

Franciscan Spirit and Life

Virtue: Integrity

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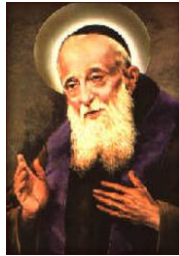
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For the purposes of the Franciscan Spirit and Life Program, the definition of integrity is: *“adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.”*

The basic judge of integrity is to find someone who does not have to think about doing the correct thing...he/she just does it. Furthermore, it is someone who does the moral thing when no one is watching, and he/she does not receive credit for doing it.

There are several examples of Franciscan Brothers and Sisters who have exemplified this virtue. For the first quarter, we will provide a snapshot of the following friar:

Integrity: Snapshot of a Priest who Exemplified Integrity – St. Leopold Mandic



On 12 May 1866, in Castelnuovo, a small port at the southern tip of Dalmatia, a twelfth child was born to Peter and Caroline Mandic. He was named and baptized Bogdan, 'the God-given-one'. Although physically frail, from his youth he showed signs of great spiritual strength and integrity. At the age of 16 years, Bogdan left home for Italy where he put himself under the tuition of the Capuchins at Udine as a student in the Seraphic School and an aspirant for the Order. Life was not easy for him there, since he was physically malformed and still delicate in health. Nevertheless, he applied himself to his studies with great enthusiasm. On 20 April 1884, Bogdan entered the Capuchin Order as a novice at Bassano del Grappa and took the religious name of Brother Leopold.

In spite of the austerities of Capuchin life, he persevered with courage and drank deeply of Franciscan Spirituality of which he was to become one of the finest models. After his Profession of Vows in May 1885, he embarked on a course of clerical studies first at Padua and then at Venice. Finally, he was ordained in Venice on 20 September 1890.

Now wishing to fulfill a childhood ambition of becoming a missionary in Eastern Europe, torn apart by much religious strife, he was denied this by his superiors and because of his frailty and general ill health. This was assuredly a testing-time for the new Father Leopold, but God had other work for him to do.

From 1890 to 1906, Father Leopold was stationed at various Friaries in the Venetian Province, including Friaries in his homeland of Dalmatia, where the Italian friars had a mission. In 1906, he was posted to Padua, where, except for one year, which he spent in a prison camp during World War I, because he would not renounce his Croat nationality, he remained for the rest of his life. It was in Padua that he took up the apostolate of Confessor and Spiritual Director... a work which proved to be the means through which God used his servant, Father Leopold, for almost forty years, and for which Leopold Mandic is best known.

On 22 September 1940, Father Leopold celebrated his Golden Jubilee of the Priesthood. After this, however, his health deteriorated rapidly. He died in the Friary at Padua on 30 July 1942. Soon after his death, a strong veneration of his memory began to flourish culminating in his beatification by Pope Paul VI on 2 May 1976, and, his canonization by Pope John Paul II on 16 October 1983.

His Spirituality

The life of Saint Leopold Mandic is characterized by the contrast between his physical frailty and his spiritual strength. He was born physically weak, and spent the whole of his life in that condition. He only reached 4ft 5ins in height and his general health became worse as he grew older. He suffered from abdominal pains, and was gradually deformed by chronic arthritis in

later life, making his frame stooped and his hands gnarled, giving him much pain. He also suffered from a stammer in his speech.

Spiritually, Leopold Mandic was a giant, full of Christian strength. It was his humility and faith in God's Goodness and Providence that enabled him to recognize and accept his poor physical condition. This in turn led him to a greater realization of his own lowliness in relation to God's mighty power - that without God he could do nothing. This strong faith was communicated to others when they came to Father Leopold for spiritual advice. He would say, "Have faith! Everything will be all right. Faith, Faith!" A compassionate man, Father Leopold gave tremendous encouragement to many people, especially those despairing of hope because of an enslavement to sin. He was truly an apostle. For although he did not go to the mission territory, his long service in the Confessional proved to be his own distinct apostolate. For nearly forty years, twelve hours a day, he received, counseled, and absolved thousands of penitents. In this work, he was a herald of God's love and forgiveness.

His human weakness highlights the gift of spiritual strength which enabled him to carry out this untiring apostolate.

