



# Berean Christian Fellowship

## DEVOTIONAL 232.0

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### Cognitive Dissonance—P1

**“O Lord, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, and speaks truth in his heart” (Psalm 15:1-2).**

Integrity—the state of being whole or undivided. Integrity of heart or mind means that you are whole in your devotion, purpose, understanding, or behavior—without ulterior motives, divided loyalties, or conflicting beliefs.

A technical term for “conflicting beliefs” is “Cognitive Dissonance.” It means: “the state of having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes, especially as relating to behavioral decisions and attitude change” — believing opposite things to both be true at the same time, not realizing they contradict each.

Cognitive Dissonance can prevent people from building a foundation of truth. Think on this illustration: you’ve purchased a furniture kit in a box that was advertised to have everything you need to put the chair together. But when you open it up, there are dozens of parts mixed in that don’t actually belong and can’t be used to construct the chair. Not knowing any better, you work day and night to put it together, but never make any progress.

In like manner, Cognitive Dissonance prevents progress in our understanding or growth in the truth and keeps us from a firm foundation. Sometimes it comes from our own misunderstanding of something, while other times Cognitive Dissonance is purposefully sown into our minds and hearts by manipulative people. Perhaps you are a feminist, yet you support Sharia Islam, OR you support children’s rights, yet you agree abortion should be legal, OR perhaps you are a “follower” of Christ, yet you employ political or violent means to achieve the “Kingdom of God.” These are examples of people who lack integrity—many of whom are suffering from cognitive dissonance, not realizing the inconsistency of their beliefs.

And is it any surprise? We’re being inun-

dated with Cognitive Dissonance—in books, movies, television, news—everywhere! Characters in stories, politicians, experts, and the like, say one thing is true (A) and then do something completely opposite (B) as if they are both compatible (A=B). This sows confusion and disrupts our progress towards constructing a truthful worldview because “A” does not actually equal “B”.

Why is this done? Because people are easily manipulated if they don’t have integrity—they can’t construct a framework to understand the truth. Their minds are filled with inconsistent, unanchored thoughts, leaving them incapable of recognizing the firm, logical foundation of truth to build their understanding upon. Instead, they must rely on their emotions to “know” what is true and right—situation by situation. And emotions are not only easily manipulated but often contrary to the truth. When a crisis comes, they have no foundation to weather the storm and are swept away in the mob, trial, or hardship to their ruin by their flesh, *“like a man who built a house on the ground without any foundation; and the torrent burst against it and immediately it collapsed, and the ruin of that house was great”* (Lk. 6:49).

Instead, strive for integrity—seek the true foundation and build upon it: *“Everyone who comes to Me and hears My words and acts on them...is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid a foundation on the rock; and when a flood occurred, the torrent burst against that house and could not shake it, because it had been well built”* (Lk. 6:47-48).

May we say with David, *“I will give heed to the blameless way. When will You come to me? I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; It shall not fasten its grip on me”* (Ps. 101:2-3). May we seek the integrity of God in our hearts and minds so that we may be wise as serpents at the schemes of the devil to destroy us in the storms of life. Even so, Amen.