

Integrity

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Proverbs 20:7 The just man walketh in his integrity: his children are blessed after him.

Proverbs 19:1 Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.

- I. Integrity is one of the most important character qualities.
 - A. Integrity is moral innocence, soundness, completeness, uprightness, and all that in simplicity.
 - B. Purity, genuine, unadulterated – what you see is what you get – no guile, no deceit, no hypocrisy, or two-facedness.
 - C. As with other things we can understand integrity more clearly by comparing it to it's opposite, which is perverseness.
 - D. To pervert means:

1. To turn from truth, propriety, or from its proper purpose; to distort from its true use or end; as, to pervert reason by misdirecting it; to pervert the laws by misinterpreting and misapplying them; to pervert justice; to pervert the meaning of an author; to pervert nature; to pervert truth.

2. To turn from the right; to corrupt.

- E. Integrity, then, is faithfulness to truth and uprightness.
- F. A person with integrity WILL do what is right, regardless of the cost to himself.

Proverbs 11:3 The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

- G. A person with integrity will be a real and genuine person with others – he will not be a chameleon.
- H. He means what he says and says what he means and no one has to “read between the lines” or decipher his riddles.

- II. Integrity is a most valuable asset to a person's life.

- A. It will not be regarded lightly or forgotten in the heat of passion or the pain of suffering.

Job 2:3 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

- B. A person who has integrity will strive to keep it in spite of whatever may fall his lot.

Job 27:2-6 As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty, who hath vexed my soul; All the while my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils; My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. God forbid that I should justify you: till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it go: my heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.

C. He is aware that others are watching for him to give it up.

Job 2:9 Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

1. That others are watching is a great motivation to keep his integrity because he knows that much is at stake if he forfeits his integrity.
2. Especially his children, grandchildren, friends, and others who have put their confidence in him.

D. Integrity is the essence of having a good name.

Proverbs 22:1 A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches, and loving favour rather than silver and gold.

1. It is his reputation – what others esteem him to be.
2. Without integrity a person's name is not good.
3. And sooner or later in life everyone will find out how important it is to have a good name.
4. We NEED other people and their help or input into our lives and if we have soiled our reputation by forfeiting our integrity we will find it is hard to get the help we need from others.

III. Real integrity must be based upon keeping the commandments of God.

1 Kings 9:4-5 And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments: Then I will establish the throne of thy kingdom upon Israel for ever, as I promised to David thy father, saying, There shall not fail thee a man upon the throne of Israel.

- A. No man makes his own rules or defines integrity according to his opinions or terms.
- B. Integrity is defined by the law of God – that is the standard for understanding and identifying true integrity – and everyone knows this is true.
- C. So integrity is part of godliness and a godly person will have and maintain his integrity.
- D. He will be real with everyone and not a pretender.
- E. People will be able to know what he is and have confidence in him.
- F. This makes life much better for him and for everyone else around him.
- G. Integrity better be what our character is based upon or life will be difficult, disappointing, and destructive.