

Risë Rafferty- Simplicity & Sincerity
Monday – August 24, 2026

2 Cor 1:12–14- “Now this is our boast: our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with simplicity and godly sincerity...”

This is important to Paul, his boast, his conscience testifying that his conduct in the world, his ministry, relationships, his life is characterized by 2 things:

What does simplicity and godly sincerity look like? Paul explains by contrast, he goes on and he says, “not with fleshly wisdom.” Fleshly wisdom in contrast with godly sincerity.

1 C 2:13- Paul compares man’s wisdom vs how the HS teaches: comparing spiritual things with spiritual
Characteristic of human wisdom- is that it does not compare spiritual things with spiritual but instead spiritual things with fleshly stuff- mixture. Topic of science as an example where scientific method and research has led to incredible discoveries, physiological understanding + human conjecturing of the origin of man – evolution.

Fleshly wisdom-mixed motives (James 3:13) compares “Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom. **But** if you have bitter envy, self-seeking in your hearts this is earthly wisdom, not the wisdom that comes from above. which is why when simplicity and godly sincerity are absent-display, formalism, extravagant ceremonies, look at me take its place.

Author of the lesson points to other 2 bible passages that provide contrast to help us understand simplicity and godly sincerity:

2 C 2:17 “For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God, but as of sincerity...”

Corrupting the truth is opposite of sincerity. = to retail-using the truth for personal gain, to adulterate-change. Insert our thoughts, ideas

2 Cor 4:2 – “not walking in craftiness (ulterior motives- deceit, lack of transparency) nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth”

Sincerity = manifested in the life, more than head knowledge, free from pretense, deceit, hypocrisy

Sincerity by itself is not enough. you can be as sincere as sincere can be while walking in darkness, believing lies, wrong path, doing the wrong thing, exerting a wrong influence, does not make it right.

“I may be perfectly sincere in following a wrong road, but that will not make it the right road, or bring me to the place I wished to reach.”

There are 3 qualities that I see in Scripture that provide a clear definition of godly sincerity.

1. this isn’t about Me
2. Truth
3. It’s from God not man- what man thinks about it doesn’t change Me or the truth

John the Baptist-example of a life of simplicity and godly sincerity.

John the Baptist said:

1. I must decrease
2. he bore witness of the truth (Jn 5:33),
3. manifested in his life- he didn’t live in reference to what man thought about him.- bold to call them out.

If we want to see what Godly sincerity looks like; Jesus = God in the flesh –didn't need extravagant display or formalism to be Who He was and do what He did.

In Jn 5:30 Jesus said succinctly to His disciples:

"I can of mine own self do nothing: I bear witness of the truth. I receive not testimony from man" (Jn 5:30) – this is godly sincerity.

1. this isn't about Me
2. Truth
3. It's from God not man- what man thinks about it doesn't change Me or the truth

Jesus said:

1. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but he who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true (Jn 7:18) " I do not seek My Own glory" (8:50). I glorified Your name on the earth (17:)
2. For this cause I was born, for this cause I came into the world to bear witness to the truth (Jn 18:37) I am the truth (14:6), God's word is truth (17:7)
3. "I do not receive honor from man" (Jn 5:41) How can you believe who receive honor from one another and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? (5:44) because I tell you the truth you do not believe me (8:45)

This is godly sincerity

1. this isn't about Me
2. Truth
3. It's from God not man- what man thinks about it doesn't change Me or the truth

Paul, John the Baptist, Jesus – examples of living in simplicity and godly sincerity

What about with us?

God is inviting us to

Can you think of other examples in Scripture of people who lived in simplicity and godly sincerity, what do you think, how can this be manifested in our lives?

"Now this is our boast: our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, with simplicity and godly sincerity..."

Wasn't it for myself, seeking to uplift the truth in my life, manifest the truth, and that truth is God inspired – I march to His drum not man's

John 14:10

"...the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."

John 12:49–50

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak..."

John 8:28

“...I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things.”

John 7:16

“My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.”