

Integrity

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[0:00] Let's just pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word and we ask you Lord to visit with us by your spirit. Be glorified in each life Lord be lifted up that you might draw all men unto yourself we ask in Jesus name.

! Psalm 51 verse 6 just the first part it says, Behold thou desirest truth in the inward paths. Psalm 51 verse 6, Behold thou desirest truth in the inward paths.

I want to talk today about integrity. Integrity and honesty are amongst the most highly prized qualities that people are looking for. They've done surveys of this and they said that the kind of leaders people want are leaders who have integrity. It's so important to the world at large. So what is integrity?

What is integrity? Number one, integrity is about being honest. It's about being truthful to your word. It's about treating people justly and fairly. It's about speaking the truth in a world full of lies and untruths. The Bible commands integrity to us. The Bible says integrity is something we should aspire to.

It's having that character, that moral purity, that truthfulness about us. Truth in the inward paths if you like. And Zechariah 8 verse 16. The Lord says speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour.

[1:40] Execute the judgement of truth and peace in your gates. Speak ye every man the truth. Integrity is something that is very valuable. It has great value. It says in Proverbs 28 verse 6, Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness than he that is perverse in his ways though he be rich.

You know there's lots of people like that isn't there? A bit like what Brad was talking about this morning. Better is the poor that walketh in his uprightness than he that is perverse in his ways though he be rich.

And when God instructed Solomon in 1 Kings 9 verse 4, he instructed him to walk with integrity of heart and in uprightness as his father David did.

And if David says in Psalm 78 verse 72, David shepherded the people with integrity. There was something about the life that he lived. As much as we know he had his failings too. But integrity is something that is commended. Something that is very valued and worthwhile. Something that we should want to have in our lives.

Integrity. It produces truth. So people can trust what we say and believe that we are not telling them lies. It brings honour and reward. Integrity.

[3:01] When you know someone has got integrity you can go to them and trust them when you speak to them. Integrity is something that is lived out in a life so that it is a life that is lived in accordance with the word of God.

In accordance with the ethics and the morals and the values of God's word. So the people are truly measuring up to the ultimate, absolute measuring stick, the Bible which is our law of faith and conduct.

A person with integrity has that kind of foundation to their life. So you know that they will keep their word and they will do their best even when no one else is aware.

Even when they can get away with it. They will still be true to their word. We know that in case you haven't noticed it, integrity is lacking. I don't know if you have noticed that. I have noticed it of late. I have got someone to do a job and paid him ahead. I paid him for materials and he has just suddenly disappeared.

I am not answering my phone calls. Integrity is lacking. And it is disappointing. It is disappointing. It hurts when that happens. Integrity is lacking. Integrity is missing. It is lacking. It is sadly lacking. In

politicians it is lacking. In police they lack integrity too. There is corrupt police out there.

[4:21] Workers lack integrity too. Workers lack integrity. Workers lack integrity. When you want someone to do a job for you and they don't deliver. They lack integrity. Husbands and wives lack integrity today. Such that marriage and family are no longer those sacred institutions that God has given to us. Integrity is lacking in Australia today.

In Proverbs 11 verse 3 it says the integrity of the upright shall guide them. But the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them. Integrity is something to have. It is something to want. Integrity shall guide the upright. And perverseness shall destroy the transgressors.

Integrity is what is the opposite. Integrity is what is the opposite. The opposite of integrity is corruption. We are seeing a lot of corruption today. As I have said before. Corrupt police. Corrupt law systems. Corrupt institutions. We are seeing a lot of corruption in the world today. In society today.

There is a book that is a book that has been written called The Day America told the truth. The Day America told the truth. It is based on this survey. This huge survey that they did. They wanted to find out what Americans really believe and do.

And the results from this survey were startling. They were a shocking result. They found that this nation had, number one, had no moral authority. No moral authority. I am just going to quote from the book. It says, Americans are making up their own moral codes.

[5:50] Only 13% of us believe in all the Ten Commandments. 40% of us believe in five of the Ten Commandments. We choose which laws of God we believe in. There is absolutely no moral consensus in this country as there was in the 1950s when all our institutions commanded more respect. A nation with no moral authority. Just make up the rules as you go. Choose which bits you like and which bits you don't follow.

