

The Teacher's Character/Integrity/Being an Example

Sidney Poe

In this session we will deal with Teacher Character, Integrity and Being a Proper Example. Since there is hardly any difference between the demands and need for these features in Christian leaders, clergy, ministers, and teachers, or even public officials we will treat them collectively.

A. CHARACTER

What is character? How is it obtained? Where can I buy some? Developed?
Can I do it alone or do I need help? Source of Help? Leaders Parents Pastors

Spirituality and Mature Character are associated. Paul expected character to arise from the conversion experience Timothy and Titus were instructed on what to look for in their choices of leaders.

1 Timothy
Titus

Knowing what character is and recognizing it is not enough. Character must be reproduced in the next generation natural or spiritual.

Character, particularly moral character, is virtue of personality and will. It is what you are that is manifest in what you think, say, and do or do not do. It determines your attitude toward other, toward persecution, suffering. Character determines your response when provoked, when confronted with obstacles, when rejected, when in doubt.

Most educators agree that assisting students in building moral character is a worthwhile goal. Some of the virtues stressed in ministry and schools today include:

*compassion, courtesy, cooperation, responsibility,
fairness, tolerance, self-control, courage, knowledge,
citizenship, perseverance, helpfulness, honesty,
and respectfulness toward self, others, authority, property and the environment*

Source of our Character: Ask each student to pretend to be a reporter and interview an older person. Together compose a list of questions to ask. For example:

- “What was life like when you were a child?”
- “Who was the most important person in your life?”
- “What made him/her special to you?”
- “Can you tell about a special holiday memory?”
- “What values do you live by?”
- “When you think about your life, what makes you the most proud?”
- “Is there anything you would have done differently?”

Character is manifest in personal and professional ethics, including beliefs, values, skills, and traits

Korn-Ferry International, an executive search company, performed a survey on what organizations want from their leaders. The respondents said they wanted people who were **ethical** and who convey a strong vision of the future. These can be trusted, respected, and loved in a sound personal and professional relationship.

Ethics, in any organization, define a leader's actions that set the pace. Ethical behavior wins trust, loyalty, respect, and ensures an organization's continued vitality. One of the ways to build trust is to display good character.

Character is the summative disposition of a person. It is made up of beliefs, values, skills, and traits.

- 1. Beliefs** are the deep rooted thoughts a person holds dear. They could be assumptions or convictions that you hold true regarding people, concepts, or things. They could be the beliefs about life, death, religion, what is good, what is bad, what is human nature, etc. Beliefs arise from knowledge, instruction, or observation.
- 2. Values** are attitudes about the worth of people, concepts, or things. For example, you might highly value having a reliable car, house & family, friendships, personal comfort, or near relatives. These are important because they influence your behavior in weighing the importance of alternatives. For example, you might value the presence of friends more than privacy. If so your house will be filled with friends.
- 3. Skills** include both factual knowledge and abilities you gain throughout life. The ability to learn or acquire a new skill varies with each individual. Some skills come almost naturally, while others come only by complete devotion to study and practice. Most valuable for a leader are people skills that allow him to project what is valued, what inspires, what caring gains respect from followers.
- 4. Traits.** A trait is a distinguishing quality or characteristic of a person, while character is the sum total of traits. There are hundreds of personality traits, far too many to be discussed here¹. Instead, we focus on a few below that are crucial for a teacher/leader. The more of these you display as a teacher / leader, the more your people will believe and trust in you.

1. Honesty - Display sincerity, integrity, and candor in all your decisions and actions. Deceptive behavior will not inspire, but destroy trust in your people.

2. Competent - Your actions should be based on reason and moral principles. Do not make decisions based on childlike emotional desires or feelings. Competent leaders seem to always know what to do and how to do it. It often means using capable and skilled persons around him.

¹ **U.S. Army lists 23 character traits to model.** These are Bearing, Confidence, Courage, Integrity, Decisiveness, Justice, Endurance, Tact, Initiative, Coolness, Maturity, Improvement, Will, Assertiveness, Candor, Sense of humor, Competence, Commitment, Creativity, Self-discipline, Humility, Flexibility, and Empathy/Compassion. Another list of personal character traits include Justice, Judgment, Dependability, Initiative, Decisiveness, Tact, Integrity, Enthusiasm, Bearing, Unselfishness, Courage, Knowledge, Loyalty, and Endurance

3. Forward-looking - Set goals and have a vision for the future. The vision must be known and owned by all individuals throughout the organization. Effective leaders envision what they want and set about how to get it. They habitually pick priorities stemming from their basic values.

4. Inspiring - Display confidence in all that you do. By showing endurance in mental, physical, and spiritual stamina, you will inspire your people to reach for new heights. Take charge when necessary.

