

Steadfast Integrity

Introduction: Every person in this room has something that belongs to them that is of great value. At first, you may begin thinking about some material possessions that you own. Maybe you think about your family. But neither of these is what I'm referring. What I'm referring to takes time to gain, but is quick to lose. It's a virtue that if we lose it, it's hard to regain. I'm talking about **Integrity**.

What is Integrity? It's a soundness of moral character. Synonyms include: honesty, faithfulness, sincerity and innocence. Integrity in its simplest form is when our lives and our words match up. As believers, we must live with integrity.

- A. It's when we say we believe lying is wrong so we don't lie.
- B. It's when we say we believe cheating is wrong so we don't cheat.
- C. It's when we say we believe morals matter so we live with high morals.
- D. It's when we say we are going to do something so we do it.

If you know anything about current events, you know there have been plenty of examples of people who have failed to live lives of integrity. Maybe their public life seemed to be a life of integrity, but then how they were living privately came to light and everyone was able to see a lack of integrity on their part.

Proverbs 11:3 – The integrity of the upright guide them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them. How does our integrity guide us? People of integrity will make good decisions because on what they believe.

Job was a Man of Integrity.

- A. God recognized Job's faithful virtue of integrity (Job 1:1, 8).
- B. God had enough faith in Job and his integrity that He allowed Satan to test Job (Job 1:12).

Job's Intense Suffering

- A. Satan tested Job with one sticking blow of tragedy after another (Job 1:13-22).
- B. God told Satan that through everything Job held fast to his integrity (Job 2:3).
- C. Satan tried to convince God that Job would give up everything for his life, so he caused Job to be covered in sores from his head to his toes (Job 2:4-8).
- D. Even his wife told him to forget about his integrity and curse God and die (Job 2:9).
- E. In all this Job did not sin with his lips (Job 2:10).

Job's Integrity was Worth Everything to Him (Job 27:1-6).

- A. Job may have lost everything, but he still had his integrity and would die with it.
- B. Throughout all he endured, Job's integrity was what was important.

How Important is Your Integrity to You? Is it something you are willing to guard/protect?

- A. If we exaggerate a story to be accepted, then it's only worth that acceptance.
- B. If we cheat on a test, then it's worth whatever the grade we get.
- C. If we lie on our resume to get a job, it's only worth the salary we get.

You and I must do everything possible to hold fast to our integrity no matter what it may cost us.

Benefits of Integrity:

- A. Gives you a good name.
 - "A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, and favor is better than silver or gold" (Prov. 22:1).
 - People of integrity have a good reputation and can be difference makers.
 - Don't be a hypocrite. Jesus was hard on the Pharisees for their appearance of hypocrisy (Matt. 23:25-28).
- B. Gives you the right to be heard.
 - People will trust you and come to you for advice.
 - If your reputation is ever at stake, your integrity will give you the right to be heard.
- C. Gives you peace.
 - Proverbs 10:9 - "Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out.
 - People of integrity have nothing to fear or hide. We don't have to worry about what we said or did, or if people find out.
 - We can pillow our head each night, knowing we have no secrets we worry others will uncover.

Conclusion:

- A. The world is more shocked by people doing the right thing, than by people doing the wrong thing.
- B. What is your integrity worth to you? I hope and pray it's worth protecting and guarding at all cost.
- C. Job's integrity was worth everything to him. His integrity was the one thing he was not willing to lose.