Early in his Capuchin life, Leopold Mandic was asked to surrender his missionary aspirations and personal preference so as to be given the work of Confessor and Spiritual Advisor. He once expressed his feelings about this when he said, "I am like a bird in a cage, but my heart is beyond the seas." A Lesson Saint Leopold has much to teach us. He is an inspiration for us to be humble and strong in the Christian faith we have received from God. He is, moreover, a living memorial of that truth preached by the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians: "It was... to shame the strong that He chose what is weak by human reckoning." His ministry of God's forgiveness in the Confessional can teach us of the real value and importance of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, whereby we rise from the death of sin to the fullness of life in Christ. Saint Leopold is definitely a man for us and for our time.

Prayers Related to Integrity

Scripture Prayer to be People of Character and Integrity

I thank You, Father that we are people of godly character and integrity. I ask now that You will strengthen our character even more than it is now, enabling us to conquer every temptation we face. Help us to be true to what we know is right and give us the ability to walk in integrity of heart.

You, Father always provide a way of escape from life's temptations so we are enabled to bear up in the face of testings and trials. Keep our souls, Lord. Let integrity and uprightness preserve us. May we learn to wait on You more. Help us to see that the issues of life spring from our hearts and as we think in our hearts so are we. Give us more of Your grace to keep our hearts with all diligence.

I ask you to help us to be a faithful men and women who are just and filled with the integrity that comes from You, Father. This is my prayer for us, In Jesus' Name, Amen (so be it)

President Harry Truman's Integrity Prayer

Oh Almighty and Everlasting God.

Creator of Heaven, Earth, and the Universe: Help me to be, to think, to act what is right, because it is right; Make me truthful, honest and honorable in all things; Make me intellectually honest for the sake of right and honor and without thought of reward to me. Give me the ability to be charitable, forgiving and patient with my fellowmen – help me to understand their motives and their shortcomings – even as Thou understandest mine! Amen, Amen, Amen.

Integrity Prayer from the Scriptures

May I walk before You, as David my father walked, with integrity of heart and uprightness, doing according to all that God has commanded me to do, and keeping His statutes and His rules (1 Kings 9:4)

Till I die, may I never put away my integrity (Job 27:5)

May I ponder the way that is blameless and walk with integrity of heart within God's house (Psalm 101:2)

May I show myself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in my teaching show integrity and dignity (Titus 2:7)

Like Joseph, may I hear the word of the Lord and obey (from Luke 1:27)

Like Daniel, may I resolve not to defile myself (from Daniel 1:8)

Like Paul, may I learn to be content in any situation (Philippians 4:11)

Like Timothy, may I set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity (1 Timothy 4:12)

Like David with Goliath, may I stand up for the living God (1 Samuel 17)

Like Abraham, may I obey God in faith (Genesis 12)

A Prayer for the Virtue of Integrity

Jesus, Prince of all Heavenly truths, Your Words are carved for eternity! You have commanded the virtue of integrity; It is the power against all deceptions. Direct Your Spirit of integrity upon me, That my soul may always remain stainless. Guide my daily thoughts, words and actions, To join those living by the Spirit of truth. For integrity yields harmony and loyalty, Enriching all human relationships. By the power of Your Spirit that flourishes, Integrity will prevail in this world!

Prayer for Truthfulness In All That We Do

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your faithfulness. Thank You that You understand our emotions. Help us to be completely honest with You and with others. Help us to speak the truth in love and grace. Help us to share our struggles with someone we trust. Help us to remember that the prayer of the righteous person has great power and wonderful results. May we ever be mindful to pray for others. Amen.

Integrity Prayer Thought

Integrity is a valuable virtue but in today's society it is incredibly hard to find. Business people, elected representatives, even people claiming to be servants of Christ are steadily deceiving true believers into contributing to their cause or buying their product. Company employees often misuse company property and steal undeserved wages by "looking busy" but not putting their full effort into a job. Inferior products are sold to line the pockets of the manufacturers and little concern is given to the satisfaction of the consumer.

From the Old Testament to the New Testament the Bible speaks about integrity. As scripture in Philippians 4:8 relates "... whatever is true, whatever is worthy of reverence and is honorable and seemly..., think on and weigh and take account of these things [fix your minds on them]. We are called by our Heavenly Father to be a separate people. We are not supposed to act like the people of "the world".