5. Intelligent - Read, study, and seek challenging assignments.

6. Fair-minded - Show fair treatment to all people. Prejudice is the enemy of justice. Display empathy by being sensitive to the feelings, values, interests, and well-being of others.

7. Broad-minded - Seek out diversity, accept and welcome differences, but weigh carefully all options being careful to avoid partiality and prejudice.

8. Courageous - Have the perseverance to accomplish a goal, regardless of the seemingly insurmountable obstacles. Display confident & calmness when under stress.

9. Straightforward - Use sound judgment to make a good decision at the right time. Let your decisions be for what is best for your people and the cause they represent.

10. Imaginative - Make timely and appropriate changes in thinking, plans, and methods. Show creativity by thinking of new and better goals, ideas, and solutions to problems.

U.S. Army 23 Traits of Character

- Bearing
- Confidence
- Courage
- Integrity
- Decisiveness
- Justice
- Endurance
- Tact
- Initiative
- Coolness
- Maturity
- Empathy/Compassion
- Improvement
- Will
- Assertiveness
- Candor
- Sense of humor
- Competence
- Commitment
- Creativity
- Self-discipline
- Humility
- Flexibility

Perspectives of Personal Character Traits

Traits (acronym - JJ did tie buckle)

- Justice
- Judgment
- Dependability
- Initiative
- Decisiveness
- Tact
- Integrity
- Enthusiasm
- Bearing
- Unselfishness
- Courage
- Knowledge

- Loyalty
- Endurance

11 Leadership Principles Practiced in the U.S. Army

- Be tactically and technically proficient
- Know yourself and seek self-improvement
- Know your soldiers and look out for their welfare
- Keep your soldiers informed
- Set the example
- Ensure the task is understood, supervised and accomplished
- Train your soldiers as a team
- Make sound and timely decisions
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates
- Employ your unit in accordance with its capabilities
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions

"RetreatNever! We've just got here!" - Attributed to several World War I Marine Corps officers, Belleau Wood, June 1918. (key ideal - "take a stand") "..... you'll never get the Purple Heart hiding in a foxhole! Follow me!" - Captain Henry P. "Jim" Crowe, USMC, Guadalcanal, 13 January 1943. (key words - "follow me" NOT "go")

Are managers leaders? Are leaders managers?

Managers need to be leaders...their workers need vision and guidance! On the other hand, leaders need to be good managers of the resources entrusted to them.

Attributes

Attributes establish and characterize what leaders are, and every leader needs at least three:

Standard Bearers

establish the ethical framework within an organization. This demands a commitment to live and defend the climate and culture that you want to permeate your organization. What you set as an example will soon become the rule. Unlike skills or knowledge, ethical behavior is learned more by observing than by listening. And in fast moving situations, examples become certainty. Being a standard bearer generates trust and openness in your employees, who in turn, fulfill the vision.

Developers

help others learn through teaching, training, and mentoring or coaching. This creates an exciting place for them to progress, work, and learn. Never miss an opportunity to teach or learn something new yourself. Mentoring is coaching that suggests someone who cares enough to get involved encouraging and developing others who are less experienced. Individuals who

work for developers know that they can take risks, learn by making mistakes, and win in the end.

Integrators

orchestrate the many activities that take place throughout an organization by providing a view of the future and the ability to obtain it. Success can only be achieved when there is unity of effort to obtain it. Integrators have a sixth sense about where problems are likely to occur and make their presence felt during critical times. They know how to inspire their employees do their best when they work within a vision based framework.

The Image of Leadership - John Schoolland

A leader's a man who commands much respect,
But due to the natures of all,
He's only as good as the image he casts
In the mirror that hangs on the wall.

He usually sees what he wants, and no more,
He's afraid to look deep in his soul.
He doesn't consider himself as at fault,
But wants others to help reach his goal.

When failures arise he blames it on all
Who failed to help or take part,
"They never did what they were told, " he would say,
"they haven't the skill or the art."

What kind of a leader are you going to be –
the kind who thinks he is the best?
Or will you be one of the very few greats
Who attributes success to the rest.

Don't fail to look at the help you received
From parents and friends all your life.
They comforted you, praised you, and gave you the push
To help you through trouble and strife.

Another whose help you should never forget,
Who gave you your life and His love,
The One to whom all of our assets are known
Is the One whom we pray to above.

Be humble in all of your leadership traits.
Thank those who have made you so tall.
Be human to others, consider them too,
Then smile through the glass on the wall.

11 Leadership Principles Practiced in the U.S. Army

- Be tactically and technically proficient
- Know yourself and seek self-improvement
- Know your soldiers and look out for their welfare
- Keep your soldiers informed
- Set the example
- Ensure the task is understood, supervised and accomplished
- Train your soldiers as a team
- Make sound and timely decisions
- Develop a sense of responsibility in your subordinates
- Employ your unit in accordance with its capabilities
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions

How to build Character in People

How can Pastor build develop or instill character traits in people in the church and Sunday school?

