



INTEGRITY LEADS TO *Good Character*



MAY 2022

People sometimes throw around the words “integrity” and “character” without differentiating between them. They may get the two confused; and sometimes when they refer to character, they really mean integrity. Both of these are very important to God, but we must correctly divide them to get their proper context. Making a distinction between the two helps us understand how they fit together.

Integrity refers to a code of conduct. As Christians, we’ve decided to live by the code of conduct that the Word of God and its principles of grace teach us. God referred to David as someone who’d walked “in the integrity of his heart” because he was determined to adhere to God’s code of conduct. *“And if thou wilt walk before me, as David thy father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded thee, and wilt keep my statutes and my judgments”* (1 Kings 9:4). David had made up his mind to live God’s way; this demonstrated what kind of person he was.

By comparison, character is doing what’s right *because* it’s right. David showed his character by walking in integrity and doing the right thing. This is an extremely important concept for us; the habits we develop control our character, and our character determines our destiny. We’ll never rise higher in life than our character will allow.

A person’s character is the sum total of their disposition, thoughts, intentions, desires, and actions. Our character is something we hold fast to on the inside and that people see on the outside. Integrity and character fit together like a hand in a glove. *Integrity* is recognizing a behavior that’s wrong and

refusing to join it; *character* is taking it a step further and doing something about it.

For example, character is knowing that people are hungry and doing something about it; it’s knowing that others are hurting and doing something about it. It’s even knowing that a friend is doing something wrong or being dishonest, and confronting them with love and kindness. Integrity is associated with traits like honesty, respect, responsibility, and keeping promises. The difference between integrity and character is action.

Integrity positions us to be open to God’s prompting and to yield to Him so that He can lead us in the right direction. *“The integrity of the upright shall guide them...”* (Proverbs 11:3). It’s our guide and compass that leads us into the good character that determines our actions. It also keeps us safe from blundering headlong into something dangerous that has disastrous consequences.

When Abraham was traveling and King Abimelech took his wife, Sarah, God warned the king that he was a dead man if he touched her; however, he hadn’t laid a hand on her. Although Abimelech had believed Abraham’s lie that he and Sarah were brother and sister, God spared the king’s life because he was operating in the integrity of his heart (Genesis 20:1-6). God can see the integrity of *our* hearts and rescue us from a bad situation even before it happens.

In the kind of world we’re living in now, this applies more than ever. We absolutely know that we’ll encounter adversity at some point in time; how we

BELIEVERS RESPOND DIFFERENTLY

respond to it depends on the quality of our character. Most people respond negatively when a tough situation shows up. Because they don't know God's Word, they lose hope, get discouraged, and quit; however, the believer responds differently. *"...Even in times of trouble we have a joyful confidence, knowing that our pressures will develop in us patient endurance. And patient endurance will refine our character, and proven character leads us back to hope"* (Romans 5:3, 4, TPT).

God will allow certain trials to help refine and strengthen our character for the rest of our lives. Once we go through tough times, we come out stronger and better able to do the right thing. Basing our integrity on God's Word develops the sterling character we need to be the light of the world. Once we master this concept, we'll be able to withstand anything life throws at us.

Taffi and I love you and pray for you every day. May the blessing of God be on you and your family. Remember, Jesus is Lord, and *"...in all of your getting, get understanding."*

In Expectation,



Creflo Dollar

P.S Don't forget to visit the link below to download this month's free message.

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"THE INTEGRITY OF THE UPRIGHT SHALL GUIDE THEM..." (PROVERBS 11:3).

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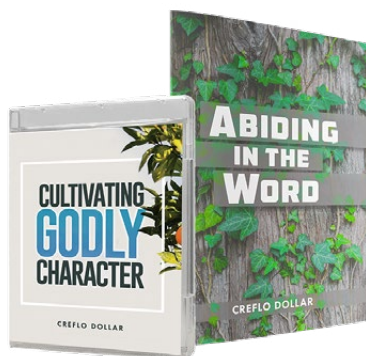
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DEUTERONOMY 5:32



MAY CONFESSIONS

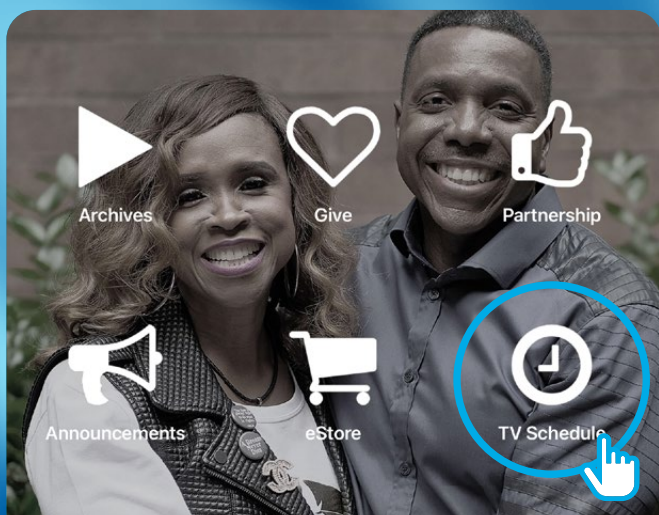
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