

"The foundation stones for a balanced success are honesty, character, **integrity**, faith, love and loyalty." Zig Ziglar

**A. THE FEAR OF MAN BRINGS CHALLENGES THAT CAN LEAD TO TRAGIC CHOICES.**

**1. Fear in the Bible can refer to (a) Reverence for God or (b) The terror, trembling, and dread of harm from man, circumstances or things.** Wiersbe

Proverbs 29:25 ESV "The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is safe."

CEV "Don't fall into the trap of being a coward, trust the LORD, and you will be safe."

**2. Abraham through fear of man failed in his choice of actions. Genesis 12:10-20**

Abraham faced a human power beyond his own strength, Pharaoh, and Abraham forgot God.

Abraham feared that Sarah's beauty was so enticing that the Pharaoh may take her as his wife.

He and Sarah schemed by telling a half-truth (that she was Abraham's sister), this saving Abraham.

In fear for his own life, Abraham almost compromised his wife's purity.

But God acted, in spite of Abraham's scheme, and brought plagues on Pharaoh's house

The pagan Pharaoh was the instrument of the LORD to shame Abraham and rebuke him for his deception. Even then, Abraham tried to justify himself, saying that Sarah was in truth his sister, but he had failed to say "And she is my wife".

God protected the line of Abraham through Sarah, God's chosen couple, for the people and blessing which was to come uniquely through them as promised by covenant. Genesis 12:1-3, 21:1,2

**3. Abraham committed the same sin 25 years later and deceived another powerful man to preserve himself. Genesis 20:1-18**

Abraham again feared man, Abimeleck, King of Gerar, and with Sarah agreed that she would call herself merely Abraham's sister. This was Abraham's regular line to others. see 20:13

The king took Sarah... with the idea of making her his wife or concubine.

But God revealed to the king in a dream that he would die for taking Sarah.

The innocent man with **integrity** is this pagan king. He did his action in ignorance.

The king questioned Abraham for his actions. v.9,10. Abraham again gives a weak defense.

But God has Abraham pray for the king and his house to be healed so that they would again produce children... in their offense against Sarah, the wombs had been closed. V.17,18



**'With integrity, you have nothing to fear, since you have nothing to hide. With integrity, you will do the right thing, so you will have no guilt.'** Zig Ziglar

## **B. GOD IS THE GOD OF SECOND CHANCES... LEARN TO FEAR GOD OVER MAN. BUILD INTEGRITY.**

### **1. God did not give up on Abraham after his sin. He gave Abraham the opportunity to start over...a second (and more) chance to obey God after learning his lessons.**

Prayer of David - "But you, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness. Turn to me and be gracious to me; give strength to your servant, and save the son of your maidservant." ESV

"Honesty and integrity are absolutely essential for success in life - all areas of life. The really good news is that anyone can develop both honesty and integrity." Zig Ziglar

Golf Mulligan - DO OVER

### **2. There is often an Initial Cost to Integrity.**

"Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered, but he who is crooked in his ways will suddenly fall." Prov. 28:18

Integrity makes parts of my life harder.

Integrity may allow others an unfair advantage.

Integrity requires uncomfortable conversations.

Integrity exposes my weaknesses.

Integrity means I may not fit in with some people.

Integrity is essential even when no one else knows the difference.

Integrity is key even when it requires me to treat others better than they've treated me.

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"Human nature is weak, and we tend to yield to temptation when we think nobody can see us. In fact, if there was no police force, many people would not hesitate to steal. This is not to say that when we do something bad, we feel no compunction at all, just that man is weak and prone to yield to temptation. But even if nobody witnesses our sins, and not a soul knows of them, we cannot hide the truth from the eyes of our conscience. In the end, what is important is not that other people know, but that we ourselves know. [ And God always knows! ] A person who sins neither in thought nor deed, and is fair and just, gains enormous courage and strength." Konosuke Matsushita, founder of Panasonic

### **3. If You've Blown Your Integrity Already, Rebuild It.**

"The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them." Prov. 11:3

Admit you were wrong - sinned. Confession.

Do what you promised to do originally.

Now start doing what is right, whatever the cost.

Leave the wrong behind, make a bad memory from which learn.  
Grow from it.

**We want INTEGRITY in others, I must live it myself.**

**"Live so that when your Children think of fairness, caring,  
and integrity they think of you."** H. Jackson Brown Jr.

