

# Practical Advice for Living. . .

**I**ntegrity is a word you hear almost every day, but it's not a word that people spend a lot of time thinking about. If you try to define it, what would you say? **According to the dictionary, integrity is "firm adherence to a code of especially moral or artistic values." Put another way, the root of integrity is about doing the right thing even when it's not acknowledged by others, or convenient for you.**



**The Book of Job is a famous account of a good man whose life went into crisis. Our attention is immediately drawn to all the problems, and how unfair they all are.** But Job was also a very successful man, a “blameless and upright” man who God was delighted to bless. The word that Job himself used to describe his character is integrity: *Till I die I will not put away my integrity from me* (Job 27: 5). Job had been successful in everything he did. He said that *God watched over me. I was in my prime, and the friendly counsel of God was over my tent... my steps were bathed in cream and rocks poured out rivers of oil* (Job 29: 1-6). Everyone wanted to be his partner. Job said that men waited for him as for the rain (Job 29: 23).

But **Job's integrity is not based on his successes.** Twice God said to Satan that there is no one as good as Job on the earth; he is a blameless and upright man. In chapter one, God said it when Job was the wealthiest man in the east, with his children well and his family secure. In chapter two God said it of Job when his children were dead, his money was gone, and he was in despair. In both circumstances God said: Look, Satan – that is what I'm talking about – “he still holds fast to his integrity” (Job 2: 3). **Integrity is a whole hearted devotion to a moral standard as a matter of personal honor.** To Job, his integrity is worth more than all of his possessions piled up in a heap. Before the onslaughts of Satan, he could not hold onto his money or his health. But he would hold onto his integrity no matter what. And God loved him for it.

**What did this look like in practice? How was Job's integrity demonstrated in real life circumstances? Job himself gives us ten different areas of life in which he exercised integrity.**

**1. Integrity towards God.** To Job, God is one Who does great things, and unsearchable, marvelous things that cannot be counted (Job 5: 9). *Job never lost his sense of wonder, and God's works never became commonplace or ordinary.* Every day there was something new, something great, that the Lord would do.

**2. Integrity in Worship and Service.** If I have observed the sun when it shines, or the moon moving in brightness, so that my heart has been secretly enticed ... this also would be an iniquity... for I would have denied God who is above (Job 31: 26 – 28). Job sought to know and walk with God. He was not much interested in religion. In Job's day, people went through religious rituals, giving reverence to the sun and moon and stars as gods. Job did not confuse “going to church” with devotion to the Lord. He was not satisfied with religious ritual – he wanted to know the Lord.

**3. Integrity towards the Bible.** *His lamp shone upon my head; and by His light I walked through darkness* (Job 29: 3, 4). Job obviously did not have the Bible to read and study. But Job understood that the Word of God is the lamp unto our feet and a light to our path.

Integrity towards the Bible means an intellectual honesty when you study it – not searching the Bible to find what you agree with, or to justify yourself, or to rationalize it away. To Job, any way other than the Word of God led into darkness.

**4. Integrity in Repentance.** *If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding my iniquity in my bosom, because I feared the great multitude* (Job 31: 33, 34). Job was honest in repentance towards God, and before men. He did not try to look good. When he sinned, he confessed it before the Lord. Our nature is to be like Adam – to hide our sin, to not tell anyone, to keep it inside. We are afraid what others will think of us, because we fear the multitude. But you cannot hide sin from the Lord, and Peter writes that you can be sure that your sins will find you out. We read in James to confess our faults one to another, and pray for one another. Every business writes off old unpaid bills. That's what we should do with sin — write it off. Repent of it to the Lord; find a Christian you respect (maybe your spouse), confess it, and get it off the books.

## Integrity . . . continued

**5. Integrity in your Family.** *“I have made a covenant with my eyes; Why then should I look upon a young woman?”* (Job 31: 1) Job starts his integrity at home with fidelity towards his spouse. Many Christian marriages hit the rocks because of sexual sin. Job makes a covenant with his eyes – he is going to be pure in his devotion to his spouse, and live in integrity and honor in his family.

