Nathan’s rebuke. That matters because leadership integrity requires not only sorrow over sin, but a willingness to receive truthful correction.

b) Leadership Lesson

i) _____
David does not blame, deflect, or justify.

ii) _____
(1) Psalm 51 shows that David’s focus is on God.
(2) Not just consequences.

iii) _____
(1) “A broken and contrite heart...”
(2) True repentance involves humility, not performance

c) Reflection: How do you typically respond to correction?

When repentance is genuine, it opens the door to restoration and a deeper kind of maturity.

4) RESTORATION AND MATURITY

a) David’s Leadership After Failure

- i) David’s leadership continues after failure, but it is marked by greater humility and dependence on God. Scripture also makes clear that forgiveness did not remove every consequence. Restoration involves repentance and grace, while maturity is seen in a leader’s quicker return to alignment and deeper submission to God.
- ii) Integrity grows not through perfection, but through consistent realignment with God.

b) Leadership Lesson

i) _____

- (1) Restoration to God and restoration to public leadership function are not always identical in Scripture. A leader may be genuinely forgiven and yet still live with altered trust, lasting consequences, or changed responsibilities.
- (2) David is not removed, but he is changed.

ii) _____

- (1) More humility
- (2) Greater dependence
- (3) Deeper awareness

iii) _____

- (1) The goal is not perfection
- (2) The goal is alignment

c) Reflection: How has failure shaped your leadership?

5) Closing: Integrity Formed Through the Pathway

a) Bringing It Together

- i) When we step back and look at David's life as a whole, we can see that integrity is not one-dimensional. It is developed over time through a pattern we see repeatedly in Scripture.
- ii) Through this pathway, we see that:

- (1) Integrity is _____ under **pressure**.
- (2) Integrity is _____ through **process**.
- (3) Integrity is _____ in **failure**.
- (4) Integrity is _____ in **response** to God after failure.
- (5) Integrity is _____ through **maturity**, resulting in quicker alignment, greater humility, and consistent dependence on God.

b) Final Leadership Lesson - David's story teaches us that:

- i) You will face pressure, but integrity is revealed in how you respond.
- ii) You will walk through seasons of waiting, but integrity is formed in the process.

- iii) You may experience failure, but integrity is not defined by falling, but by responding.
- iv) You do not prove integrity because you never fail. You prove integrity by how you respond when you do.

c) Christ as the Standard of Integrity

- i) While David shows us how integrity is formed, Jesus shows us its perfection, facing pressure without sin, trusting the Father completely, never failing, and yet bearing the consequences of our failure. Where David failed, Christ succeeded.
- ii) Christ is both the model and the means of integrity; we follow His example, depend on His grace, and rely on His transforming work in us.

Final Reflection

So the question is not simply whether David had moments of greatness or moments of failure. The deeper question is where you are in this pathway right now:

- Where are you under pressure?
- Where are you in process?
- Where are you vulnerable to failure?
- How are you responding to God?

Integrity is ultimately revealed in how you respond to God in every stage of leadership.