



“Integrity”

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- Integrity...living on the highest level of honesty we possibly can
 - Integrity...who you are and what you are when no one is looking and when no one is listening.
 - **1 Chronicles 29:17, “I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity.”**
 - ✓ Hebrew for integrity means “to be level, straight”
 - ✓ Root word in Hebrew means “to be open”... “plenty of room to move”... “to feel safe and secure”... “to be delivered”... “to be saved” →
 - ✓ Savior...Name of “Jesus” in Greek comes from this Hebrew root word “Savior” in Matthew 1:21
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Questions every man needs to ask himself...and be asked by other men:

1) How do I handle money...tithing...expense reports

- a) woman work at music store, pastor from church she visited bought cd's, \$9.99 each, sold for \$1.99, see how honest he was...went back and led her to Christ
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2) How do I handle personal and ministry business...Proverbs 20:23,“dishonest scales do not please him”

- a) merchants used different sets of stones to weigh, increase profits...lighter when selling, heavier when buying
 - b) me use BSU phone long distance...justified it...caught
 - c) God blesses us...loves us...men of integrity pleases Jesus
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3) How do I handle ministry information...statistics, reports, 10% off

4) How do I handle people...restaurant workers

- a) Philippians 2:3, “in humility consider others better than yourselves”
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5) How do I handle my word...tell someone do something do I do it...appease people?

- a) 2 Corinthians 1:17, “let your yes be yes and your no be no”...(New Living Translation) “Or am I like people of the world who say yes when they really mean no”
 - b) Gossip – Proverbs 18:8 & Proverbs 26:22, “The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down to a man’s inmost parts.”
 - c) bag of feathers opened in the wind...woman gossip about pastor
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6) How do I handle reputation...mine, your church, and God’s

- a) evangelist, “reputation is what you should be, integrity is what you are”
 - b) If I am a fake Christian people will sense it...eventually will be found it
 - c) Philippians 2:7, “Jesus made Himself of no reputation”
 - d) Pastor friend, “If we take care of the depth of our character, Jesus will take care of the width of our ministry.”
 - e) Weightlifter, reputation being strongest man around, cheated using lighter weights, weightlifting suit busted, saw underwear
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7) How do I handle boundaries

- a) Boundaries with others: meeting with members of opposite sex alone in relationships
 - b) Boundaries with myself: what do I do publicly that could “damage” my witness...clothing, alcohol, entertainment, language...any question marks
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8) How do I handle my sexuality

- a) Sexual desires normal, healthy and from God
- b) Accountability – action and thoughts

- ✓ married and single need strong, open accountability with same gender
 - ✓ emotional adultery for those married
 - c) Pornography – internet, escape, addiction...my struggles
 - d) Homosexuality – children not have emotional connection with parents
 - e) Sexual abuse...my story
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9) How do I handle leadership

- a) Different styles...authoritative, relaxed, delegate → balance
 - b) Passive
 - fear, pain, underdeveloped emotionally
 - allow others to intimidate us...provide for us when we provide ourself
 - c) encourage & challenge today...be initiators...take risk...step out in faith
 - d) Proverbs 29:18, “where there is no vision (leadership) the people perish
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We are preachers, church leaders, and Christians, must have a life and a reputation of integrity...preaching gifts, knowledge of Bible, etc...cannot use our preaching abilities cover compromised honesty, character and integrity.

→ Pastor, “a person’s talents may take them where weak character cannot keep them.”

- ✓ The power in our preaching is not necessarily in the Theology that we know but in the life we live
 - ✓ I my life does not match up with Theology I know and Theology I preach I am a hypocrite...
 - ✓ Honest life of integrity recognized and honored by God...one way He honor integrity empower our preaching and ministry with His spirit
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→ We each have opportunities for growth in the areas of honesty and integrity.

Practical ways to grow:

- 1) Ask God and God's people to reveal holes in my life...Psalm 139, "search me o God and know my heart...see if there be any hurtful way in me"
- 2) Write down areas I need to work on...sins need to confess and repent...dishonest with money, reports, dealing with people
- 3) Meet with a strong Christian friend and have them ask you how you are doing in these areas...Proverbs 27:17
- 4) Be deliberate on these areas...each day focus...if my struggle is with exaggerating ministry numbers, think it through.

✓ Integrity as a lifestyle

✓ Proverbs 10:9, "The man/woman of integrity walks securely."

→ Invitation
