

***A Note to Coaches:
What is Integrity for an Athlete?***

Integrity. What do we mean when we use this word? We hear it used as a description of an honorable person. “He is a man of integrity.” Is this praise merely a vague way to describe the way someone lives, or does integrity have a more significant meaning? Scripture identifies Job as a man of integrity. How did he earn such a distinguished legacy?

My dictionary tells me that integrity is “adherence to a code of rules; honesty; utter sincerity; candor.” The term is commonly used to describe someone who consistently lives according to the set of values that our society has deemed to be good. Especially today, that standard is often based upon nothing more than what people decide is right (or sometimes simply acceptable) *in their own eyes*.

Throughout this study, you will lead your athletes to a more Biblical understanding of integrity. A study of Scripture allows us to define integrity as “living a life worthy of the calling you have received.” We can, then, rightly appreciate integrity as living according to what you believe; but this discipline is not merely the act of strictly following a set of rules, but rather is a beautiful response to the awesome work that Christ has done in our lives. Not merely duty, it is a response to the lavish love that has been poured out on us. The compulsion to give ourselves fully to that love is the integrity that can define our lives.

Unfortunately, integrity does *not* often accurately describe our culture’s popular athletes; in fact, it probably isn’t a quality that most athletes deeply desire. As you and your teams embark on this study throughout your coming seasons, our hope is that you will develop a passion and a vision for being teams, coaches, and individual athletes that are known for their integrity on and off the playing field.