

Indicators of Integrity

Psalm 101

Introduction:

Integrity is foundational and essential for leadership. The Bible addresses it on a number of occasions and from various viewpoints. (Proverbs 10:9; 11:3; 13:6; 28:6).

Psalm 101 is penned by King David. Warren Wiersbe calls it “Leadership 101.” Willem VanGemeren tags it as a “Commitment to Excellence.” Martin Luther wrote an 80 page exposition of this psalm. The qualities extolled here find an echo in Isaiah 11:1-5 which are a prophetic portrait of Messiah Jesus.

I. The man of integrity will honor the Lord. 101:1

- Nine times in Psalm 101 we find the declaration or promise “I will.”
- Mercy (“*hesed*”; *ESV* “steadfast love”) and justice are twin towers of godly leadership. Both find their source and truest expression in the character of God.
- Applied to leadership, what might the fruit of the Spirit, as found in Galatians 5:22-23 look like as we seek to honor Him?

Leadership Inventory

1. LOVE a willingness to love people regardless of status or actions.
2. JOY a commitment to the task, independent of circumstances or people.
3. PEACE a commitment to an inner calling that is unshakable and undeniable.
4. PATIENCE a willingness to see beyond the horizon of trouble and obstruction; a gentle spirit that is kind to those who oppose your leadership.
5. KINDNESS a Christ type spirit that children see and are drawn to in an adult.
6. GOODNESS a lifestyle of integrity.
7. FAITHFULNESS becoming a person of absolute dependability and consistency.
8. GENTLENESS the ability to be strong at the right time and transparent at all times.
9. SELF-CONTROL the ability to be angry at the right time and in the right way, and to be exceedingly patient and longsuffering at all times.

II. The man of integrity will live wisely. 101:2

- *NIV*, “I will be careful to lead a blameless life” (cf. v. 2, 3, 6). The pledge is to live and act wisely, and to give ear to the lessons of wisdom.

III. The man of integrity will care for his home. 101:2

- He will avoid like a deadly and infectious virus the flirtatious and home destroying woman of Proverbs 5.
- Wise and godly men will care for their homes. They will not ignore them, nor will they take them for granted.

IV. The man of integrity will monitor his eyes. 101:3

- Nothing speaks of the absolute nature of this promise. Wicked is lit. “a thing of Belial” and means worthless, vile, evil.
- The man of integrity will monitor his physical eyes. (Job 31:1).
- The man of integrity will monitor ambitious eyes.

V. The man of integrity will hate what is false. 101:3

- Some things he will 1) have nothing to do with, 2) hate, 3) not allow to cling to him, 4) send away and 5) not know (Proverbs 6:16-19).
- “Pastors At Risk” 7 dangers of “ministry confusion.”
 1. He confuses loving God with loving his ministry.
 2. He confuses intimacy with God, with sermon preparation and Bible study.
 3. He confuses setting a godly example with projecting a pastoral image.

4. He confuses marital oneness with a wife willing to promote a ministerial image.
5. He confuses authentic relationships with other men with knowing lots of people.
6. He confuses being a strong leader with a need to be in control.
7. He confuses being a biblical peacemaker with fear of conflict.

VI. The man of integrity will attend to his heart. 101:4

- (Jeremiah 17:9-10; Proverbs 4:23; 15:28; 16:23; 22:11; 23:7; 27:19; Matthew 12:34; 22:37).

VII. The man of integrity will guard his soul. 101:5

- Vs. 5-7 reveal the kind of men a wise leader will surround himself in both negative and positive categories.
- Note the 3-fold criteria set in negative categories in v. 5: a slanderer, a haughty look and a proud heart.
- The man of integrity will recognize the potent power of the tongue. He will see:
 - Slander & gossip as twin spiritual plagues flirting with destruction.
 - Mocking & deception as madmen playing with fire.
 - Obscenity & vulgarity as ungodly speech that degrades both the speaker and the listener.
 - Profanity as trivializing the sacred and an evidence of a lazy and impure mind.
- Luther said, "Everything is a vain sham if God is not in it!" Augustine: "that which is not done for the glory of God is sin."

VIII. The man of integrity will seek out the faithful. 101:6

- V. 6 stands in contrast to v. 5 and picks up the theme of the eyes in v. 3.
- The wise leader will surround himself with men who are 1) faithful, 2) blameless and who have 3) a servant's heart. (Psalm 1:1; Mark 10:45).

IX. The man of integrity will deal with the deceitful. 101:7

- Chuck Swindoll has a 7 Question Test:
 1. Have you been with a woman anywhere this past week that might be seen as compromising?
 2. Have any of your financial dealings lacked integrity?
 3. Have you exposed yourself to any sexually explicit material?
 4. Have you spent adequate time in Bible study and prayer?
 5. Have you given priority time to your family?
 6. Have you fulfilled the mandates of your calling?
 7. Have you just lied to me?

X. The man of integrity will understand the Lord's standards. 101:8

- "Early" is rendered by most translations as either "every morning" (*NASV*) or "Morning by morning." With each new day the man of God will confront the wicked and seek their defeat.

Conclusion: *The Reformed Pastor*, Puritan pastor Richard Baxter 1) "Take heed to yourselves, lest you be void of the saving grace of God which you offer to others, and be strangers to the effectual working of the gospel which you preach." 2) "Take heed to yourselves lest you live in those actual sins which you preach against in others, and lest you be guilty of that which you daily condemn." 3) "Take heed to yourselves that you may not be unfit for the great assignment you have undertaken." 4) "Take heed to yourselves lest your example contradict your doctrine." 5) "Take heed to yourselves, for you have a depraved nature and sinful inclinations." 6) "Take heed to yourselves, because so great a work as ours puts men on greater exercise and trial of their graces, since they are exposed to greater temptations than most men." 7) "Take heed to yourselves because the tempter will make his first and sharpest attack on you." 8) Take heed to yourselves because there are many eyes upon you." (p. 1-9). People are indeed watching. Let them see a man of integrity. Let them see Jesus in you!