

Sexual Integrity

Integrity.

What comes to your mind when you hear the word integrity?

Integrity means wholeness. An integer is a number that cannot be divided. A person of integrity is one who is single-minded, undivided, without internal and external conflict between what he believes and values. A person of integrity behaves according to their belief.

Bottom line: Integrity is being who we say we are and doing what we say we do.

There is no greater area of life for people to walk in integrity than their sexuality. In our flesh-focused, sense oriented, pleasure seeking society, sex sells....and sex kills. Lack of integrity sexually can destroy a person's life and the lives of people they say they love. Because sexual sin destroys the purity, joy, satisfaction and blessing of sexual boundaries lined out in the Bible, God is looking for moral men and women who will conduct their lives with integrity.

The lust of the flesh is every man and woman's battle. (I John 2:15-17). Surrounded by a sea of sexual license and sexual misconduct, the pressure to walk through life with sexual integrity is tested daily. Opportunities to sin sexually abound. If we drop our guard and sin sexually, we will find ourselves in a place we do not want to be.

Sexual integrity really does matter.

Triumphing Over Temptation

Everyone is tempted to sin sexually. I Corinthians 10:13 reminds us about temptation and how to overcome it when it comes knocking on our minds door.

"No temptation (sexual temptation included) has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it."

This verse is good news in the battle for maintaining sexual integrity. *First of all, temptation comes to everyone.* No one is exempt. That means we are not weird, strange or

perverted. It means we are human. Every person in the flesh, with blood and hormones flowing through their veins, will be tempted sexually.

Secondly, in our fight to overcome the flesh, God fights with and for us. Note: He is faithful to not allow the temptation to be so strong that it wipes us out. Though the battle rages and pressure to succumb increases, temptation can be managed. You and I either manage temptation, or it will manage us. Managing temptation is possible when we recognize God provides a way to escape. An exit. A fire escape. A way out from the pressure to sin. Why? Because His will is that we endure temptation.....and overcome what has overtaken us.

So why do some people endure and triumph over temptation's test, and others cave in and fail? The answer is pretty simple. To succumb to sexual temptation is a decision. To resist sexual temptation is a decision. Both are choices you and I make in the heat of the battle of the lust of the flesh. Our faith in the faithfulness of our Father in heaven to not lead us into temptation and to deliver us from evil (see Matthew 6:13) is the key to victory over sexual temptation and sin.

To sin or not to sin sexually is up to you and me.

A Tale of Two Men's Sexual Integrity

Two prominent Bible characters took very different paths regarding sexual purity. Joseph was a man of outstanding spiritual and moral integrity. When tempted sexually, he overcame temptation by refusing to cave in to the flesh. When put to the test, he passed the test. David, on the other hand, didn't resist inappropriate sexual desire and was overcome by temptation. David strayed from his moral moorings and failed the test of sexual integrity.

Take your Bible and follow along as we take a look at Joseph and David.

Joseph: A Man Of Sterling Sexual Integrity

Genesis 39

Joseph, youngest, favorite son of Jacob, had been sold into slavery by his jealous brothers. He ended up serving as a slave in Potiphar's house, an Egyptian officer who was in charge of the Pharaoh's body guards.

God was with Joseph. He served Potiphar faithfully, rising up to head servant. Potiphar trusted Joseph with everything he had. Joseph had proven himself to be a man of integrity in his service to Potiphar.

But Potiphar had a problem in his house: his wife. Mrs. Potiphar had a lust problem. While husband Potiphar was away, his wife wanted to play... with handsome Joseph.

The Word says in verse 7 *“And it came about after that after these events, his master’s wife looked with desire at Joseph, and she said, “Lie with me.”* Verse 10 reveals that she kept after Joseph *“day after day.”* Hot to trot, Mrs. Potiphar put the heat on Joseph every day.

So how did Joseph respond to Potiphar’s seductive wife?

Before we go there, Joseph was tempted like any man would be. No doubt Mrs. Potiphar was beautiful and her feminine charm made her desirable to a virile, single, young man. She did her best everyday to stir up Joseph’s fleshly desire...every man’s battle. Potiphar was gone on business often. Mrs. Potiphar sexually stalked Joseph at every opportunity. If Joseph succumbed to Mrs. Potiphar’s relentless seductive advances, certainly they would keep it secret. They valued their heads, so neither would tell.

