

HOW TO DEVELOP TRUTHFULNESS

Discover the true meaning of TRUTHFULNESS

I. What is TRUTHFULNESS?

vs. Deception

TRUTHFULNESS is

Earning future trust by accurately reporting past facts.



The meaning of truthfulness:

The word *truth* is derived from the word *trust*. Truth is conformity to fact and reality. It allows one's mind to rest on the integrity, veracity, and justice of what a person does or says. Truth is a word or action that is consistent with the character of Christ, because Jesus said, "I am the Truth." (See John 14:6.)

Truthfulness is a universal absolute. Shades of untruthfulness include telling "little white lies," telling a lie to protect someone, exaggerating, or telling only part of the truth with the intention of deceiving.

There may be times when it is not appropriate to answer, but there is never a time to violate the Ninth Commandment, which is, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour." (See also Proverbs 11:1 and 16:11.)

The opposite of truth is lying, deception, dishonesty, falsehood, and misrepresentation.

Truth is the nature of God, and lying is the nature of Satan, because, "... *there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it*" (John 8:44). Satan is also called the Deceiver, and he is actively involved in daily deception.

II. How does God require TRUTHFULNESS?

1. Be truthful to God.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (John 4:24).

2. Be truthful to your parents.

"I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father" (II John 4).

3. Be truthful to your conscience.

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? ...He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart" (Psalm 15:1-2).

4. Be truthful to your church elders.

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another" (Ephesians 4:25).

5. Be truthful to your civil authorities.

"...Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (Zechariah 8:16).



6. Be truthful to your employer.

“Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men” (II Corinthians 8:21).

III. How did Jesus demonstrate TRUTHFULNESS?

1. He was truthful to God.

Jesus truthfully expressed His desire to “*let this cup pass from me*” but then affirmed His obedience to God’s will. (See Matthew 26:36-44.)

2. He was true to His parents.

Jesus explained to His mother that He must obey His Father’s timing to do the miracle she requested at the wedding. (See John 2:1-11.)

3. He was true to conscience.

When Satan tempted Jesus to do evil, Jesus quoted the truth of Scripture back to him, and he fled. Jesus’ truthfulness gave Him boldness. (See Matthew 4:1-17.)

4. He was truthful to elders.

When Jesus read Isaiah and told the truth that He was its fulfillment, the elders took up stones to kill Him. (See Luke 4:16-29.)

5. He was truthful to rulers.

When the officers asked for Jesus’ identity, He gave it to them and was arrested. He also told Pilate the truth about Himself. (See John 18:3-13 and 33-38.)

6. He was true to employers.

Jesus taught truthfulness to employers by describing the levels of commitment between a good shepherd and a hireling. (See John 10:11-13.)

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life...” (John 14:6).

IV. Which members of the body must be controlled for TRUTHFULNESS?

THE HEART



The heart contains four chambers. It pumps life-giving blood to every part of the body through arteries, veins, and capillaries.

Medical researchers have recently discovered that the heart contains chemical substances similar to those in the brain which carry out thinking. This discovery is consistent with the words of our Creator, “...As [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he ...” (Proverbs 23:7), and “... Of the abundance of the heart, [the] mouth speaketh” (Luke 6:45).

If we treasure evil thoughts in our hearts, we will not be able to be truthful, but if we have the good treasure of God’s Word in our hearts, we will be able to speak the truth to those who question us.

THE BRAIN

The human brain is composed of two major parts: the left hemisphere and the right hemisphere. The hemispheres are connected in the middle by the *corpus callosum*.

Various compartments of the brain control certain parts of the body, but it is primarily with the brain (mind) that we think and speak. If we allow our minds to be filled with wrong thoughts and do not discipline our minds to memorize and meditate on Scripture, we will not be prepared to speak the truth when we are asked for it.

As believers, we can also have the mind of Christ (see Philippians 2:5), and then we are able to love the Lord with all of our hearts, souls, and minds (see Matthew 22:37).



