



Dgroup Discussion Guide for February 14, 2016

Respond with Integrity

Scripture: Genesis 27

Integrity (*tom, tummah*): *simplicity, soundness, completeness, rendered also upright, perfection*

The word “integrity” does not occur in the New Testament, but its equivalents may be seen in “sincerity,” “truth,” the “pure heart,” the “single eye,” etc. In the above sense of simplicity of intention, it is equivalent to being honest, sincere, genuine, and is fundamental to true character.

In Genesis 27, Isaac’s eyes have become too dim to see and he is quickly approaching death. Knowing this, he called on his favorite son Esau (Genesis 25:28) to tell him to hunt for game that he would then prepare for Isaac to eat; only then would he bestow his blessing upon his firstborn. This conversation was overheard by an eavesdropping Rebekah, who then devised a scheme to have her favorite son, Jacob, receive the blessing instead. She told him to pick two kids from their flock for her to cook for Isaac, then helped him prepare the food and take on the necessary measures to deceive her husband into thinking that he was actually his brother.

Although Isaac initially had doubts when Jacob first approached him under guise of his brother, he eventually was led to believing that it was actually Esau in front of him when the time of releasing the blessing came. Isaac blessed Jacob, saying in Genesis 27:28-29, ***Now may God give you of the dew of heaven, and of the fatness of the earth, and an abundance of grain and new wine; may people serve you, and nations bow down to you; be master of your brothers, and may your mother’s sons bow down to you, and blessed be those who bless you.***

When Esau went to Isaac to receive his blessing, he found out that his brother had beaten him to it. He could not get even a portion of his blessing, even after he asked Isaac for it. This was the second time that Jacob had supplanted his brother—previously, he was able to convince Esau to hand over his birthright in exchange for food. This is what Esau received instead: in Genesis 27:39-40, Isaac said, ***Behold, away from the fertility of the earth shall be your dwelling. And away from the dew of heaven from above. By your sword you shall live, and your brother you shall serve; but it shall come about when you become restless, that you will break his yoke from your neck.***

Remember that in Genesis 25:23, the Lord had told a pregnant Rebekah, ***Two nations are in your womb; and two peoples will be separated from your body; and one people shall be stronger than the other; and the older shall serve the younger.*** Thus, God’s promise was fulfilled. Because of this, Esau vowed to kill his brother after his father dies. When Rebekah heard of this, she told Jacob to escape by fleeing to Haran, where her brother lives, until Esau’s anger subsides. Such were the consequences of the deception.

There are times when we either don’t want to wait, don’t like God’s answer, or don’t trust God enough with our circumstances, and that leads us to sometimes try to deceive people and manipulate circumstances to get our way. However, we must keep in mind that, “God’s work done in God’s way will never lack God’s supply.” (James Hudson Taylor) Remember that true blessings come from God; we have to believe His Word by faith, and this will manifest in our lives as obedience.

We must respond in integrity, because even when people won’t know what we are doing, God will always





know. Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 says, ***The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person. For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil.*** We should emulate godly men like Job, who, after losing everything, still held onto his integrity and refused to curse God for his situation. Additionally, Psalm 78:72 said that David ***shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them with his skilled hands.*** Integrity begins with the heart, but manifests itself in our actions. People around us have to see that we are people of integrity who fear and love God above anything else.

The Bible also warns us to confess anything that we may be concealing because the day will come when our character will be revealed. In Luke 12:2-3, it says, ***But there is nothing covered up that will not be revealed, and hidden that will not be known. Accordingly, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in the inner rooms will be proclaimed upon the housetops.***

God *is* integrity. He does not merely act with integrity; integrity *IS* His character. The biblical virtue of integrity points to a consistency between what is inside and what is outside, between belief and behavior, our words and our ways, our attitudes and our actions, our values and our practice. We must not only talk the talk, but we must walk the walk; only then can we call ourselves people of integrity.

APPLICATION:

Patently listen as God reveals where you can apply the passage’s lesson in your life. Write down specific action points to what He has revealed to you.

	<p>Personal: Evaluate your heart. Is there anything in your life that you are not 100% honest about? What is it that makes it difficult for you to practice integrity? Are there any consequences to this lack of integrity that you are experiencing today?</p>
	<p>Family: Talk about integrity as a family. Are you practicing integrity in all areas of your life? Do other people see your life as a testimony to God’s grace? Do you walk your talk? Are you practicing integrity in the home? How are you teaching your kids the value of practicing integrity?</p>
	<p>Discipleship: Discuss with your discipleship group what are the things that remain a struggle for you in order to practice integrity?</p>
	<p>Church/ Ministry: In the light of all that is happening in the world today, how am I actively and intentionally sharing the gospel to those who are around me?</p>

PRAYERS:

Lift all the things that you learned back to God. Share your thoughts to Him. If He is impressing a sin in your life, confess it to Him. He is always ready to forgive.