1. Know what shaped you. In your role as an educator, think about individuals who have influenced your life. Make a list of the values they possessed that inspired you. Write down any additional beliefs. Decide which core virtues guide your actions.
2. Meet with church staff and as a group, develop a list of virtues that everyone can support. Ask for their commitment to model these character traits in order to reinforce them in others. Golden Rule. Post the list and/or accentuate one trait or value each week or month of the year.
3. Create an impartial, accepting church or school community that cares for everyone regardless of differences.
4. Model the ethical beliefs you want to cultivate in your students and identify your commendable actions. For example,
“When I do what I say I will do, I am being dependable.”
“I am being fair when I treat each of you the same.”
“When the principal asked me why I was late yesterday, I told the truth even though it was hard to admit that I had overslept.”
5. Read, discuss and act out stories that teach good character traits. [Good Samaritan] Draw pictures, make up games, songs or stories about characters who made right choices. As a class project, design and produce a mural which depicts character-building virtues.
6. Challenge followers to demonstrate noteworthy character traits and reinforce the positive actions by noticing and commenting. For example, “John, when you welcomed the visitor and offered to show him around, you were being friendly and helpful.” Encourage students to notice virtuous behavior in each other. Have them give verbal feedback or write down what happened and place it in a “Good Character Box” to be read later. Have a bulletin board celebrating character traits displayed by class students.

7. Dramatize situations that help students understand the perspectives of others and develop empathy. Putting a students in the situation, can help them identify what a person feels and guide them toward responding with kindness.

8. Study autobiographies of outstanding Bible characters such as Abraham, Joseph, Moses, David, Daniel, Jesus, Examine the lives of world greats such as Mother Teresa, Winston Churchill, the Wright brothers, or others the people know from their own communities. Have them define the character traits each exhibited and which ones they had in common. Have them list their own strengths, or the virtues they have observed in other students.

9. Ask each student to pretend to be a reporter and interview an older person. Together compose a list of questions to ask. For example:

“What was life like when you were a child?”

“Who was the most important person in your life?”

“What made him/her special to you?”

“Can you tell about a special holiday memory?”

“Where were you during the war?”

“What values do you live by?”

“When you think about your life, what makes you the most proud?”

“Is there anything you would have done differently?”

Have each student draw a picture and/or write a report about the person interviewed. Compile the papers in a book.

10. Provide opportunities to develop decision making skills regarding moral judgments. For example:

“You promised to help your grandma clean her apartment, but at the last minute you are invited to go to the movies with a friend.”

What would you do? (*Dependable*)

“You broke your aunt's favorite vase. But since it was on a high shelf maybe she won't notice that it is gone.”

What would you do? (*Truthfulness*)

“You have an important part in a group project with three other students. You told them it would be done on time, but the night before it was due, your dad wanted you to go to a baseball game.”

What would you do? (*Trustworthy*)

12. Provide a means for conflict resolution when disputes arise. Follow these steps:

- Stop, cool down
- Ask, “What is the problem?”
- Each one answers and listens

- Brainstorm possible solutions
- Agree on a plan
- Try it
- If it does not work, agree to try something else

13. Communicate be consistent and send clear messages. Listen respectfully to others ideas and answer their questions.

14. Set high but reasonable academic standards for yourself and your students. Be respectful and honest in your relationships and academic work. Be prepared to inspire learning through your knowledge and enthusiasm.

15. Teach tenacity by requiring the completion of work and honesty by holding the students accountable for doing their own lessons.

16. Show your humility by acknowledging your mistakes. Yet demonstrate perseverance.

17. Remember what Mother Teresa said, “We can do no great things, only small things with great love.” Share your time, talents and belongings.

18. Recruit and involve parent and community leaders as supporters in the character-building efforts through programs, newsletters, or other methods.

19. Partner with parents to monitor children's exposure to media and materials that can undermine virtuous behavior and promote early sexual involvement, violence, drug use, and other detrimental behaviors.

20. Remind parents that they are their children's role models. If children are to develop positive character traits, the adults in their lives must live the values they hold dear, as well as emphasize the importance of building caring relationships rather than accumulating things.

B. Integrity

Integrity and the Bible

Integrity --a character quality that we often talk about but don't see quite as regularly in the lives of public officials or even in the lives of the people we live and work with.

STOP

First, determine what integrity means.

Second, list important elements of Integrity.

The ten words below can be used to define **integrity**. These words describe in part the character of someone who acts with integrity in a given situation.

Select the **three words** you find most helpful to define integrity.

