

**duplicating
discipleship**

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● **lesson three**

the integrity of nathaniel

*"If we have integrity, we don't hide our stumble;
we don't act like we didn't."*

Charles Swindoll

Lesson 3: The Integrity of Nathaniel

John 1:45-49 (NLT)

⁴⁵ Philip went to look for Nathanael and told him, "We have found the very person Moses and the prophets wrote about! His name is Jesus, the son of Joseph from Nazareth." ⁴⁶ "Nazareth!" exclaimed Nathanael. "Can anything good come from Nazareth?" "Come and see for yourself," Philip replied. ⁴⁷ As they approached, Jesus said, "Now here is a genuine son of Israel—a man of complete integrity." ⁴⁸ "How do you know about me?" Nathanael asked. Jesus replied, "I could see you under the fig tree before Philip found you." ⁴⁹ Then Nathanael exclaimed, "Rabbi, you are the Son of God—the King of Israel!"

John 1:45-49 (NAS)

⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the Law and also the Prophets wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." ⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming to Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!" ⁴⁸ Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." ⁴⁹ Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel."

- What do we think of when we hear that a person is a "man of integrity"?

"Under the fig tree" - Why was this important?

People in the Middle East planted fig trees often near their house because of the great shade that the large leaves provided as well as the fruit that was in abundance from a healthy tree. The fig tree became a place of study and meditation.

Because of the branches coming down near to the ground, it was sometimes place where things were done in secret when they wanted to hide something.

Discussion Items:

- Did it seem from Nathanael's response to Jesus that Nathaniel was aware the he was a man of complete integrity?

- What led him to either in jest or disgust claim nothing good could come from Nazareth? What did this remark have to do with integrity?

- Why did Jesus seem to focus on Nathanael's trait of integrity?

- Discuss these comparison words with integrity from other translations:
 - o Guile

 - o Deceit

What significance to this account is the passage in Genesis 3:6-11 of Adam and Eve using fig leaves to hide their nakedness, their sin and themselves from the Lord?

- Is John 1:51 (NAS) a promise that applies only to those who truly have Integrity?
 - o ⁵¹ *And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see the heavens opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man."*

Discipleship Items:

- Where does our integrity come from?

- What's the significance of the three things in Timothy - heart, conscience and faith?

1 Timothy 1:5 (NAS) *"But the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith." (Integrity)*

- How are these "cultivated" and what is the significance of LOVE?

- How does integrity impact:
 - o Our work?

 - o Our marriage?

 - o Our relationship to God?

- Our relationship to others outside our fellowship?

 - Our relationship to our fellowship/brothers?

 - Our reputation?
- How can we be sure to maintain our integrity? Cf. II Corinthians 4:2

What does renounce imply in this verse?

What part does truth play in integrity from this verse?

What is the place of conscience in integrity from this verse

Who do you know that exhibits a determined integrity?



Modern-day Example of Integrity: Charles Pike

Charles Pike is married and has two sons. I will never forget the time that he came into an elder meeting distressed from some of the situations he was facing at his work. His boss was asking him to do something that Charles felt was not ethical to do. He had to take a stand and tell his boss he could not do it unsure of what the outcome would be for his job. Integrity stands for doing the right thing regardless of what the cost might be. Charles has demonstrated that commitment in his life and leadership.