

SESSION: REFUSING TO TAKE MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS

Presenter: Dr. Lawrence Scott

Session Purpose

When many people hear the word integrity, they think only about moral behavior. But Scripture gives us a fuller picture. Integrity is not only seen in doing what is right; it is also seen in how a leader stays aligned with God under pressure, in delay, and in difficult decisions.

This first session focuses on integrity before failure—what it looks like when a leader must choose restraint, trust God’s timing, and refuse to take matters into his own hands.

Integrity is not the absence of struggle; it is the presence of alignment, restraint, and trust in God.

Opening Reflection Questions:

- What defines integrity in leadership?
- Is it consistency, strength, or moral performance?
- Do we assume integrity means living above failure?
- What happens when you have both the opportunity and the justification to act?
- What does leadership integrity look like when restraint requires more faith than action?

1) INTRODUCTION: STARTING WITH DAVID

David is the right person to study because his life holds together two realities we often separate: remarkable faithfulness and devastating failure. He is not a simplistic model of integrity, but a biblical case study in how integrity is tested, compromised, and pursued again through repentance. That tension helps us see that integrity is deeper than image, performance, or public success.

a) **On one hand, David is one of the most celebrated and influential leaders in Scripture:**

- i) He is the king of Israel, chosen and established by God.
- ii) He is a worshiper, expressing deep devotion and intimacy with God through the Psalms.
- iii) He is victorious in battle, used by God to deliver and establish the nation.
- iv) David represents strength, courage, faith, and leadership at the highest level.

b) **Yet on the other hand, his life also includes serious moral failure:**

- i) He committed adultery with Bathsheba.
- ii) He abused his authority, leveraging power to conceal his sin.
- iii) He orchestrated the death of Uriah, moving from private compromise to public injustice.

This contrast is not incidental; it is intentional in Scripture.

c) **The Tension We Must Resolve**

- i) David's life forces a key question: How can a man after God's heart fail so deeply? If integrity meant sinless perfection, David could not be discussed in these terms at all.
 - ii) This tension reveals a deeper biblical truth: integrity in fallen leaders is not proven by sinless performance, but by truthful alignment with God across testing, correction, repentance, and renewed obedience.
- d) **Why David Matters for This Training**
- i) David's life shows that integrity is not abstract; it is formed through real pressure, real decisions, real failure, and real encounters with God.
 - ii) **As we walk through David's life, we are not just observing what happened; we are uncovering how God develops integrity in leaders over time.**

In this first session, we begin where many leadership tests begin, not after collapse, but before it, in the moments when pressure exposes whether we will trust God or move ahead of Him.

The first-place integrity shows up in David's life is under pressure.

2) **PRESSURE – INTEGRITY IS REVEALED (1 Samuel 24; 26)**

a) **David's Pressure Moment**

David finds himself in a situation where he has both the opportunity and justification to eliminate King Saul. However, David refuses to act. Instead of taking advantage of the situation, David says, **"I will not stretch out my hand against the Lord's anointed."** This moment reveals that integrity is not proven by what you can do, but by what you choose not to do. Integrity trusts God's authority and timing even when self-protection seems reasonable.

b) **Leadership Lesson**

i) **Pressure does not create integrity; it reveals it.**

- (1) David's values were already established before the moment.
- (2) Crisis simply exposed what he believed.

ii) **Opportunity does not equal permission**

- (1) Just because you can act does not mean you should.
- (2) Leaders must discern the difference between access and assignment.

iii) **Integrity requires trusting God's order and timing**

- (1) David refused to disrupt what God had established.
- (2) He trusted that God would remove Saul in His time.

c) **Reflection:** Where are you tempted to take control instead of trusting God?

Pressure is not the only place integrity is tested. It is also formed in the long seasons between promise and fulfillment.

3) DAVID IN PROCESS (1 SAMUEL 16–31)

a) David Waiting His Turn

- i) Although David is anointed as king, he does not immediately assume the throne. He spends years in obscurity, difficulty, and uncertainty.
- ii) Integrity is formed in these unseen seasons. Waiting reveals whether a leader truly trusts God or desires outcomes.

b) Leadership Lesson

i) **Calling does not eliminate the process.**

- (1) Being chosen by God does not mean immediate fulfillment.
- (2) Leaders must develop before they are positioned.

ii) **Waiting is a test of trust.**

- (1) It's easy to trust God when things are moving.
- (2) It's harder to trust Him when things are unclear.

iii) **Impatience often leads to compromise.**

- (1) When leaders try to “speed up” God's plan.
- (2) They often step outside of God's will.

c) **Reflection:** Where are you tempted to force what God has not yet completed?

Closing Reflection for Session 1

Before David ever failed publicly, he was already being formed privately. Pressure and waiting were not side issues in his leadership development; they were part of how God shaped his integrity.

The first challenge of integrity is this: will you remain aligned with God when you have the power to move ahead of Him?

Session 1 has shown us that integrity is revealed when leaders refuse to take matters into their own hands. But David's life also teaches a second lesson: integrity is not only tested before failure, but also after failure.

The question of the next session is different. It is no longer, “What will you do when you have the opportunity to act?” It is, “What will you do when you have sinned, been confronted, and must respond to God?”

David's story now moves from restraint under pressure to honesty after wrongdoing—from trusting God's timing to seeking God's forgiveness.

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

Presenter: Dr. Lawrence Scott

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) **No leader is beyond failure.**
 - (1) David’s position did not protect him.
 - (2) Leadership increases responsibility, but not immunity.
- ii) **Unchecked desires lead to destructive decisions.**
 - (1) What begins internally eventually becomes external.
 - (2) Lack of accountability accelerates failure.
- iii) **Sin progresses when it is not interrupted**

- (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?
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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 → Failure → Response → Restoration → Maturity

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) **Integrity owns wrongdoing without excuse.**
David does not blame, deflect, or justify.
 - ii) **Repentance is relational, not just behavioral**
 - (1) Psalm 51 shows that David’s focus is on God.
 - (2) Not just consequences.
 - iii) **Brokenness is essential for restoration**
 - (1) “A broken and contrite heart...”
 - (2) True repentance involves humility, not performance
- c) **Reflection:** How do you typically respond to correction?
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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) **Restoration does not erase consequences, but it does renew calling.**
 - (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) **Mature leaders do not become less dependent on God; they become more aware of how much they need Him.**
 - (1) More humility
 - (2) Greater dependence
 - (3) Deeper awareness
 - iii) **The aim of integrity is not image management, but ongoing alignment with God.**
 - (1) The goal is not perfection
 - (2) The goal is alignment
 - c) Reflection: How has failure shaped your leadership?
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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 demonstrated under pressure
 - (2) Integrity is formed through process
 - (3) Integrity is exposed in failure
 - (4) Integrity is proven in response to God after failure
 - (5) Integrity is deepened 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.