

## LESSON 14

### PERSONAL INTEGRITY

**CENTRAL TRUTH:** Christian values should reflect in a person's attitudes, decisions, and actions.

**MEMORY VERSE:** Blessed are the pure in the heart, for they will see God. - *Matthew 5:8*

#### LESSON TEST

**Prov. 11:3, 15:6; Acts 5:1-11; James 1:21-26**

##### ***Proverbs 11:***

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

##### ***Proverbs 15:***

6. The LORD detests the thoughts of the wicked, but gracious words are pure in his sight.

##### ***Acts 5:***

1. Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property.

2 With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet.

3 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?

4 Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."

5 When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened.

**6** Then some young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him.

**7** About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

**8** Peter asked her, “Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?” “Yes,” she said, “that is the price.”

**9** Peter said to her, “How could you conspire to test the Spirit of the Lord? Listen! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.”

**10** At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband.

**11** Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events.

### ***James 1:***

**21** Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

**22** Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

**23** Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror

**24** And, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

**25** But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

**26** Those who consider themselves religious and yet do not keep a tight rein on their tongues deceive themselves, and their religion is worthless.

## INTRODUCTION

God's word is the foundation for honesty, purity and discipline. This week's lesson discusses these three Christian values and how we can live by them. As we commit ourselves to Jesus Christ, He, who is the perfect example, will empower us to live disciplined lives.

Many people in this world believe that in order to be successful you should not necessarily be honest. In other words you don't need to be honest before you can become successful.

They believe that one cannot establish what truth is and for that matter build honesty on it. However, Christians believe that God's word is the foundation for truth and honesty and reliance on it (the word of God) will help us to be honest. In the world today, many people are struggling to find purpose or direction, but those who depend on God's word and are committed to honest living will see the plan for their lives begin to develop.

Sometimes, we are tempted to agree with those who deny the value of honesty especially when we see dishonest people becoming financially successful. But the scripture in **Proverbs 11:3** teaches us that there is a payday for dishonesty – the dishonest people will be destroyed by their own works.

The record of Ananias and Sapphira in **Acts 5** presents an example of dishonesty. They were not sincere about the total price received from the sale of their property and God in his sovereignty chose to immediately fulfil the principle described in **Proverbs 11:3** (destruction in dishonest people).

In our present day lives, we, sometimes read about or are witness to how the reputation of well-known Christians become destroyed because of their failure to pursue honesty at all cost. The results of their action have driven others away from Christ. May we recognize our responsibility to live as faithful representatives of the One who is the Way, the Truth and the Life – Jesus Christ.

God is always concerned about our purity. He sees our very thoughts and always requires inner purity; this virtue will aid us to live a life of integrity. We should not forget that after having been saved, struggles still take place in our minds. The struggles themselves may not be sinful, but yielding to them is. When we realize that our thoughts are displeasing to the Lord, we should quickly seek His forgiveness.

The Gospel according to **Matthew chapter 5:8** emphasizes the importance of inner purity. Those who will “see God” are those who are pure in the depths of their being. This scriptural demand for complete purity cannot be met with human ability. Christians can remain “pure in heart” only if they remain committed to following the Holy Spirit’s guidance.

Discipline is also a vital virtue which provides a foundation for a life of integrity. Just as in our everyday lives we discipline our minds to achieve a goal whether educational or otherwise, so the Bible urges us in the book of James to do.

In all these instances there are things we have to give up in order to accomplish our goals. As believers we are to cut off any attachment we have to the lusts of the world: that is “the moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent” in our world.

### **LIFE APPLICATION**

The way the world views honesty, purity and discipline is very different from how God does. Honesty is more than just rattling verbal statements. It requires that we communicate God’s truth in everything we say and do.

So also should our commitment to purity and discipline. Personal integrity is not optional for the Christian. Even if people ridicule us when we strive to live pure and honest lives, it should not deter us. Personal integrity is attainable because as Christians we have committed ourselves to Jesus, whose integrity can never be questioned. Indeed if we had life integrity the result is God’s blessing.

----- **DAILY BIBLE READING** -----

- Monday – Moral Purity (Genesis 39:2-12).
- Tuesday – Consequences of Sin (Joshua 7:19-26).
- Wednesday – Obedient to God (Daniel 1:8-20).
- Thursday – Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12).
- Friday – Righteousness rewarded (Luke 2:25-32).
- Saturday – Honest Ministry (2 Corinthians 6:3-10).