

Integrity Defined: Uncorrupted Virtue; the Integrity of God: Righteousness, Justice, & Love; Christian Integrity: Loyalty to Truth

9. Integrity demands loyalty to truth, and the motivational virtue for one's loyalty to truth is personal love for God. Integrity is defined by:

Webster, Noah. *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language: Unabridged*. 2d ed. Revised by Jean L. McKechnie. (Cleveland: The World Publishing Co., 1962), 1:953:

Integrity. [L. *integritas*, wholeness, soundness, from *integer*, untouched, whole, entire.]
1. The quality or state of being complete; wholeness; entireness; unbroken state. 2. The entire, unimpaired state or quality of anything; perfect condition; soundness. 3. The quality or state of being of sound moral principle; uprightness, honesty, and sincerity.

Integer vitae. [L., literally, unblemished in life.] blameless, upright.

Oxford English Dictionary. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971), 1:1455:

Integrity. [L. *integritas* wholeness, entireness, completeness, integrity, chastity, purity.]
1. Undivided or unbroken state. 2. The condition of not being marred or violated; unimpaired or uncorrupted condition; original perfect state; soundness. 3. In moral sense: **a.** Unimpaired moral state; freedom from moral corruption; innocence, sinlessness. **b.** Soundness of moral principle; the character of uncorrupted virtue, especially in relation to fair dealing; uprightness, honesty, sincerity.

Webster, Noah. *An American Dictionary of the English Language*. (New York: S. Converse, 1928), 1:111:

Integrity. 1. Wholeness; unbroken state. 2. The entire, unimpaired state of any thing, particularly of the mind; moral soundness of purity; incorruptness; uprightness; honesty. *Integrity* comprehends the whole moral character, but has a special reference to uprightness in mutual dealings, transfers of property, and agencies of others. 3. Purity; genuine, unadulterated, unimpaired state.

10. From these dictionaries we find that the first definition of "integrity" follows that of its Latin source and refers to a state of "completeness," "wholeness," and an "unimpaired state." From this foundation the definitions narrow these concepts to speak in moral terms.
11. The definition that comes closest to the idea of Christian integrity is from *The Oxford English Dictionary's* 3b: "the character of uncorrupted virtue." Or the Latin term referenced by Webster taken from the writings of Horace [1st century B.C. Roman poet]: *integer vitae scelerisque purus*: unblemished in life and free from guilt.
12. The Greek word for virtue is **ἀρετή, aretē**, and it has two meanings. First, the integrity of God which emphasizes the divine attributes of righteousness, justice, and love. What righteousness demands, justice executes through the love of God and it is expressed by the grace of God.

The righteousness of God refers to His absolute and infinite perfection and expresses the purity of His standards. The purity of His standards applies to the infallibility of His Word which finds its source in divine righteousness. Thus divine righteousness is the source for truth and His truth is inviolable, immutable, inerrant, and eternal. Thus righteousness is the principle of divine integrity.

Justice is the function of divine integrity. It administers the righteousness of God toward to the human race. Righteousness demands righteousness while justice demands justice. They coordinate with each other: what righteousness demands is what justice executes. The reason: righteousness is the depository of absolute truth and justice to be fair must comply with, enforce, and protect that truth.

Therefore, what righteousness condemns, justice judges; what righteousness approves, justice blesses. For example, righteousness condemns sin, thus justice judges sin; it did so at the cross. Righteousness approves of the Lord's substitutionary atonement on the cross, thus justice executes salvation to those who believe.

Each of the attributes that composes divine integrity has direction. For example, **righteousness** is integrity's point of responsibility toward all the sins of mankind. **Justice** is integrity's point of contact toward: (1) the unbeliever at salvation, (2) the spiritual believer regarding divine blessing, and (3) the carnal believer regarding divine discipline. **Love** is integrity's point of reference toward the unique spiritual life of the Church Age. God directs His personal love to the believer's imputed righteousness whether or not that believer is in status quo spirituality or status quo carnality.

13. The second meaning of *aretē* applies to the believer who is growing in grace. It is the duty of every believer to acquire in his soul standards and doctrines revealed from the source of divine integrity and contained in the Bible. As the believer acquires these standards he develops personal integrity as an internal resource for right thought, right decision, and right action. The expression of personal integrity is the execution of these standards toward life and circumstances. This is observed by others as honor but we can also classify it as the demonstration of the believer's virtue or integrity. Thus Christian virtue is the believer's loyalty to truth when confronted by the exigencies of life and circumstances.
14. From these principles we conclude that true virtue finds its source in divine integrity. Since it originates with God then it cannot be acquired by human beings except through divine power.
15. True virtue is defined by the Word of God. Every community of people develops a system of human virtue that becomes the culture of its civilization. But to paraphrase Pontius Pilate, "What is virtue?"
16. If a civilization's culture is not based on biblical absolutes then it is corrupt and will eventually fall, unable to maintain order from the source of human viewpoint.
17. True virtue is found in the souls of advanced believers, the anchor of a client nation. When a nation's core of spiritual aristocrats, called the Pivot, continues to enlarge, then all its citizens prosper by association.