

A view from **HIGHER GROUND**

The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof,
the world and those who dwell therein,
for he has founded it upon the seas
and established it upon the rivers.

Psalm 24:1-2

Integrity Matters



www.shepherdssupport.org

Why Integrity Matters

Don Erickson



1. Because as representatives of Jesus Christ, our character and conduct reflect the character of Jesus

Romans 13:14

“But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.”

1 John 2:6

“whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.”

2. Because as representatives of Jesus Christ, we cast a reflection of Jesus Christ on the church

John 13:35

“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”

John 15:8

“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”

3. Because as representatives of Jesus Christ, we are called to model godly living for the body of Christ, believers

1 Peter 5:2-3

“shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.”

4. Because as representatives of Jesus Christ, we are called to model godly living to the unbelieving world

Ecclesiastes 10:1

“As dead flies cause even a bottle of perfume to stink, so a little foolishness spoils great wisdom and honor.”

2 Corinthians 6:3

“We put no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry.”

Acts 24:16

“So I always take pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man.”

Assignment:

Discuss the negative consequences that are being seen everywhere. I Corinthians 5:6

What Integrity Looks Like

Don Erickson



Proverbs 10:9

“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely”

1. A MAN AFTER GOD’S OWN HEART

Acts 13:22

“And when he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, ‘I have found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all my will.’”

2. A MAN OF GOD

Micah 6:8

“He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

3. ABOVE REPROACH

1 Timothy 3:2

“Therefore an overseer must be above reproach,”

4. BLAMELESS

Job 1:1

“There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job, and that man was blameless and upright, one who feared God and turned away from evil.”

5. SAMUEL - A LIFE WELL-LIVED, 1 SAMUEL 12:1-5

a. Samuel came to the end of his life devoted to integrity

b. Samuel was willing and able to face his critics with transparent accountability

- i. He was found to be just – defrauded no one
- ii. He was found to be honest – did not take a bribe
- iii. He was found to be compassionate – was not abusive
- iv. He was found to be gracious – did not prey upon the people for his own benefit

c. Samuel’s character was affirmed by others

Developing a Life of Integrity

Don Erickson



2 Corinthians 1:12

“For our boast is this, the testimony of our conscience, that we behaved in the world with simplicity and godly sincerity, not by earthly wisdom but by the grace of God, and supremely so toward you.”

1. **Never consider myself above temptation** – The heart deceives us

1 Corinthians 10:12

“Therefore, let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed lest he fall.”

2. **Keep a close watch on my spiritual temperature**

Proverbs 4:23

“Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flow the springs of life.”

3. **Maintain purity in my marriage or my singleness**

1 Corinthians 6:18

“Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.”

4. **Develop spiritually healthy outlets for my emotions and passions**

Romans 12:21

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

5. **Protect my mind and my heart**

Romans 12:2

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

6. **Remind myself regularly of the damaging consequences of moral failure**

1 Timothy 4:16

“Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.”

7. **Take the necessary precautions to protect myself**

Matthew 26:41

“Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.”

Failure to live A Life of Integrity

Don Erickson



THE COST OF SPIRITUAL AND MORAL INFIDELTY

1. **God's name is dishonored**
2. **Our personal trust is lost**
3. **Our closest relationships are seriously damaged**
4. **God's Kingdom work is threatened**

RESTORATION IS ALWAYS POSSIBLE BUT NOT EASY

Restoration starts with repentance

1. **The goal of church discipline should always be restoration of the sinner**

Galatians 6:1

"Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness."

2. **There needs to be a distinction made between restoration to fellowship and restoration to vocational ministry**

1 Timothy 3:2

"Therefore an overseer must be above reproach."

3. **The body of Christ must be the agency used to establish and carry out a process of restoration.**

Matthew 18:15-20

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church."

Session #4 – Failure to Live a Life of Integrity

- 4. Restoration to fellowship must take place before restoration to vocational ministry can be considered.**

2 Corinthians 2:5-11

“Now if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but in some measure—not to put it too severely—to all of you. For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him.”

- 5. Restoration to fellowship is always available but restoration to vocational ministry is not a certainty.**

- 6. The process of restoration requires that sufficient time be given for genuine renewal of one’s life to be demonstrated**

James 3:1

“Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.”