V. Who in history demonstrated TRUTHFULNESS?

1. Joseph's Brothers

When Joseph was young, his brothers were filled with envy because their father favored him. Through an evil plot, they sold him as a slave and deceived their father into believing he was killed by a wild animal.

Years later, Joseph became the second highest ruler of Egypt, and because of a famine, Joseph's brothers had to come to him for corn. When Joseph recognized his brothers, he designed circumstances to bring them to the place of telling the truth about what they had done. Joseph then revealed himself to them, forgave them, and reunited his family. (See Genesis 37-45.)



2. Joshua and Caleb

When the nation of Israel left Egypt, they journeyed through the wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula to the southern border of Canaan. Moses, their leader, instructed twelve spies to go into the land God had promised them and to bring back a report.

Ten of the spies brought back what God called "an evil report": It contained exaggeration in a context of fear. Joshua and Caleb gave a true report by stating that even though there were giants in the land, God would help conquer them. God rewarded Joshua and Caleb with leadership, honor, and long lives. (See Numbers 13:1-14:38.)



3. Mordecai

One day, two trusted servants of King Ahasuerus secretly plotted to assassinate him. A Jew named Mordecai overheard them and gave the report to the king. His report was investigated and found to be true. The two men were executed, and Mordecai was honored.

Later, another plot was designed to kill Mordecai and all of the Jews in the empire. Through his wise counsel to the queen, he was able to turn back the enemy and bring his people to a place of great honor. Today the Jewish holiday of Purim commemorates this historic event. (See the book of Esther.)



VI. How does the red squirrel demonstrate TRUTHFULNESS?

• The red squirrel defines and masters its jurisdiction.

The red squirrel identifies a relatively small area in the woods for its territory. Normally, this area is 200 to 250 yards in diameter. It knows every inch of its domain, memorizing the paths through the trees and branches, as well as on the forest floor. With this information, the red squirrel can dart from place to place in order to carry out its work as the "Watchman of the Woods."



• The red squirrel is alert to the slightest danger.

Red squirrels have very keen eyesight, and from perches high in the trees, they can spot enemies while they are still a long way off. To determine how far away an intruder is, the squirrel nods its head up and

down in order to compare the angle of sight from two positions. By this method it is able to pinpoint the exact distance of the enemy.

- **The red squirrel gives a clear warning of danger.**

As soon as the red squirrel spots an unwelcome intruder, it releases a vocal outburst, stamps its feet, and jerks its tail. Its warning can be heard from over a quarter of a mile away. If the intruder proceeds, it is scolded mercilessly with sharp “tokens” and explosive “chucks.” Other animals in the forest monitor these valuable warning signals, especially moose, elk, and deer.

- **The red squirrel is active and alert all year long.**

While other animals hibernate during the winter months, the red squirrel continues to be busy about its work. It can be seen darting about on the most bitter cold days of the year. Its tireless vigil does take a toll on its life. In the wild, a squirrel lives up to seven years. If it is in captivity with a less rigorous routine, its lifespan increases by up to 30 percent.

- **The red squirrel is bold in the face of enemies.**

The red squirrel has many enemies. It is pursued by the bobcat, lynx, mink, weasel, hawk, and owl. These enemies prey upon animals of the forest which can hear the warning signals of the red squirrel. With so many enemies, the red squirrel must be alert to its own danger, but it never shirks from its responsibility to sound alarms. When faced with danger, the red squirrel is very bold. It will often charge down a tree toward an intruder that is many times its size.

- **The red squirrel accepts long periods of aloneness.**

Although red squirrels will playfully scamper up and down trees with fellow squirrels, their basic nature and their function tends to separate them for a solitary existence. The red squirrel is often seen alone in the top of a tree or busy about its work of gathering and burying nuts and pinecones.

- **The red squirrel leaves a testimony even after its death.**

The average squirrel collects ten bushels of nuts and pinecones during its lifetime. It buries most of these in the soft ground all over its domain. Some of these are later dug up for food, but many germinate and grow into trees for future generations of squirrels to enjoy and to use in their duties as the sentries of the forest.

