

# MODULE 1: THE STORY OF YOUR LIFE

## SESSION 6: YOU BECOME WHAT YOU CHOOSE

### Key Ideas for This Session:

- Purity includes honesty consistently executed in all aspects of our lives.
- All the choices we make—big or small—are a reflection of where we stand and what we really value.
- Our values act as a set of rules, ideals, or guidelines for the decisions we make and the kinds of things we pursue.
- Key verse: Psalm 51:10:  
*Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

### Our Character Drives Our Actions:

Character, values, attitudes, and actions are inter-connected. Personal integrity is considered to be a core character trait. Integrity means honesty, but it means more than that. It means “oneness” or wholeness and unity. Another way to describe integrity is purity—as in a substance that is not mixed with or contaminated by other things.

In terms of character, integrity is defined as consistency between word and deed or between what we believe and what we do. This requires consistency between who we really are on the inside (our character) and our decisions and actions.

### Integrity is Purity of Heart:

Read Psalm 24:1-4

*The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; <sup>2</sup> for He founded it on the seas and established it on the waters. <sup>3</sup> Who may ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may stand in His holy place? <sup>4</sup> The one*

*who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.*

Read Matthew 5:8

***Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.***

What does it mean to have clean hands and a pure heart?

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Also read Psalm 51:1-10

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love; according to Your great compassion blot out my transgressions. <sup>2</sup> Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. <sup>3</sup> For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. <sup>4</sup> Against You, You only, have I sinned and done what is evil in Your sight; so You are right in Your verdict and justified when You judge. <sup>5</sup> Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me. <sup>6</sup> Yet You desired faithfulness even in the womb; You taught me wisdom in that secret place. <sup>7</sup> Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. <sup>8</sup> Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones You have crushed rejoice. <sup>9</sup> Hide Your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquity. <sup>10</sup> Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*

This is a Psalm written by King David. What is he asking of God?

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What do these three Scriptures above have to do with integrity?

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Is integrity an important character trait to you? Yes/No (Explain.)

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## Your Life—Your Choices

For most of us, the story of our lives is really a mixed bag of “the good, the bad, and the ugly.” Every day since we are old enough to remember we have been making small and big decisions. Should I do what my mother wants? Should I do my homework or watch TV or play video games? Should I go drinking with my friends? Should I have sex with the person I met at the party? How do we make these choices? Is it just a matter of how we feel at the time? Or is there some other basis for choosing one thing over another?

Why do we make good choices and why do we make bad choices?

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Much of who we are and how we act is based on our character. Values are linked with our character. Personal values are things that are valuable, important, and significant to us. Our values act as a set of rules, ideals, or guidelines for the decisions we make and the kinds of things we pursue. Our personal values express what is most important to us as well as the things that are not important to us.

Not all of our values are things we have consciously adopted for ourselves. Many of our values are handed down to us in our families and take shape in our earliest years. This does not mean that those values are locked in, but it does mean that unless we adopt other values either consciously or unconsciously, those will be the values we accept as our own.

The bottom line is this—whatever our values may be and wherever they have come from, our personal values reflect the “desires of our heart.” The decisions and choices you make inevitably reflect what is important to you and what you really value.

There are literally hundreds of things that can be considered values. Look over the following list of 48 common values and circle those values you think are especially important to you, personally. These would be your core values.

Authenticity	Justice	Adventure	Authority
Autonomy	Beauty	Love	Courage
Community	Creativity	Curiosity	Kindness
Fairness	Faith	Fame	Family
Friendships	Winning	Happiness	Hard Work
Harmony	Honesty	Humour	Influence
Achievement	Peace	Knowledge	Compassion
Loyalty	Stability	Trust	Optimism
Determination	Pleasure	Popularity	Recognition
Reputation	Respect	Truth	Spirituality
Meaningful Work	Success	Status	Openness
Security	Wealth	Fun	Wisdom

Are there any values missing from this list that you think are important? Write them in the space below and circle those that are important to you.


Review the list of the values you have circled or written, and select the five you think are reflected for better or worse in your life choices so far. (Explain.)

- 1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) \_\_\_\_\_

Review the list of values again and select the five values you want your life to be about going forward. (Explain.)

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

4) \_\_\_\_\_

5) \_\_\_\_\_

**Playing Life Forward:**

We have been talking about our life story and the various aspects that make up our history as well as who we are and how we live. None of this determines the end of our story. Sometimes as we look back on our lives it is easy to become depressed or to think that it is impossible to change.

Understanding our own story, owning it, and then understanding ourselves (our character, values, and attitudes) is the foundation for changing our story line. From there, we need further support. This includes the help of family and friends, maybe professional counsellors, and case workers. But most importantly, we need God’s transforming power.

Read Philippians 5:13

***I can do all this through [Christ] who gives me strength.***

How will your story continue once you return to the community? Only you can write the next chapter—nobody can write it for you.

Break into small groups and discuss the following if there is time, or think about these topics this week:

- *For every day of the week ahead, choose one of your values listed above, and put it into action:*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday

Friday	Saturday	Sunday

- *In the box below, draw a picture that comes to mind as you think about Psalm 24:1-4 or Matthew 5:8.*



- *Meditate on Psalm 51:1-10.*