

## **JOB; INTEGRITY DESPITE SUFFERING**

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**Integrity** is a steadfast faithfulness to a moral code. Regardless of circumstances, a person of integrity is the same person with the same convictions. They are not wishy-washy, adapting their moral character to the supposed needs of the moment. Instead, there is straightforwardness with strength to stand no matter the situation. In other words, “the person is the same before watching eyes and when alone.”

### **Integrity Test**

One Sunday a Pastor preached a sermon on honesty. On Monday morning, he took the bus to get to his office. He paid the fare, and the bus driver gave him back too much change. During the rest of the journey, the pastor was rationalizing how God had provided him with some extra money he needed for the week. But he just could not live with himself, so before he got off the bus, he proceeded to give back the extra money and said to the driver, "You have made a mistake. You've given me too much change." The driver smiled and said, "There was no mistake. I was at your church yesterday and heard you preach on honesty. So, I decided to put you to a test this morning. We call that “integrity”.

### **Integrity of Job**

**The Book of Job** is an overwhelming discovery of suffering, faith and divine justice centered on the trials of Job. His suffering affected his physical, financial, emotional and spiritual well-being but not his character. After the historical facts of his name (a man of repentance) and place of origin (Uz), the first significant thing the writer tells us is about Job’s character. He was a man of complete integrity. This does not mean he was perfectly sinless; it simply means he was not hypocritical. After all, Job readily confessed his own sin throughout the book. It is also noted that he was also a man who feared God. I can think of nothing else that bolsters integrity like a deep reverence for the sovereign Judge of the universe. Finally, he was a man who turned away from sin. That is, he was a man who practiced repentance.

### **Integrity Before God**

The very first verse of Job give us an introduction of a man who exemplifies the integrity and character we should all long for: “There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and shunned evil”(Job 1:1,8).“**Blameless**” means straightforward and complete. The Hebrew word usually describes integrity and spiritual maturity. “**Upright**” refers to a behavior that is in harmony with God's ways. The Hebrew word means ethically correct. “**Feared God and shunned evil**” speaks of reverence and respect for God which visualize an upright relationship with God.

### **Integrity Before the Family**

Job’s “fear of the Lord” was not just a public declaration but a **private, consistent walk with God**. He lived as if God’s presence mattered in his children’s celebrations, and he sought to honor God in every aspect of family. Job’s integrity before his family was rooted in his deep reverence for God, his willingness to intercede for possible hidden sin, and his consistent moral and spiritual leadership as a Priest of his home (Job1:4-5). This reverence shaped his decisions, his prayers, and his willingness to cover hidden sins. His example teaches that **true integrity is lived out in the everyday moments with those closest to us**. Often the greatest test to one integrity comes from the ones closest to us as Job can attested to by the question his wife asked, <sup>9</sup>Then his wife said to him, “Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die!” This question comes at of time when Job was suffering greatly with painful boils from the attack of Satan on his body. But through it all, Job stood tall and answered her with these words, <sup>10</sup>But he said to her, “You speak as one of the foolish women speaks. Shall we indeed accept good from God and not accept adversity?” In all this Job did not sin with his lips. (Job 2:9-10)

### **Integrity Before Others**

In the Book of Job, Job’s three friends—**Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar**—come to comfort him after he loses his wealth, children, and health. Instead of offering support, they insist that Job’s suffering must be the result of his own sin (Job 2-26). Job respond to the accusations against him speaks volume of about his character and integrity, “then Job continued his discourse and said, <sup>2</sup>“As God lives, who has taken away my right, And the Almighty, who has embittered my soul, <sup>3</sup>For as long as life is in me, And the breath of God is in my nostrils, <sup>4</sup>My lips certainly will not speak unjustly, Nor will my tongue mutter deceit.<sup>5</sup>“Far be it from me that I should declare you right; Till I die I will not put away my integrity from

me. <sup>6</sup>“I hold fast my righteousness and will not let it go. My heart does not reproach any of my days.” (Job 27:1-6; 29:14-16)

The potential of integrity collapse not only affects us, but it also has implications for those around us. As Christian leaders, we must understand that our people’s greatest need is our personal holiness. Integrity and character in leadership do not mean that we will be sinless. However, the pursuit of character and integrity will mean that by God’s grace we will “sin less.” Part of our sanctification process is the realization that the closer we get to Jesus, the more we realize how much we need to repent. To put it another way, the Christian will still sin, but he will not be able to actively continue in that sin. And as Christian leaders, we lead by repentance. The repentant leader helps build a culture of grace and gives permission for others to repent without fear.

## **CONCLUSION**

[Colossians 3:23](#) reads, “Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men.” The Christian lives for the audience of one: almighty God. Working for the Lord and *not for men* means that we are as diligent in those duties that go unnoticed by others as we are in those that are visible. The latter may be rewarded: verbal praise, a pay raise, perhaps even a promotion. But the former, done in faith, are no less acts of worship. Moreover, those unseen deeds generally have a growing effect that overflow to the good of others, though not in a way that is necessarily traceable to our actions.