In being honest, children of God serve as an example to "the world". If someone is dishonest with us it doesn't mean we should pay them back by being dishonest with them.

Integrity helps us learn higher spiritual understanding and helps our spiritual brethren also.

Luke 8:15 - And the seed that fell on the good ground is like those who hear God's teaching with good, honest hearts and obey it and patiently produce good fruit.

Prayer: Dear Father bless me with the Spirit of true integrity and sincerity. Amen

Prayer on the Importance of Integrity

"Lord, I have felt impressed to pray today about the need for integrity—old-fashioned, personal, practical integrity. It seems that integrity means always doing what is right and good, regardless of the immediate consequences. It means being righteous from the very depth of our soul, not only in our actions but, more importantly, in our thoughts and in our hearts. Personal integrity implies such trustworthiness and incorruptibility that we are incapable of being false to a trust or covenant. Help me to have that kind of moral compass, and to do what is right, what is good, and what is holy. Amen."

Integrity Leads to Courage

Heavenly Father, strengthen our character, by enabling us to conquer every temptation that comes to us. Help each one of us to ever be true to what we know is right, to lean on you for the strength we need, so that we will always be able to walk in integrity of heart. Let our Christian integrity guide us in every situation; may it rule in the face of every temptation. Let each one of us know that you will always provide us with a way to escape that will enable us to bear up in the face of all testing and trials. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen

Integrity Prayer

Integrity is when our words and actions hang together in harmony with our principles. We follow through. We keep promises. We speak plainly. We act consistently.

Read: 1 Samuel 3:19 – “The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground.”

Pray: Ask the Lord to help you consider how people learn to prize and pursue integrity, and pray for those things to come true, both personally and in our churches.

A Prayer for Integrity

Father, Your Word I have hidden in my heart that I might not sin against You; for it teaches me to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before You. Even when it brings about hurtful circumstances help me to do the right thing in keeping with the Christ-filled nature I received upon the day of my salvation. May I not be found lacking in integrity but rather be characterized by my integrity as it honors my Father in heaven. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen

Integrity Over Image: A Prayer

God, may I never be more concerned with surface appearances than with inward substance. I long for a Christ like character that will sustain me through the vicissitudes and trials of this life. May I seek integrity over image and holiness over happiness. Protect me from the sin of lost potential that would result from pursuing the wrong things at the wrong times in the wrong ways. Grant me the power to be that same person when no one is looking as I am when I am among my peers. Let me be increasingly impressed with Jesus Christ and less impressed with appearance, posturing and posing. I ask that godly character will inform and empower my daily choices and relationships. Then I will seek the things that really matter and endure over the things that will fade and disappear.

The Man in the Glass: A Poem About Integrity

When you get what you want in your struggle for self and the world makes you king for a day,
Just go to a mirror and look at yourself and see what that man has to say.
For it isn't your father or mother or wife whose judgment upon you must pass,
The fellow whose verdict counts most in your life is the one staring back from the glass.
Some people might think you're a straight-shootin' chum and call you a wonderful guy.
But the man in the glass says you're only a bum if you can't look him straight in the eye.
He's the fellow to please, never mind all the rest for he's with you clear to the end
And you've passed your most dangerous test if the guy in the glass is your friend.
You may fool the whole world down the pathway of years and get pats on the back as you pass
But your final reward will be heartache and tears if you've cheated the man in the glass.

Prayer Changes Us

Prayer is the most relevant thing we do. If we are to be free from our addictions, free from our compulsions and free from self tyranny, we will have to become people who pray consistently, without stopping. Prayer must become part of us much like eating or breathing, bathing and sleeping. The kind of prayer we need is a personal, open and ongoing interaction with God - the type of interaction that brings insight and understanding, helping us to resolve the catastrophes of our past and increase our hopefulness for the future. Ongoing prayer helps us know exactly who we are and what we should do at any moment in time. It builds integrity in us, making us well-balanced and whole. Prayer keeps us alert and ready to live well during any difficulty that may come our way.

Prayer helps us to work with God to build our future. It plays a huge role in determining what kind of people we will be and what kind of impact we will have on the world. It may be helpful to pray for others to change, but it is always more important to pray that we will change. Prayer changes us and as we are changed, the influence we have on our surroundings will change too. Prayer gives us new perspectives. It changes our priorities. Instead of praying for things we want or for things we need, we should pray that we will be increasingly motivated to bring ourselves closer to God.

