The greatest threat to the church is not persecution. It’s not the rise of atheism, Islam, or liberal politics. It’s not the Pope. And it’s not the rampaging immorality of the world around us.

No, the greatest threat to the church—and to individual believers—is compromise.

If this current election cycle has taught us anything, it’s that the world has no use for fixed ideologies any more. People will go along with whatever works—or merely appears to work—in the need of the moment. It doesn’t matter what you have to say or do, as long as you get the results you’re after.

Many in the church have already succumbed to the same kind of pragmatism. It seems there is no end to the redefining, reimagining, and redacting of Scripture for the sake of appealing to audiences still fervently in love with their sin. Too many professing believers play fast and loose with God’s Word, presuming their ingenuity can make it more potent to reach sinners and transform lives.

Personal compromise is just as insidious. The testimony of the entire church—not to mention that of the Lord and His Word—is damaged whenever a Christian is exposed as a hypocrite. In fact, the way we live is often a more powerful testimony than what we say. Our lives need to back up the truth we claim to believe, or we’re actively undermining the progress of the gospel in the lives of those around us.

In these pragmatic, compromising days, Christians need to faithfully cultivate and protect their integrity. It’s an increasingly rare commodity in this world, and it gives credibility to the truth we proclaim.

We recently asked John MacArthur about the importance of integrity: how to develop it, protect it, and earn it back once it has been compromised. Here’s what he said:

In the days ahead, we’re going to consider what God’s Word says about integrity—how to develop it, how to nurture it, and how to guard it from the duplicitous nature of our fallen flesh. The example of your day-to-day life might be the strongest, clearest testimony you have. What do you want it to say about God, His Word, and His church?