

February 9, 2020  
HEAVEN ON EARTH - Part 3  
“A Life of Integrity”

Jesus is calling his disciples to live so their outward actions align with their hearts so that there's integrity in their lives.

Three of the most important acts of faith and religious life in the Jewish faith are almsgiving or giving to the poor, prayer, and fasting.

**Matthew 6:1** (NIV): “Be careful not to do your ‘acts of righteousness’ before men, to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven.”

Jesus said some people were doing religious activities for the applause of men, and, in the process, they lost the applause of heaven because their motives were self-serving.

One definition of integrity says we're same person, always acting the same way, even when no one is looking.

Integrity is particularly important for the disciple of Jesus Christ, because a lack of integrity reflects on our witness and impact on the lives of others.

Jesus became one of us so that we could become like him.

**Philippians 3:9** (NLT): “...I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith.”

**Sam Baird (paraphrased):** Christians are called to live *up* to the righteousness Christ has already *won* for us.

If we are seeking to live as disciples of Jesus, we become less and less of hypocrites every day because following and imitating Jesus actually transforms us.

The mission of Gateway is to lead everyone to become more like Jesus.

“...confessing Jesus to be the Christ isn't about knowing the right Sunday-school answer or uttering the magic words at our baptism. It is not a matter of head knowledge, but a matter of the heart. If our heart is unwilling to surrender to Jesus as king, it renders whatever words we may say about him as ‘the Christ’ meaningless. –  
Pastor Bill Hull

“Faking it until you make it” isn't hypocrisy if my *intent* is to follow Jesus, even if I'm not always feeling it.

**For Jesus' followers, spiritual practices are part of Kingdom living, and so doing them reflects the commitment they've already made to Christ, yet doing them does transform us.**

**Jesus:** “<sup>9</sup>This, then, is how you should pray: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, <sup>10</sup>your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. <sup>11</sup>Give us today our daily bread. <sup>12</sup>Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. <sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”” (Matthew 6:9-13 NIV)

**The Lord's Prayer is what Heaven on Earth looks like and reflects the lifestyle Jesus is calling us to live.**

**Integrity is proved and earned when it's hard.**

**The love God gives and calls us to is tough and refuses to take the easy way out, as He demonstrated on the cross.**

**Gateway offers three main environments to help you live as disciples for the Kingdom of Heaven – worship, serve and groups.**

**Jesus says our living for the Kingdom always has an outward component to it, because if we're not affecting others, if we're not loving, we're not living in his Kingdom.**

**1 Peter 3:13-18 (NLT):** “<sup>13</sup>Now, who will want to harm you if you are eager to do good? <sup>14</sup>But even if you suffer for doing what is right, God will reward you for it. So don't worry or be afraid of their threats. <sup>15</sup>Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. <sup>16</sup>But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. <sup>17</sup>Remember, it is better to suffer for doing good, if that is what God wants, than to suffer for doing wrong! <sup>18</sup>Christ suffered for our sins once for all time. He never sinned, but he died for sinners to bring you safely home to God. He suffered physical death, but he was raised to life in the Spirit.”

**Next Week: A Matter of Perspective**

Get the *Life Journal* Bible Reading Plan at [gateway-community.org/Find-it](http://gateway-community.org/Find-it)

Follow Randy on Twitter @HagemanRandy