If we pray for anything less than God Himself, we may go away disappointed, having learned just how idolatrous we still are. But when we pray seeking a closer walk with Him we will always find our deepest longings fulfilled, often before we know what our deepest longings really are.

Quotations Related to Integrity

I never had a policy; I have just tried to do my very best each and every day. ~Abraham Lincoln

I hate mankind, for I think myself one of the best of them, and I know how bad I am. ~Joseph Baretti, quoted by James Boswell, 1766

Love all, trust a few, do wrong to none. ~William Shakespeare

Transcend political correctness and strive for human righteousness. ~Anthony J. D'Angelo, *The College Blue Book*

Wisdom is knowing what to do next; virtue is doing it. ~David Star Jordan, *The Philosophy of Despair*

Character is doing the right thing when nobody's looking. There are too many people who think that the only thing that's right is to get by, and the only thing that's wrong is to get caught. ~J.C. Watts

If you have integrity, nothing else matters. If you don't have integrity, nothing else matters. ~Alan Simpson

Selfishness is not living as one wishes to live; it is asking others to live as one wishes to live. ~Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*

Character is much easier kept than recovered. ~Thomas Paine

Do not believe in anything simply because you have heard it. Do not believe in anything simply because it is spoken and rumored by many. Do not believe in anything simply because it is found written in your religious books. Do not believe in anything merely on the authority of your teachers and elders. Do not believe in traditions because they have been handed down for many generations. But after observation and analysis, when you find that anything agrees with reason and is conducive to the good and benefit of one and all, then accept it and live up to it. ~Buddha

One does evil enough when one does nothing good. ~German Proverb

There is no pillow so soft as a clear conscience. ~French Proverb

Don't try to be different. Just be good. To be good is different enough. ~Arthur Freed

Your life may be the only Bible some people read. ~Author Unknown

Do not repeat anything you will not sign your name to. ~Author Unknown

Are right and wrong convertible terms, dependent upon popular opinion? ~William Lloyd Garrison

The measure of a man's real character is what he would do if he knew he never would be found out. ~Thomas Babington Macaulay

The right to do something does not mean that doing it is right. ~William Safire

Try not to become a man of success but rather try to become a man of value. ~Albert Einstein

The only exercise some people get is jumping to conclusions, running down their friends, side-stepping responsibility, and pushing their luck! ~Author Unknown

But that's always the way; it don't make no difference whether you do right or wrong, a person's conscience ain't got no sense, and just goes for him anyway. If I had a yaller dog that didn't know no more than a person's conscience does I would poison him. It takes up more room than all the rest of a person's insides, and yet ain't no good, nohow. ~Mark Twain, *Huck Finn*

Character is higher than intellect. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. That's my religion. ~Abraham Lincoln

Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it. Autograph your work with excellence. ~Author Unknown

Quality means doing it right when no one is looking. ~Henry Ford

Laws control the lesser man. Right conduct controls the greater one. ~Chinese Proverb

A man cannot be comfortable without his own approval. ~Mark Twain, "What Is Man?", 1906

If we are ever in doubt about what to do, it is a good rule to ask ourselves what we shall wish on the morrow that we had done. ~John Lubbock

You can easily judge the character of a man by how he treats those who can do nothing for him. ~James D. Miles

I thank Thee first because I was never robbed before; second, because although they took my purse they did not take my life; third, because although they took my all, it was not much; and fourth because it was I who was robbed, and not I who robbed. ~Matthew Henry

My country is the world, and my religion is to do good. ~Thomas Paine

Never let your sense of morals prevent you from doing what's right. ~Isaac Asimov

To thine own self be true, and it must follow, as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man. ~William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

A man has to live with himself, and he should see to it that he always has good company.

~Charles Evans Hughes

Dignity consists not in possessing honors, but in the consciousness that we deserve them.

~Aristotle

You do not wake up one morning a bad person. It happens by a thousand tiny surrenders of self-respect to self-interest. ~Robert Brault

You can out-distance that which is running after you, but not what is running inside you.

