



Living with integrity

Discovering ways to live with integrity, being the same person on the inside and outside.

## REVIEW

Recap on your experience of the challenge. Ask the following questions:

### How did it go? Was it helpful?

If you weren't able to try the challenge, explore the question:

**Where and how did you experience God last week?**

## REAL LYFE INTEGRITY

Integrity is about internal, moral consistency, being genuine and being faithful to God. It's about how I live when no-one else is looking. We are to live in private the same as we live in public because our 'Father sees what we do in secret' (Matt 6). When we compromise integrity we bend the truth, cheat, lie, pretend and mask who we really are. Integrity is about becoming the kind of person who does the right thing, in the right way, at the right time, all the time.

## READ



### Genesis 39. 6

## - 23 Joseph and Potiphar's Wife

<sup>6</sup> Joseph was well-built and handsome, <sup>7</sup> and Potiphar's wife soon noticed him. She asked him to make love to her, <sup>8</sup> but he refused and said, "My master isn't worried about anything in his house, because he has placed me in charge of everything he owns. <sup>9</sup> No one in my master's house is more important than I am. The only thing he hasn't given me is you, and that's because you are his wife. I won't sin against God by doing such a terrible thing as this." <sup>10</sup> She kept begging Joseph

day after day, but he refused to do what she wanted or even to go near her.

<sup>11</sup> One day, Joseph went to Potiphar's house to do his work, and none of the other servants were there. <sup>12</sup> Potiphar's wife grabbed hold of his coat and said, "Make love to me!" Joseph ran out of the house, leaving her hanging onto his coat.

<sup>13</sup> When this happened, <sup>14</sup> she called in her servants and said, "Look! This Hebrew has come just to make fools of us. He tried to rape me, but I screamed for help. <sup>15</sup> And when he heard me scream, he ran out of the house, leaving his coat with me."

<sup>16</sup> Potiphar's wife kept Joseph's coat until her husband came

home. <sup>17</sup> Then she said, "That Hebrew slave of yours tried to rape me! <sup>18</sup> But when I screamed for help, he left his coat and ran out of the house."

<sup>19</sup> Potiphar became very angry <sup>20</sup> and threw Joseph in the same prison where the king's prisoners were kept.

<sup>21</sup> While Joseph was in prison, the Lord helped him and was good to him. He even made the jailer like Joseph so much that <sup>22</sup> he put him in charge of the other prisoners and of everything that was done in the jail. <sup>23</sup> The jailer did not worry about anything, because the Lord was with Joseph and made him successful in all that he did.

Contemporary English Verse - CEV

### REFLECT

Setting the scene:

- ▶ Joseph is now in Egypt and has been bought as a slave by Potiphar (an officer of the Egyptian Emperor Pharaoh), then elevated to a position of authority and respect within Potiphar's household. Potiphar's wife tries to seduce Joseph continuously – but he resists – ending up in jail rather than succumbing to temptation.
- ▶ Joseph probably expected to die – the reasonable outcome of this accusation in those days. Perhaps it was the

respect that he had previously won, that resulted in a jail sentence instead. Joseph is an example of integrity which took years to build and only seconds to destroy (even though he was innocent!) – yet despite his circumstances and the temptations he faced, he remained faithful to God.

- ▶ The reference to 'screaming' (v14) is important as screaming in a rape case in OT law meant that you were innocent (see Deut 22.24 & 27). The fact that Joseph was not put to death by Potiphar could have meant that he was suspicious of his wife's accusations.

- ▶ What is it with Joseph and coats! His father's coat was a sign of honour, but caused trouble with his brothers. Here a coat forms evidence against him. Later on Joseph is given another coat as a sign of honour and authority (see Genesis 41.42)
- ▶ What are the 'shockers' and 'blockers' for you in this passage?
- ▶ Where have you seen a lack of integrity recently? What is the impact on individuals and the community?
- ▶ What personal 'integrity challenges' are you facing?

### RESPOND

**Integrity challenge:** This session leads us to explore the topic of integrity. As a group, create a challenge to help you address the issues of integrity in your own lives this week.

**Challenge ideas:** If you struggle to come up with your own challenge then why not try one of the following...

#### 01 Reflection

Consider areas in your life where you may lack integrity, perhaps it's cheating on your tax accounts, accessing pornography, stealing supplies from work, returning used clothing or goods to a shop to get a refund, bending the truth, accessing the web when you

should be working? Do any of these resonate with you? If not examine other areas of your life where you lack integrity and bring them before God in prayer.

#### 02 Confession

This week find someone who you can be totally honest with and can trust. Establish confidentiality and then be open with each other and confess areas of weakness and pray together for strength. Perhaps you might want to come to agreement where you will hold each other accountable. Confession of our hurts, needs and struggles can become a big step towards a life of integrity.

#### 03 Fair Play

Each time you get into a competitive situation this week – whether in sports, playing with your kids, or at work – aim to be open and honest. Do away with cheating or rule bending of any kind. Aim for truthfulness and transparency. You could even pray for the success of others and that they will do better than you!

*'The world gets pretty tired of people who have Christian bumper stickers on their cars, Christians fish signs on their trunks, Christian books on their shelves, Christian stations on their radios, Christian jewellery round their necks, Christian videos for their kids, and Christian magazines for their coffee tables but don't actually have the life of Jesus in their bones or the love of Jesus in their hearts.'* [John Ortberg](#) *When The Game Is Over It All Goes Back In The Box*

### Don't Forget

1. To record your experience of the challenge so that you can accurately share it with your lyfe group when you next meet. You might like to text/tweet each other throughout the experience!
2. Consider posting your created challenge on the lyfe facebook site for others to view.

### More resources on 'Real Lyfe'

- Listen to video interview with Roy Searle
- Read article by Antony Billington on Holiness
- Read 'lyfe story' biographies on Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Desmond Tutu
- Recommended reading – *The Rest of God: Restoring Your Soul* by Restoring Sabbath by Mark Buchanan

### GROUP PRAYER:

You might like to commit to praying for each person in the group this week as you look to develop and maintain a life of transparency, honesty, humility and integrity.