**6. Integrity towards your Friends.** If the men of my tent have not said, “Who is there that has not been satisfied with meat?” But no sojourner had to lodge in the street, for I have opened my doors to the traveler (Job 31: 31). Job speaks of those he calls the men of my tent. Those close around me. Job always did right by them, and always did right for his business partners and to his friends. Paul wrote in Galatians, “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all, especially to those who are of the household of faith” (Galatians 6: 10).

**7. Integrity towards those Not your Friends.** *“If I have rejoiced at the destruction of him who hated me, or lifted myself up when evil found him”* (Job 31: 29). Clarence Darrell once said “I have never killed a man, but there are some obituaries that I have read with great pleasure.” It’s easy to take quiet pleasure when bad things happen to people who have been less than pleasant to you. But Job refused to rejoice in the destruction of his enemies. He took no pleasure when bad things happened to bad people. Jesus commanded us to love our enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who wrongfully use you. He not only said it, He did it. Even on the cross He prayed for those who hated Him, and did evil to Him.

**8. Integrity with Money.** “If I have made gold my hope, or said to fine gold, ‘You are my confidence;’ If I have rejoiced because my wealth was great, and because my hand had gained much; this also would be an iniquity deserving of judgment” (Job 31: 24- 28). Job never confused confidence in riches with confidence in the Lord. He understood that riches could fail him (and did fail him), but that the Lord never would.

**9. Integrity towards Employees.** “If I have despised the cause of my male or female servant when they complained against me, what then shall I do when God rises up? ... Did not He who made me in the womb make them?” (Job 31: 13 – 15). Job treated those in his employ with dignity. He listened to their concerns, he responded to their needs, and he respected their criticisms. He did not consider himself above them – but rather understood that we are all made by God, and that the Lord values equality among us.

**10. Integrity in Society.** *Because I delivered the poor who cried out, the fatherless and the one who had no helper. The blessing of a perishing man came upon me, and I caused the widow’s heart to sing for joy. ... I was eyes to the blind, and I was feet to the lame* (Job 29: 12 – 15). Job made social justice his cause. He moved through a world of hurt, injustice, and despair with mercy and compassion. He was quick to help those who could not help themselves. Because of that compassion, he was beloved by his society, and also was beloved by God.

There are rich men and women in our society, and their money is only a means to their ease and a trophy to their pride. **Christians should be like Job, living before the Lord, governed by His Word, and holding to that despite the ups and downs they may endure.** To such men and women, I believe that the Lord still points and says to a cynical world *Have you considered my servant – perfect and upright, and still holding onto his integrity.*

### **FOUR SIMPLE WAYS TO DEVELOP INTEGRITY:**

#### **Don’t make a promise you cannot keep.**

A lot of people have a hard time saying no—these people typically hate confrontation and will say yes to maintain a favorable impression. As a result, they make promises they cannot keep, and their integrity goes down the tubes.

#### **Remember what you promised others.**

The solution is simple. If you promise someone something—an e-mail, phone call, money, etc.—be aware that you are putting your integrity on the line. Write it down IMMEDIATELY—in your schedule, on a napkin, on the back of your hand or staple a note to your clothes if you want—anywhere to make sure you remember it.

#### **Always tell the truth and do the right thing.**

Do you know any chronic liars? Do you trust what these people say? If you want people to trust you, then always tell the truth and obey God. When you face tough situations being honest might seem incredibly challenging. However, being up-front and honest in these situations will sky rocket the trust people have in you like nothing else and above all will please God!

#### **Emphasize your integrity and make it a habit.**

Emphasize that you are a person of your word and watch the respect people have for you grow. Emphasizing your integrity and remembering each and every promise you make (regardless of how small) is a powerful combination that will turn integrity into a habit by the Grace of God!

*The Power of FOCUS* by Les Hewitt, Andrew Hewitt and Luc d’ Adadie  
<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/insight-is-2020/201504/7-signs-people-integrity>  
<http://www.cpnopoint.com/ten-rules-of-integrity-for-christians-in-business>