

Integrity: 1 Samuel 24

Job's Integrity: Job 1:8, 2:3 - And the LORD said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil? He still holds on to his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason."

Job 2:9: Then his wife said to him, "Do you still hold fast your integrity? Curse God and die."

Job's integrity was not a claim to be sinless, but a claim he did not commit some terrible 'secret' sin that caused his suffering. Job knew he was a righteous man who feared God. (Righteous meaning as righteous as an OT person could be before the righteousness of Christ was available.)

In 2015 my daughter had a car accident in Colorado. The Nissan Versa was totaled. We used the insurance money to buy a 1998 Toyota Tacoma. I went to Boulder DMV to get a new title for the Tacoma. The seller didn't put anything on the sale price line. The DMV agent asked me the sale price and I said \$7000. So I paid \$700 sales tax to Boulder. I gave the agent a Truelife card. When I left the DMV I realized I could have said any sale price and saved several hundred in tax. I could have said the sales price was \$4000 (close to Kelley BB value) and only paid \$400. But that would be lying and I gave the female agent a *Truelife* card. How could I lie and be a witness for Christ at the same time? She wouldn't know, but I would know. That would make me a hypocrite. That would be an integrity deficit. One factor that enables us to maintain integrity is fear of God.

Later in the afternoon I went to Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. In the visitor's center there is a display that says the most important quality for an AF cadet is integrity! God was making his point to me. It is in the AF motto memorized by every cadet. "We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate anyone among us who does." Character development is the number one priority for an AF cadet. If it is right for a cadet then it is right for a Christian.

Air Force: “Doing the right thing at all times, supervised or not, in spite of pressures to compromise, defines a person’s integrity. Cadets (Christians) have the opportunity to display the highest standards of integrity each day in the tests they take, the words they speak, in respecting others and their property, and in upholding the honor of the cadet wing (Christ).”

Integrity is doing the right action for the right reasons. The right action for the right reason at the right time.

Right action: David did not kill Saul in the cave.

David almost followed the wrong advice of his men to kill Saul. David was tempted to take the wrong action, but stopped himself and only “cut off” a corner of Saul’s robe. The thought behind this action was probably to reveal himself to Saul. (It also had a symbolic meaning.) After David did it he felt the conviction of the Holy Spirit. He realized the right action was not to kill or “cut off” Saul and he also persuaded his men not to kill Saul. The right action: “Do not kill the LORD’s anointed. Let the LORD do it.”

[The Hebrew words of the writer of 1 Samuel imply a secondary meaning. David’s gesture, cutting off a corner of Saul’s robe, is “richly nuanced” with secondary meaning. It is a “playful euphemism” for cutting off the male organ which would render Saul helpless, void of manhood, and with no future generations or heirs. The same word “cut off” is used in the promise between Jonathan and David. I will explain later under “Right Reason.”]

After Saul finished his business and exited the cave David revealed himself. David humbled himself: “David bowed with his face to the earth and paid homage.” David said, “The LORD gave you today into my hand in the cave.” The LORD arranged the meeting but it was a TEST/temptation for David, not an opportunity to kill Saul. David said, “I have not sinned against you... May the LORD judge between me and you, may the LORD avenge me against you, but my hand shall not be against you.” Romans 12:18-21: *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you*

will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The LORD blessed David’s right action and it “heaped burning coals” on Saul’s head. Saul felt shame and left David alone. Right actions can be blessed by the LORD, wrong actions cannot (unless the wrong actions are done to you and God means it for a greater good - Genesis 50:20. This is the “greater-good theodicy” I preached about before with Job.)

Right reason: David said to his men, “The LORD forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the LORD’s anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the LORD’s anointed.”

Right action: don’t kill Saul.

Right reason #1: he is the LORD’s anointed and **it would be a sin against the LORD.** This is the right reason with the right action. God cares about motive or reason for an action. Saul was “the LORD’s anointed.” God chose Saul and made him Israel’s first king. David had no right to kill the king chosen by God. God made Saul king, so let God remove him.

