

Truth Or Consequences

(Ephesians 6:10-18)

- Introduction:
1. Most of you have probably heard the question, “Do you want me to be honest with you?”
 2. What this question indicates is that this person does not always tell the truth.
 3. Honesty, or integrity is something that is desperately needed in our society.
 - a. Politicians, Merchants, Preachers.
 4. God places a high price on truth (Proverbs 23:23), and despises anything less than that (Proverbs 6:16-19).
 4. This lesson is intended to awaken our awareness of the need for truth, honesty, and integrity and to challenge ourselves to a greater degree of integrity.

I. Social Truthfulness — Honesty With Others

- A. God demands us to be truthful with others (Romans 12:17; Colossians 3:9).
- B. We have all heard the expression, “Honesty is the best policy,” but is it?
 1. “The Stealing Of The American Mind”
 2. “Situation Ethics: The New Morality” — Joseph Fletcher
 - a. “Is adultery wrong?...One can only respond, ‘I don’t know. Maybe. Give me a case. Describe a real situation.’ Or perhaps somebody will ask if a man should ever lie to his wife, or desert his family, or spy on a business rival’s design or market plans, or fail to report some income item in his tax return. Again, the answer cannot be an answer, it can only be another question. ‘Have you a real question, that is to say a concrete situation?’ If it has to do with premarital sex or libel or breach of contract or anything else (you name it), the reply is always the same: You are using words, abstractions. What you are asking is without substance; it has no living reality. There is no way to answer such questions.
 3. “Reformer” — We need to teach our children to lie.
 - a. “Lying is universal - we all do it; we all must do it. Therefore, the wise thing is for us diligently to train ourselves to lie thoughtfully, judiciously; to live with good object, and not an evil one; to lie healingly, charitably, humanely, not cruelly, hurtfully, or maliciously.”
 4. “Examiner” May 1988 - “Today I bent the truth to be kind, and I have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than I am what is true...Love expressed in kindness hides some truths (facts) that are better hidden than revealed. Truth can be ‘bent’ because love is kind. But be very careful that you have the right motive, the greater good.”
- C. “The Day America Told The Truth” — James Patterson & Peter Kim
 1. We have become a nation of liars.
 2. 91% of Americans admit to lying regularly.
- D. To save what little conscious we have left, we have colorized our lies: White & Black.
- E. (Romans 3:5-8).

II. Biblical Truthfulness — Honesty With God

- A. (Titus 2:7) ...in doctrine showing integrity.
- B. People often place their faith in men and the doctrines of men rather than in the word of God (Faith only, inherit sin, falling from grace, baptism is not necessary...)
- C. But can we slip into the same trap?
 - 1. Passover and the death angel (Ex. 12).
 - 2. Elijah and the chariot of fire (2 Kings 2:11).
 - 3. Esther and Mordecai (Esther 2:7).
 - 4. Wise men at the birth of Jesus (Matthew 2:11).
 - 5. Jesus falling under the weight of the cross (Mt. 27:32).
- D. To state something to be true when we do not know whether it is true or not (though I may be right) lacks integrity.
- E. (Acts 17:11-12).

III. Inward Truthfulness — Honesty With Self

- A. One of the most dangerous distortions of truth is what we say to ourselves.
 - 1. Conceit — (Galatians 6:3; Mark 10:42-45).
 - 2. Unbridled tongue — (James 1:26; 3:8).
 - 3. Careless hearing — (James 1:22; 4:17).

- Conclusion:
- 1. God expects us to be honest and to have integrity.
 - 2. We are to be lovers of truth.
 - 3. “Lord who may abide in your tabernacle? Who may dwell in your holy hill? He who walks uprightly, and works righteousness, and speaks the truth in his heart.”