

June 24, 2011

A Man of Integrity
by Charles R. Swindoll

Read [1 Samuel 16:1--11](#)

God knew David had the quality of *integrity*. Today, we live in a world that says, in many ways, "If you make a good impression, that's really all that matters." But you will never be a man or woman of God if that's your philosophy. Never. You cannot fake it with the Almighty. He is not impressed with externals. He always focuses on the inward qualities, those things that take time and discipline to cultivate. God trained David for a leadership role with four disciplines.

First, God trained David in *solitude*. He needed to learn life's major lessons all alone before he could be trusted with responsibilities and rewards before the public. Solitude has nurturing qualities all its own. Anyone who must have superficial sounds to survive lacks depth. If you can't stand to be alone with yourself, you have deep, unresolved issues in your inner life. Solitude has a way of bringing those issues to the surface.

Second, David grew up in *obscurity*. That's another way God trains His best personnel---in obscurity. Men and women of God, servant-leaders in the making, are first unknown, unseen, unappreciated, and unapplauded. In the quiet context of obscurity, character is built. Strange as it may seem, those who first accept the silence of obscurity are best qualified to handle the applause of popularity.

Which leads us to the third training ground, *monotony*. That's being faithful in the menial, insignificant, routine, unexciting, uneventful, daily tasks of life. Life without a break . . . without the wine and roses. Just dull, plain L-I-F-E. Just constant, unchanging, endless hours of tired monotony as you learn to be a man or woman of God . . . with nobody else around, when nobody else notices, when nobody else even cares. That's how we learn to "king it."

That brings us to the fourth discipline: *reality*. Up until now you might have the feeling that despite the solitude, obscurity, and monotony, David was just sitting out on some hilltop in a mystic haze, composing a great piece of music, or relaxing in the pastures of Judea and having a great time training those sheep to sit on their hind legs. That's not true.