VII. How to Discover... The Four Keys to TRUTHFULNESS

1. The Author of Truthfulness

Jesus Christ is Truth. All His words and teachings are truthful. The more He lives within us, the more we will understand truth, and the more truthful we will be. (See I Corinthians 2:16.)

When we become believers, we are given the mind of Christ so we can think God’s thoughts after Him. We become believers by confessing our untruthfulness and receiving the forgiveness that Christ paid for with His death.



2. The Source of Truthfulness

Jesus is also called the logos of God. The word logos means “word.” During His earthly ministry, Jesus taught the Truth of God, and it was written down in the Bible by the inspiration of God’s Holy Spirit. (See II Peter 1:21.)

The more we read, study, memorize, and meditate on the Bible, the more of Christ’s mind we will have, and the more truthful we will be able to be.



3. The Guide to Truthfulness

When someone becomes a believer, the Holy Spirit unites with his spirit and confirms that he is a child of God. (See Romans 8:16.) Then the Holy Spirit teaches him God's truth and convicts him whenever he speaks or believes a lie.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity. He is grieved when we are untruthful, but when we confess our lies, His work and power are strengthened in us.

4. The Battle Over Truthfulness

The battlefield between God and Satan is the human mind. God wants us to have His truth in all of our thoughts so we can be wise and speak the truth. (See Psalm 15:2.)

Satan wants to fill our minds with his presuppositions so that when we hear any information, we will translate it into his way of thinking and come out with deception and untruth.

God warns us about this battle when He says, "Beware lest any man spoil [plunder] you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ" (Colossians 2:8).

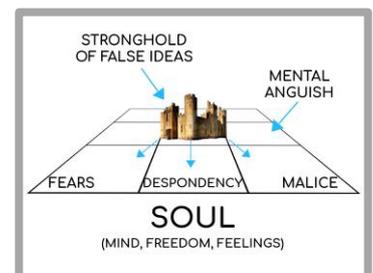
If you have accepted any of Satan's presuppositions, they must be torn down and replaced with truth. God has powerful weapons for you to do this.

VIII. How to Tear Down ... The Strongholds of Deception

When we allow bitterness, greed, or immorality into our lives, we give Satan a "jurisdictional area" in our souls. (See Ephesians 4:13-27.)

Satan then constructs false ideas and conclusions (strongholds) on the "ground" that he controls. From those strongholds, tormentors affect other areas of the soul with fear, depression, anger, lust, etc. (See Matthew 18:34-35.)

Before we tear down the strongholds, we must regain the "ground" by confessing our sin, claiming the blood of Christ (see I John 1:9), and asking God to take back the "ground." God restores our souls (see Psalm 23:3), but it is our job to tear down strongholds by reading, studying, memorizing, meditating on, and applying the truth of Scripture. (See II Corinthians 10:4-5.)



IX. HOW TO BE TRUTHFUL

1. How to Be Truthful to God

Realize that God knows all things.

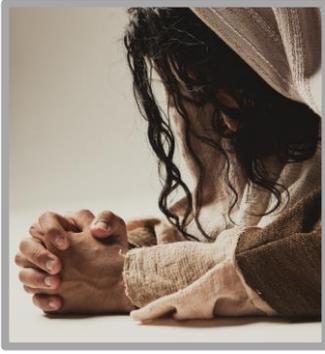
It should be easy to be truthful with God when we stop to realize that He is all-knowing. There is nothing in our hearts or minds that He does not already know. Memorizing the following verses will tear down the stronghold of thinking we can hide things from God:

- Genesis 16:13—"... Thou God seest me..."
- Psalm 139:4, 12—"For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.... Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day: the darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

Know the high cost of hiding from God.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper..." (Proverbs 28:13). There are many ways in which we do not prosper when we are not truthful with God. First, we deceive ourselves. Second, our guilt erodes our reasoning abilities and our physical health. It also dims the light of our eyes and damages our relationship with God and with others. For your own enlightenment, list the things in your life that you would be ashamed to bring into the holy presence of God.