Joseph responded to Mrs. Potiphars *“Lie with me”* with a refusal based on his moral/sexual integrity.

“But he refused and said to his master’s wife, “Behold with me here, my master does not concern himself with anything in the house, and he has put all that he owns in my charge. There is no one greater in this house than I, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. HOW THEN COULD I DO THIS GREAT EVIL AND SIN AGAINST GOD?”

“And it came about as she spoke to Joseph day after day, that he did not listen to her to be beside her, or be with her. “ Verses 8-10

Joseph’s Response To Sexual Temptation

- 1. You are another man’s wife.** I cannot lie with you and commit adultery.
- 2. I will not sin against my God.** To sleep with you is a great evil that is wrong in the sight of the God I serve. I choose to honor my holy God by keeping myself sexually pure.
- 3. I refuse to sin against God, Potiphar, you and myself.**

Mrs. Potiphar responded, “I get it Joseph. It would be sinful for us to sleep together. I am so sorry I put pressure on you. Will you please forgive me?” Not on your

life. In verses 11-23, Mrs. Potiphar turned up the heat. In desperation, she pressed him to lay with her.

Joseph FLED. He refused again to sleep in her bed.

She grabbed his clothes, tearing them off as he ran away as fast as his feet could carry him. Mrs. Potiphar lied to her husband, falsely accusing Joseph of sexual misconduct. Joseph got an all expenses paid trip to jail!

Integrity intact, prisoner Joseph found favor in jail.

“But the Lord was with Joseph and extended kindness to him, and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. The chief jailer did not supervise anything under Joseph’s charge because the Lord was with him, and whatever he did, the Lord made to prosper.”

Verses 21, 23

For the rest of the story, study Genesis 40-50 and see how God vindicated Joseph’s sexual integrity with favor, promotion and a dream come true!

Personal Reflection

1. How would you have handled a Mrs. Potiphar’s pressure?
2. What impressed you about Joseph’s response?
3. What did Joseph gain by being a man of sexual integrity?
4. What does it take to be like Joseph?
5. Write out your response statement to sexual temptation.

David: A Man of Shameful Sexual Integrity

II Samuel 11-12

David was King of Israel. He served in a position of influence over his nation. King David was characterized as a man after God’s own heart. But there was a time

when David's heart went wrong. He committed sexual sin with a woman named Bathsheba.

David got involved with Bathsheba because he didn't look after his spiritual, moral, emotional and sexual life. Committing adultery, he lost sight of the sacred promises and holy marriage covenant he made to his wife, before God, family and friends. Instead of staying home and loving his betrothed, his eyes, heart, (and other parts of his anatomy) strayed to another man's wife.

David's sexual sin tarnished his moral integrity. His sexual misconduct brought shame to his name and the name of the God he served. The King's sin separated him from the Lord and brought serious consequences to David and his family, Bathsheba's family, and the nation of Israel.

There were four things that David did that contributed to his fall from being a man of sexual integrity,.

First of all, David was not where he should have been.

“Then it happened in the spring, at the time when kings go out to battle, that David sent Joab and his servants with him and all Israel, and they destroyed the sons of Ammon and besieged Rabbah. But David stayed in Jerusalem.” II Samuel 11:1

King David was first and foremost a warrior. His claim to fame was slaying giant Goliath (I Samuel 17). As Commander in Chief of the Israeli army, David should have been on the battlefield with his troops.

Instead David stayed in Jerusalem. The battlefield he should have been at was far away in a distant land. Another battle was brewing in Jerusalem, a battle of his mind and will.

The king was camping in the wrong place. The King should have been leading the army against their enemies, not lounging on the palace roof. Instead of making war, he would make love. Staying led to straying. King David ended up playing, laying with a woman who wasn't his wife.

Secondly, David looked at someone he should have not been looking at.

“Now while evening came David arose from his bed and walked around on the roof the kings' house, and from the roof he saw a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful in appearance.” II Samuel 11:2

The sleepless-in-Jerusalem monarch took an excursion to the palace rooftop. From his lofty perch on top of the palace, he looked and saw something. Something was someone. Someone was Bathsheba, a very beautiful woman taking a bubble bath at her house.

Bathsheba was minding her own business. But David made her his business. David looked and lusted after Bathsheba.

King David's undisciplined sight would turn into a night he would one day regret.