Secondly, they found that people are not honest. Not honest. I will quote the book. Lying has become an integral part of American culture. A trait of the American character. We lie and don't even think about it. We lie for no reason.

And the authors estimate that 91% of us lie regularly. Honesty is lacking. Thirdly, it goes on. I quote the book again. While we still marry, we have lost faith in the institution of marriage. A third of married men and women confess to us they've had at least one affair.

Thirty percent. Thirty percent aren't really sure they still love their spouse. So we see no moral authority. We see not honest. We see lost faith in the institution of marriage.

Thirty percent. And fourthly, they found that the Protestant work ethic is long gone from today's workplace. Workers around America frankly admit that they spend more than 20% seven hours a week of their time at work totally goofing off.

[7:26] That amounts to a four-day work week across the nation. You know, it's costing our nation. It's costing employers a lot of money when you add it all up, isn't it?

If you think that your workers are only working four days out of the five, they're at work. Integrity. It's under attack. It's under attack today. And we've lost it. We've lost it as a society. We've lost it. Lack of moral authority because we've abandoned the Word of God. We just take it or leave it. Choose what we like and dislike.

A lack of honesty. A lack of faith in marriage. A lack of work ethic. It's corruption. Corruption that's set in because we've abandoned God. And people cannot be trusted. They're a bit like Pharaoh when he went to Moses and he said, yeah, I'll let you go. But he wasn't really meaning it. He was lying.

So we see integrity is something highly valued. People want it in the leaders who lead them. But as much as it's sought after, it is sadly lacking.

Also, we see that integrity is under attack. It's under attack today. In these days we live, it's important that we maintain integrity.

[8:45] In Job's day, integrity came under attack. We see that things were against him. Things were going wrong.

And his wife said to him, does thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die. Job 2 verse 9. Integrity will come under attack.

It's vital then for you and me who claim to be God's people that we maintain our integrity through the times of testing. Like with Joseph in Genesis 39.

Genesis 39 it says from verse 4, Joseph found grace in the sight of Potiphar, his master. And he served him and Potiphar made him overseer over his house.

All that he had, he put into his hand. Genesis 39 verse 5. It came to pass from the time that he made him overseer in his house. And over all that he had, the Lord blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake.

[9:49] And verse 6. And Potiphar left all that he had in Joseph's hand. And he knew not what he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was a goodly person and well favoured.

Joseph, Joseph was a man favoured by God. A man of true character and integrity. He was trustworthy. Such that Potiphar put him over the charge of his household.

Joseph found favour with Potiphar because of his godly character. He was elevated to a place of authority and responsibility. But then, Potiphar's wife attempted to seduce Joseph.

Joseph's integrity was under attack. But Joseph did not cave in. Joseph fled from the temptation. Joseph would rather have gone to prison than to betray his master and his integrity.

And Joseph told Potiphar's wife in verse 9 of Genesis 39. There is none greater in this house than I. Neither have I kept back anything from you but thee. Because thou art his wife, how then can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?

[11:01] Joseph knew that if he was unfaithful and committed adultery with Potiphar's wife, there was great wickedness and sin against God. He could have got away with it.

There was no one else around. It would have been a lot easier for him to have gone that track. But Joseph held fast his resolve and his faithfulness and his devotion to God.

He held fast his integrity. He put God first. He honoured God. Some will give way to temptation in these days thinking, I can get away with it. No one will see. No one will know.

God does. God does. God says in Numbers 32, You have sinned against the Lord and be sure your sin will find you out.

Be sure your sin will find you out. You can attempt to hide your sin, but it will always be found out.

Joseph kept on holding fast his integrity.

[11:58] Even in prison, as he was there, as it was his God-given responsibility, times to pass on bad news as well as good. He was holding fast his integrity as he did that.

He never lost his faith, even through that time of great testing within the prison. His integrity was under attack from moment to moment through different stages here.

Yet his faith endured. His integrity held fast in those most testing times. And friends, your integrity, if you're a Christian, your integrity should hold fast.

