23 October 2026

Honest. Really?



Most of us are honest, at least we think we are mostly honest. Are we honest consistently, day in and day out in all situations, *really?*

As with other godly qualities, honesty is sometimes sacrificed on the altars of another person's feelings, politeness, keeping the peace, our desire to be liked or accepted, and even anger or revenge, to name just a few.

Being honest is vital to being happy and at peace. It begins with being honest with ourselves, and with God. King David opened Psalm 32 with,

> "How blessed is he whose wrongdoing is forgiven, whose sin is covered! How blessed is a person whose guilt the LORD does not take into account, and in whose spirit there is no deceit!"

How blessed, how truly happy is the person "in whose spirit there is no deceit!" While acts of deceit for whatever reason can be isolated and prompted by a specific situation, a *spirit* of deceit refers to an underlying condition which characterizes how a person thinks, or operates. It can develop slowly, even without much notice, through individual decisions until it becomes a pattern.

It can be easy to not be truthful with ourselves. It is easy to rationalize, to justify thoughts, speech and actions which are not right. It also can be easy to deny, to refuse to face the way things really are because of fear or painful feelings. It can be easy to think some things or areas are not that important. In all these ways we can deceive ourselves, and then even come to a point where we are not aware that we are deceiving ourselves or others.

God is not only truthful, He is the truth. Believers are to grow in being like Christ, which includes being people of the truth, being truthful.

Ephesians chapter 4 verse 15 tells us that growing, maturing believers are "speaking the truth in love." This is part of living worthy of our calling which heads this section back in verse 1. Speaking the truth in love also is key to the unity of the church (verses 4, 13), and the building up or

maturity of the church (verses 13, 15). So in a practical sense really being truthful is very important.

Truth and love go together. The words, “I’m just telling the truth!” sometimes are plastered over insensitive, not gentle, harsh criticism. Later in this same chapter Paul directs,

> “Let no unwholesome word come out of your mouth, but if there is any good word for edification according to the need of the moment, say that, so that it will give grace to those who hear” (29).

Good words of truth in love for building up one another flow from what is needed extend grace of support and encouragement. The *good words* come from wisdom from God as to what is needed. It may be encouragement, comfort, correction, or exploring options. When it comes to correction we need to remember what Paul directed in Galatians chapter 1. It is to be “in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you are not tempted as well” (1).

Then, withholding the truth is not only not right, but it can cause damage. In recent research on people withholding truth believing they are helping keep the peace or sparing a person’s feelings, one case was about a designer whose husband was not honest about the flaws he saw in her design. He chose to support her over being truthful. She then presented her design to the client. It was a total disaster, including the loss of contracts with the client. When her husband later told her about his initial concerns, it strained, damaged her trust in him, damaged their relationship.

Let’s make sure that we are honest, really honest, and so build a Christ-like character which glorifies God and benefits ourselves and others.

