

# Life Church Message 2011-04-17 - Honesty? Keeping Me Real

- **Honesty? Keeping Me Real**

**Bil Mooney-McCoy - Sunday April 17, 2011**

© 2011 Life Church Ministries, Inc.

<http://www.LifeChurchBoston.org/>

- **Notes**

- **Types of Dishonesty:**

- **A. Intentional**

Motivation: Self-protection, selfish ambition, to look good (or least not bad), to avoid inconvenience or conflict

- **1. *Blatant Lie***

Ananias and Sapphira

Acts 5: 1-11

- **2. *Indirect Deception***

... a statement can be strictly true and still be dishonest if the intention of the statement is to deceive its audience. Dishonesty can be defined simply as behavior that is performed with intent to deceive or to manipulate the truth. (Wikipedia)

Laban and Jacob

Genesis 29:21-27

- ***Being honest can be risky, requires trusting in God completely***

Nehemiah 2: 1b – 3

I had not been sad in his presence before, so the king asked me, “Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart.” I was very much afraid, but I said to the king, “May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?”

- **B. Unintentional**

- **3. *Denial/Self-deception***

Cause: avoidance of real issues, wishful thinking, lack of self-awareness

David and Nathan

II Samuel 12: 1:7a

- **4. *Unkept Promises***

Cause: laziness, lack of real concern for others, excusing unreliability

The Gibeonites

II Samuel 21: 1-3

- **SO NOW WHAT? (What shall we say to these things?)**

- 1) Are you in or out?

- 2) Ask God to help you
- 3) Get honest about how honest you are
- 4) Trust God for the consequences
- 5) Develop practical strategies
- 6) Do not use truth as a weapon (Eph. 4:15)
- 7) Be patient with yourself

- **Life Group Material**

- **Life Group Word Material**

These are sample discussion questions / topics. Your life group leaders may choose to adjust these questions, substitute new ones, or spend the Word section of the meeting in a different way altogether.

Scripture taken from the [HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION \(NIV\)](#).  
Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 [International Bible Society](#). Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

- **Matthew 5:33-37**

**33**“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.’ **34**But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; **35**or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. **36**And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. **37**Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one

- **Discussion Questions:**

- Are you in or out? Discuss.
- Have you asked God to help you in this area? Discuss.
- How honest are you (honestly)?
- Do you trust God for the consequences of your honesty? Discuss.
- What practical strategies will you use to stay honest?
- Have you ever used truth as a weapon (Eph. 4:15)? Discuss.

- **Scriptures For 4/17/2011 Life Church Sermon**

Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV) Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

**SET UP PASSAGE: Matthew 5:17-20**

17“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. 18For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. 19Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. 20For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

**KEY PASSAGE: Matthew 5:33-37**

33“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.’ 34But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; 35or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. 36And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. 37Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one

**Numbers 30:2 (also see Deuteronomy 23:21)**

When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said.

**Matthew 23:16-22**

16“Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ 17You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? 18You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.’ 19You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? 20Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. 21And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. 22And he who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it.

*Honesty: we strive to convey to the outside what we know/believe/feel on the inside.*

*Mean what we say; say what we mean. All the time! With or without words!*

**1 Samuel 15:29**

He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.

**Scriptures about the importance of honesty:**

### **Zechariah 8:16-17**

16 These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; 17 do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this,” declares the Lord.

### **Psalm 101:7**

No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence.

### **Colossians 3: 9-10**

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

### **But we need God’s help to be truthful; it’s not easy**

### **Proverbs 30:7-8a**

7 Two things I asked of You, Do not refuse me before I die: 8 Keep deception and lies far from me...

### **Psalm 139:1-4, 23-24**

1 O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.

23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. 24 See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

# Life Church Sermon Scriptures for April 17, 2011

## Honesty? Keeping Me Real

*Bill*

### SET UP PASSAGE: Matthew 5:17-20

[17](#)“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. [18](#)For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished. [19](#)Therefore whoever relaxes one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever does them and teaches them will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. [20](#)For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.

### KEY PASSAGE: Matthew 5: 33-37

[33](#)“Again, you have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not break your oath, but keep the oaths you have made to the Lord.’ [34](#)But I tell you, Do not swear at all: either by heaven, for it is God’s throne; [35](#)or by the earth, for it is his footstool; or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the Great King. [36](#)And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make even one hair white or black. [37](#)Simply let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No’; anything beyond this comes from the evil one.

### Numbers 30:2 (also see Deuteronomy 23:21)

When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said.

### Matthew 23:16-22

[16](#)“Woe to you, blind guides! You say, ‘If anyone swears by the temple, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gold of the temple, he is bound by his oath.’ [17](#)You blind fools! Which is greater: the gold, or the temple that makes the gold sacred? [18](#)You also say, ‘If anyone swears by the altar, it means nothing; but if anyone swears by the gift on it, he is bound by his oath.’ [19](#)You blind men! Which is greater: the gift, or the altar that makes the gift sacred? [20](#)Therefore, he who swears by the altar swears by it and by everything on it. [21](#)And he who swears by the temple swears by it and by the one who dwells in it. [22](#)And he who swears by heaven swears by God’s throne and by the one who sits on it.

*Honesty: we strive to convey to the outside what we know/believe/feel on the inside.*

*Mean what we say; say what we mean. All the time! With or without words!*

### 1 Samuel 15:29

He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a man, that he should change his mind.

Scriptures about the importance of honesty:

### Zechariah 8:16-17

[16](#)These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; [17](#)do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this,” declares the Lord.

### Psalms 101:7

No one who practices deceit will dwell in my house; no one who speaks falsely will stand in my presence.

### Colossians 3: 9-10

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

But we need God’s help to be truthful; it’s not easy

### Proverbs 30:7-8a

[7](#)Two things I asked of You, Do not refuse me before I die: [8](#)Keep deception and lies far from me...

### Psalms 139:1-4, 23-24

[1](#)O Lord, you have searched me and you know me. [2](#)You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. [3](#)You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. [4](#)Before a word is on my tongue you know it completely, O Lord.

[23](#)Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. [24](#)See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

## Types of Dishonesty:

### A. Intentional

Motivation: Self-protection, selfish ambition, to look good (or least not bad), to avoid inconvenience or conflict

#### 1. Blatant Lie

*Ananias and Sapphira*

**Acts 5: 1-11**

#### 2. Indirect Deception

... a statement can be strictly true and still be dishonest if the intention of the statement is to deceive its audience. Dishonesty can be defined simply as behavior that is performed with intent to deceive or to manipulate the truth. (Wikipedia)

*Laban and Jacob*

**Genesis 29:21-27**

Being honest can be risky, requires trusting in God completely

**Nehemiah 2: 1b – 3**

I had not been sad in his presence before, so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid, but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my ancestors are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?"

### B. Unintentional

#### 3. Denial/Self-deception

Cause: avoidance of real issues, wishful thinking, lack of self-awareness

*David and Nathan*

**II Samuel 12: 1-7a**

#### 4. Unkept Promises

Cause: laziness, lack of real concern for others, excusing unreliability

*The Gibeonites*

**II Samuel 21: 1-3**

SO NOW WHAT? (What shall we say to these things?)

- 1) Are you in or out?
- 2) Ask God to help you
- 3) Get honest about how honest you are
- 4) Trust God for the consequences
- 5) Develop practical strategies
- 6) Do not use truth as a weapon (Eph. 4:15)
- 7) Be patient with yourself

#### Understanding the Bible

Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION (NIV) Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers.

Here, for your convenience, are the Bible passages that we will be using in today's sermon at Life Church. We use the New International Version (NIV) of the Bible so that you can read it in modern English. You may have been accustomed to reading or hearing the King James Version of the Bible, which uses older English (with words like "thee", "thou", "thine", "believeth", etc.). If so, don't be alarmed - the passages below are really from the Bible even though they are in modern English.

The Bible was originally written in three ancient languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. None of the people in the Bible, and none of the people who God used to write it spoke English. In fact, English did not even exist as a language when the Bible was written. The King James Version, first published in 1611, was a translation of the Bible from its original languages into the every day English that people used back then - almost 400 years ago! They didn't just speak that way in church - they spoke that way with everyone. The King James Version was "modernized" in 1769, but, even so, English has certainly changed a lot since then! Since you probably don't speak Hebrew, Aramaic, or Greek, you're going to have to read the Bible in translated form. At Life Church we believe that since you're going to read an English translation of the Bible you might as well use an up to date one - written in the English you speak every day. God wants you to understand his Word so that you can put it into practice!

Life Church Web Site: <http://www.lifechurchboston.org/>