

WARM UP | It has been said that “environments do not **make** who we are, but **reveal** who we are.” This is very true indeed when we carefully observe how people behave when they are under pressure.

During a camp retreat, a co-worker who was not acting like his normal self became very grumpy when the meal was served late. He said, “I just can’t help being grumpy when I am hungry.” People do reveal their true character when under stress.

About one quarter of the books in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, and about half of John’s gospel were about the last week of our Lord Jesus’ life on earth. The incredible pressure mounting on Jesus during his last week on earth was more than just physical, but spiritual. However our Lord displayed such an amazing, perfect character of integrity and love to the people till the end. In His dying breath on the cross, He still stretched out His love and care to people around Him. Jesus suffered for us to leave us an example that we should follow in His steps. We will receive a rich welcome into His eternal kingdom when we grow in faith. (2 Peter 1:11)

READ | 2 Peter 1:3-11; Matthew 5:3-10

BACKGROUND | Faith is a journey and growing involves step-by-step addition. It is a progression of spiritual attributes (2 Pet 1:5-7) and spiritual blessedness (Matt 5:3-10). Meditate on the correlation between the following eight steps of growing in faith:

- Faith**
 - ⌚ Poor in spirit (not by work)
 - ⌚ Justification
- Goodness**
 - ⌚ Mourning (first fruit of faith)
 - ⌚ Repentance
- Knowledge**
 - ⌚ Meekness
 - ⌚ Power
- Self-control**
 - ⌚ Hunger and thirst for righteousness
 - ⌚ Faithfulness
- Perseverance**
 - ⌚ Mercy
 - ⌚ Joy
- Godliness**
 - ⌚ Pureness in heart
 - ⌚ Holiness
- Brotherly kindness**
 - ⌚ Peacemaker
 - ⌚ Peace
- Love**
 - ⌚ Persecuted because of righteousness
 - ⌚ Agape love

QUESTIONS |

- 1 Why is it so important that when under pressure your bottom line is determined by your moral integrity?
- 2 Discuss what you think of the following statement by Ralph Waldo Emerson, “The greatest glory is not in never failing, but in rising up every time we fail”.



- 3 Discuss in your past experience how God kept you by His power through faith. (1 Peter 1:5)
- 4 There is a price for everything; hence there is a cost in carrying the cross to follow Jesus daily. Discuss why integrity is so important.



MY RESPONSE AS A PROMISE KEEPER |

What do I need to apply from what I have learned from this study?

IT'S TIME FOR PRAYER |

CONSIDER THIS |

⌚ No man can purchase his integrity too dearly, for it is the only thing whose value must ever increase with the price it has cost us.

⌚ Our integrity is never worth so much as when we have parted with our all to keep it.

⌚ If you lose your money, you have lost nothing; if you lose your health, you have lost something; if you lose your integrity, you have lost everything.

⌚ Better is the poor who walks in his integrity than one perverse in his ways, though he be rich. (Proverbs 28:6)

⌚ It is not what we eat but what we digest that makes us strong; not what we gain but what we save that makes us rich; not what we read but what we remember that makes us learned; and not what we profess but what we practise that gives us integrity.

WRAP UP | Make

Psalm 15 our checklist and prayer: How do we get invited to God’s dinner table? **Relationship with self:** Walk right, act right and tell the truth. (Psalm 15:1-2) **Relationship with others:** Don’t hurt your friends; don’t blame your neighbour; despise the despicable; keep your word even when it costs you; make an honest living, and never take a bribe. (Psalm 15:3-5)