PRINCIPLED	HONEST	SCRUPULOUS
TRUTHFUL	FAIR	
FAITHFUL	CONSISTENT	OPEN
WHOLE	TRUSTWORTHY	

The Latin root of the word integrity is similar to that for integer, meaning whole number. The concept of wholeness, or consistency is clearly relevant. For now, we shall take "behaviour and decisions which are consistently in line with our principles" as our working definition of acting with integrity. The dictionary would also suggest that these principles should generally be accepted as ethical and honest. For Christian leaders, that integrity would require consistency with biblical principles.

The word *integrity* comes from the same Latin root as *integer* and implies a wholeness of person. Just as we would talk about a whole number, so also we can talk about a whole person who is undivided. A person of integrity is living rightly, not divided, nor being a different person in different circumstances. A person of integrity is the same person in private that he or she is in public.

Integrity - Kerby Anderson

- Integrity not only implies an undividedness, but moral purity as well. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus talked about those who were "pure in heart" (Matt. 5:8), implying an undividedness in following God's commands.

The Bible is full of references to integrity, character, and moral purity. Consider just a few Old Testament references to integrity.

- In 1 Kings 9:4, God instructs Solomon to walk with "integrity of heart and uprightness" as his father did. David says in 1 Chronicles 29:17, "I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity." And in Psalm 78:70-72 we read that "David shepherded them with integrity of heart, with skillful hands."

The book of Proverbs provides an abundance of verses on integrity.

- Proverbs 10:9 says that, "He who walks in integrity walks securely, But he who perverts his ways will be found out." A person of integrity will have a good reputation and not have to fear that he or she will be exposed or found out. Integrity provides a safe path through life.
- Proverbs 11:3 says, "The integrity of the upright will guide them, But the falseness of the treacherous will destroy them." Proverbs is a book of wisdom. The wise man or woman will

live a life of integrity, which is a part of wisdom. Those who follow corruption or falsehood will be destroyed by the decisions and actions of their lives.

- Proverbs 20:7 says, "A righteous man who walks in his integrity; How blessed are his sons after him." Integrity leaves a legacy. A righteous man or woman walks in integrity and provides a path for his or her children to follow.

All of these verses imply a sense of duty and a recognition that we must have a level of discernment of God's will in our lives. That would certainly require that people of integrity be students of the Word, and then diligently seek to apply God's Word to their lives. The book of James admonishes us to be "doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves" (James 1:22). That is my goal in this article as we talk about integrity.

Corruption

As we examine integrity, I would like to talk about its opposite: **corruption**. We claim to be a nation that demands integrity, but do we really? We say we want politicians to be honest, but really don't expect them to be; perhaps because often we aren't as honest as we should be. We say that we are a nation of laws, but often we break some of those same laws--like speed limits and jaywalking-- and try to justify our actions.

A powerful illustration can be found in the book, *The Day America Told the Truth*, by James Patterson and Peter Kim.^{1} Using a survey technique that guaranteed the privacy and anonymity of the respondents, they were able to document what Americans really believe and do. The results were startling.

First, they found there was no moral authority in America. "Americans are making up their own moral codes.

- Only 13 percent of us believe in all the Ten Commandments.
- Forty percent of us believe in five of the Ten Commandments.
- We choose which laws of God we believe in.

There is absolutely no moral consensus in this country as there was in the 1950s, when all our institutions commanded more respect."

Second, they found Americans are not honest. "Lying has become an integral part of American culture, a trait of the American character. We lie and don't even think about it. We lie for no reason."

- The authors estimate that 91 percent of us lie regularly.

Third, marriage and family are no longer sacred institutions. "While we still marry, we have lost faith in the institution of marriage.

- A third of married men and women confessed to us that they've had at least one affair.
- Thirty percent aren't really sure that they still love their spouse."

Fourth, they found that the "Protestant [work] ethic is long gone from today's American workplace. Workers around America frankly admit that they spend more than 20 percent (7 hours a week) of their time at work totally goofing off. That amounts to a four-day work week across the nation."

The authors conclude by suggesting that we have a new set of commandments for America:

- I don't see the point in observing the Sabbath (77 percent).
- I will steal from those who won't really miss it (74 percent).
- I will lie when it suits me, so long as it doesn't cause any real damage (64 percent).
- I will cheat on my spouse; after all, given the chance, he or she will do the same (53 percent).
- I will procrastinate at work and do absolutely nothing about one full day in every five (50 percent).

We may say that we are a nation that wants integrity, but apparently a majority of us lack it in our own personal lives.

The Traits of Integrity

Honesty

I would now like to turn our focus toward **four key traits found in a person of integrity**. One of those traits is honesty.

We talked about some of the findings from the book *The Day America Told the Truth*. The authors found that nearly everyone in America lies and does so on a fairly regular basis. Truth telling apparently is no longer a virtue people try to adopt for their lives. We may say we want people to tell the truth, but we don't do it ourselves.