You should do right even when everyone else is doing wrong. You should do right even when it's going to cost you dearly. Joseph was later taken from prison and he interpreted a dream for Pharaoh.

And then the Pharaoh granted him a place of authority as the second in command of all Egypt.

Then famine struck and Jacob and his sons sent his sons to Egypt to buy food and grain.

[13:04] Joseph then faced his brothers. His own brothers came. They approached unto him as he was not recognisable in his new look of an Egyptian nature.

And Joseph's integrity showed you again with his forgiving spirit for his brothers. Even though they had done him wrong, even though they had almost killed him, and they'd sold him into slavery, Joseph showed his integrity again with his forgiving spirit.

And Joseph could look back on his life and see God's perfect will, even then, that God was working all things to the good through those times.

He held no grudge against his brothers, against the people who had wronged him in his life. Joseph did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord. That is real integrity.

How can we know this in our own lives? How can we know such integrity? How can we know this?

How can we find this integrity that will stand the test?

[14:10] This integrity that is so valued even by the world at last. This integrity, this character, this truth in the inward paths that is so lacking and yet under attack today.

Choose the path of integrity. Choose the path of integrity. To be a person of true integrity, you must know God.

You must know him. You must know him. Because in all of us there is this sinful nature that inclines us to evil, inclines us to wrong.

We must be remade. We must be reborn. Reborn. Born again. Amen. We must know him. We must know him.

It tells us a people, in 1 Corinthians 6 verse 20, a people bought with a price. Bought with a price. Of whom Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6 verse 20, therefore, if you are such, bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your spirit, in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

[15:26] In your body and in your spirit, which belong to God. He says glorify God in your body and in your spirit. It's about a change of ownership. A change of ownership.

It's as if, as you see over the front of shops sometimes, under new management. That's what God puts over your life when you're born again. Under new management.

There's a change of ownership that happens. You are bought with a price. This is what must happen for you to know that true integrity of which the Word of God speaks.

That quality of life that's a whole new dimension of life. A whole new change of life. A change of heart. Integrity comes to those who know God.

Integrity does what is right. No matter what. No matter when. Because it is always right. To do right. It's always right. To do right.

[16:22] Even though it's more convenient. To do wrong. Even though you can get away. With doing wrong. So you think. It's always right. To do right. And as a born again believer.

It's a new life. It's a new loyalty. There's a new character. There's a new heart. There's a new tongue. That you have. As we read in 1 Peter 3 verse 10.

It says of the people there. They speak no guile. It's a new language. When you get born again. You get a new tongue. They speak no guile.

In other words. They don't lie. They tell the truth. Truth. In the inward parts. Integrity. It means being true. True to God. True to God's standards. And look.

If you fail. Forgiveness is there. Forgiveness is there. You might be thinking. Wow. I don't measure up. Neither do I. But if we confess our sins.

[17:18] He is faithful and just. To forgive us our sins. And to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. That integrity in the inward parts. That truth in the inward parts.

Can be yours. By faith. By his work. You have someone to please now. Other than yourselves. You can determine what is right.

At your school place. On the job. At home. Moment by moment by moment. You can choose to do right. Because it's always right. To do right.

Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity. Than he that is perverse in his lips. And is a fool. Proverbs 19.1 Character counts. I'm not just giving some kind of moral lecture here.

It's not about being a person of integrity without God. Really you can't. You can't be a person of integrity without God. You can't have that character that counts without Christ in your heart.

[18:20] It's a quality that comes from him. Choose the pathway of integrity. Job chose that pathway.

In Job 1 verse 1. It says that Job was a man perfect and upright. One that feared God.

And assumed or shunned evil. And even Satan recognised that. He said oh he's only got integrity because everything's going okay for him. In effect. But despite many trials.

Job held his integrity fast. Despite his own wise negative words. He held fast his integrity. I urge you Christian brother.

Christian sister today. Hold fast your integrity. Retain your integrity. Maintain your integrity. Hold it fast. Guard it. No matter what. Guard it. Guard it as you would.

[19:15] Guard your companionships. As the Bible tells us of a corruption that can come from bad company. 1 Corinthians 15.33. It says be not deceived.