Remember that God is rich in mercy.

The U.S. Internal Revenue Service has an unwritten policy regarding delinquent taxpayers: "If you get to us first, we show mercy. If we get to you first, we carry out justice." God demonstrates a similar policy with us. When the city of Nineveh was truthful about its sins, God canceled His judgment for them. (See the book of Jonah.) Satan's stronghold is getting us to think that God is a harsh, cruel judge Who will punish us if we are truthful. But He is rich in mercy. "*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth andfor-saketh them shall have mercy*" (Proverbs 28:13).

Trace your temptations to basic needs.

Each temptation we face is actually a desire to fulfill a basic human need in the wrong way. For example, God designed us to need companionship. God even said to Adam, "...*It is not good that... man should be alone*" (Genesis 2:18), but Satan will try to get us to fulfill that need with the wrong person, or in the wrong timing, or in an improper way. List the temptations you face, trace them to basic needs, and then see from Scripture how God wants to meet each one.

Receive the rewards of truthfulness.

It is humbling to be truthful with God, yet God has tremendous rewards for the humble. "By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches, and honour, and life" (Proverbs 22:4). Scripture also says, "... God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble" (James 4:6). Grace is the desire and the power to do God's will. (See I Corinthians 15:10.) The more grace you have, the more truthful you will be able to be in every area of your life.



Retrace defeats to regain lost "ground."

Satan will do all he can to hinder us from being truthful, because he knows that if we confess specific past sins and simply ask God to take back the "ground," he (Satan) must immediately surrender that "ground" and leave, for "...*the truth shall make you free*" (John 8:32). The "ground" was surrendered to Satan sin by sin. It must be regained by God by our confessing each sin. (See I John 1:9.)

Replace strongholds with towers of truth.

The moment we verbally ask God to take back the "ground" given to Satan, He will do it. Then it is our job to tear down the strongholds of false ideas. (See II Corinthians 10:4-5.) Trace the destructive emotions of fear, anger, discouragement, pride, envy, and lust to strongholds, and then tear them down with Scripture.

2. How to Be Truthful to Your Parents

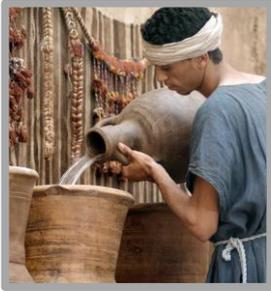
Never promise not to tell your parents.

If someone says to you, "Don't tell your parents," you can be confident that whatever he tells you not to say is the very information your parents need to hear. Whoever asks you not to tell is wanting to separate you from the wisdom, experience, or protection that he knows your parents will give you. You can be certain that this person's designs are evil and not at all for your benefit, although he may promise you rewards for following his instructions. Recall the times that you have been told not to tell your parents, and discuss these experiences with your parents.



Report accidents and damage immediately.

Whenever you have an accident, or whenever damage occurs through your actions, report it immediately and fully to your parents. A fear of punishment may cause you to cover up what happened, but the continuing guilt will be more detrimental to you than any discipline. Also, Scripture promises, "... Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers 32:23), so it is not a question of whether your parents will find out, it is only a matter of when. Recall these types of incidents in the past, and discuss them with your parents.



Inform parents about your weaknesses.

God has given your parents the responsibility to protect you, and one day they must give an account to God for their faithfulness in doing this. However, the only way they can protect you is if you tell them about your areas of weakness and what temptations are especially strong to you. Explain these to them.

Don't pre-guess your parents' responses.

One of the most often-cited reasons for sons and daughters not telling their parents is their ideas of what their parents' response will be. However, when information is properly and truthfully given, it is amazing how the parents' responses are often quite different from what was anticipated. Whatever the response, however, it is God Who works through your parents to accomplish His ultimate benefit in your life. Therefore, you can be confident that when you base your decision on what is right, it will turn out for your good.



Have your parents approve all friends.

