A GODLY LIFE

2. An Honest Life



Introduction

An office worker quietly slips a pen into her bag ... A shop assistant quotes a higher price than it should be ... A student cheats in his exam. These are just some examples of dishonest actions. Yet these things happen all around us and are accepted as normal. Whose standards should we accept – those of the world, or God's?

In Psalm 15 it says, 'Who shall dwell on God's holy hill? He who speaks truth from his heart.' Those who will enjoy God's presence now and in eternity are those who are honest.

We are learning what it means to live a Godly life. A person who is Godly will be an honest person.

| <u>1.</u> | Origen of Dishonesty |
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| • | What is the source of dishonesty? |
| | John 8:44 |
| • | Why is dishonesty such a problem in our society? |
| | Jeremiah 17:9 |
| • | As Christians, how should we deal with our dishonest heart? |
| | Colossians 3:9-10 |
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| <u>2.</u> | Result of Dishonesty |
| ~ | What affect will it have on our relationship with God if we are dishonest? |
| | Isaiah 59:1-4 |
| • | What is God's attitude towards dishonesty? |
| | Deuteronomy 25:16 |
| | Zechariah 8:16-17 |

3. Honesty in Practise

Honesty must penetrate every area of our lives. Allow the Holy Spirit to expose any areas of dishonesty. Sometimes there are things we do because it is accepted in society, but it may not be by God. Look at some of these common attitudes and see what God's Word says.



| 'It's okay to do this as my family needs the money for food.' Is a Christian justified in telling lies or cheating to help earn money? | | |
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| Leviticus 25:14 | | |
| Proverbs 20:23 | | |
| 'You just need to put a little under the table, then it will be all right.' What should be our attitude to bribery? | | |
| Amos 5:12 | | |
| 'You only need to pay your worker this much. They couldn't earn more anywhere else.' What should be a Christian employer's attitude be towards paying his employee? | | |
| Deuteronomy 24:14-15 | | |
| 'Everyone cheats on their taxes. That's not wrong.' What does God say about paying taxes? | | |
| Romans 13:6-7 | | |
| 'Most people take a few things home from the office – they expect that.' What should our standard be in this area? | | |
| Ephesians 4:28 | | |
| 'What should be our attitude to work? Why is this important? | | |
| Colossians 3:22-24 | | |
| 'Everyone cheats in exams!' Why is cheating definitely wrong for a Christian? | | |
| Leviticus 19:11 | | |
| Hebrews 4:13 | | |
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| Honesty in Speech | | |
| What does God say about the importance of speaking truthfully? | | |
| Colossians 3:9-10 | | |
| Fnhesians 4:15, 25 | | |

What reasons do these verses give us for being honest?

There are many forms of dishonest speech which we often justify. God's Word exposes these as sin. Let's look at some examples.



| A. Telling a partial truth | |
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| Read 1 Samuel 15:13, 16-21 | |
| In what way was Saul being dishonest? | |
| How did he try to justify himself? | |
| B. Allowing people to believe a false impression | |
| Read Genesis 37:26-28, 31-34 | |
| What did the brothers do to Joseph? | |
| In what way were they lying to their father? | |
| C. By Silence | |
| Read Acts 5:1-5 | |
| How were Ananias and Sapphira being dishonest? | |
| What was God's attitude to such dishonesty? | |
| D. Exaggeration | |
| Why do you think exaggeration is a form of dishonesty? Discuss. | |
| E. Failure to Keep Promises | |
| Someone asks to see you and you agree on a time. However, you don't really want to see that person! Later when you see that person you say you were too busy. | |
| How is breaking a promise dishonest? | |
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| Are there any of these subtle forms of dishonesty in your life? Allow the Holy S to bring them to the light and the blood of Jesus to cleanse you. | Spiri |
| Discuss Discuss In some cultures there are things that are acceptable. For example people feel better to tell a lie than hurt another person, or it is better to lie than lose face. In ways are these standards good, and in what ways do they contradict God's Word | wha |
| What can help us to live an honest life? | |
| Psalm 119:29-30 | |
| Acts 24:16 | |

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth, he said he sought to do what is right, not only in the eyes of the Lord, but also in the eyes of others. Let's make that our desire and goal too.

