

Honesty

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Introduction: It is impossible to know God and live a Christian life without a deep commitment to honesty. **(Col 3:9; Eph 4:25)**

- A. Our society does not think twice about telling a lie.
- B. Sadly dishonesty is a problem in the Lord's church as well.
 - 1. Paul warned that the false teachers of his day would say anything to accomplish their purposes. **(Col 2:8-9; Eph 4:14-15; Jude 1:16-20)**
 - 2. We too can be tempted to use dishonesty in the "Lord's" work. **(2 Cor 4:1-2; 1 Thess 2:3-5)**
 - 3. I have seen and heard of far too many instances where men and women were caught up in the sin of a party spirit which resulted in "lies for the cause."
- C. Those who live in the truth and tell the truth will be greatly blessed!**(1 Pet 3:10-11)**

I. What is honesty?

- A. What is "honesty"? Webster defines the word as follows:
 - 1. Originally, (a) honorable; held in respect; (b) respectable, creditable, commendable, seemly, etc.: a generalized epithet of commendation .
 - 2. That will not lie, cheat, or steal; truthful; trustworthy.
 - 3. (a) As showing fairness and sincerity; straightforward; free from deceit. . .
(b) gained or earned by fair methods, not by cheating, lying, or stealing
- B. How can one be dishonest?
 - 1. By not telling the truth. 2. By exaggerating the facts.
 - 3. By giving a false appearance. **(1 Pet 3:1-2; Acts 5:1-5)**
 - 4. By only telling people what they want to hear. **(2 Tim 4:3-4)**
 - 5. By representing myth as truth. **(2 Tim 4:4; Titus 1:14)**

II. Why are men dishonest?

- A. To avoid short term pain. **(Prov 28:12-14)**
 - 1. Admitting a sin. 2. Not wanting to hurt another.
 - 3. To keep the association of others.
- B. To cover up other sin. **(Prov 26:24-26)**
 - 1. Another lie.
 - 2. Gossip and slander. When one lies they often will expand their lies rather than repent and confess their sins. **(Prov 10:18)**
 - 3. Dishonesty in business will led to much deceit.
- C. To please men. **(Gal 1:10)**
- D. To appear to be something that we are not. **(1 Pet 2:16)**
- E. Because of business
 - 1. Dishonest merchants **(Prov 11:1; 16:11)**
 - 2. Charging excessive interest rates. **(Prov 28:8)**
 - 3. Get -rich-quick schemes **(Prov 28:20, 22)**
 - a. This takes advantage of men in their unfortunate conditions!
Those who push gambling will take advantage of others.
 - b. Often the widows, orphans and ignorant are victims to these.
- F. In order to steal from others. **(Eph 4:28)**
 - 1. How do you fill out your taxes? 2. Do you take from your employer?
 - 3. Do you take from your family?

III. What are the fruits of honesty and dishonesty?

- A. Honesty will guide and deliver you. **(Prov 11:3, 5-6)**
- B. Honesty will bless the family. **(Prov 13:22; 20:7)**
- C. Honesty will let you speak with confidence. **(Psa 25:21; Psa 26:1, 11; Prov 10:9; Titus 2:7-8)**
 - 1. When you lie you will eventually get caught!
 - 2. When you speak the truth you do not have to remember your past statements.
- D. What will dishonesty do?
 - 1. Dishonesty will destroy your reputation. **(Psa 9:16; Prov 10:9)**
 - 2. Dishonesty will bring you in conflict with the law.
 - 3. Dishonesty will bring you into association with people like you. **(Prov 13:20-21)**
 - a. Honest people do not want to be around the dishonest.
 - 4. Dishonesty will take away good opportunities. **(Hosea 10:13)**
 - a. Will you do business with someone who lies to you?
 - b. Consider how a cheater cheats himself.
 - 5. Dishonesty will cause you to lie to yourself. You live a lie! **(Gal 6:7-8)**
 - 6. Dishonesty will cause you to follow evil more and more. **(2 Tim 3:13)**
 - 7. Dishonesty will destroy your family.
 - a. If you live a dishonest life your children will see and learn.
 - b. Dishonesty learned in the home will make the children vulnerable to other sins.
 - 8. Dishonesty will send you to hell. **(Rev 21:8-9; Psa 101:7)**
 - 9. Dishonesty will cause you to not be able to know the truth. **(2 Thess 2:9-12)**
 - 10. Dishonesty will cause you to be fearful and suspicious that others are on to you! **(Prov 28:1)**

IV. How to find and maintain an honest life.

- A. Build a strong character.
 - 1. Keep your promises!
 - 2. Pay whatever price you must to be honest. This takes strength but it will bless you greatly!
 - B. Choose associates who demand honesty. **(Prov 13:18; 15:31-33; Prov 26:1-4; Prov 27:5-6)**
 - 1. What a shame when men discard friends for their truthfulness.
 - 2. It is common for the drug addict to line up people around him who will not tell him the truth. The family of an alcoholic often is taught not to tell the truth.
 - C. Eliminate pride. **(Psa 10:2-4; 11:2-4; Psa 31:23; Psa 40:4; Prov 6:16-19)**
 - 1. Proud men will do anything to maintain their self deception.
 - 2. Why are men afraid of the truth?
 - D. Have the courage to confess your sin quickly. **(Prov 28:13)**
 - E. Guard the conscience. **(Phil 1:10; 1 Tim 1:5, 4:2)**
- Conclusion:** Who do you want to be like: God or Satan?
- A. Satan is the father of all lies. **(John 8:43-45; Acts 13:10; Heb 3:13; Mk 7:21-23)**
 - B. Jesus always spoke the truth. **(1 Pet 2:21-23; Prov 12:22)**