That is the problem with corruption; it is corrosive. We believe we can be dishonest just a little bit. We say we want people to be honest, but then we cheat on our taxes. We say we want people to obey the laws, but then we go "just a little" over the speed limit. We want to be honest just enough to ease our conscience.

It's a little like the story of the man who sent a letter to the Internal Revenue Service. He said, "I cheated on my income taxes, and felt so bad that I couldn't sleep. Enclosed find a check for \$150. And if I still can't sleep I'll send the rest of what I owe."

Many of us can relate to that man. We want to be honest, but sometimes we find it easier to be dishonest. So we try to find a way to compromise our values so that a little bit of lying doesn't bother our conscience.

Trustworthiness

Another characteristic of a person of integrity is trustworthiness. A person of integrity is unimpeachable. He or she stands by principles no matter what the consequences. A person of integrity realizes there are moral absolutes even in a world of relative values.

In Tom Clancy's novel, *Clear and Present Danger*, Jack Ryan is about the only noble character in the book. As he begins to uncover this clandestine government plot, he is confronted by the antagonist who makes fun of Jack Ryan's principles. He says, "You're a boy scout, Jack. Don't you get it? It's all grey. It's all grey."

I wonder how often people of integrity hear a similar statement in corporate board rooms or the halls of government. It's all grey. There are no absolute right and wrong values. It's all relative.

A person of integrity knows that it isn't all grey. There are principles worth standing by and promoting. There are values that should govern our lives. We have a responsibility to follow God's law rather than the crowd.

When the book of Proverbs talks of the "integrity of the upright" it implies that we adhere to God's will and God's laws. We have a duty to obey God's absolute commands in our lives and become men and women of integrity.

"Private" Life

There is a popular book on the market entitled, *Who You Are When Nobody's Looking*. Who are you when nobody's looking? Will I see the same person that I see when you are in a group of people? Do you do the right thing no matter what the circumstances?

There was a newspaper story years ago about a man in Long Beach who went into a KFC to get some chicken for himself and the young lady with him. She waited in the car while he went in to pick up the chicken. Inadvertently the manager of the store handed the guy the box in which he had placed the financial proceeds of the day instead of the box of chicken. You see, he was going to make a deposit and had camouflaged it by putting the money in a fried chicken box.

The fellow took his box, went back to the car, and the two of them drove away. When they got to the park and opened the box, they discovered they had a box full of money. Now that was a very vulnerable moment for the average individual. However, realizing the mistake, he got back into the car and returned to the place and gave the money back to the manager. Well, the manager was elated! He was so pleased that he told the young man, "Stick around, I want to call the newspaper and have them take your picture. You're the most honest guy in town.

"Oh, no, don't do that!" said the fellow.

"Why not?" asked the manager.

"Well," he said, "you see, I'm married, and the woman I'm with is not my wife." [\[2\]](#)

Apparently he had not considered the consequences of his actions. Even when he was doing something right, it turned out he was also doing something wrong. A person of integrity is integrated and authentic. There is no duplicity of attitudes and actions.

When the apostle Paul lists the qualifications for an elder in the church, he says "he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he may not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil" (1 Tim. 3:7). This is not only a desirable quality for church elders, it is a quality we should all aspire to. Christians should be "above reproach" in their public testimony before the watching world.

In the next section we will talk more about the importance of a public testimony of integrity and conclude our study.

Public Testimony

I would like to conclude our discussion by addressing the importance of integrity in our daily lives.

It's been said that *we* may be the only Bible some people ever read. In other words, people around us often judge the truthfulness of Christianity by its affect in our lives. If they see us as hypocrites, they may not go any further in their investigation of the gospel.

Every day we rub shoulders with people who are watching us. Your life will demonstrate to them whether Christianity is true or false. They make value judgments about you by your attitudes and actions. Have we made the right choice?

After his Sunday messages, the pastor of a church in London got on the trolley Monday morning to return to his study downtown. He paid his fare, and the trolley driver gave him too much change. The pastor sat down and fumbled the change and looked it over, counted it eight or ten times. And, you know the rationalization, "It's wonderful how God provides." He realized he was tight that week and this was just about what he would need to break even, at least enough for his lunch. He wrestled with himself all the way down that old trolley trail that led to his office. Finally, he came to the stop and got up, and he couldn't live with himself. He walked up to the trolley driver, and said, "Here. You gave me too much change. You made a mistake." The driver said, "No, it was no mistake. You see, I was in your church last night when you spoke on honesty, and I thought I would put you to the test." [\[3\]](#)

Fortunately the pastor passed the test. Do you pass the test when unbelievers look at you and your life and wonder if the gospel is true? It's a convicting question. When we live lives of integrity, opportunities for evangelism and ministry surface. When we don't, those opportunities dry up.