~Rwandan Proverb

A pure hand needs no glove to cover it. ~Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*

We grow with years more fragile in body, but morally stouter, and can throw off the chill of a bad conscience almost at once. ~Logan Pearsall Smith

Better keep yourself clean and bright; you are the window through which you must see the world. ~George Bernard Shaw

Let us be grateful to the mirror for revealing to us our appearance only. ~Samuel Butler, *Erewhon*

To know what is right and not do it is the worst cowardice. ~Confucius

We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done. ~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *Kavanagh*, 1849

You don't carry in your countenance a letter of recommendation. ~Charles Dickens, *Barnaby Rudge*

The only correct actions are those that demand no explanation and no apology. ~Red Auerbach

Live in such a way that you would not be ashamed to sell your parrot to the town gossip. ~Will Rogers

Discussion Starter Stories on Integrity

Lashed To The Mast

The *Odyssey*, an epic Greek poem, tells the story of King Odysseus and his heroic struggle against the gods. The tale begins when the ship of Odysseus is blown off course on the way home from the Trojan Wars. In his effort to get home, Odysseus lands on an island where he encounters one-eyed monsters known as Cyclops.

One of the Cyclops, Polyphemus, captures the humans and begins devouring them. Odysseus, in order to save himself and his crew, blinds the eye of the giant and manages to escape from the island.

What Odysseus doesn't know is that Polyphemus, the Cyclops he blinded, is the son of the Greek god Poseidon. In retaliation, Poseidon tries to prevent Odysseus from ever reaching home.

To accomplish his goal, Poseidon places Odysseus's ship in the path of the Island of Sirens. The island is inhabited by beautiful women (sirens) who sing out to sailors on the sea, enticing them to steer their ships to destruction on the jagged reefs that surround the island. The sirens' songs could be heard for great distances.

As Odysseus sails for home, he can hear the songs of the sirens. He's also well aware of his vulnerability to their seductive power. His solution is to lash himself to his ship's mast so he can listen to their songs but not respond to them. The rest of the crew stuffs their ears to block the sound.

In agony, Odysseus remains lashed to the mast until his ship makes it safely past the island. As a result, he manages to stay on course until he arrives home safely.

As we sail the sea of life, we will encounter many temptations and enticements that will threaten to take us off course and destroy us. The Bible tells us that Satan "prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8)—not unlike Poseidon in The Odyssey.

Our best strategy for defeating these temptations is not necessarily to withdraw from the world so that we can't hear these songs. Instead, we must remain "lashed to the mast"—the cross of Jesus Christ. Our calling as Christians is to be "in the world, but not of it." We should be involved in the world without allowing its seductive power to undermine our integrity. We must remain faithful to who we are as Christians and to resist temptation.

We do this by intentionally tying ourselves to the church, to other Christians, to the Word of God, and to the disciplines of the Christian life. So if you don't take steps to insure your survival, you will always be in grave danger. "If you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!" (1 Corinthians 10:12).

No Basket

Many people who were there called it the best basketball game they'd ever seen: Westwood High versus Valley Center, to determine who would advance to the state basketball championship.

From the opening whistle the contest was a nail-biter. Players from both schools turned in the game of their lives—running, dribbling, passing, rebounding, shooting, and playing defense with an intensity that their fans had never seen before.

The momentum of the game seesawed back and forth, with the lead changing hands more than a dozen times.

With only ten seconds to go, Westwood scored a basket that put them ahead by a single point. Valley Center called timeout. The team huddled with their coach, who drew up what would most certainly be the final play. The plan was to work the clock down to two seconds, set a few screens to get their best shooter a good look at the basket, and let him try to win the game with a last-second shot.

When the whistle blew, the crowd rose to its feet. Their cheers were deafening. Westwood positioned its defense, and Valley Center brought the ball up.

As the clock ticked down to its final seconds, the Westwood fans chanted along, "FIVE...FOUR...THREE...TWO..."

The Valley Center players executed the play exactly as the coach had drawn it up. With only two seconds remaining, Valley Center's star player took his shot. The ball bounced off the rim and ricocheted off the backboard—right to a Valley Center player, who tipped it in!

The Valley Center fans went wild. Their team was going to the state finals!

Or so they thought.

While the players and fans celebrated, the referees ran to the official scorer's table to make sure that the time on the clock had not expired when the ball was tipped in. With all of the noise, the referees had been unable to hear the buzzer to determine whether or not the shot was good.