Evil communications corrupt good manners. That integrity can be corrupted by the people we rub shoulders with. We take on some of their ways.

But we can stand fast with integrity. You can be that person of integrity. You can be that one of whom we read an example in Titus 2.

Verse 7. Where Paul exhorts Titus to be a pattern of good works. Showing uncorruptness. And sound speech.

And other things there in Titus 2. Verses 7 to 8. There was something that happened in Titus. To have a way of showing himself.

[20:12] A good pattern. An example of good works. And if you can have that quality of life. If you can know God. Such that that change happens on the inward parts of you.

That there will be truth on the inward parts. There will be that integrity in the inward parts. Such that there will be no regrets. You won't have some guilty conscience about something unresolved. Unresolved. There will be no skeletons in the cupboard. Because you will be above reproach. But it will be not for any glory of your own. But all unto him.

Unto his glory. Unto his glory and praise. Integrity means taking that safe pathway. It means choosing that pathway of wisdom. That way of life of which we read in Proverbs.

That way of integrity. Of godly character. Proverbs 4. We read of a couple of paths in Proverbs 4.

[21:12] It says enter not into the path of the wicked. And go not in the way of evil men. But Proverbs 4.18 it says. But the path of the just. Is as the shining light.

Which shineth more and more. Unto the perfect day. Two pathways people tonight. The path of the wicked. God says enter not into the path of the wicked.

But the path of the just. Is as the shining light. That shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

Choose the pathway of integrity. Choose the pathway.

A life of integrity. Jesus says. I am the way. The truth. And the life. He is the way of truth. He is the pathway of integrity.

He is the pathway for the righteous man or woman. He is the way. The way. The way. He is the door. He is life. He is that pathway of integrity.

[22:14] Abraham. Walked in that pathway. Of faithfulness. We know. Abraham. As it were. Saw the cross. In the future.

It says of Abraham. Genesis 18. Verse 19. God says. I know him. But he will command his children. And his household. After him. And they shall keep the way of the Lord.

To do justice. And judgment. Abraham was commended. For his faithfulness. Daniel. In Daniel 6. Verse 4. He was commended too. They could find none.

Occasion. Nor fault. For he was faithful. Daniel 6. Verse 4. Integrity. Was a hallmark. Of the people of God. That resolved.

To stand for what is right. Joseph stood there too. With that earnest. Single mindedness. He chose to obey God. He could have got away with it. Nobody would have known.

[23:08] But he chose integrity. Friends. We can lose integrity. There's things we can do. That brings shame and reproach. That happened with Ananias and Sapphira.

It looked like they were doing a noble and commendable thing. Giving likely a considerable son to the church. Yet God knew that they were lying to the Holy Spirit.

In Acts 5. Despite all the appearances that they put on. They lacked integrity. And it caused shame. It caused shame and disgrace.

With Ananias and Sapphira. The Pharisees. They lacked integrity. As our Lord rebuked them. In Matthew 23. David lacked integrity. When he fed his flesh.

In 2 Samuel 11. In 2 Samuel 11. Blotted. The record. Of his life. Those in 2 Timothy 2.

[24:08] Of whom it says that their destructive words are like gangrene or cancer that's spreading. There's many biblical examples of people who lack integrity. They brought shame and reproach.

Professing to be the people of God. Yet failing miserably. Giving way to sin. Giving ground to Satan. Another good example of a bad example. Is Achan. Achan. In Joshua 7. He took some forbidden plunder.

He hid it. Just seemed like something fairly small. And easy to hide. Something he could get away with. But it was a lack of integrity. And it cost him dearly.

It cost Israel. It cost his own life. And the lives of his family. And some of the men. Of the army. Were lost. Because of Achan's lack of integrity.

[25:05] And it was only when the purity was restored. Only when he dealt. Only when the sin was dealt with. Could there be victory again. So how does a person get integrity? God shows us the way.

He shows us the way. He showed you, O man, what is good. What does the Lord require of thee? But to do justly. And to love mercy. And to walk humbly with thy God.

Micah 6 verse 8. We must walk with Jesus. We must walk that walk. Find that pathway of integrity. Find Christ. Know him. And follow him.

