

Theme: The wise are called to lives of integrity – speaking truthfully, acting honestly, behaving reliably.

I. Intro – Enron, WorldCom, Tyco

- A. Names synonymous with scandal
- B. Only the latest – teapot dome,
- C. Show the need for personal integrity

II. The Biblical Call for Integrity

- A. A consistent call & reward in Proverbs
 - 1. 13:6 –note parallelism - guards
 - 2. 10:9 – parallelism again - secure
 - 3. 11:3 – opposite of unfaithful and duplicitous
- B. The importance of integrity in rest of Scripture
 - 1. God - integrity - truth & faithfulness (Num 23:19; Deut 7:9)
 - 2. Our armor – belt of truth (Eph 6:14)

III. Understanding Integrity (in Action)

- A. Understanding integrity
 - 1. Basic idea - complete, upright, honest
 - 2. NIDOTTE quote/idea
 - 3. Components: true words, honest actions, consistent behavior

B. Components of integrity

- 1. True words (12:19, 22; Lev 19:11)
- 2. Honest actions
 - a. No stealing (20:10; [11:1; 16:11] Lev 19:11; Eph 4:28)
 - b. No bribes (17:23; Ex 23:8)
 - c. No favoritism (James 2:1-4, 9)
- 3. Reliable behavior (James 5:12)

C. A portrait of integrity – Psalm 15

IV. Applying the Word

- A. Do we see integrity is undermined by culture?
 - 1. Culture of situation ethics/no objective truth
 - 2. Culture of get away with what I can
 - 3. Surprised at corporate scandals! (Lewis quote)
- B. Do I walk with integrity?
 - 1. Do I speak the truth – or lie when convenient?
 - 2. Am I honest?
 - a. Stealing – store? Taxes? Digital music?
 - b. Favoritism – or impartial?

3. Am I reliable – keep my word, even if hurts?

C. Communion – our covenant meal

1. None of us walk with complete integrity

2. Jesus showed integrity – even to cross!

3. Focus in communion today

a. Confess our lack of integrity

b. Thanks Jesus for His integrity – even to death

c. Ask God for strength to walk w/ integrity

The Integrity of the Wise

Proverbs 13:6

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Communion

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

The man of integrity walks securely, but he who takes crooked paths will be found out. Proverbs 10:9

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

God is not a man, that he should lie, nor a son of man, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfill? Numbers 23:19

Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands. Deuteronomy 7:9

Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, Ephesians 6:14

The word **μτ**; designates (esp. in the Wisdom literature) a discernible group of people to whom adherence to the ethos and social values that clearly distinguish the God-fearing from the wicked (**νq τ**) is of prime importance. They are called the innocent (**Ps 64:4 [5]**), the blameless (**Job 8:20; 9:20-22**), the pious and upright (with **rv;y: Job 1:1, 8; 2:3**; as par. to **μ/LV; vyaI Ps 37:37**; cf. **Prov 29:10**). NIDOTTE, H9462.

19 Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment... 22 The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful. Proverbs 12:19,22

Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another. Leviticus 19:11

Differing weights and differing measures-- the LORD detests them both. Proverbs 20:10 (Proverbs 11:1; 16:11)

Do not steal. Do not lie. Do not deceive one another. Leviticus 19:11

He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Ephesians 4:28

A wicked man accepts a bribe in secret to pervert the course of justice. Proverbs 17:23

Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds those who see and twists the words of the righteous. Exodus 23:8
My brothers, as believers in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ, don't show

favoritism. 2 Suppose a man comes into your meeting wearing a gold ring and fine clothes, and a poor man in shabby clothes also comes in. 3 If you show special attention to the man wearing fine clothes and say, "Here's a good seat for you," but say to the poor man, "You stand there" or "Sit on the floor by my feet," 4 have you not discriminated among yourselves and become judges with evil thoughts?... James 2:1-4

But if you show favoritism, you sin and are convicted by the law as lawbreakers. James 2:9

Above all, my brothers, do not swear-- not by heaven or by earth or by anything else. Let your "Yes" be yes, and your "No," no, or you will be condemned. James 5:12

LORD, who may dwell in your sanctuary? Who may live on your holy hill? 2 He whose walk is blameless and who does what is righteous, who speaks the truth from his heart 3 and has no slander on his tongue, who does his neighbor no wrong and casts no slur on his fellowman, 4 who despises a vile man but honors those who fear the LORD, who keeps his oath even when it hurts, 5 who lends his money without usury and does not accept a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken. Psalm 15

“And all the time—such is the tragi-comedy of our situation—we continue to clamour for those very qualities we are rendering impossible. You can hardly open a periodical without coming across the statement that what our civilization needs is more 'drive', or dynamism, or self-sacrifice, or 'creativity'. In a sort of ghastly simplicity we remove the organ and demand the function. We make men without chests and expect of them virtue and enterprise. We laugh at honour and are shocked to find traitors in our midst. We castrate and bid the geldings be fruitful.” Lewis, *Abolition*, pg 36-37.