David’s right reason was not to sin against the LORD. The LORD’s anointed is what belongs to God. When Peter has something that belongs to me, I sternly tell him, “Don’t touch my things unless you ask.” God feels the same way about his anointed things and people. “Don’t touch my anointed things unless I give you permission.”

David’s right reason #2 was keeping a promise. He probably remembered it when he “cut off” Saul’s robe and then felt regret. David made a promise to Saul’s son Jonathan: **1 Samuel 20:12-17.** Jonathan asked David not to “cut off” his steadfast love (*hesed*) from his house/family after the LORD “cut off” all of David’s enemies. Keeping a promise is a right reason. Keeping a promise is integrity!

It may be difficult to understand a right action motivated by a wrong reason. What would be the right action for the wrong reason in David’s situation? Wrong reason would be a selfish reason. David could reason, “I cannot kill Saul. If I kill Saul then I will never be king. The soldiers loyal to Saul will never follow me and I could never trust them. If I kill Saul now then Saul’s men may kill me now. There are 3000 men and they’re special forces. We’re outnumbered! It would also cause disunity in Israel.” These are true facts and legitimate reasons but also selfish and shouldn’t

be the primary reason for not killing Saul. If David killed Saul then David would make himself unfit to be king and would also create the opportunity for himself to be killed by the next person who wanted to be king. One evil action or murder begets another.

The right action is to worship God. The wrong reason would be to get something from God. The right reason is to worship God for who He is - holy and merciful; as the LORD named Himself "I AM WHO I AM."

Don't destroy anything anointed by God! Anything anointed by God is sacred and holy and any sinful person arrogant enough to defile something anointed by God will receive God's vengeance. For a cultural example: Marriage, one man and one woman, is the LORD's anointed! Legalizing SSM is raising a hand against the Lord's anointed and He is the greater judge to whom all SCOTUS judges will give an account. (*SCOTUS = Supreme Court Of The United States*)

Right time: David's men said to him, "Here is the day of which the LORD said to you, 'Behold, I will give your enemy into your hand, and you shall do to him as it shall seem good to you.'"

(When did God say this to David? No record of God saying this.)

This happened a second time when David snuck into Saul's camp: 1 Samuel 26: ⁸ *Then Abishai said to David, "God has given your enemy into your hand this day. Now please let me pin him to the earth with one stroke of the spear, and I will not strike him twice."* ⁹ *But David said to Abishai, "Do not destroy him, for who can put out his hand against the LORD's anointed and be guiltless?"* ¹⁰ *And David said, "As the LORD lives, the LORD will strike him, or his day will come to die, or he will go down into battle and perish."* ¹¹ *The LORD forbid that I should put out my hand against the LORD's anointed."*

It is doing the right thing even when friends are telling you to do the opposite because the opposite looks like an opportunity from God. But you know it goes against God's will, so it can't be from God. It can't be the right time.

David's friends said it was an opportunity from God to kill Saul, but David knew it couldn't be from God because he would kill "the LORD's anointed" and that would be sin (David's right reason). David demonstrated real integrity. Saul even acknowledged David's integrity when he said "You are more righteous than me."

This was the right time for David's public acquittal and for Saul to accept that David would be the next king (not his son Jonathan). David proved he was not guilty of treason when he spared Saul's life. David used this opportunity to refute the charge of treason against him. 24:11: *"See, my father, see the corner of your robe in my hand. For by the fact that I cut off the corner of your robe and did not kill you, you may know and see that there is no wrong or treason in my hands. I have not sinned against you, though you hunt my life to take it."* It was the right time for Saul to accept David as the LORD's anointed to be king: 24:20-21: *"And now, behold, I know that you shall surely be king, and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in your hand. Swear to me therefore by the Lord that you will not cut off my offspring after me, and that you will not destroy my name out of my father's house."* If you are ever falsely accused then wait for the right time to be vindicated. God makes a right time. Continue doing the right actions for the right reasons.

