



Connect: LIFEgroup discussion guide

a Christian community of fresh hope

“INTEGRITY: Living to please God” Sun 5th September 2021

WELCOME: We begin our new series for term 3 this year, so far we have explored:

Term 1: The Power of God – the power is in God’s hands. Term 2: Footsteps of Faith – we walk in partnership with God. In Term 3 we will explore Integrity – our part in the partnership with God. What do you recall from Vanessa’s message last week, based on Ruth and Romans 8?

- **What does it mean to you that Jesus is your redeemer?**
- **What impact does this have in your everyday life?**

DISCUSSING THE MESSAGE:

Sunday’s message began with a general definition of “Integrity.”

Integrity: noun. /ɪn ˈteɪgrəti/ quality of being honest & having strong moral principles (Oxford Dictionary)

- **How would you define “Integrity?”**
- **How important do you think it is to live a life with integrity?**
- **In what ways might the wider community accuse the church of not having integrity?**

*Origins of the meaning of Integrity: from the Latin adjective **Integer**, meaning whole or complete.*

In Maths an Integer is a whole number, doesn’t have any fractions.

- **What meaning does this add to ideas of “Integrity?”**
- **In what ways is important for us to be “whole?”**
- **What may cause people to be less than whole?**

In Biblical terms living in integrity means: “being fully the person God created you to be.”

Paul encourages believers not so much to focus on the present, but to look to the future, to live our lives as the people we are created to be, people who are citizens of heaven.

1. God loves His people to live in integrity

Read 1 Thess 4:1-2

- **How would you summarise what Paul is saying?**
- **In what ways does this continue to be a relevant request to Christians today?**

Read 1 Thess 4:3-8

Paul begins by alerting God’s people to what they should NOT continue to do.

- **How would you summarise what Paul is saying in these verses?**
- **What impact can these sinful actions have in peoples’ lives?**

Read 1 Thess 4:9-12

Paul continues by focusing more on what God’s people should continue to do.

- **How would you summarise what Paul is saying in these verses?**
- **What impact can more positive actions have in peoples’ lives?**

2. Christians can live in hope – even in times of grief and pain, when things are tough

Read 1 Thess 4:13-14

- What do you think it means v13 that we “*will not grieve like people who have no hope?*”
- What do you envisage when you hear verse 14?

Read 1 Thess 4:15-17

- How would you describe what Paul writes here to someone who is not a Christian?
- How does this contribute to not grieving “*like people who have no hope?*”

Paul Kelly – the Aussie iconic songwriter – shares his version of this idea in this clip, have a look when you have time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g34-nB3oym4>

3. Christians should live life ready for Jesus to return any time

Read 1 Thess 5:1-3

- How would you summarise what Paul is saying?
- What do you envisage when you hear verse 2?

Read Matt 24:44, 25:1-13 (just verse 13 if time is tight)

- What do you make of what Jesus is saying here?
- What does it mean to live your life being ready for Jesus to return?

Read 1 Thess 5:4-11

- How would you summarise what Paul is saying in these verses?
- In what ways are you encouraged?
- How could we encourage one another?

Curtis Mayfield – iconic American songwriter – wrote about being ready. It was recorded by singer Eva Cassidy, have a look when you have time <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzLd2MDAHK8>

Our response:

Take a few moments to consider who in the Connect church family, “in the family of faith” you could encourage this week. Commit to pray for them and to send a message to encourage them this coming week/weekend?

Pray together:

Pray that we would each be the kind of Christian who is known as a person of integrity.

Pray that we would each be encouraged to do good those around us in need.

Pray that we, as the family of Connect Church, would make the effort to strengthen each other to represent the Church of Jesus well in our world.

Pray that our leaders would be godly people who intercede on our behalf, while we in turn commit to pray for our leaders and support them.

Pray we would give and receive the kind of forgiveness we all need, to be who God has called us to be

Pray that we would make time this week to listen to God, whether through our 5 x 5 x 5 journey or other devotional process, make time to listen as God speaks to us.

This week why not engage with the 5 x 5 x 5 process – take 5 mins for 5 days and dig deeper in 5 ways.