



# HISTORY INTEGRITY TRUTH SCRIPTURE

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## July 2019 Newsletter Integrity – Applied Truth

This month, as promised, it's time to bring up the idea of integrity. It's a big deal, possibly a hot button issue in modern American culture and life, especially in the realm of politics. We have just endured the kickoff of many presidential candidacies, preparatory to an election which will take place in November 2020, some 17 months from now. One of the big issues promises to be rooted in the integrity of candidates and their ideas. As I said in the title above, integrity is "applied truth."

Sadly, I fear that our political world has less integrity than I need to draw an illustration. Further, it is entirely too heated in most people's minds. For this reason, I'm going to move to what I think is a superior source of wise illustrations, literary sources. In great literature we find examples of people, bad and good, wise and foolish, scoundrels and saints. It's safe to analyze them.

I confess to having a lot of trouble choosing a literary character who exemplifies integrity. This is not because there are so few, but because there are so many. They are almost always the people without whom a plot would fall apart. Do I choose my friend Esther Summerson? What about John Jarndyce? Or possibly George Knightley? Elinor Dashwood comes to mind. However, since some people really dislike 19<sup>th</sup> century British literature, I'm going to go with a 20<sup>th</sup> century character, Sam Gamgee. Sam has few aspirations. He is quite satisfied with his life as a gardener for the more flashy Frodo Baggins. He's not well travelled. He's not erudite. But when the itinerant wizard tells him in no uncertain terms to stick with Frodo on a journey, once he agrees he will not turn back. He keeps his word to the full extent of his ability, even when he fears it is useless or will bring him harm. He acts in a manner consistent with his claims.

That's the heart of integrity. When we make a claim, we try to live it out. We do it even if it seems counter-intuitive. We allow the truth to rule. We live out those historical precedents when we see that they are right. We do it even if it goes against our current culture, against our intuition, against our desires. We keep the ring secret while the giant spider is trying to kill us. We know it's a ring that will try to bring our destruction rather than be thrown into the Crack of Doom, but we move it along toward its destination anyway. We know it must be done so we will carry our boss up the mountainside when he is no longer able to walk. We return home knowing that our efforts may well have saved civilization as we know it, then we patiently return to our garden, our family, our quiet and fulfilling life.

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry emphasizes Christian integrity. Do we assert that Jesus is the only hope in a dying world? Then we urge people, including ourselves, to trust in him. Do we recognize that the Scripture speaks to the deepest of human needs and of ills in the world? Then we take it at face value as giving a message of peace with God through repentant faith in the work of Jesus, a peace which will be able to govern all our other interactions in the world. Do we claim that in Christ there is free forgiveness? Then we fight attempts to be saved by Jesus plus anything else. Do we confess that the Scripture is right? Then we will stake our very lives on it.

The Christian, then, strives to live a life of integrity. We accept that we are at one and the same time redeemed saints and sinful by nature. We recognize both, calling sin what it is and warning of the deadly effects. We revel in forgiveness but realize that we all need forgiveness because we all sin. We pray, we study, we care for one another and for our world, and we recognize that it will all be done imperfectly. Yet we go ahead and do it. We live this life, fighting against our own sin and the sinful state of our world, knowing that the Lord who created and redeemed it all is still working in us. This is integrity. It is an application of the truth.

Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry helps people in the collegiate communities of Columbia Missouri to live a life of integrity. It isn't easy. But it sure is good! We're glad for all our partners in this work.

### **Wittenberg Door Financial Update**

Thanks for all your help keeping us going with real, face-to-face pastoral care on the college campuses in Columbia! You will notice that I have taken out the GoFundMe picture that has appeared here the past several months. I have done that for two reasons. First, and most important, Wittenberg Door supporters almost never make contributions through that platform. Rather than going to the effort to maintain a record there, we want to make it simpler. Second, in recent months GoFundMe has become much more politically active, lobbying for causes which we can't endorse. Although we realize that all the fundraising platforms are going to be this way, GoFundMe has been more overt than some. If you want to avoid such political activism and maximize your contribution, remember that we are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit tax exempt organization and that checks mailed to us are deposited with no commission paid to any intermediary. Most of our contributions are actually received this way.

We're still below our fundraising goal for the year to date, as well as being below our expense budget for year to date. We're working actively during these summer months to visit congregations, tell people about the work we're doing, and stay visible, especially to newcomers on the college campuses. I hope you'll keep helping us meet our financial goals so we can bring that face-to-face pastoral care to our local campuses. Wittenberg Door Campus Ministry is entirely funded by the generosity of individuals and groups who want to help us bring care to our campuses. Giving is easy! Simply visit our website at [www.wittenbergcomo.com](http://www.wittenbergcomo.com) and click on "about" and "support us." I've got many upcoming opportunities to tell local churches about this ministry. Is yours on the list? Let's keep it moving! I'm always glad to tell church groups about what we do to make a difference on our local campuses and around the world.

## Uganda Update:

Schools run on a different schedule in Uganda than they do in the United States. I recently learned that the third school term of the year begins in August. Right now I think they are in their second school term. In the impoverished area of Kaliro where Pastor Simon Peter is working, the literacy rate is only about 25%. Being able to read and write is a key to economic and cultural success. So one of the important works of the local church is to help people learn to read and write. In



addition to planting a church congregation that will almost certainly serve as the mother church to other congregations, Simon Peter is working to build a school ministry. Tuition is low by American standards, about \$30 per student per term. Students receive some food benefits as well, which, for

some, is their best hope of having food regularly. Most importantly, every subject in a Christian school is taught from a theistic standpoint. Students learn that the reality of God in this world makes sense of everything in ways that the concept of random evolution and blind forces cannot. Over the years, learning to think “Christianly” (Thanks to Francis Schaeffer for the term), the concepts of loving and serving one’s neighbors for the sake of Christ and His kingdom become second nature. A Christian education will be the key to a stable society. Our friends in Kaliro are doing what they can to make it happen.



I’m really looking forward to meeting these folks face to face in January. It will be an honor to visit in their home, to meet the hundreds of students in the school, to coach several dozen pastors who are serving at their posts even though they don’t have the educational background we take for granted in this country, and to remind and be reminded of the hope we have in Christ. A few months ago, Simon Peter said, in passing, that historic Reformational

Christianity is the same everywhere in the world. Christianity is truly a body which is not bounded by historical or cultural borders. We join together as brothers and sisters under the care of the one true and mighty God.



## Upcoming Activities:

July 4 – Picnic and fireworks at the Richmonds' house, text or email for details.

July 14 Christ Lutheran, Ellis KS

July 15-19 Youth Conference, Estes Park CO

July 21 Christ Lutheran, Ellis KS

July 26 (Friday, Tentative) – a fun dinner

August 4 St. John's Lutheran Church, Stringtown MO

August 12-13 (Monday-Tuesday) Mizzou International Welcome Activities

August 16 (Friday) The First Dinner Night of the New Academic Year!

August 18 Christ Lutheran Church, Duluth MN

**We always have something new at the website, the blog, and the activities calendar. Please be a friend on Facebook and follow us on Twitter. If you're in Columbia, let's get together on or near campus. Go to <https://www.wittenbergcomo.com/support-us.html> to provide financial support. The Wittenberg Door 300 needs you!**