

MESSAGE

Character Systems

Part of Jesus' teaching is that we can never become who God made us to be if we simply aim at doing the right things. We must aim at becoming the right kind or person who naturally does what is right. – This thought comes from Dallas Willard

Character is not the same as "skills for success," and success is not necessarily a sign of moral integrity. – John Ortberg

If we say that a person who lives and leads with integrity is healthy, and a person who doesn't is not healthy, then we are able to use the systems of the human body as a metaphor and structure to explore the different elements of integrity.

The human body has 12 different systems, all of which are vital to our existence as living humans beings. If anyone of those 12 systems falters or fails the entire body is affected and risks the possibility of death or incapacitation. Therefore in order for us to lead healthy lives we need to maintain the health of our bodily systems, if we don't, we may be excluded from living life.

My perspective on integrity is the same. If we don't keep the 12 systems of integrity healthy (and in check) in our leadership (and life) then even if only one system (for example: trust) were to break down, we risk the possibility of incapacitation or the death of our leadership influence. In short, our bodies have 12 systems, if one breaks down we get sick. Our leadership also has 12 Integrity systems, if one breaks down our leadership gets sick. Therefore the condition of our character is the indicator of our leadership health.

This perspective paves the way for us to examine the twelve integrity systems that need to be alive and well in our leadership if we are to lead in a healthy way. Throughout this series we will look at the symptoms of character failure and what we need to do to address them. It also needs to be said at this point that I am no medical expert, and have arrived at the conclusions presented here by my own personal study means. I do not in any way claim to understand the medical implications raised here. My purpose is to use the Systems of our bodies as a way of understanding the role integrity has in our leadership.

Below is a list of the character qualities we're going to look at.

Trustworthiness	<input type="checkbox"/>	Empathy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Diligence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loyalty	<input type="checkbox"/>	Respect	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dependability	<input type="checkbox"/>
Determination	<input type="checkbox"/>	Humility	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tolerance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Self-control	<input type="checkbox"/>	Servanthood	<input type="checkbox"/>	Generosity	<input type="checkbox"/>

These were refined from Bill Gothard's work featured at <http://billgothard.com/bill/teaching/characterqualities/> where he presents 49 Operational Definitions of Character Qualities. There are many other resources available (use Google) which present varying list of what is and what isn't a character quality. It has been my aim to refine these expansive and thorough lists down to a manageable number of character qualities that encompass many similar qualities under each broad yet concise category.

May I encourage you to score yourself out of ten on each of these qualities, in terms of how healthy they are. These two questions may help:

- 1) Does my life and leadership cause others to *trust* me?
- 2) Am I *trusting* of others?

This may be a great way for you to open up and warm up to the material that is to follow in the coming weeks.