

GenZ - INTEGRITY

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Sermon Synopsis

In this timely episode of *World Impact*, Dr. Billy Wilson of Oral Roberts University delivers a passionate and thought-provoking message on integrity, addressing Generation Z as a rising force in a world marked by fractured values and uncertain foundations. With heartfelt contributions from ORU students who candidly share what integrity means in their daily lives, the episode paints a picture of a generation striving for authenticity amid cultural pressures to appear flawless. These testimonies highlight integrity as consistency—living by the same moral standards in private and in public, demonstrating accountability, and standing for what is right regardless of the cost. Dr. Wilson affirms that, though the external world is plagued by duplicity, God is raising up a new generation fully committed to Christ, ready to lead with wholeness and dependability.

Scripture provides the framework for the message, with Dr. Wilson pointing to passages such as Psalm 41:11–12, Proverbs 11:3, and Proverbs 12:22, which honor uprightness and condemn deceit. He explains that integrity integrates inward conviction with outward behavior, resisting the pitfalls of both legalism and licentiousness that threatened the early church. Drawing from the apostle Paul's example as a man of undivided character, Dr. Wilson calls believers to live in both imputed and imparted righteousness, demonstrating a holistic redemption that aligns heart, soul, and body in obedience to Christ's commands (John 14:15).

To illustrate transformation through integrity, Dr. Wilson turns to the story of Zacchaeus. Once defined by greed and corruption as a tax collector, Zacchaeus was transformed through a personal encounter with Jesus into a man committed to restoration and restitution. His story demonstrates that no matter how divided or broken one's past may be, true wholeness is possible through Christ. Dr. Wilson exhorts listeners to "come down from their trees,"

surrender their fractured lives to Jesus, and embrace the healing presence of God that restores integrity in both heart and deed.

The episode also confronts modern distortions of integrity, warning against the allure of separating spiritual claims from bodily actions—a false dichotomy reminiscent of Gnosticism. Instead, Dr. Wilson underscores the biblical call to complete holiness, where spirit, soul, and body stand united under God’s sanctifying power. He assures believers that integrity, though costly, brings divine favor, spiritual protection, and leadership capacity.

This episode of *World Impact* closes with a hopeful declaration: through the cross and the Holy Spirit’s transforming work, anyone can live as a person of uncompromising authenticity. God is raising up a new generation—whole, dependable, and incorruptible—whose lives will shine as beacons of truth in a culture longing for honesty and godly leadership.

Scripture Verses

Psalm 41:11-12

I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever.

Proverbs 11:3

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

Proverbs 12:22

The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy.

Luke 2:1

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

John 14:15

If you love me, keep my commandments.

Luke 19:5-10

"Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, 'He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.' But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.' Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham.'

1 Thessalonians 5:23

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Quotes

- "Truth is fallen in the streets. But in the middle of it, God is raising up a new generation who is committing their lives to Jesus Christ, who will live whole and complete and have integrity." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "Integrity does the right thing no matter the consequences." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "There are people all over the world that think their heart is right, though their body is doing evil. That is duplicity; what you do with your body affects your spirit." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "Zacchaeus had the worst reputation in Jericho. But in one moment of giving everything to Jesus, he became a man of integrity. So can you." - Dr. Billy Wilson
- "Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever." - Psalm 41

Bible Study

Objectives

- Understand the Biblical concept and importance of integrity as a vital quality for Christian living and leadership.
- Recognize the challenges of living with integrity in a world filled with duplicity and fallen truth.
- Learn from the example of Zacchaeus and Apostle Paul on how integrity is reflected in a whole life, combining heart, mind, and body.
- Distinguish between imputed righteousness and imparted righteousness and their role in living a life of integrity.
- Apply practical steps to develop and maintain integrity in daily life and personal spiritual walk.

Reading and Reflections

- Psalm 41:11-12 — Reflect on how integrity uplifts and sustains a believer in the presence of God.
- Proverbs 11:3 — Observe how integrity guides the upright and leads to destruction for the double-minded.
- Proverbs 12:22 — Meditate on the Lord's displeasure with lying lips and His delight in trustworthy people.
- John 14:15 — Jesus connects love for Him with obedience to His commandments, emphasizing integrity as an act of love.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:23 — Reflect on Paul's prayer for whole sanctification — spirit, soul, and body kept blameless.
- Luke 19:1-10 — Study the transformation of Zacchaeus from a corrupt tax collector to a man of integrity after meeting Jesus.