I have been encouraging you to develop a life of integrity. In some respects, it's a life-long process. But we have to begin somewhere. Our lives are the collection of choices we have made in the past—both good choices and bad choices. Perhaps you have seen the poem:

Sow a thought, reap an act.
Sow an act, reap a habit.
Sow a habit, reap a character.
Sow a character, reap a destiny.

I would encourage you to begin to focus on the verses and biblical principles delineated here. If you want to be a person of integrity, it won't happen overnight. But if you don't make a deliberate plan to be a person of integrity, it will never happen at all.

Notes

1. James Patterson and Peter Kim, *The Day America Told the Truth* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1991).
2. *Dallas Times Herald*, 23 Sept. 1966.
3. Paul Lee Tan, *Encyclopedia of 7,700 Illustrations* (Assurance Publishers, 1990).

This remainder of this module offers a chance to help you work through how you can maintain integrity when confronted with a difficult decision. You should allow at least an hour to work through this - although it could take much longer - it's up to you!!

Leading with Integrity calls for Biblical Principles

To lead with integrity we need to establish answers to five questions:

1. Do we know to always do what is right? Some people do not know to.
2. Do we know how to do the right and avoid doing the wrong?
3. Do we want to do the right thing – invariably and always?
4. Do we will to do so under all conditions? Make a covenant.
5. Do we follow through to do as we have established?

How you can maintain integrity when confronted with a difficult decision.

One of the important elements of integrity is consistency - if we are unpredictable, if our decisions are dependent upon the day of the week, and the way we are feeling, others are unlikely to see us as maintaining integrity.

Men of Integrity : Daniel

Read through Daniel Chap 1 to Chap 3. We see Daniel and his friends staying with their principles, despite pressure to the contrary - a theme which occurs throughout the book of Daniel. How can young men hundreds of miles from home alone and captive maintain integrity?

Phase One - Set Down Principles. Decide before the crisis or challenge comes.

When confronted with a challenging situation, the first step is to determine what our principles are. *Did they know to do right? Did they want to? Kow how to?*

Setting down principles is to will to! This may not be as easy as it sounds, particularly when faced with a difficult decision!! To work through this study, you will need to use as an example which you are either faced with currently (preferably) or have experienced recently.

What are your principles that apply to this situation?? Write them down. This is very important - whilst we may think that we know what our principles are - setting it down on paper is a real test of whether that clarity is genuine!! Don't be surprised if you find it difficult - most people need some quality thinking time to get really clear on their principles. Christian leaders also may expect that it is easy to write down Christian principles, but too often we can fall into a combination of Christian or management jargon!

The chances are you may need to expand on what you have written. For example, you may have written "love", or even "love for every individual concerned". But perhaps it needs to go deeper to clarify what maintaining love for each individual means. These principles must include all the relevant principles you are applying, not just those that you think are "Christian". For example, in a work situation, you may well have "building long term shareholder value" as a principle. If key ones are missing from your list, you may not feel comfortable with a decision.

Men of Integrity : Peter & John

Acts 3 and 4 tell of Peter and John acting in accordance with their principles by healing the crippled beggar. They needed to justify their actions to the Sanhedrin, and needed to be fully aware of what their principles were.

Phase Two - Developing Solutions

Now list your possible alternative solutions. There may be a solution which meets all of the principles. It may even be a good one!! However, the chances are that there is no easy solution that comfortably fits all the principles. Otherwise you would probably not have selected it as an example of a difficult decision. More often we are faced with four or five possibilities, each with their advantages and drawbacks.

Phase Three - Exploration of Alternatives.

The next phase is to work through each principle in turn, understanding it in depth. For Christian Leaders, this is where the Bible Study comes in. Take some time to think of the biblical examples, models and passages that have led you to adopt this principle. List them, and explore how they may be relevant to your situation. The first time you do this will take time, but as you become used to the approach it will speed up!

You may struggle to think of relevant biblical models or passages for some of your principles. This does not mean that your principle is wrong. What it does suggest, however, is being clear why you hold it as a principle!! There is an example below of a principle and it's biblical foundation. Although this is an illustration, it may give you some thoughts on how to approach this.

Example of Phase Three - Biblical Exploration.

This seeks to illustrate the process of exploring the biblical basis for a principle. This example does not provide an exhaustive biblical exposition of delegation - and it is unlikely that you will have time to fully explore all of your principles. Rather, it takes the 80/20 approach, noting the first four examples that come to mind, along with some key points.

PRINCIPLE : "Invest time to share responsibility with others so that they can grow."

BIBLICAL MODELS :

~ Moses : Jethro gives Moses some advice on his role, and on appointing others to share the work and responsibility. (Ex 18:17-23) Moses needed telling!!

