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Leading With Integrity

INTEGRITY IS
choosing
COURAGE OVER COMFORT;
CHOOSING WHAT IS RIGHT
over what is
FUN, FAST, OR EASY;
AND CHOOSING TO
PRACTICE OUR VALUES
rather than simply
PROFESSING THEM.

There is a cynicism in the land today over leadership both in the political arena as well as the church. With new waves of sexual abuse scandals the media tends to relish reporting about politicians, media personalities, and church leaders whose lives that are not congruent with the messages they stand for. This cynicism can be an easy defense mechanism for the underlying desire for authentic leaders who have integrity.

What is integrity in leadership? It is the consistency between what a leader says and what they do. It is the congruency between their values, beliefs, words, and actions as well as the extent in which they keep their word. It involves such things as honesty and trustworthiness. People want to be led by leaders who practice what they preach. Jesus walked on this earth with integrity as John reported about Him being, "generous inside and out, true from start to finish."

John 1:14 MSG *The Word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighborhood. We saw the glory with our own eyes, the one-of-a-kind glory, like Father, like Son, generous inside and out, true from start to finish.*

Integrity in leadership engenders trust and confidence based on reliability. Trust in a marriage is the belief about the faithfulness of your spouse even when you are apart. Integrity in leadership helps engender trust that their private life is the same as their public life. You know who they are and what they stand for. They have core values and ethics they stand for even in the face of challenges. They live the values they profess to

believe and that gives them credibility with those they lead. They don't just say "do as I say" they live and say "do as I do." They lead by example.

Image is what people think we are: integrity is what we really are.
John Maxwell

Good leaders have a high value on integrity because God has a high value of it. David valued integrity. This was what caused messed up broken people to be drawn to him. They became mighty men due to the integrity and anointing David led them with (1 Sam 22:1-2, 2 Sam 23).

- ***Psalms 25:21*** *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me.*
- ***Psalms 78:70-72*** *He also chose David His servant...He brought him To shepherd Jacob His people, And Israel His inheritance. (72) So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart.*

When it comes to integrity it isn't always the serious faltering that cause the problems. It is often the "little foxes that spoil the vine" (Song of Solomon 2:15). Sometimes leaders can live on the edge of things regarding integrity. This can put them in the dangerous position that only takes a short step to cross a line of losing integrity.

Things that help keep a leader away from the edge of losing integrity.

- **Leaders with integrity run towards messes and challenges, not away from them.** David did this with Goliath. ***1 Samuel 17:22-48*** *Then David left his baggage in the care of the baggage keeper, and ran to the battle line and entered in order to greet his brothers...(48) Then it happened when the Philistine rose and came and drew near to meet David, that David ran quickly toward the battle line to meet the Philistine.* Leaders with integrity do not avoid problems or problem people. Usually everyone else sees the problems and are affected by them. If they see leaders avoid them in order to keep peace or avoid trouble that leader's integrity will be questioned.
- **Be a continual learner.** People who don't think they need to learn anything are know-it-alls. Leaders with integrity exhibit a desire to learn and make progress especially in the area of their own integrity. They are honest with themselves and others. They seek guidance and input and do not see themselves as being above blind spots in their life.
- **Keep your promises.** The Bible says "a righteous man swears to their own hurt" (Ps 15:4).

- **Be reliable.** Stick with problems or issues until they are resolved. Don't run away from challenges or issues but face them head on.
- **Walk in real accountability.** Leader's with integrity rarely blame others and don't project victimization. They quickly take responsibility for their failures and are open and honest with others.
- **Don't hide things but walk in the light (1 Jn 1:9-10).** Hiding things is the quickest way to bring darkness into your life.
- **Be respectful of others which will engender their respect.** Leader's with integrity exhibit the "wisdom from above" that is "willing to be entreated with gentleness." (Jas 3:13-18). Because they show respect to others they tend to be respected themselves.
- **Be honest before God and with yourself.** Allow God to ask you the question "Why?" Do not be afraid to question your motives before God.
- **Do not be a people pleaser but live to please the audience of One.** Honor God and do the right thing even though it isn't always the easiest.
- **Seek wise counsel and live transparently.** This is part of "walking in the light (1 Jn 1:5-9). Be real with people. Admit your shortcomings. Transparency doesn't cause people to think less of you it usually causes them to think more of you.
- **Pray, Pray, and Pray.** Our daily communication with God is the seedbed for integrity. We have to walk in His light before Him (Biblically the idea of "God's presence" means in front of Him or His face) if we are going to walk in the light with others.

Leaders need to have a core conviction about integrity that they refuse compromise even in the midst of difficulty and personal loss. Some call it God's inner compass.

Check it out and sign up



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