Discussion Question:
Do you behave a certain way when you are with your friends or people you know well? Do you behave oppositely when you are alone or anonymous or in front of strangers? Why?
  Example: Being nice with your friends, but when you are by yourself you are rude?

What is integrity?
- ⚐ I believe there are four components to integrity: what you say, do (how you live your life), believe, and all these things in a morally upright fashion (explain about evil). When all four of these are in alignment with one another then there is integrity.
- ⚐ When one of these four components are not in alignment then there is a lack of integrity.

Previously we've looked at how characters in the bible in some way failed to maintain integrity, but now I want to shift the focus to Jesus and how he has integrity and why that integrity is important. Before we looked at Peter and Abraham and how they acted out of fear because they did not trust in God. Peter was done in by peer-pressure and Abraham was done in by lack of trust.

Jesus lived his life like an arrow because right from the beginning he was very clear with what he was here to do (say), what he held important (believed), how he carried it all out (do) and all this being morally upright before God. Let us take a small glimpse by reading **Matt 4:1-11**

Context: Before this John the Baptist was baptizing people and telling them to turn away from their sins. Jesus was then baptized by John and the spirit descended upon Him and led him to the dessert. This all happened before Jesus began his ministry with other people

Matthew gives us an account of how Jesus was all alone in the wilderness of the dessert and only Satan was with him. Let's take a look at how Jesus responded:
- ⚐ (vv. 3-4) Satan told Jesus that to prove He is the Son of God He needed to turn stones into bread.
  - ◦ Jesus reply was that man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from God
  - ◦ Jesus chose obedience (submission) over physical need
  - ◦ Did not take matters into his own hands, but chose to rely on God
  - ◦ Benefit from temptation: food
- ⚐ (vv. 5-7) Satan told Jesus that to prove He is the Son of God He needed to throw himself off the temple because scripture says that angels with protect Him
  - ◦ Jesus replied that you should not put God to the test
  - ◦ Testing God implies that you doubt (presume) God
  - ◦ Benefit from temptation: pride
  - ◦ Side note: beware the misuse of scripture because Satan used scripture but it was out of context
- ⚐ (vv. 8-10) Lastly, Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and how they could belong to Him as long as He bowed down and worshipped Satan
  - ◦ Jesus told Satan to leave because scripture commands that we worship God only
  - ◦ World belong to God so Satan had no right to give it away

At the beginning I asked if you all behaved differently with different groups of people or when you are alone. Here Jesus maintained absolute integrity. What Jesus believed (that only God should be worshipped, that God should not be tested, that obedience to God is more important than physical needs, but we are still dependant on God on our physical needs) is matched exactly by what he said and did and this was all done according to God's standards.

Jesus behaved this way regardless of the fact that no one was there to witness it. He maintained integrity before God. He did not compromise what he believed or how he behaved or what he said simply because he was alone.

Here is therefore a good "measuring stick" for whether you have integrity or not in your own life. Do you behave the same around your friends, family, strangers and when you are alone?

I think often times when we are with people we don't know or when we are by ourselves we behave differently because we believe no one will keep a record of what we are doing.
For example, where do your eyes turn to when you're along on the computer? Do we get angry when someone cuts

in front of you in traffic or when public transit is very slow? Do you say good things about someone when they are around you and then gossip about them behind their back?

Why is it important that Jesus have integrity?
- ⚴ Because He is the fulfilment of all of God's promises to us
- ⚴ God said he would bring someone who will deliver us from our sins and Jesus is that someone
- ⚴ We believe that God is a God of both mercy and justice

What happened if Jesus did not have integrity?
Then he was simply another man who lived on the earth and would at times fail to meet God's standards
God's justice demands that when we fail to reach his perfectness that a price must be paid and that price is death
- ⚴ If Jesus failed to have integrity then when he died on the cross he died for himself and not for us since his own sin caused him to die

The punishment for sin is death because God is a holy God (this is part of who he is) and cannot stand sin. Before God, people who've committed sin must pay the price
- ⚴ Romans 6:23

What is sin?
- ⚴ people that have put other things as their number one in their hearts instead of God – people that lacked integrity
- ⚴ active rebellion against God's rightful rule over our life
  - ◦ God actually wants the best things for us, but it's us that chooses to rebel
- ⚴ Romans 3:23

So what hope is there for us?
- ⚴ Our hope is in God's mercy
- ⚴ In His mercy He sent Jesus who we just saw had perfect integrity and Jesus decided to take that place of death for us
  - ◦ It would not be just for a sinless person to die
    - ▪ punishment without a crime
  - ◦ It is not righteous to let sin go
  - ◦ because Christ took the punishment the righteousness of God was satisfied
- ⚴ 1 Cor 15:3-4: For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,
  - ◦ Why did Christ rise from the dead?
    - ▪ Because He conquered death and punishment for sin no longer has a hold. His death and resurrection made it so that we can have eternal life
- ⚴ Jesus who is perfect took our place of death and an exchanged took place:
  - ◦ Christ is perfect (had the right relationship with God)
  - ◦ We have sin (rebellious)
  - ◦ Christ took our sin/guilt/condemned status/shame (the bad stuff)
  - ◦ We are credited Christ's perfect "status"
- ⚴ This is what Jesus did for us and this is what God sees in us if we believe and trust in God's promises: That Jesus is who he said He is → the Son of God who came from heaven to die on the cross for our sins and rise from the dead three days later
  - ◦ → that we recognize we need a saviour
  - ◦ → that we ask for forgiveness
  - ◦ → that we can start living the life that God wants us to

My challenge to you is this:
- ⚴ For those who don't know Christ, we have all lacked integrity in some point in our lives. We therefore have sin and the only way to save us from God's judgement of sin is through Jesus. Will you choose to trust in Jesus as the one who can save?

- For those who trust in Jesus, we too lack integrity in our lives, but through Jesus we can live a life of integrity. Pray that God will empowered you through Jesus to make the right choices for integrity.
- Especially when you are alone, how do you choose to live your life?