~ Nehemiah shares out the work involved with rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem - but is prepared to be honest and open with the people when they have sinned. Demonstrates trust in others, but is prepared to speak the truth in love so that they can grow in faith. Maintained contact - going round the walls.

~ Jesus sends out the twelve disciples, and later the seventy two in order that they may gain experience of witnessing and working on their own. (Luke 9,10) Jesus rejoices when they return seeing the spreading of ministry (Luke 10:21) Time after time teaches the disciples so that they are equipped.

~ Paul is delighted when the young churches are growing in faith (2 Thessalonians 1:3,4)
Alternative attitude could have been to become threatened by the growth in others.

IMPLICATIONS OF PRINCIPLE

I will accept the risk that tasks may not get done as well as I would have done them in order to allow colleagues the room to grow. This is likely to have longer term benefits, and risks a short term opportunity cost. However, staying close to them in a coaching role should increase their growth, and minimise the risk.

Phase Four - Praying into Action.

As you work through each principle, you may become aware of indicated action that the principle points towards. For instance, the principle of "love for each individual" may point you towards explaining your decision one on one with each person affected by it.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Finally, having worked through all your principles, then spend some time in prayer. This is a major help for Christian leaders to maintain integrity. God is interested in all of our problems - He's told us so!! This does not guarantee that the decision we take will be the right one! But, finally, we need to take the decision, and act accordingly. Explaining the principles behind our decision can sometimes help others accept the solution we have come to, and can support their view of our integrity - they may not agree with the decision, but can appreciate why you have made it.

Men of Integrity : Job

Job is not an easy book to read. It is not one to make the reader cheerful! However, it does clearly illustrate the need to focus on God, and on His character rather than our own experience.

Consistency in the face of difficult circumstances can only come with God's help. The book of Job also teaches us patience!

Pause for Thought : Consider your leadership : would you consider yourself to be exercising situation based leadership or principle based leadership? (Are your decisions based on what is expedient for the current situation, or to what degree are they based on principles.) Spend some time in prayer asking God to show you where your integrity may risk being compromised.

C. Being an Example for Others to Imitate

A. Introduction

A mature Christian is a model who influences others in positive ways according to biblical standards! Modeling Christian virtues of true spirituality, is crucial to effective ministry in the world. (Isa. 57:20). "We—all of us, but especially the young—need around us individuals who possess a certain nobility, a largeness of soul, and qualities of human experience worth imitating and striving for."²

-----William J. Bennett

Called. People come to realize that God has called them to be examples to others.

"A disciple is not greater than his teacher, but everyone when fully trained will be like his teacher"

1 William Bennett. *Kindred Spirit*, Vol. 23, No. 1, p. 10. Dr. Bennett served as editor of *The Book of Virtues*.

(Luke 6:40).

True spirituality is revealed by actions that will influence others either for good or for evil.

Students, sons, daughters, and the flock, tend to emulate their leaders, parents, guardians, teachers, or heroes.

Why should leaders shy away from this responsibility and reality? To be mature and lead, one must accept our role as a positive reality of leadership.

In this study we give some principles, list problems we face, and examine six Bible passages that show us how to be good examples.

B. Principles Related to Being Examples

1. Being a godly example is not an option, it is commanded in Scripture.

2. We have no choice in being an example of impact on those around us, but we do have a choice in the *kind* of witness and impact we provide.

3. Christian maturity provides people with real honest-to-God examples of *authentic Christ-like living*.

Dynamic personality, talent, giftedness, training, enthusiasm, and with charisma, alone are inadequate. Bible qualities that lead to effective ministry are found in the elements of spiritual character reproduced in us by the ministry of the Spirit (Eph. 4:12f.; Gal. 5:22ff).

4. Mature Christians and leaders have a responsibility to maintain a *consistent example*. 1

Thessalonians 2:1ff

C. Problems We Face in Being Examples

1. The problem of distinctiveness or manifesting biblical character.

Live in a way that shows character, the result of knowing and walking with Christ.

2. The problem of direction or the wrong example.

People follow us in what we say, in the way we live, in our priorities, values, and attitudes as well as our actions.

3 The problem of definition-providing a clear reason for our life style.

Ready to show the distinctives of the Christian life. When our lives are different from the world and we let others know why we are different, we perfect our example.

“But set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts and always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks about the hope you possess” (1 Peter 3:15).

D. How to be a good Example: Bible Passages on Being Examples

Leaders and Christians as a whole are to be models for others to imitate.

We are to be a picture of reality, a proof that Jesus Christ saves and changes lives so we can become a powerful magnet that draws others to Christ.

1. 1 Corinthians 11:1 and 1 Thessalonians 1:6

“Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (1 Cor. 11:1)

“And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, when you received the message with joy that comes from the Holy Spirit, despite great affliction” (1 Thess. 1:6),

“Imitate” refers to one who mimics another.

