

Branches Part 4: Integrity

- I. Tonight, we're continuing our series on leadership.
 - a. So far we've learned that...
 - i. Leadership is influence
 1. A good leader is a thermostat, not a thermometer.
 2. We set the temperature with our example
 - ii. The foundation for good leadership is Christ-likeness
 - iii. The first pillar of leadership is meekness.
 1. Meekness has nothing to prove.
 2. Meekness lets God govern our lives.
 - b. Tonight we're going to talk about the second pillar of leadership: integrity.
- II. What is integrity?
 - a. Webster's calls it "The quality or state of being _____."
 - i. In other words, you're the same person when you're at church as you are at work, at home, and even by yourself.
 - b. In engineering terms, a building's integrity is its strength and intactness.
 - i. You can't necessarily see the things that make a building strong. They're on the inside beneath the plaster and paint.
 - c. It's your _____ that makes you strong and dependable.
 - d. It's the virtue that gives people confidence to follow you.
- III. Psalm 51 gives us a picture of integrity, "Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just. For I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there. Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you. Then I will teach your ways to rebels, and they will return to you. Forgive me for shedding blood, O God who saves; then I will joyfully sing of your forgiveness. Unseal my lips, O

Lord, that my mouth may praise you. You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God. Look with favor on Zion and help her; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. Then you will be pleased with sacrifices offered in the right spirit—with burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings. Then bulls will again be sacrificed on your altar.”

- a. David didn't try to sugar coat his sins.
 - i. He was honest and didn't try to make them out to be less than they were.
- b. He realized that integrity starts with _____.
 - i. Many of us put a lot of effort into what's on the outside, but neglect to build integrity and character on the inside.
 - 1. We're like a rusty piece of metal that's been painted over several times.
- c. We regularly need our spirits renewed inside of us.
 - i. Time in God's word and presence.
- d. Integrity desires to be _____.
- e. Our example will convict others.
- f. Integrity is humble.

IV. Integrity _____.

- a. Way too many people seem to be lacking integrity somewhere.
 - i. From copying CDs and software to cheating on taxes to just not telling the truth 100%
- b. G.K. Chesterton once said, “If you want to fall, there are a thousand different ways, but if you want to stand, there is only one.”

V. Start now

- a. Begin by practicing integrity with God.
 - i. Be real with Him about how you feel, about your sins, and about what you'd like His help with.
- b. Always _____.
 - i. It's not always easy.
 - 1. I was forced out of a job when my new senior pastor asked if I voted for him or not.
 - ii. Being honest sets you apart as one who can be trusted and worthy of following.
- c. Receive _____.
 - i. It makes you a better person if you let it.
- d. Lead by principle rather than by what would make you popular or liked.
- e. Lack of integrity can have far-reaching consequences.
 - i. The satellite dish