

# Integrity

*by Bryan Gibson*

Various passages in the Bible admonish us to walk with integrity (Proverbs 28:6; 19:1; 11:3). What is integrity? A dictionary definition reads something like this: “Integrity is moral soundness, especially as it is revealed in dealings that test steadfastness of purpose, responsibility, or trust.” In other words, integrity is sticking to principles of right even when it might be easier to do otherwise; maintaining character, even under severe tests. The root meaning of this word suggests the idea of being whole, undivided, or complete. When under pressure we begin to compromise principles of right, our integrity is no longer intact—no longer whole. Let’s think through a few situations where our integrity might be tested.

Suppose your boss asks you to lie, a lie he believes will benefit the company for which you work. You realize your job may be on the line. What are you going to do? Will you maintain your integrity?

Suppose you’re in charge of the money for some organization, and no careful accounting of the funds is required. In other words, it would be real easy for you to take some money without anyone finding out. Will you maintain your integrity?

Suppose you’re planning to sell a car and this car has some “hidden” defects—some which might not be noticed by the average buyer. When he asks you if anything is wrong with it, what are you going to say? If you tell the truth, you may not make as much on the sale. Will you maintain your integrity?

Suppose you’re asked by the girl you’re dating to go the dance with her. You really like her a lot, and you don’t want to risk losing her; but you know what the Bible says about lasciviousness, about lusting and causing others to lust. What are you going to do? Will you maintain your integrity?

Suppose you’re asked to quit teaching on a particular Bible subject, because some people are offended. You know your responsibility to God, but you’re scared to make enemies. If you’re supported by this church to preach the gospel, you may even lose your job. Will you maintain your integrity?

Maintaining our integrity may not be easy, but the rewards are great. Here are a few:

**We can walk securely, confidently.** “He who walks with integrity walks securely...” (Proverbs 10:9). When we consistently do the right thing, we don’t have to worry about our conscience “nagging” at us.

**We can keep our good name** (Proverbs 22:1; 3:3-4). When we lose our integrity, we lose the respect of others, and consequently our influence for good.

**We set a great example for our children.** “The righteous man walks in his integrity; his children are blessed after him” (Proverbs 20:7).

**We please God** (2 Corinthians 5:9), and shouldn’t that mean more than anything else?