Key Observations

- Integrity is wholeness and undivided consistency between our inner heart and outward actions.
- Living with integrity requires walking the same in private as in public, showing authenticity and dependability.
- Legalism (external conformity without heart change) and license (internal belief without outward change) both destroy integrity.
- The Gnostic philosophy in the early church threatened integrity by separating spirit and flesh — a danger still relevant today.
- Salvation involves both imputed righteousness (accounted in heaven) and imparted righteousness (living righteously on earth).

- Zacchaeus' story beautifully illustrates that true integrity arises when a changed heart leads to transformed action.
- One's environment and close associations profoundly influence their integrity and future.

Personal Reflections

- How consistent am I between the standards I uphold privately and publicly? Where do gaps exist?
- In what ways might I be tempted towards legalism or license? How can I avoid these dangerous extremes?
- Do I fully understand and embrace both the imputed and imparted righteousness of Christ in my daily walk?
- Reflect on moments where my actions did not align with my heart. How can I bring healing in those areas?
- Consider how Zacchaeus' willingness to risk embarrassment and meet Jesus contrasts with my responses to challenges in integrity.
- Am I surrounding myself with friends and influences that uphold and encourage integrity?

Lessons for Daily Life

- Integrity is non-negotiable for Christian leadership and is essential for bearing pressure without collapse.
- Living authentically, even when it is unpopular, builds credibility and honor before God and man.
- A genuine Christian life involves action—obedience to God's commandments—even when the heart is changed.
- Everyone struggles, but we must face our struggles honestly and seek support rather than hiding behind facades.
- Our spiritual health impacts our physical actions; unity of spirit, soul, and body reflects true righteousness.
- Everyone is influenced by their environment; choose close relationships wisely to cultivate integrity.

Practical Applications

- Daily examine your heart and actions for consistency; confess and repent of any duplicity.
- Strengthen your relationship with Jesus through prayer and reading His Word to empower obedience.
- Avoid the trap of legalism by nurturing a heart transformed by grace, not just outward conformity.
- Resist license by allowing your changed heart to visibly influence your lifestyle and choices.
- Surround yourself with a community of believers who encourage truth and accountability.

- Be proactive in confronting dishonesty or lack of authenticity in a loving and private manner, as exemplified by Polly.
- Guard your influences—media, friends, conversations—to sustain a culture of integrity around you.

Challenges for the Week

- Identify one area in your private life where your integrity could be strengthened; commit to transparency and change.
- Practice obedience to one specific command of Jesus that you have been neglecting.
- Reach out to a trusted Christian friend or mentor and share your struggles and victories regarding integrity.
- Evaluate your current friendships and influences and seek to cultivate relationships that reinforce godly character.
- Memorize Proverbs 11:3 and meditate on it daily to guard against duplicity.
- Commit to rejecting any form of 'Gnostic' thinking that separates your relationship with God from your lifestyle.

Further Study

- Study the life and teachings of Apostle Paul, especially his epistles focusing on sanctification and Christian living.
- Explore the historical context and dangers of Gnosticism and how the early church confronted it.
- Deepen understanding of imputed and imparted righteousness - Romans 5, 6 and Titus 2.
- Read and meditate on Jesus' commands, especially John 14, in the context of integrity.
- Analyze the transformation stories in the Bible similar to Zacchaeus, such as the Apostle Peter or the Prodigal Son.
- Engage in resources from Oral Roberts University or trusted Christian ministries regarding generation-specific challenges.

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today asking for Your strength and guidance to be a generation marked by integrity. Help us to be whole and undivided in heart, soul, and body. Teach us to love You enough to obey Your commandments not out of obligation but from a transformed heart. Guard us from the dangers of hypocrisy, legalism, and license. Empower us through Your Spirit to live authentic lives that honor You in every place and circumstance. As Zacchaeus found mercy and restoration when he encountered Jesus, may we too experience Your transformative grace that leads to righteousness and wholeness. Surround us with godly friends who encourage our faith and hold us accountable. May our lives shine as lamps of truth in a dark world, guiding others to Your salvation. We declare that our enemies will not triumph over us, for You uphold us by our integrity. In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.

Daily Devotionals

Day 1

Scripture Verse

Psalm 41:11-12 (NIV): "I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me. Because of my integrity you uphold me and set me in your presence forever."