Third, David touched someone he should have not touched.

“And David sent messengers and took her; and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.”

II Samuel 11:4

King David, looking, lusting and longing, took the next step to fulfill his sexual fantasy. David summoned his servants, instructing them to go and fetch Bathsheba. Obeying his orders, under the cover of darkness, the messengers delivered Bathsheba to David.

Bathsheba submitted to David. The king touched a woman who was not his woman to touch. When the midnight fling was finished, Bathsheba purified herself and returned home. I wonder if either David or Bathsheba thought What just happened? What was that all about? We slept together. What next?

What next was a curve ball...a baby was conceived (II Samuel 11:5). Party time turned into panic. Facing the fact that he fathered a child with another man's wife, desperation descended over the king.

Fourth, David had someone killed who should not have been killed.

“And the men of the city went out and fought against Joab, and some of the people among David's servants fell; and Uriah, the Hittite also died.” II Samuel 11:17

In verses 7-17, David conceived a plan to cover up the conception that had his royal DNA imprinted on it. Uriah, Bathsheba soldier husband, was called back from battle. David tried him to sleep with his wife while on leave. But loyal Uriah wouldn't because of his love and faithfulness to his comrades on the battlefield. So, David had Joab put Uriah on the front line, where he was killed.

Oh King, what in the world were you thinking. Adultery. Now murder. You killed a good, loyal, integrity-minded man to cover up your lack of sexual integrity.

A lustful look. Sexual infidelity. An illicit pregnancy. Pre-meditated murder. Not very kingly or godly King David.

David's Response To Sexual Temptation

- 1. You are another man's wife.** I will take you and have sex with you.
- 2. I will sin against God.** I have forgotten He is holy and I am accountable to Him for my sexual conduct.
- 3. I choose to sin against God, my wife and family, Uriah and Bathsheba, myself, and the people I serve.**

The King tried to cover up his sin for nearly two years. David was busted when Nathan the prophet confronted David concerning his moral failure (see II Samuel 12:7-9). David's cover was blown. Nothing can be hidden from the eyes of the Lord. Cover-up will always be uncovered. Our sin will find us out. We do reap what we sow.

The consequences for David's sins were horrific. Bathsheba lost her husband. Her baby died. David disgraced himself and his family. His wife suffered the scars of an adulterous husband. One of his daughters would be sexually assaulted. David's son Absalom would try to kill him and usurp the throne.

The King of Israel was finally broken over his sexual failure. Psalm 51 records his restoration to the Lord. I encourage you to do an in-depth study of this Psalm which lays out eight pivotal steps we must take on the road to restoration.

Personal Reflection

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1. What happens in you when you look and lust?
 2. What would you have done differently than David did?
 3. What stands out to you concerning David's failure?
 4. What lessons can you learn from David's sin?

5. Write out how you will put boundaries around you life so you will not fall to sexual sin like David.

Why Joseph Stood Tall And David Took A Fall

- Joseph was where he was supposed to be, doing what he was supposed to be doing
- David wasn't where he was supposed to be, doing what he was supposed to be going.
- Joseph looked and fled.... David looked and jumped in bed.
- Joseph responded positively to temptation...David reacted negatively to temptation.
- Joseph focused on his faith.... David focused on his flesh.
- Joseph respected moral boundaries....David rejected moral boundaries.
- Joseph stood tall for God....David took a fall before God.
- Joseph's character was vindicated...David's character was vilified.
- Joseph's dream was fulfilled...David lived a nightmare.

Joseph or David...who are you going to be?

Sexual Integrity Is Important

The Apostle Paul mentored Timothy in the Christian faith and trained him for pastoral ministry. He shared some powerful words about sexual integrity with his young son in the faith.

“Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of the Lord abstain from wickedness.

Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor.

Therefore, if a man cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.

Now flee youthful lusts, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call upon God with a pure heart.” *II Timothy 2:19-22*

Paul's exhortation to young Timothy: **FLEE YOUTHFUL LUST**. Get out of town when under sexual pressure. Put distance between you and lustful desire. Don't

look back. Look ahead. With a pure heart, pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace. Then you will be a sanctified, holy, honorable, useful vessel that God can use for His glory.

Men and women of sexual integrity are honorable, trustworthy, and can be used by God to reach people for Christ.

You can choose to be someone God can use.

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