Christian imitation has nothing to do with mere outward conformity where someone merely copies the actions, mannerisms, or speech of another. The Greek word is “to imitate, emulate, use as a model.”

This is change from the inside out by means of the Spirit and the application of biblical truth as seen in the life of the mature Christian model.

2. Hebrews 13:7

“Remember your leaders, who spoke God’s message to you; reflect on the outcome of their lives and imitate their faith.”

Others recognize the rightness of the life of the leader. the proof of godliness.

3. Philippians 3:17-18

3:17 Be imitators of me, brothers and sisters, and watch carefully those who are living this way, just as you have us as an example. **3:18** For many live (about whom I often told you, and now say even with tears) as enemies of the cross of Christ.

A clear sign of maturity is the pursuit of holiness, a heart set on heavenly treasures and divine objectives (Phil 3:8-14, 19-20).

(a) The mature man will let go of the past and his previous pursuits and treasures, to set his sight on reaching forth to the goal of growth in Christ-likeness.

(b) The mature man relies on God to expose this errors, false standards, sense of pride in his life, knowing that anything else is contrary to the purpose of God.

(c) The mature man knows the crucial test for being a biblical example for others to follow is in a biblical view and understanding of the finished work of Jesus at Calvary. We are ‘in Christ’ and the union with Christ does three things:

1. It provides a proper foundation and motivation for godly living and service

It provides protection against legalism and works done either to gain salvation or to keep it or to gain merit with God (Phil. 3:4-8).

2. It promotes a commitment to God’s standards of behavior (Phil. 3:9).

It recognizes that freedom does not mean license, but provides the power to serve God according to His standards through faith in a living Savior who has made us acceptable to God and provides us with the motivation and means for change (1 John 3:1f).

3. It gives an eternal perspective.

Understanding the work of Jesus at Calvary and our union with Him provides assurance of eternal life that leads to new values, controls, and pursuits (cf. 3:20-21 with 1 Pet.1:17f; 2 Cor. 4:15-18; 1 John 2:28-3:3).

A proper grasp of the person and work of Christ leads to putting off our old attitudes, values, and priorities (see Phil. 3:3ff), and demonstrating this as examples to families and others.

4.1 Timothy 4:11-16

Command and teach these things...because by doing so you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.

The charge is to “command and teach these things” (4:1-5). Timothy’s ability depends on two things

(a) nourishing his own soul on the words of the faith, i.e., godly discipline in his own life (vss. 6-10), and

(b) being an example for other believers (vs. 12).

1 Timothy 4:13-16 gives six commands that are needed to be effective models of the Savior.

- Obedience to vv 13-14, dealing with public ministry and stewardship of his spiritual gifts, will allow Timothy to become an example to follow in public ministry when the church is assembled.
- Dedication, diligence, endurance, and discipline in private life issues a challenge to laziness and inertia in vv. 15-16.

5. Titus 2:6-8

2:6 Encourage younger men likewise to be self-controlled, **2:7** showing yourself to be an example of good works in every way. In your teaching show integrity, dignity, **2:8** and a sound message that cannot be criticized, so that any opponent will be at a loss, because he has nothing evil to say about us.

6.1 Peter 5:3

“And do not lord it over those entrusted to you but be examples to the flock.”

Avoid being a “controller,” a person that seeks to dominate or lord it over others which ruins their capacity to be an example of Christ-like leadership.

To lead by domination characterizes world leaders (Matt 20:25-26) but that should not exist in the body of Christ. A Christ-like example is one who *leads as a servant* (Mark 10:45).

E. Summary and Conclusions

The biblical plan and order of modeling and following includes the following:

1. With Jesus as a personal model (John 15:13; 1 Pet. 2:21; Eph. 5:1), mature Christian leaders must recognize

their responsibility to model the reality and character of Jesus to those they teach and influence by ministry (1Tim. 4:12; Tit. 2:7; 1 Pet. 5:3).

2. Leaders encourage, even challenge others to imitate or follow their example as they take heed to their own walk (1 Tim. 4:12-16) in following the example of the Lord (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17; 2 Thess 3:9).

3. The ultimate goal of minister is to help others become imitators of Christ. Teacher and student alike recognize the goal of becoming like Jesus, our perfect model (1 Pet. 2:21).

4. The basic order or process is:

- (a) Leaders imitate Christ (1 Cor. 11:1) that they might be models for others (1 Pet. 5:3);
- (b) New converts and the flock as a whole imitate their leaders, (Heb. 13:7);
- (c) Churches recognize their responsibility to model godliness as the Thessalonians did to the believers in Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thess. 1:7);
- (d) All believers become imitators of the Jesus revealed in the word and by His life (Eph. 5:1).