

# ***INTEGRITY***

**Definition:** Doing what is right without compromise.

**Synonyms:** Honesty, Decency, Ethical, Sincere

This week we will look at what integrity means by examining Psalm 15.

## ***DAY 1***

*Who may worship in your sanctuary LORD? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts” (Psalm 15: 1—2 NLT).*

How do we walk blameless? Well starting with the golden rule is a good beginning. Psalm 24: 3—6, declares that only those who don't tell lies and don't worship idols can stand in His holy place.

Idol worship was a problem for the Israelites. Other nations worshipped multiple gods. God's people were tempted to include other gods with the God of Abraham. We tend to worship money, power, celebrity, entertainment, sports, work, drugs, and alcohol. Pray that God will enlighten you to your idols and ask for forgiveness



Ephesians 4:25 tells us to stop telling lies, especially to other believers, because it causes disunity in our ranks. Lying causes numerous problems in our lives and in the lives of others. In the church it causes division and loss of trust in one another.

“All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it” (1 Corinthians 12:27).

**Thought or Action Step for the Day:** A person with **integrity** rids their life of idols and lies.

## **DAY 2**

*“Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends”  
(Psalm 15:3).*

In Exodus we witness how seriously God takes those who unfairly speak evil of others. Miriam was honorable in many of her actions. She saved Moses’ life when he was an infant and led the people in praise of God when they exited Egypt. She was called a prophet. (Exodus 15:20)

However, she also had a critical spirit and spoke ill of her brother, Moses. She was motivated by jealousy due to Moses power, influence, and close relationship with God. She criticized his wife and indirectly God too. She commented that God doesn’t only speak through Moses but through her and her brother Aaron.

God’s anger was immediate and forceful. He struck Miriam with leprosy. Moses cried out to God for healing and God relented for Moses’ sake. She was not allowed to return to camp for seven days. The people were unable to move on for the week of Miriam’s exile. It was a humbling and terrifying experience for Miriam. I am sure she learned to keep her tongue in check.

**Thought or Action Step for the Day:** A person with **integrity** identifies the motivation for their criticism before speaking.



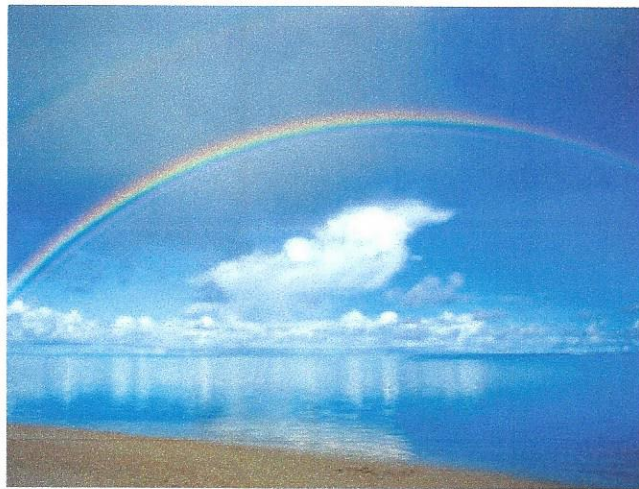
### **DAY 3**

*“Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the LORD, and keep their promises even when it hurts” (Psalm 15:4).*

When I think about keeping a promise that hurts, Hannah immediately comes to mind. She was desperate for a child. She promised God to give the child back to the Lord if he gave her a son.

God blessed her with a son. When Samuel was weaned, she kept her promise to God and took him to the tabernacle at Shiloh. There he grew up under the tutelage of Eli. (1 Samuel 1 and 2: 11, 18—21, and 26)

Keeping your word is important. It builds a good reputation; people trust and respect what you say. “Choose a good reputation over great riches; being held in high esteem is better than silver or gold” (Proverbs 22:1).



An example of a promise not kept is found in Joshua 24:16: Joshua asked the Israelites who they wanted to serve: “Then the people replied, ‘We would never abandon the LORD and serve other gods.’” Joshua warned them that God would punish them if they didn’t keep their word.

The people were unfaithful and eventually Israel was conquered and the Israelites were dispersed throughout other lands.

**Thought or Action Step for the Day:** “But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes’ and your ‘No’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one” (Matthew 5: 37 NKJV).

## **DAY 4**

*“Those who lend money without charging interest, and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent. Such people will stand firm forever” (Psalm 15:5 NLT).*

God did not want the Israelites to charge each other interest on loans. They were to be generous to each other and help those in need. Charging interest to foreigners was permitted, but God wanted greed controlled.

Being obsessed with money is sin and causes many problems in your own life and in society. God is displeased when we are greedy or hoard our money. It should be used to glorify God. After all the money is not ours to begin with – it is God’s.

Remember the story of Zacchaeus (Luke 19: 1—10) During NT Biblical times, bribery and stealing was a major problem. Tax collectors were notorious thieves. Their corruption was widespread and resented by the Jews.

However, Zacchaeus was redeemed. He received Jesus as Lord and Savior, and his repentance was the real deal. He gave half of his wealth to the poor and returned four times the amount to those he cheated on their taxes.



**Thought or Action Step for the Day:** “The LORD detests the use of dishonest scales, but he delights in accurate weights” (Proverbs 11:1).

## **WEEKEND REFLECTIONS**

What does it mean to dwell in God's sanctuary? It means to walk with God. You will sense God's presence, draw closer to him, and stand firm forever when you follow the precepts described in Psalm 15.



This weekend:

Make a list of things that might be an idol in your life. Ask God for forgiveness and rid yourself of these idols that pull you away from God.

During the next week be aware of a critical spirit. Each time you are tempted to be critical examine your reasons. Make sure your criticism isn't originating from envy or being used as a way to increase your own importance.

When people ask you for a favor or for information don't elaborate more than necessary. Fewer words are best. Answer Yes and No when possible – then keep your word.

Be aware of your speech. If you are tempted to lie to avoid trouble or to make yourself look better, immediately ask God for grace. Keep tabs on all those "white" lies. You might be surprised how often you are not completely honest.