God designed families so each member can be a best friend to the others. However, in a day of overemphasis on socialization, peer dependence is drawing sons and daughters away from their families and into activities that are destructive to them. God has given fathers the responsibility to protect their daughters until they give them away in marriage, and it is a wise son who seeks the counsel of his father more than the counsel of his friends.

Discuss ideas before planning activities.

Truthfulness is discussing ideas with your parents before setting your affections on them or having other people make plans around them. If you ask your parents for permission to do something you have already planned, you failed to give them an opportunity to objectively discuss the merits of your idea and give you the benefit of their years of experience and wisdom on the matter.

Help parents be truthful, if needed.

If your parents ever ask you to lie for them, your truthfulness to God would not allow you to do so. However, you could work out a creative alternative. For example, if your parents ask you to tell someone they are not home, you could say, "They're not available right now," or "May I take a message for them?"

3. How to Be Truthful to Your Conscience

Call sins by their true names.

It is amazing how skilled we can become at describing our sins in ways that do not make them sound very sinful. We say that we are not perfect; but God says, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked ..." (Jeremiah 17:9). We say that someone is an "alcoholic"; God says he is a drunkard. We say that someone tends to "overeat"; God calls him a glutton. We call a person "sexually active"; God calls him a fornicator or an adulterer. We talk about an "alternative lifestyle"; God talks about perversion and abomination. Renaming sins is Satanic deception.



Recognize and reject rationalizations.

The human mind is capable of justifying any sin known to man. We can create reasons to explain away murder, lying, stealing, and immorality. Thus, God warns, "He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool ..." (Proverbs 28:26). The first alarm of truthfulness in your conscience will be the question, "Is it right to do this?" If this question is ignored, you will then think up reasons why it is all right to do it. Continuous rationalization will sear your conscience. Recall past rationalizations of sin, and discuss the results with your parents.



Confess your failures quickly.

When confronted with the truth, embrace it and acknowledge it. Any resistance to the truth will encourage you to justify what you have done and react to the person who told you the truth.

Recall past promises and fulfill them.

Being truthful to our own word is foundational to every relationship in life. Our minds tend to rationalize unfulfilled promises, but other people do not. They will accuse you of lying, deception, or not being true to your word. God commands us to keep promises, even when it is not convenient (see Psalm 15:4), and “when thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools. . . . Neither say thou ... that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the

work of thine hands?” (Ecclesiastes 5:4-6).

Ask family members and friends if you have made promises that you have not fulfilled. They may recall things you talked about but in your mind were not promises. Clear your conscience.

Let your conscience discern good vs. good.

There are good deeds that we think of in our minds, and there are good deeds that God gives us in our spirits. If we carry out our minds’ ideas, we commit iniquity.

God warns that one day, many will say to Him, “... Lord, Lord, have we not. . . done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22-23).



The Importance of Understanding “Iniquity”

In the Bible, God distinguishes sins from iniquities. (See Psalm 51.) Good works become iniquity when we follow our own wills rather than the will of God. Our own willfulness is responsible for Christ’s death: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all” (Isaiah 53:6). Iniquity is doing our own will rather than the will of our Heavenly Father. (See Matthew 7:21.)

The things we do may look good to others, but they constitute a willfulness which is passed on to our children and shows up in various types of stubbornness, disobedience, and rebellion. (See Exodus 20:5.) Before each activity, ask your conscience, “Am I doing this because I want to do it, or because God wants me to do it?” If you need further light for your conscience, read Proverbs daily.

4. How to Be Truthful to Your Elders

Put on the “Belt of Truth.”

In the days of Roman warfare, a belt was used to hold up the long garments which men wore so they would not trip while running in battle. In like manner, we are told to “gird up the loins of [our] mind” (I Peter 1:13). This means that as a member of a group of believers, you purpose not to allow your mind to “drag along” the dirty paths of the world and be soiled by the untruths of deception.



Accept the Bible as the “Textbook of Truth.”