The 3 Rights work together to produce integrity. Wait until you have all three lined up. If you do the right action for the right reason at the right time then you will be a person of integrity.

3 Integrity Points from David's and Saul's responses: 24:17-21.

Integrity can be a hard choice. It's a hard choice when you don't know the outcome; especially when you know it will be your death. (Show $2 + 2 = 5$ agree or die picture.) Fear of unpleasant consequences will steal your integrity. It's safer to lie. Consider Dr. Li Wen Liang of Wuhan Hospital. The CCP intimidated and silenced "whistleblower" doctors like Dr. Li Wen Liang. (I imagine CCP agents visiting his hospital room and removing his breathing tube until he died.)

David decided on integrity and when he revealed himself to Saul it could have been his death, but he trusted in the LORD (24:8-15). V.12: "May the LORD judge between me and you..." David didn't need to reveal himself. He could've stayed hidden in the cave until Saul was out of sight. But he recognized the encounter as a divine appointment in order to reveal his integrity and expose Saul's sinfulness.

Integrity exposes unrighteousness (and gets censored). Contrasted with David's integrity, Saul realized his sinful insecurity and jealousy. It moved him to repay evil for good. People may not realize their sinfulness until it is contrasted with integrity.

The CCP and the WHO have a serious integrity deficit. CCP arrested citizen journalists who tried to report on the Coronavirus in Wuhan. They have disappeared. They are probably in a labor camp or their bodies will be found floating in a river. CCP pressured the WHO to rename the virus COVID-19 and to delay declaring it a pandemic.

Mainstream American media, Democrat party, Facebook, and YouTube all have a serious integrity deficit. Their deceit is exposed by integrity.

YouTube demonitizes programs critical of the CCP. I watch "China Uncensored" with Chris Chapel and "China in Focus-NTD" (New Tang Dynasty-Falun Gong) with Tiffany Mier and The Epoch Times "Crossroads" with senior investigative editor Joshua Philips. They all report some interference from YOUTUBE and FACEBOOK censors. They say "Make sure you click the subscribe button after every report because you may be unsubscribed by YT."

Integrity exposes unrighteousness and when it does it gets censored and silenced. Right after John 3:16 comes 18-21: ¹⁸ *"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. ²⁰ **For everyone practicing evil (lying) hates the light (integrity) and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. ²¹ But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."***

God rewards integrity.

How does a detective know if a suspect is telling the truth or not - without using a lie detector test? If you have integrity then your story will not change. Detectives cross-examine a suspect about a crime by asking a lot of questions and the same questions over and over again at different times and in different ways. Why? Because if the suspect is lying then the story will change. The suspect will forget what he said a few days ago. If the suspect is telling the truth the story will stay the same; his integrity will be rewarded with acquittal as a suspect.

Integrity is generally recognized and rewarded in this world, but sometimes integrity will be punished by unjust governments. I'm reminded of the doctors in

Wuhan who tried to warn about a new virus transferred person-to-person but were silenced (Dr. Li Wen Liang).

Saul didn't kill David while he had him trapped in a cave! That's David's reward for his integrity. Saul recognized that the LORD would reward David for his integrity. Saul even told David, "Now I'm certain that you will indeed become king, and that the kingship of Israel will be established in your hands." The LORD kept his promise to David because he held fast to his integrity through very difficult circumstances and persecution. David did the right action for the right reason at the right time - most of the time. (He failed. He had 2 big sins, adultery and murder, but he sincerely repented and accepted God's punishment. It took the word of God from Nathan the prophet to restore David's integrity.)

God referred to David's integrity when he promised Solomon to establish his throne: **1 Kings 9:4-5** - And as for you (Solomon), if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that I have commanded you, and keeping my statutes and my rules, then I will establish your royal throne over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, "You shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel."

Psalm 41:11-13 - By this I know that you delight in me: my enemy will not shout in triumph over me. But you have upheld me because of my integrity, and set me in your presence forever. Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting! Amen and Amen.

Read PSALM 101.

Psalm 57: When David fled from Saul in a cave.