Reflection

Integrity is not just a word but a divine attribute that aligns us with God's will and His presence. The psalmist proclaims a poignant truth: because of integrity, God upholds us and secures us in His presence. In today's world, where falsehoods abound and the quick gain is often pursued over steadfast truth, to live with integrity is to stand unmovable amidst the shifting sands of public opinion and culture. Imagine a young student standing in an empty classroom, away from the eyes of teachers and peers. The question arises: Will this student remain honest when no one is watching? Integrity demands that our actions remain consistent whether in public or private. In the sermon, Generation Z was called to this high standard—not as a burden, but as a mantle of blessed assurance that God is with us when we walk in truth. This generation, much like every generation before it, faces pressure to conform, to hide imperfections, and to split their hearts from their outward behaviors. Yet Psalm 41 declares a promise: integrity pleases God, it strengthens us against the enemy, and it positions us forever in His presence. How powerful it is to know that to live with integrity is to live in God's favor! You might feel alone in your struggle to be authentic. Remember Zacchaeus, a man despised by society, yet Jesus notices him and calls him down from the tree into a life of transformation. The same Jesus calls you down from whatever 'tree' you are on—be it fear, compromise, or despair—to live in truth and fullness before God and man. Integrity is a lifeline; it is what God uses to uphold and bless us. Today, reflect on the parts of your life where you might be tempted to divide your heart or hide your truths. Ask God to grant you courage to live completely before Him, even when no one else seems to care. As you embrace integrity, your spirit will be strengthened, and God will set you in His presence forever.

Prayer

Lord, help me to walk in integrity today, to live as a whole and undivided person before You. Uphold me in my struggles and set me in Your presence forever. Amen.

Day 2

Scripture Verse

Proverbs 12:22 (NIV): "The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in people who are trustworthy."

Reflection

Trustworthiness is the heartbeat of integrity. To be trustworthy is to be someone whose words and actions align—a person who can be counted on not only when observed but especially when unseen. In the modern world, appearances often deceive. Social media lets us craft idealized images that do not always match the soul beneath. The students in the sermon revealed a truth often tackled in Christian circles today: genuine authenticity is rare but treasured. Consider a story of a young woman named Sarah, who excelled in her job and around friends, yet privately struggled with bitterness and deception in her heart. One day, pushed to her limits, she confessed to a trusted mentor, and through that vulnerability, found freedom to live openly. The challenge today is that our culture pressures us to present perfection, but God delights in authenticity. The verse from Proverbs reminds us that the Lord detests lies but delights in trustworthy hearts. Your integrity is your spiritual ID card; it opens doors to God's joy and blessings. Every time you choose truth over convenience, you are laying a foundation for God's delight and long-term success as a leader for Him. The example of Zacchaeus moving from cunning tax collector to one who restores fourfold captures this beautifully—he did what was right externally because his heart was changed internally. This kind of integrity is not legalism; it is the sweet fruit of righteousness imparted by God. Today, consider: Are your words trustworthy? Do your actions reflect your professed beliefs even when it costs you? Let your life be so aligned with Christ that people around you see the light of integrity shining through. You don't have to be perfect—Jesus welcomes broken hearts ready to be made whole.

Prayer

Father, create in me a heart of trustworthiness. May my words and deeds reflect Your truth so that I may be a light of integrity in this world. Amen.

Day 3

Scripture Verse

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NIV): "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Reflection

To be sanctified 'through and through' is to be made whole and pure in every part—spirit, soul, and body. The apostle Paul's prayer underscores the incredible unity God desires within us; our entire being is to be in harmony with His holiness. The sermon taught us about the chronic battle against duplicity—the dangerous divide where one part of a person claims salvation while another part lives in contradiction. This fragmentation is like a leaking ship—it cannot hold the voyage and will ultimately sink. But when God sanctifies us completely, we become vessels of integrity that can withstand pressure without breaking. Consider a craftsman making a clay pot. If there are cracks inside hidden from view, the pot will eventually break and be useless. But if the potter molds it carefully, smoothing both the outside and the inside, it becomes strong and useful. So it is with our lives. Our hearts, minds, spirits, and bodies must all be shaped by God's hand so that we can stand firm for Him. Zacchaeus exemplifies this from the Bible. He was initially divided, living as a sinner in a corrupt system, yet when Jesus called him, everything changed—it was not just a change in heart but a complete renewal that touched every part of his life. Like Zacchaeus, you are invited to come down from the 'tree' of division and live fully for Jesus. Integrity is lived out authenticity—where the intent of your spirit aligns perfectly with the actions of your body. It is not enough to have knowledge of Jesus or feel saved in your heart; your outward life must affirm your inner sanctification. This is the call for you today: seek sanctification that is complete, that God's peace may hold you blameless when Jesus comes again. Walk in daily surrender, giving every part of your life to Him, for only then can you be a leader who stands unmoved, a light shining in a fractured world.

Prayer

Lord, sanctify me completely—in spirit, soul, and body. Help me live a life of wholeness, reflecting Your glory in all I do. Amen.

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