

What is integrity?

Written by Bill Perkins

A biblical author once wrote, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever" (Hebrews 13:8). Jesus is both eternal and unchanging. If the author of Hebrews had wanted to use one word to describe Jesus as unchanging he could have said, "Jesus possesses integrity."

Whole and Complete

The word integrity speaks of someone who is "whole or complete" and has the same root word as does the word integrated. A man or woman of integrity has taken the principals that govern their life (like the Ten Commandments), internalized them and integrated them into every area of life.

A Magnetized Compass

They aren't a weathervane that changes direction with every shift of the social winds. They are like an internally magnetized compass that always points north, regardless of what's happening around it. He is honest at work and at home. She keeps promises even if it means a financial loss. He speaks well of his clients in their presence and behind their back. He doesn't treat his wife with respect in public and belittle her at home. A woman of integrity doesn't switch masks to win the favor of the audience she's playing for.

Because men and women of integrity don't pretend to be something they're not, with them, what you see is what you get, literally. And it's not that they're perfect--they aren't. But they're aware of their weaknesses and don't lead others to believe they have no flaws.

Not Perfect Parents — Real Ones

Sometimes parents think their children need a "perfect" mom or dad. They don't. What they need are parents of integrity. They need someone in the process of growing that talks honestly about that process.

Ultimately, our children embrace what we do, not what we say. Our friends respect our truthfulness and consistency. Like Jesus, let's pray God makes us the same on the inside as we appear on the outside.