The official scorer, an older man who had held the position for many years, suddenly had the game in his hands. He hesitated for a moment, but finally leaned over the table and said, "Tell the Valley Center coach I'm very sorry, but the shot was no good. Time on the clock had expired."

That news changed everything for both teams. The Westwood players and fans started celebrating their victory while those from Valley Center were left to deal with the agony of defeat. The stunned Valley Center coach sat down on the bench with his head in his hands.

The official scorer left his table, walked over, and sat down on the bench beside him. With a tear in his eye, the older man embraced the distraught young coach on the bench and said, "Son...I'm so proud of you."

Not A Good Example

A rather pompous, self-righteous Sunday School teacher was trying to make the point that good Christians don't keep their faith a secret. With her head held high and her chest thrust out, the teacher strutted impressively back and forth across the room. She asked, "Now, class, why do you think people call me a Christian?"

The room was silent for a moment. Then one of the boys slowly raised his hand and said, "Probably because they don't know you."

Witnessing for Christ first means living for Christ. You don't have to be a great leader to bring others to Christ. You just have to be a great follower—a disciple of Christ.

Jesus criticized the Pharisees for saying one thing and doing another. Like that Sunday School teacher, they were pompous and self-righteous. They wore their religious titles proudly on their sleeves, as if that was enough to get them into heaven.

While other people may not have known what the Pharisees were really like, Jesus sure did. He could see their hearts, and he called them "whitewashed tombs" (Matthew 23:27). The Pharisees were hypocrites.

Jesus wants us to demonstrate integrity and not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think (Romans 12:3). If we confess that we're sinners in need of a Savior, and treat others with dignity and respect, we will do more to communicate Christ than all the sermons in the world. And through this integrity, we will teach the Franciscan way of life as well.

Pepe Rodriguez

Pepe Rodriguez, one of the most notorious bank robbers in the early settling of the West, lived just across the border in Mexico. He regularly crept into Texas towns to rob banks, returning to Mexico before the Texas Rangers could catch him.

The frustrated lawmen were so embarrassed by this that they illegally crossed the border into Mexico. Eventually, they cornered Pepe in a Mexican bar that he frequented. Unfortunately, Pepe couldn't speak any English, so the lawmen asked the bartender to translate for them.

The bartender explained to Pepe who these men were, and Pepe began to shake with fear. The Texas Rangers, with their guns drawn, told the bartender to ask Pepe where he had hidden all the money he had stolen from the Texas banks. "Tell him that if he doesn't tell us where the money is right now, we're going to shoot him dead on the spot!"

The bartender translated all this for Pepe. Immediately, Pepe explained in Spanish that the money was hidden in the town well. They could find the money by counting down seventeen stones from the handle, and behind the seventeenth stone was all the loot he had stolen.

The bartender then turned to the Rangers and said in English, "Pepe is a very brave man. He says that you are a bunch of stinking pigs, and he is not afraid to die!"

Things sometimes get lost in the translation.

Much of what we read and hear and watch is secondhand information that may or may not be true. We need to make sure that we are not only getting the truth, but also communicating the truth to others. And then, our integrity will continue to communicate who we are and what we stand for, with no need for translation.

Uncle George

The children of a well-to-do family decided to give their father as a birthday present a book containing their family's history. They commissioned a professional biographer to write the book, carefully cautioning him about the family's "black sheep"—their Uncle George had been executed in the electric chair for murder, and they felt that it would be best if the biographer left Uncle George out of the book.

"No need to do that," said the biographer. "I can report the situation in such a way that there will be no embarrassment to your father or to you. I'll merely write that Uncle George occupied a chair of applied electronics at an important government institution. He was attached to his position by the strongest ties, and his death came as a real shock."

How would a biographer write about your life? Would he have to disguise the truth? What do you think people might say about you after you die? Answering questions like these will help you recognize the kind of life you're living right now.

The Bible teaches us that when you die, there's nothing else you can do to get ready to meet God. (Hebrews 9:27) It won't matter what people write about you or say about you to make you look good (or look better than you actually were). God knows all about you, and you will be judged by him.

Integrity basically means living a life that you and God would both be proud of. And then there needs to be no disguising of the truth.