

# “Integrity”

## Beneath the Surface: Deepening Our Relationships—Part 3

January 21-22, 2017

### INTRODUCTION

When you consider the quality of your relationships, you are likely to be influenced by what you think of the individuals. Are they worthy of your respect, and honor as well as your trust and confidence? All of these things are related to that person’s integrity; their sound moral character that is whole or undivided, internally consistent and integrated into all aspects of life. Without integrity relationships suffer. God also seeks integrity in His people. This study examines some of the ways we can develop our integrity, and strengthen our relationship with God and with others.

### *Ice Breaker (Optional):*

When you think of integrity, what historical figure comes to mind?

### Study Questions (45 MIN)

#### How is integrity developed?

##### Fear the Lord

#### Q1. Read Job 2:3; Psalm 19:7-12

Consistent sound moral character is the hallmark of integrity. But you might find differing opinions on the basis of morality depending on whom you ask to define it. In the Bible, God has given us His standard of morality. How did the fear of God affect Job’s integrity (Job 2:3)? If we are to follow God’s standards, we first must know what they are. What benefits did the Psalmist attribute to those standards in Psalm 19:7-12?

#### Q2. Read Prov 15:3; Psalm 90:8; Ecclesiastes 12:14; Hebrews 4:13; Romans 6:1-2

Our integrity is not only judged by others, it is judged by God himself. Why is God better able to judge the consistency of our moral character than anyone else? (Proverbs 15:3; Psalm 90:8) The motivation to live a virtuous life may be out of a heart that seeks to please God, but it might also be in consideration of the consequences of failing to follow God’s laws. (Ecclesiastes 12:14; Hebrews 4:13). Each of us must choose how we view God’s grace in relationship to our actions. Romans 6:1-2 reveals how Paul felt about the integrity of his actions in response to God’s grace. What attitude toward grace was he arguing against? Do you view that attitude as a risk to the integrity of believers today?

#### Respect yourself

#### Q3. Read Psalm 51:6; Psalm 139:23-24; Romans 7:22

Despite how we strive to appear to others, we sometimes see ourselves through a personal lens that distorts the true view of ourselves. Psalm 51 refers to our gut-level honesty as “integrity in the inner self.” Why might you fail to “speak truth” to yourself? David was willing to have God search his heart and reveal anything offensive. (Psalm 139:23) Do you feel comfortable asking God to search your heart? Is there something that we can do to prepare ourselves to be examined by God? How does our attitude towards God’s law (Romans 7:22) make a difference in our willingness to face God’s scrutiny?

#### Value relationships

#### Q4. Read Proverbs 18:24; Proverbs 17:17; Job 6:14

As we learned last week, relationships can be challenging. The weight of good relationship is supported on a bridge of trust. Is there a relationship in which you could build more trust with more integrity? (Proverbs 18:24, Proverbs 17:17) What are some things that you can do to generally build the trust of your friends? How would this reflect the value of their relationship to you? How does it reflect on your fear of God? (Job 6:14)

#### Wrap-Up

A life of integrity is pleasing to God, beneficial to us, and strengthens our relationships with others. There are several ways that integrity is developed. It grows out of our fear of God and the observance of His moral code found in the Bible. When we recognize that God is ever present and that we are accountable to Him for our behavior, we are more motivated to consistently follow His commands. When we are honest with ourselves we can recognize where we fall short, and that prepares us to have God search our hearts and reveal any areas we need to change. Finally, if we value our relationships with others, we will act in such a way that they can trust us, and rely on us to do the right thing, making every effort to maintain our integrity before God, ourselves, and others.

#### Memory Verse

*Surely You desire integrity in the inner self, and You teach me wisdom deep within.*  
*Psalm 51:6 HCSB*

#### Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more notes) \_\_\_\_\_

**Challenge:** Ask God to search you, to help you know yourself. Ask him to work in you to develop your personal integrity.