Elders are charged with the responsibility to teach the truths of Scripture, and those who hear them are responsible to obey them as from the Lord. This relationship is valid only if both teacher and listener accept the truth that “all scripture is given by inspiration of God...” (II Timothy 3:16). Ask your elders if they believe the Bible is infallible.



Be accountable to elders for truthfulness.

If you are the head of a family, realize that every member of your church will be affected by any untruthfulness in your life. Seek out a Godly elder and ask him to hold you accountable for truthfulness in your relationship with the Lord, in your marriage, in the training of your children, in your managing of finances, and in your ministry to others. Meet with your elder periodically for prayer.

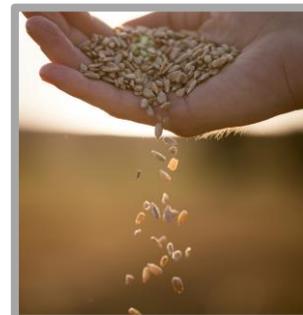
Share with him failures and ask for spiritual counsel on making them right. Ask for Scriptures to memorize and insights for application. Also ask him to make sure you clear your conscience with each one to whom you have lied or been deceptive in the past.

Prepare for truth with “an honest heart.”

Jesus used the parable of the sower to explain the four conditions of the heart into which truth is planted. The first condition is wayside soil, and Satan snatches the seed away. The next is rocky ground, and the hot sun dries up the young plant. The third condition is among weeds, and the truth is choked out. “But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience” (Luke 8:15). You will have an honest heart if you hide nothing from God.

Make sure your songs are truthful.

God listens to what we say in church, therefore “...when thou goest to the house of God... Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter any thing before God” (Ecclesiastes 5:1-2). When you sing a hymn or a song, ask yourself, “Do I really mean these words, or how can I make them true right now?” Make sure that the music you listen to is true to the nature of God rather than the sound of the world. Loving the world means God’s love is not in us. (See I John 2:15.)



Tell your elders how you are applying truth.

When you tell your elders how you are applying their teachings to your life, it will be a tremendous encouragement to them. Not only will it motivate them to continue proclaiming truth, but it will provide insights for them as they prepare future messages and counsel others. Also be ready to give a similar public testimony.

Know how rejecting truth brings delusion.

Truth received brings more truth. Truth rejected brings confusion and darkness. God describes this tragic sequence in the following passage: “...Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie” (II Thessalonians 2:10-11).

5. How to Be Truthful to Civil Authorities

Provide truth for decisions.

Civil authorities welcome mail and are greatly influenced by it. Legislators acknowledge that four or five well-written letters cause them to seriously reconsider their position. We can be confident that those who promote error will write letters. If we fail to give truth, civil authorities will have an inaccurate basis for making decisions.



Protect liberty by not being a false witness.

A free nation requires its citizens to cooperate with an investigation of crime by giving truthful testimony. The alternative is to torture the accused until he confesses, whether guilty or not. Truthful witnesses are so important to the foundation of a Biblically sound law system that one of the Ten Commandments is dedicated to it: “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour” (Exodus 20:16).



Volunteer information to solve crimes.

If you are aware of information that would promote justice, you are Scripturally responsible to share it with the proper civil authorities, but “... if [you] do not utter it, then [you] shall bear [your] iniquity” (Leviticus 5:1). Do you know of information that would help authorities solve crimes in your area? Share it with them.

Confess to authorities, if you are guilty.

If you are guilty of a crime, it is your Biblical responsibility to confess it to the authorities and pay the proper penalty or appeal for mercy. You will be frustrating justice and undermining the legal system if you plead “temporary insanity,” deny the truth, or hire a clever lawyer to look for legal loopholes. When Achan broke the law in his day, the entire nation suffered defeat until Achan glorified God by confessing the truth: “And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the Lord God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me” (Joshua 7:19).

Make truthful appeals if falsely accused.

The enemies of truth will sometimes use bribes and deception to attack those who oppose their evil schemes. Jezebel found false witnesses against Naboth so she could condemn him to death and confiscate his vineyard for her purposes. (See I Kings 21.) The Apostle Paul was falsely accused by those who wanted to kill him. His appeal to Caesar brought him to Rome and provided for us many books of the New Testament. (See Acts 25:11-12.)



