

Integrity
Proverbs 11:3-6
April 3, 2016

I. Integrity vs Hypocrisy

Proverbs 11:3-6 *The integrity of the upright will guide them, but the perversity of the unfaithful will destroy them. 4 Riches do not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from death. 5 The righteousness of the blameless will direct] his way aright, but the wicked will fall by his own wickedness. 6 The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the unfaithful will be caught by their lust.*

- Integrity (**11:3a, 4b, 5a, 6a**)
 - Character of the upright
 - Integrity = completeness, without blemish, above reproach
 - Can be translated as blameless
 - This person is truthful in sight and out of sight
 - This person does not change publically or privately
 - A man of integrity is above reproach (as a pastor **1 Tim 3:1-2**)

Job 1:1 *In the land of Uz there lived a man whose name was Job. This man was blameless and upright; he feared God and shunned evil.*

Note: upright and blameless are both words that describe integrity.

- Fear God
 - This is what Proverbs is all about
 - Skill of living in the fear of God
 - Shuns evil
 - This person loves God, publically and privately
 - This person shuns evil, publically and privately
- Hypocrisy (**11:3b, 4a, 5b, 6b**)
 - The idea of crookedness—people standing aside
 - Ideas of dishonesty and untruthfulness
 - Hypocrisy is the opposite of integrity

Matthew 23:1-4 *Then Jesus said to the crowds and to His disciples: 2 "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. 3 So you must obey them and do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. 4 They tie up heavy loads and put them on men's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.*

Note: Jesus called the Pharisees and scribes “hypocrites” six times in Matthew 23 alone. It was their character. Their outward appearance looked holy, but inwardly, they were as far from God as anyone can be.

- Value of integrity
 - God approved

Proverbs 11:20 *Those who are of a perverse heart are an abomination to the*

Lord, but the blameless in their ways are His delight.

- For those who are hypocritical God is opposed to them
- Secures our way

Proverbs 10:9 *He who walks with integrity walks securely, but he who perverts his ways will become known.*

Proverbs 13:6 *Righteousness guards him whose way is blameless, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.*

- For those who are hypocritical—people will find out and their plans will be thwarted
- He is trapped by his own traps
- God is against those who are crooked in their ways
- Secures our future
 - Earthly

Proverbs 20:7 *The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him.*

- Eternally

Proverbs 28:18 *Whoever walks blamelessly will be saved, but he who is perverse in his ways will suddenly fall.*

- Destructiveness of hypocrisy
 - In marriage

Malachi 2:14 *Yet you say, "For what reason?" Because the Lord has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you have dealt treacherously; yet she is your companion and your wife by covenant.*

- In friendship

Job 6:15 *My brothers have dealt deceitfully like a brook, like the streams of the brooks that pass away,*

- Destruction and more destruction
- Integrity is better than hypocrisy

Proverbs 19:1 *Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his lips, and is a fool.*

Proverbs 28:6 *Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one perverse in his ways, though he be rich.*

II. Maintaining Integrity

- Be holy

1 Peter 1:14-16 as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance; **15** but as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, **16** because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."

- Fearing God
- Imitating His character
- In thought and action in private
- Shunning evil
 - God hates evil

Psalms 5:4 You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with You the wicked cannot dwell.

- Reject and hate evil like God

Proverbs 8:13 To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech.

- Avoid evil

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 Test everything. Hold on to the good. **22** Avoid every kind of evil.

Psalms 1:1 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.

- Some evils to avoid
 - Sexual immorality

1 Thessalonians 4:3-4 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; **4** that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable,

- Only sexual relations that God approves is in marriage

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

1 Corinthians 7:2 But since there is so much immorality, each man should have his own wife, and each woman her own husband.

- Hate all forms of sexual perversion
- By being a person of integrity—your thoughts should not be entertaining sexual perversions of all kinds in thought or practice
 - Even though nobody can see what you are thinking, God sees and knows
- Greed
 - Wanting more than what you are given (job, marriage, money)

Ecclesiastes 5:10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is

meaningless.

- There is never a satisfaction with wanting more
- Stealing from employers (time, money, materials)
- By a being a person of integrity—your attitude is to be one of contentment
 - You are satisfied with what God has given you (job, money, marriage, etc)

Hebrews 13:5 *Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you."*

- Job: Man of integrity
 - Job refused to blame and curse God when he lost his children, possessions, and health

Job 2:3 *Then the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered My servant Job? There is no one on earth like him; he is blameless and upright, a man who fears God and shuns evil. And he still maintains his integrity, though you incited Me against him to ruin him without any reason."*

Job 2:9-10 *His wife said to him, "Are you still holding on to your integrity? Curse God and die!" 10 He replied, "You are talking like a foolish woman. Shall we accept good from God, and not trouble?" In all this, Job did not sin in what he said.*

- He continued to refuse to blame God

Job 27:1-4 *And Job continued his discourse: 2 "As surely as God lives, who has denied me justice, the Almighty, who has made me taste bitterness of soul, 3 as long as I have life within me, the breath of God in my nostrils, 4 my lips will not speak wickedness, and my tongue will utter no deceit. 5 I will never admit you are in the right; till I die, I will not deny my integrity. 6 I will maintain my righteousness and never let go of it; my conscience will not reproach me as long as I live.*

- He maintains that he is in the right and has not done any wrong
- Sexual purity

Job 31:1 *I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl.*

- It is a decision; a life-long decision

Coram Deo

Those verses in 1 Thessalonians 5 clearly call believers to evaluate everything carefully and thoughtfully. By doing that, we can judge (based on God's Word) ideas, motives, and attitude to reject and what to hold on. It should be obvious that if we are to hate evil, we are to love and hold on to what is good. The path to integrity requires discipline and is often difficult. However, God provides us with all the spiritual strength and resources in Scripture that we will ever need. Our responsibility to strive for integrity is simply a step toward a life without compromise.