



STRIVING FOR INTEGRITY

A SHORT EXHORTATION BY BRO. OLALEKAN TOYO

The subject of integrity is an important one for discussion in our generation today, where many seem to have lost sight of its importance and true intrinsic value.

In pursuance of self-interests and achieving goals at whatever cost, people have done damage to their integrity and left little for others to trust or rely on about them and sadly the same is true for many Christians in our day also.

Let's look at our text in Proverbs 11:3 KJV which says...

The integrity of the upright shall guide them: but the perverseness of transgressors shall destroy them.

There's no doubt that integrity is an important quality that any man must have to preserve his image before others, how much more Christians who profess the name of the Lord and are called to represent him on Earth

Briefly we will take a look at what it means to have integrity and why striving for it is of the utmost importance

Integrity is defined as the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles and uprightness. Having integrity involves being real at all times and in all situations, it is being true to yourself and to those around you, even to those who don't like you

In life not everybody is going to love you and there are people who will antagonize you no matter how good you are or how accurately you live but even these people should be able to see your integrity

An example of this is very evident in the life of Job

Job 2:3 KJVS

And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? And still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

Despite the fact that his own wife tried to convince him to throw away his integrity and curse God, Job held firm and made up his mind that he wasn't going to do such a thing. People must know the things you can and can't do, and they must be right about it. That is what it means to have integrity

My spiritual father, Reverend Temilolu Aliu says something very often, that after the anointing, the next thing is to pursue is integrity, lack of integrity kills the anointing. And I'm very grateful that he hammered on and emphasized this point, otherwise I might not have taken this seriously like many of us fail to do

The truth is this statement doesn't just apply to the anointing as in ministry, but in any area whatsoever that you have a natural affinity for or a God-given talent and an ability to perform in. If you lack integrity, it's only a matter of time before you destroy your reputation and render that ability useless

Every man has a monster on the inside, you may choose to call this the flesh but if it's left unchecked it can run on a rampage. Have you not heard of stories of great men who fell because of something they did or a scandal that damaged their reputation forever? If you check closely you can trace their fall to a problem of integrity

No matter how gifted, prominent or charismatic you are, it is your integrity that will determine the longevity of your work, any work that will last must be built on the solid foundation of integrity

The truth is integrity isn't easy to build and it's not a quality you can develop all by yourself in one day. It takes a divine process to build integrity.

God may require that you submit yourself to another man of integrity that will train you to develop that quality, in many cases this can be a father figure either biological or spiritual, maybe even both! But it will be your own responsibility to take that process seriously and ensure that the lessons learned under it are retained and perpetuated

Your Integrity is also tested when nobody is watching. My spiritual father while explaining this once gave an analogy: imagine you happen to come across some lost currency that is missing its owner, it takes honesty to see 5 pesos and return it to the owner but it will take integrity to see a million pesos and return it

Now I'm not saying having integrity will mean that you must be perfect. Perfection is when you don't make mistakes but integrity means being true in spite of your mistakes and owning up to them without any reservation, it is also demonstrated when you show that you are willing to keep improving and get better

God cannot do more with you than your integrity will allow Him, it is as far as your integrity goes that He can take you. Your level of integrity will form the boundary lines of your possibilities in God because He would rather keep you at a level where your integrity is maintained than lift you to a point where it is not

I will point out seven things that striving for a life of integrity can do for you

1) It will earn you trust, from both men and God

Job 31:6 KJVS

Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know mine integrity.

People are always in search of someone who is trustworthy. When you have proven yourself to be consistent in character, you will be granted opportunities that many can only dream of because you have secured trust by your track record of integrity.

God is constantly in search of men that He can commit Kingdom mandates to, that will represent Him accurately in different spheres of life and receive all the divine backing and resources they need to do so, will you strive for the integrity necessary to become one of such men?

We need to bring back the days when being a Christian was synonymous with being trustworthy

2) You will have defense in the day of accusation

Psalm 25:21 KJVS

Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

The weapon of personal integrity is simple yet very potent, it creates a track record that answers for you in the day rumor comes. You don't need to be a bad person to have people talk against you but you must cherish your integrity so that the day accusations rise up, it will be other people who know you that can defend and stand up for you

3) It gives your message a power that nothing else can give it

1 Samuel 9:6 KJVS

*And he said unto him, Behold now, there is in this city a man of God, and **he is an honourable man; all that he saith cometh surely to pass:** now let us go thither; peradventure he can shew us our way that we should go.*

Without Integrity it doesn't matter what kind of story God wants to tell with your life, it won't matter what kind of message you have for the world or for your generation because they won't believe it

Integrity gives a potency to your words that nothing else can. People must be able to trust that when you say something, that is exactly how it is and when you give your word they can take it to the bank and it won't bounce

4) Men will esteem you more highly, and the anointing will flow to them more easily

This is especially important for someone who has been called into Ministry. You see the anointing works on estimation, the more highly esteemed you are by people the more the anointing or grace of God upon your life can flow to those people and this was evident even in the life of Jesus

Matthew 13:57-58 KJVS

*And they were offended in him. But Jesus said unto them, **A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house. [58] And he did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief.***

The moment you lack integrity people's estimation of you begins to drop and it will seriously hinder the effectiveness of your Ministry

5) You will do more with low anointing and high integrity than with high anointing and low integrity

Like we've seen before, it doesn't matter how gifted or anointed you may be, it will be meaningless if you haven't built the integrity that will sustain those gifts and keep them relevant

Integrity ensures that your gifts and anointing always remains relevant

6) Men receive you with honor when you live a life of integrity

Your charisma may be able to draw people in but it is your character that will sustain them. Never make the mistake of thinking one has to be a substitute for the other, you need both to truly be exemplary in life

People are willing to follow and honor men of integrity, even to a fault

7) Integrity is a magnet for righteous money. God will channel resources through you

We have already established the fact that it is the level of your integrity that will determine how much God can commit into your hands. A man of integrity can be used by God to be a channel of His resources to push the frontiers of Kingdom advancement

And it's impossible to be God's channel of resources without enjoying the benefits of that trust. God takes care of His own!

Brothers and sisters, the list of advantages that a life of integrity brings is inexhaustible and its application in our lives cannot be overemphasized

But I will leave you with this final note, when it's all said and done what do you want people's testimony of you to be? What do you want God's testimony of your life to be? Will He be able to say, like He said of Job, that you have been a person of integrity?

Asides the time bound benefits of integrity, let eternity be your motivation to live a life that is above reproach and let your story be one that will be able to echo the counsel of God to your generation without doubt

God bless you tremendously!

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