6. How to Be Truthful to Your Employer

Be punctual and put in a full day's work.

The first and most important way to demonstrate truthfulness to an employer is to be on the job, ready for work at starting time. It is dishonest to “punch in” on time but start work late, to take longer breaks than required, to get ready to leave before quitting time, and then to accept a full day's pay. God teaches that a profitable employee is one who does more than what is required. (See Luke 17:7-10.)



Work as though God were your employer.

Most jobs involve details that the employer never sees, but God sees them. As you begin a job, remind yourself that your final inspector is not your earthly supervisor or employer, but God. “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ” (Colossians 3:23-24).



Respect your employer's property.

Make a clear distinction between what belongs to you and what belongs to your employer. Never use company items for personal benefit without first asking permission, and do not ask unless it is an urgent need. Do not mix your tools with company tools, and never “borrow” company items or take “unused” supplies.

Don't misrepresent your abilities.

If an employer asks if you can do a certain job, find out what level of quality he is looking for. Do not overestimate or underestimate your abilities. If you believe you can do the job, say, “I would be happy to do my best and learn what is necessary to accomplish what you want.”

Don't give excuses for unsatisfactory work.

If you do not finish a job or the results are not satisfactory to the employer, do not give excuses or blame others. If you did experience problems on the job, that would have been the time to have contacted your employer so he could give new direction. To offer excuses after the time allotted for the job is to be untruthful about your lack of planning, lack of forethought, lack of diligence, lack of communication, lack of creativity, and lack of personal responsibility. Always do your work so your boss can count on your word.

Reject money that requires dishonesty.

Dishonest gain in any form carries with it a curse. (See Proverbs 15:6.) God requires accurate measurements for buying and selling, because “divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord” (Proverbs 20:10). If you are enticed by any business dealings that require you to compromise the truth or receive unjust gain, reject them. If your employer asks you to misrepresent a product, first try to design a creative alternative. If he requires you to do something illegal, choose rather to forfeit the job.

Use after-work hours wisely.

If your pay is not sufficient to meet your needs, be truthful with your employer and tell him. Do not start a second job or begin a major project without your employer's full knowledge and approval. After-work hours are intended for your personal business, family responsibilities, and to rest up for the job.

X. HOW TO BALANCE TRUTHFULNESS

1. With Thoroughness

You may hear the truth about someone or something but give out false information because you did not investigate to get all the facts. Partial truth is dangerous and deceptive, because it allows other people to fill in the blanks with misinformation and quote you as the source.



2. With Discretion

Once you get all the facts, it still may not be appropriate to tell a person all you know. It may not be appropriate for him to hear the information, or it may not be the right time to tell him. If he is not ready to hear the truth, he will react to you for sharing it.

3. With Mercy

You may have all the facts and the person may be ready to hear the truth, but mercy will direct you in your choice of words, in your tone of voice, and in how much you share. Scripture often combines mercy and truth, because, *“By mercy and truth iniquity is purged...”* (Proverbs 16:6).

4. With Genuine Love

God commands us to speak the truth in love. (See Ephesians 4:15.) Love requires you to have the right motive in telling the truth and making sacrifices of yourself in sharing it. Love means that you are committed to the success of others, regardless of the cost to you. If someone reacts to the truth or to you for sharing it, love means you do not cut him off in your emotions. His guilt may separate him from you for awhile, but your faithful prayers and alertness to opportunities to invest in his life will demonstrate that your life and your words are consistent with the character of God, Who is Love, and with the Lord Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

Practical assignment

Completed

- Gather your family together and teach on truthfulness. Adjust the material to the age and attention span of your children. Interact with them, even at the teen level. Don't make it a lecture! Write a short report on what you did, who was there and what interaction you had with different members.



Date:

Who:

How:

- Preach on truthfulness. Adapt to the audience. Use many illustrations. Write a brief report below



Date:

Where:

Who:

What was the response: