

Integrity

Objectives

To discuss that true integrity stems from our life with God.

Resources

Ben Stuart- Breakaway Ministries “*Inconvenient Integrity*”

Abouna Anthony- St. Mark DC “*The Life of David Series*”

Scriptural Verse

“But the LORD said to Samuel: Do not look at his appearance or at his physical stature, because I have refused him. For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” *1 Samuel 16:7*

Lesson Outlines

- ❖ Integrity—it is a word we don’t hear as much as we used to. What does it mean?
 - ✦ Willingness and ability to do the right thing even when it is difficult.
 - ✦ Integrity is an interdependent reality is simply this: you treat everyone by the same set of principles.
 - ✦ Personal integrity means being consistently true to yourself and your morals character, ideals, etc. and not wavering, even when circumstance, good or bad, changes.
- ❖ Some other ways integrity has been described:
 - ✦ The measure of a man’s real character is what he would do if he would never be found out. [Thomas Macauley]
 - ✦ Image is what people think we are: integrity is what we really are. [John Maxwell]
 - ✦ Integrity is not a given factor in everyone’s life. It is a result of self-discipline, inner trust, and a decision to be relentlessly honest in all situations in our lives. [John Maxwell]
- ❖ Integrity, by definition, means a code of expected morality, the quality or state of being complete or undivided, honesty, soundness, incorruptibility, or an unimpaired condition; according to Webster’s Dictionary.
- ❖ A person’s character is ultimately defined by integrity, and character can be defined by what you do when no one else is around. It means abiding by unwritten rules for the sake of doing the right thing. A person with conviction will do right and has credibility with his peers.
- ❖ With respect to integrity, there are 3 categories of people: those who lack integrity, those who live a principled life and those who have real integrity.
- ❖ Even if we pass this test of living consistent with our principles, we need to consider our motivation or source of our integrity “*For the LORD does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.*” *1 Samuel 16:7*
- ❖ To get a better understanding of what real integrity is and what is at the root of it, read 1 Samuel 24
- ❖ David is being tested by God. He is in a circumstance where having integrity is seemingly not to his advantage.
- ❖ David is a man after God’s own heart but Saul is a man that whenever having integrity is inconvenient, or against his logic, he drops it. In 1 Samuel 10:8 and 1 Samuel 13:8-12, Saul gives a situational justification for not obeying God.

- ❖ Saul keeps doing this until Samuel confronts him and says you can't lead the people of God if you are unwilling to follow the word of God. Samuel tells Saul that there is another to whom the kingdom will be given. Instead of truly repenting and trusting God's decision, Saul becomes murderously jealous of David and pursues him to kill him. Some priests help David, so Saul slaughters the priests. At this point, Saul's compromises and lack of integrity have led him to become a reckless, Godless, insane man chasing after David.
- ❖ How ironic that Saul chose the one cave that David and his men are hiding!
- ❖ Instead of killing him, David cuts off a corner of his robe (a sign of disrespect) but then David feels badly about it. And then exposes himself, makes himself vulnerable and pays homage to Saul.
- ❖ He sees God's hand in the whole thing.
- ❖ He acts based on God's will not the actions of others. In 1 Samuel 24:12, David understands that God ordains authority and that Saul is the Lord's anointed—he says it 3 times—so he will not dishonor the man God put in leadership (David is rightfully experiencing guilt).

Conclusion

The only kind of integrity that has an eternal impact is that which stems from God and is because of Him. In order to live a life of integrity we need always remember that God has me in the bundle of His side and He will make things right.

Activities/Discussion Points

1. Discuss other examples from the lives of the saints and church history that modeled a life of integrity.