

“A Model of Integrity”
Psalm 101
(Preached at Trinity, April 1, 2012)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. Integrity is maintaining a high moral and ethical standard. It is doing the right thing even in the face of opposition, even at great personal cost – when it is convenient and when it is not; when it is popular and when it is not. It is taking the Law of God and applying it consistently in every situation, even when human wisdom might speak to the contrary, even when public opinion says otherwise, even when personal safety is at stake.
2. It is a character trait that few possess today. We seem to live in a moral and ethical vacuum. Pragmatism seems to be standard of today's world. Whatever produces the desired outcome is the rule of behavior.
3. This pervades every facet of our society. Businesses make false claims about their products. Corporate executives deceive their stockholders. Student cheat on their exams and plagiarize their term papers.
4. When this behavior reaches even to the leaders of a nation all suffer. Such is the case in our own land. Scandals are common among our politicians. Laws are passed and funds are appropriated not according to how it will benefit our nation but how our leaders will benefit personally. We often hear about this or that politician receiving kickbacks. And justice is often perverted with a glut of lawyers more interested in winning their case than in uncovering the truth.
5. Our generation cries out for holiness and integrity. As Christians we need to be the light that shines forth in this world of darkness.
Ephesians 5:8-9 NAS - "for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of the light *consists* in all goodness and righteousness and truth),"
6. This is the nature of **Psalm 101**. It is a psalm of David. It presents David as a king whose heart is fixed upon God; a king dedicated to a life of integrity, a king with a desire to honor God above all else.
 - a. This was a rarity upon the kings of Israel. After the death of Solomon Israel was divided into two kingdoms: Israel and Judah. Jeroboam set the standard for the kings of Israel. He set up the high places and led Israel into idolatry. The testimony of Jeroboam's life was that he sinned and led Israel to sin.
 - b. Over and over we read that the kings of Israel followed this pattern:
1 Kings 15:25-26 KJV - "And Nadab the son of Jeroboam began to reign over Israel in the second year of Asa king of Judah, and reigned over Israel two years. ²⁶ And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."
1 Kings 15:33-34 KJV - "In the third year of Asa king of Judah began Baasha the son of Ahijah to reign over all Israel in Tirzah, twenty and four years. ³⁴ And he did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin."

1 Kings 16:25-26 KJV - "Omri wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him. ²⁶ For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger"

- c. David was a man after God's own heart. Although he fell into sin with Bathsheba, the overall pattern of his reign was that of righteousness and integrity. His heart was to walk in integrity before God.
7. This should be the heart of every Christian; to live a life of integrity, to be a person of principle. David understood such a life. This is the only life that has the confidence of dwelling with God.
Psalm 15:1-5 NAS - "O Lord, who may abide in Thy tent? Who may dwell on Thy holy hill? ² He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart. ³ He does not slander with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor takes up a reproach against his friend; ⁴ In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honors those who fear the LORD; He swears to his own hurt, and does not change; ⁵ He does not put out his money at interest, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken."
8. As you read 1 & 2 Kings the lives of the kings of Israel and Judah were summed up in a single sentence.
 "And he did *that which* was evil in the sight of the LORD"
 "And he did *that which* was right in the sight of the LORD"
 If your life were to be described how would it be written?
9. **Psalm 101** was written from the prospective of a king with Christ being the perfect Model.
- A. But it applies to all. It has sometimes been called "The Householder's Psalm" for it contains fitting standards for the head of any household.
Psalm 101:2 KJV - "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."
- B. Whatever your place in life a person of integrity has certain qualities. I think **Psalm 101** describes these qualities.
- I. A person of integrity is known by the commitment of his heart – **Verse 1**
 II. A person of integrity is known by the character of his of life – **Verses 1-3**
 III. A person of integrity is known by the company that he keeps – **Verses 4-7**
- I. A person of integrity is known by the commitment of his heart – **Verse 1**
Psalm 101:1 KJV - "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O LORD, will I sing."
 A. David had high praise for a life of integrity
1. David sings of two virtues, two high character traits: love and justice
 2. **רַחֲמִים** - We've seen this word over and over in the covenantal context pointing to God's steadfast love for His people. But this concept of steadfast love has implications on our actions towards one another. The KJV translates it as mercy. Derek Kidner translates it "loyalty." It implies a high desire to treat others with love and compassion.
 3. Justice – this has a judicial connotation. A person of integrity is a person of justice.
 4. When you put these two together it results in treating others with love and mercy, with fairness and kindness.

- B. These two traits are attributes of God
1. In singing to these virtues David is singing unto God.
 2. A desire to have these virtues is a desire to be like God.
- C. Integrity is a matter of the heart
1. When our hearts are turned towards God then we will seek to imitate Him with our lives
 2. When our hearts are turned towards God then we will seek to reflect Him towards others
 3. When our hearts are turned towards God then we will desire to honor Him
 4. God is honored when we live our lives towards others with mercy and justice.