Don't turn your ear away. Hear his voice as he calls unto you. Hear his voice. And turn unto him. While there's still a moment of time. While you still can.

And renounce the hidden things of dishonesty. As it says in 2 Corinthians 4 verse 2. Renounce dumb things. Renounce that way.

[26:02] Or that lack of integrity. And rather the manifestation of the truth. 2 Corinthians 4 verse 2. You can see that there. Renouncing the hidden things of dishonesty.

And rather choosing the manifestation of the truth. Choosing the truth. What will you choose tonight?

Where will you go? Will it be the path of the wicked? It might seem very pleasant for a time. A broad way. A popular way.

The crowd is going that way. Or will it be the narrow way? Will it be the path of life? Will it be the pathway of integrity? Will it be the way, the truth, the life?

The Lord Jesus Christ. Who says I am the way. The truth. The life. No man comes to the Father. But by me. One way.

[27:01] One way. We must love him. And know him. Integrity. Paul. Said.

I have lived in all good conscience. Before God. Until this day. Acts 23. 1. In 1 Thessalonians 2. He says. You are my witnesses. And God also. How wholly.

And justly. And unblameably. We have behaved ourselves. He says. We want you to walk worthy of God. Walk worthy of God. 1 Thessalonians 2.

Verse 12. That you would walk worthy of God. Who hath called you unto his kingdom. And glory.

Will you walk worthy of him? Will you have truth on the inward parts of you?

Will you choose the pathway of integrity? Do you know him? Him. He who is the way. The truth. The life. Will you flee temptation.

[27:57] As Joseph did. And if you fail. Will you call on his name? Will you confess your sin? Will you stop pretending. And play games with God? Will you choose integrity?

Will you be a real Christian? Not some poor testimony. Not some sham. Fake. Pretend. Part time. Casual Christian. You can kind of. Have almost like a casual job. You clock on and off. As it were.

Or will it be that you're a full time Christian? That your yes will be yes.

Your no will be no. That you can be dependent upon. There will be a reliability. A faithfulness. That is evident in your life. That you will represent our Lord. Truly. Faithfully.

With integrity. It won't reflect poorly on him. When you say to people. I'm a Christian. And then they see. What you do. And it doesn't. Match.

[28:54] There's a mismatch there. Biblical integrity. Is something. God helping you. You're relying upon him. Can be a reality for you. It can. Be a certainty for you.

Because he's given you all things that pertain unto life and godliness. It's all here. To take heart in. To take heed of. Exceeding great and precious promises.

That you can be partakers of the divine nature. Having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. And so it goes on in 2 Peter 1. So giving all diligence.

Add. To your faith virtue. To your virtue knowledge. To your knowledge temperance. To temperance patience. To patience godliness. To godliness brotherly kindness. And brotherly kindness charity. Add to your faith. Don't be a stagnant Christian. Don't let it be that you're riding that glory train to glory. And you can just sit back and enjoy the ride. [29:52] You know the ticket's being paid. So you can just take your ease. And live a comfy armchair kind of Christianity. But rather let it be that you want to have all diligence.

And add to your faith. Let it be a growing, vibrant, flourishing, blossoming, blooming faith. That will grow and grow and grow. As you know more and more of him. As you come more closely to be that person he wants you to be. And so it can be seen in you. As in Colossians 3. As the servants were spoken of here. Which we could relate to employees. In our kind of understanding of an application of that of sorts today.

Where it says in Colossians 3. That we should serve with singleness of heart. Doing it heartily as to the Lord. Not unto men. For ye serve the Lord Christ.

[30:49] And in Ephesians 6 verse 6. It says likewise. Not with eye service as men please. In other words. Not just when people are watching you. And when you want to impress others.

But as servants of Christ. Doing the will of God from the heart. So when you have that integrity. When you have that truth. In the inward parts. When you know Christ. Who is the truth. When he comes and resides and lives within you. There's a change that happens. A transformation. A transformation. And we can see. How we treat others changes. As he would that men should do unto you. So do ye. Also to them likewise. We want to treat others. As we would be treated. We want to have that pure heart.

That pure and good conscience. That faith unfeigned. 1 Timothy 1 verse 5. We want that faith that makes us real. And clean. On the inside. And it's all to his glory.

