**Christian Integrity**

Integrity: The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles which you refuse to change. Having high standards and refusing to lower them.

Integrity: Consistently making the proper choice between what is convenient and what is right.

Integral/integrated: Strong connectedness, despite significant differences. Necessary to make a whole complete.

The different parts of our personality, character and spirituality work together to make an integrated, whole person.

Ill: A building can have integrity. The whole thing works together and will withstand any kind of natural disaster.

Illustration: the mathematical term integral.

The integral breaks a function into smaller and smaller rectangles, until it is fully connected and is the exact area under the curve.

Fun question: Where in the Bible can we go to learn about integrity?

Proverbs, of course.

Matthew 22:16 We know you are a man of integrity. (You are always consistent with your moral principles and how you live out those principles)

Satan always go after our integrity.

Therefore, you cannot duck our question.

And, if you support Rome, then your integrity as a Jew is in question.

If you support not paying taxes to Caesar, you will be a rebel and will be arrested.

How can Jesus remain a man of integrity?

Our integrity must be closely guarded.

Illustration: We can have a very solid life, generally, but a single gross weakness utterly destroys our integrity.

Integrity covers literally ALL areas of our life!!!!!

That was the case with the World Trade Center towers. They had a design flaw in their internal structure which caused the entire tower to come down. But that would never happen… Famous last words.

Proverbs 29:10 Corrupt people hate people with integrity because they cannot be corrupted. None of the standard approaches work. We will see that with Daniel below.

Proverbs 10:9

Whoever walks with integrity walks securely, but whoever takes crooked paths will be found out.

A man of integrity does not take shortcuts to strong character.

A person of integrity cannot be blackmailed or put into a compromised situation.

Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

The person of integrity presents the same picture of themselves to all people, so that they cannot be caught in their words.

Areas which require integrity:

Our work ethic.

 -Are you always on time? Do you consistently arrive early?

 -Can your professors/bosses count on you to always be up on your work, and to give your work full attention?

Our honesty.

 -Do you ever provide only part of the relevant information to people?

 -Do you shade or put spin on the truth to favor your desired outcome?

Our moral character—hatred of sin.

 -Do you go into grey areas, or do you stay as far from sin as possible?

 -Do you allow yourself to get into situations in which it is likely you will be tempted?

Our consistency.

 -Are you the same person at home, at church, in class, at work, in your business dealings?

 -When you tell people you will do something, can they assume, without question, that the job will be done, or do you need reminders and oversight?

Let’s look at some biblical characters who lived with integrity:

Job 2:3 He still maintains his integrity. He is the same person under all circumstances. Job 2:9 Are you still holding on to your integrity?

Nehemiah 7:3 Nehemiah puts Hananiah in charge because “he was a man of integrity and feared God more than most people do.

Christian integrity and fear of God are closely connected. Who do you fear?

Daniel 6:1-5 esp. v. 4 “They could find no corruption in him, because he was trustworthy and neither corrupt not negligent.”

1. Not corrupt. Not dishonest. What he said, he always did. He could not be bribed or even corruptly influenced. “I help you out, you help me out.” No!

2. Not negligent. He was the same whether his boss was looking over his shoulders or if he was left totally alone. What about you?

Prov 31:10-31

v. 11 Full confidence. Can people have full confidence in you? If you are given a job, can they consider it “job done”?

v. 15 She gets up while it is still night. v. 18 and her lamp does not go out at night. v. 27 She does not eat the bread of idleness.

v. 17 She sets about her work vigorously. Can they say that about you?

v. 20 She opens her arms to the poor.

v. 25 She can laugh at the days to come… She makes short, medium and long term plans for her ministry and holds to them.

v. 30 She fears the Lord (not human beings).

Finishing questions for discussion:

1. What does integrity mean for you as a student or as a worker at your job?

2. What does integrity mean to you as a disciple of Jesus Christ?

3. What area or areas of integrity do you want to shore up?