II. A person of integrity is known by the character of his of life – **Verses 1-3**

Psalm 101:2 KJV - "I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart."

Psalm 101:2 NAU - "I will give heed to the blameless way. When will You come to me? I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart."

- A. I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way
1. This phrase comes from a single word - שָׂכַל - *sakal*
It means to have wise insight, understanding, or comprehension
Wisdom versus foolishness.
KJV is best. ESV "ponder" NAS "give heed"
 2. The word for "perfect" in the KJV is תָּמִים *tamim*
 - a. It refers to that which is full and complete.
With regard to morality it means to have nothing lacking.
 - b. It means "to be blameless" This is the great mark of integrity
 3. David is saying that he applies himself to walk in the blameless way. He makes it his pursuit. He wisely discerns the right way
Romans 12:2 NAS - "And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."
 4. Notice he says, "within my house"
 - a. If our homes are not in order nothing is
1 Timothy 3:5 KJV - "(For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)"
 - b. Spurgeon wrote:
It is easier for most men to walk with a perfect heart in the *church*, or even in the *world*, than in their *own families*.
- B. David sought the Divine presence of God
Psalm 101:2 NAU - "When will You come to me?"
1. David sought the aid of God
Psalm 101:2 NAU - "I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart."

2. This was no small thing. When David brought the Ark from Obed Edom it was a time of great celebration in the presence of God. Until Uzza reached out and touched the Ark.
 3. David is calling upon God to come. He was declaring his desire to live the holy life God demands.
 4. The person of integrity lives his life in the presence of God
- C. David declared his determination to live according to holiness
Psalm 101:3 KJV - "I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes"
1. The word for "wicked" refers to something vile
Psalm 101:3 NIV - "I will not look with approval on anything that is vile"
 2. David turned away from all that was unholy.
Psalm 101:3 NAS - "It shall not fasten its grip on me."
 3. He was determined not to even look upon that which might lead to sin.
 - a. The eyes are a porthole to much sin.
 David learned this with Bathsheba
2 Samuel 11:2 KJV - "And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon."
 - b. This was at the heart of the first sin
Genesis 3:6 KJV - "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make *one* wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."
 - c. Job knew the danger of the eye
Job 31:1 KJV - "I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?"

III. A person of integrity is known by the company that he keeps – **Verses 4-7**

- A. A righteous leader surrounds himself with people of integrity
1. The downfall of Rehoboam was surrounding himself with foolish scoundrels.
1 Kings 12:8 KJV - "But he forsook the counsel of the old men, which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, *and* which stood before him:"
 2. This passage demonstrates David's determination to surround himself with the righteous
Psalm 101:4 KJV - "A froward heart shall depart from me: I will not know a wicked *person*."
NAS **1 Corinthians 15:33** – "Do not be deceived: "Bad company corrupts good morals."

3. Remember **Psalm 1**
Psalm 1:1-2 KJV - " Blessed *is* the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. ² But his delight *is* in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night."
- B. David describes several types of wicked people that would not be permitted in the leadership of his kingdom
1. **Verse 4** - They have a "froward heart" - **NAU, ESV** - "perverse heart" Literally it means "twisted." Someone who is crooked in heart. If the heart is evil the whole man is evil. David says such people will be kept at a distance.
 2. **Verse 5** – The slanderer. The person who cannot control his tongue will cause great damage and be the source of much grief. Slander is filled with lies and deceit and has the design of destruction.
Psalm 101:7 KJV - "He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight."
 3. **Verse 5** – The proud - " him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."
 If God despises pride so should we – in ourselves first, and then in others. Pride was the sin of Satan and it has led many to the pit of hell.
 4. David was determined to put all wickedness far from him
Psalm 101:8 KJV - "I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all wicked doers from the city of the LORD."
- C. In contrast David described the people he would surround himself with
Psalm 101:6 KJV - "Mine eyes *shall be* upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me."
1. David describes them as "The Faithful"
 2. These are the people of integrity. They can be trusted to do the right thing.
 3. The faithful man will be faithful to God and to all others. He is honest, loyal, truthful, trustworthy, sincere.
 4. What a blessing it is to have faithful church members. Their love and labors are great treasures.
 Spurgeon: "God's eyes are on faithful members of churches, such who truly believe in him, who hold fast the faithful word, and keep close to his worship and ordinances; his eyes are upon them, to show favor to them, to bestow blessings upon them, and to protect and defend them, and to preserve them from perishing"

Conclusion:

1. Integrity is hard to find, especially in our generation. David was determined to be a man of integrity and to surround himself with people of integrity.
2. He was a man that loved righteousness. He lived according to righteousness and wanted righteous people in his life and in his kingdom.
3. May we be people who hunger and thirst after righteousness. May we be people of integrity that will honor God no matter what the cost.

4. Ask yourself, “Am I a person of integrity?” Do you obey the Word of God, period? Are you faithful – to God, to your church, to your husband or wife, to training your children, to your employer? Are you incorruptible in how you live in this world?