[31:46] As we read just to close. 1 Peter 2 verse 11. It says. Dearly beloved. I beseech you. In other words. I urge you. I beseech you. As strangers.

As pilgrims. Abstain from fleshly lusts. That's war against the soul. Having a conversation. In other words. Your way of life. Have that conversation.

That conduct. That is honest. There's that integrity again. That whereas people may speak against you. As evil doers. They may buy your good works. Which they may behold.

Glorify God. In the day of visitation. So when you have that integrity. When you have that truth. In the inward parts. People will notice.

And they'll glorify God. In the day of visitation. They will glorify God. When they see. The light. That shines out of your life. Friends.

[32:42] We've talked about integrity. We've talked about integrity. It can be lost. It can be neglected. We've seen integrity. It's something. That even the world.

Will value. As something. That's very vital. We see that it's something. That's very lacking. In our world today. In most every institution.

In church. In politics. It's lacking. Sadly lacking. And we see. That Joseph displayed it. When the rubber hit the road for Joseph.

He chose integrity. Friends. This message is largely to those who are saved tonight. Yet. All of this could just be some moral.

Kind of. A kind of quaint moral. Thesis tonight. You know. We might try to be as moral. And as truthful.

[33:39] And as. As. Clean living. As we possibly can. We might. You know. Brush our teeth. Morning and night. And do everything right. As far as the world would reckon it.

We might just. Wear our hair just right. And. And. You know. Do everything that the world thinks. Is the right thing to do. And be very law abiding. And have a clean record.

And such like. And yet miss. The point. We can be a good person. And still go to hell. You can be a good person tonight. And still. Be lost.

Forever. It's not about any works. That you do. That I do. There's no works. That can get you there. It's only the way. The truth. And the life. It's only that road.

That pathway. That is the pathway. We must tread. That is the pathway. We must choose. That is the pathway. We must take. If we are to receive. Eternal life.

[34:35] The only pathway. To the father. Is the Lord Jesus Christ. And I urge you tonight. To take that pathway. It. It means a change of direction.

It means a. Turn around. It means a. You turn. A 180. It means. It means. Stopping. Going your way. And turning around. And going God's way. It means.

Doing the opposite. Of what comes naturally. It means. Doing the opposite. Of what the flesh.

Would say. And what feels. Comfortable. And what comes easy. It's going God's way.

It's choosing Christ. Let us pray. Heavenly Father. We thank you. That it's only because. The Lord Jesus Christ. Died on the cross. For our sins.

That anyone can receive. Eternal life today. It's only because. Of the blood. That was freely shed. By that pure. Spotless lamb of God. That any one of us.

[35:32] Can know salvation today. We pray Lord. For anyone here today. Who has yet. To choose that pathway. They're still. On the pathway. Of the wicked. They're still heading.

Down the broad. Pathway to hell. And there is. A short. And certain. End. To their life. No matter what good. They might do. No matter what moral.

Character they may have. And yet. If only they will trust you. They will know. Eternal life. If only they will trust. That work. That you have done. In dying on the cross.

For their sin. If only they could call. On your name. Then. They can be saved. Lord. We pray that each one. Will know. What it is tonight. Even this very moment.

To call on your name. To say. Lord Jesus. Thank you for dying on the cross. For my sin. Thank you. For dying for my sin. I trust you. I take you.

[36:28] I receive you. Take me now. To be yours. To belong to you. To renew a new heart. To renew a new spirit. Within my life.

To put truth. In the inward parts of me. Help me choose the pathway. Of your walk. Lord. To part. That walk. That is walking.

After you. Help each Christian here today. If we fail. We can repent. If we fail. We can confess our sins. Unto you. There is forgiveness. With you today.

To each one. Who can come. And receive it. We thank you. For that promise. Of forgiveness. We thank you Lord. For that. Capacity. That your Holy Spirit.

Gives to us. That strengthens us. To walk. In that way. That is the pathway. Of integrity. So that we can choose. The right pathway. And we can flee.

[37:24] From temptation. Help us Lord. To find that way. And to walk in it. To your glory. We pray. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen.