

STRENGTHENING YOUR GRIP

HOW TO BE GROUNDED IN A CHAOTIC WORLD

STUDY SIX

Strengthening Your Grip on Integrity

Psalm 75:5–7; 78:70–72

We all need the reminder to pay attention to being faithful, no matter who you are or where you serve. Whether in the military, the ministry, the marketplace, or in the home and neighborhood—I urge you today to be a person of integrity.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

A SCALPEL in the hands of a surgeon can save a life. Whether to excise a tissue sample or to remove a diseased tumor, the scalpel is a medical professional’s instrument of choice. The small tool is so sharp that its blade can access the most hard-to-reach places of the body. The sharper the blade, the cleaner the cut, the faster the healing!

God’s Word is His sharp and two-edged spiritual scalpel, and He uses it to pierce where no surgeon’s blade can reach. “Cutting between soul and spirit,” it reveals the truth about our “innermost thoughts and desires” (Hebrews 4:12). Only God’s truth can expose hidden disease in our thinking, remove prideful motives in our hearts, and cure our sin-sick souls.

Duplicity is perhaps the soul’s deadliest disease because it’s so difficult to diagnose. Deceiving and manipulating one’s way through life is the norm of our world, the way of our flesh. But its end is filled with tears, pain, and shame.

“The human heart is the most deceitful of all things,” wrote Jeremiah (Jeremiah 17:9). Only God’s sharp, two-edged Word can reveal the deceit we can’t even detect and point us toward the beauty of a simple life—an honest life—a life of integrity.

In previous *Searching the Scriptures* Bible studies, we’ve listened to God’s truth about priorities, involvement, encouragement, purity, and money. In this Bible study, we’ll allow God’s Spirit to use the scalpel of His Word to cut deep into our soul. It’s the only way He can fix the faults in our character and help us become people of integrity. So, let the healing work of our heavenly Surgeon begin!



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

First, be still. Inner quietness prepares our hearts to hear God’s voice. It shows our reverence, expectation, trust, and humility. Then, as the young Samuel responded to the Lord’s call, we pray, “Speak, your servant is listening” (1 Samuel 3:10b). Express your inner disposition for God’s Word through a prayer.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Pastor Chuck Swindoll elaborates on four steps for studying the Holy Scriptures in his book *Searching the Scriptures*.¹ We’ll use *observation*, *interpretation*, *correlation*, and *application* to help us glean truths for strengthening our grip on integrity.



Observation: The Tests of Integrity

God’s Word describes certain tests that expose the true nature of our souls and strengthen our character. Let’s observe what the Bible says about these tests and how they do their work.

The Test of Adversity

According to *Proverbs 24:10* in the New Living Translation, New American Standard Bible (NASB), and New King James Version, what tests our character? What does this test reveal?

Now, turn from Proverbs to the account of Job, a man who suffered harsh adversity. Read *Job 1:13–19* and *2:7–8*. Describe in a few words the waves of tragedy that plagued his life.

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Note God's description of Job in [Job 2:3](#). What did the Lord say about Job's response to his afflictions?

Now, read [2:9–10](#). What is Job's wife's main complaint against him? How does Job respond to her?

Summarize the remarks Job's friend Eliphaz made in [4:1–5](#) regarding Job's reaction to hardship.

I can't cluck my tongue at Job. Nobody can. If you have suffered adversity, you understand what it means to feel impatient. Let's face it, it's hard to walk with God when your world comes tumbling down, when love escapes, and friends seem far away. The blows of adversity are hard to bear.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

The Test of Prosperity

Having looked at adversity as a test of our integrity, turn to [Proverbs 27:21](#) in the NLT and The Message paraphrase. Describe the second test.

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Observe *Psalm 75:1–7*. This passage looks at success from a different angle. What is God’s involvement in a person’s success? What does this passage teach about conceit?

Lastly, turn to *78:70–72*. How did God promote David? How did David lead the nation of Israel, according to *78:72* in the NASB?

The test of your integrity will come, not only when you are in adverse situations but also when you have become prosperous. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Standing the Tests

We move to *interpretation* to shine light on the meaning of the text so we can understand its timeless truths.

First, we observed that adversity tests our integrity. Reread *Job 1:13–19* and *2:7–8*. Imagine that Job kept a record of his suffering in a journal. Write a couple of sentences that would reflect Job’s account of his tragic and sudden losses. Consult your Bible-study resources to grasp the gravity of all that was taken from him. *Constable’s Notes* at netbible.org is an excellent online resource.

Both God and Job’s wife mentioned that Job “maintained [his] integrity” (*2:3, 9* NASB). What does it mean to maintain one’s integrity?

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Recall the remarks of Eliphaz in [Job 4:1–5](#). Read [4:5](#) again in the New International Version and note Job's struggles.

I'm convinced that adversity, though it is very, very hard, is not anything as difficult as prosperity. When you have much, suddenly there is an enormous test on your integrity. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

The second test of integrity is prosperity. David scaled the heights of success as king of Israel, but he didn't let it go to his head. Read [Psalm 78:70–72](#) this time in the New English Translation and consult your Bible-study resources. What does it mean to act according to the integrity of your heart, and why is integrity important for the life of faith?

The psalmist warns us in [75:1–7](#) against becoming conceited in the day of prosperity. Look up the word [conceited](#) in the *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary*. Think about David's character in leadership in light of that term. Then paraphrase [78:72](#).

God saw in David the humility of a servant. No duplicity. A simple man. Not simplistic, but a simple man. For David, God was big and all of life was little. God was responsible for promotions and demotions, and all of life passed before God's sovereign eyes. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Correlation: People of Integrity

One way that David demonstrated integrity was in his humility. Read *1 Chronicles 29:10–17*, particularly *29:14*. Note how David ascribed praise to God, after attaining great wealth and becoming a national hero. Now read *Proverbs 27:2*. What does this passage say about someone tooting his or her own horn?

What did God ask of Solomon, David's son, in *1 Kings 9:3–5*, and why is it significant?

Second Samuel 11–12 narrates how David lost his grip on his integrity, misusing the affluence and power that God gave him by committing adultery and murder. Read his prayer of confession in *Psalm 51*. What words or phrases express David's desire to restore his uprightness or integrity before the Lord?

Laxity in our character is costly. Read *Proverbs 11:3* and *16:18* carefully. Write your own proverb on the importance of maintaining integrity, whether in adversity or prosperity.

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My friend, you have a tough job to carry out in your employment. Do you do it well when no one is around? You have an assignment to follow through on and the deadline is due, do you keep your word and meet the deadline? You make promises, do you fulfill your word? You owe money, do you pay the money on time? You have a lot of privacy entrusted to you, do you behave morally in your private life? You have an expense account to fill out because you travel every month, do you keep it honest? —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Application: Hold Fast to Your Integrity

Let's take our last step, application—the most crucial step in God's training manual for godly living. Based on your time in God's Word, think of some practical ways you can have a stronger grip on integrity.

Adversity wearies the soul. How can you guard yourself from compromising your integrity under pressure? What helps you stay strong in the Lord?

Success is a subtle enemy of integrity, whispering sweet flatteries in our ears. In our self-deception, we think we caused our prosperity, and our ego inflates to twice its size. How can pride lead to a fall? How can you maintain your integrity? Think of some ways you can cultivate humility in prosperity and note them below.

The person with integrity has the humility of a servant. . . . David was faithful in the little things. My friend . . . ask yourself, "Am I faithful even in the little things?" —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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A FINAL PRAYER

Having trusted the hands of the Great Surgeon of your soul and allowed His touch to work on your life, respond by writing a prayer of confession, adoration, thanksgiving, or even supplication as the Holy Spirit leads you. May He strengthen your grip on integrity for His glory!

ENDNOTE

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"

For the 2025 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Mirlenda Noëlliste in collaboration with Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 1980, 2025 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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