

Honesty is the state or quality of being honest, refraining from lying, hypocrisy, cheating or stealing. Honesty is being truthful in word and actions. Honesty is one of the most important character qualities that a person can have. A person who is not honest cannot be trusted. My father used to say if he was hiring someone and had to choose between a drunkard and a liar he would choose the drunkard because at least he could believe him when he was sober but he would never know when to believe a dishonest person.

Jesus identified himself as the truth<sup>1</sup> and it is impossible for God to lie.<sup>2</sup> Satan, however is a liar and the father of it.<sup>3</sup> One can see how much God loves honesty by how much God hates every form of lying. A lying tongue and a false witness that speaks lies are among the seven things that are an abomination to the Lord.<sup>4</sup> Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.<sup>5</sup> Do not bear false witness is one of the Ten Commandments.<sup>6</sup> Paul renounced dishonesty and deceitful handling of the word of God as he manifested the truth.<sup>7</sup> We must not only be honest in the sight of the Lord but also in the sight of men.<sup>8</sup> We are to think on things that are honest<sup>9</sup> and walk honestly toward them that are without.<sup>10</sup> We are to walk in truth and should have our waist girded with truth as part of the armor of God.<sup>11</sup> Your honesty can cause others to glorify God.<sup>12</sup>

Dishonesty can take many forms:

Flattery is excessive, untrue or insincere praise often used to win a favor. Immoral people flatter others to seduce them.<sup>13</sup> We are not to associate with a flatterer<sup>14</sup> for a flattering mouth works ruin.<sup>15</sup> Paul never used flattery.<sup>16</sup>

Cheating implies dishonesty or deception in dealing with someone to obtain advantage or gain. One should not cheat<sup>17</sup> while playing games, taking tests or by taking ideas from others and passing them off as one's own. A Christian will not cheat in business dealings<sup>18</sup> or on their income tax.

Slander is the utterance of a false statement damaging to a person's character or reputation. God will destroy slanderers.<sup>19</sup>

Deceit is the act of representing as true what is known to be false. Satan deceived Eve into thinking what God said was not true.<sup>20</sup> An old prophet deceived a young prophet into disobeying the word of the Lord and the young prophet lost his life as a result.<sup>21</sup> Paul warned the Ephesian church to not allow anyone to deceive them into thinking they can participate in sin and avoid the wrath of God.<sup>22</sup>

To exaggerate is to magnify beyond the fact such as overstating the number of converts.

Hypocrisy is pretending to be what one is not. Hypocrites honor God with their lips but their heart is far from God.<sup>23</sup> Their motivation is to be seen of men.<sup>24</sup> They love fancy clothes, the best seats, and to be acknowledged by titles.<sup>25</sup> They judge others in detail but do not judge themselves.<sup>26</sup> They emphasize outward deeds and appearance rather than inward righteousness.<sup>27</sup> James said that the wisdom which is from above is without hypocrisy<sup>28</sup> and Peter said to lay aside all hypocrisy.<sup>29</sup> Ananias and Sapphira pretended to be more generous than they were and lost their lives as a result of this.<sup>30</sup>

Witnessing falsely will not go unpunished<sup>31</sup> and false witnesses will have done to them what they wanted done to the one they falsely accused.<sup>32</sup>

Telling only part of the truth to give a wrong impression is also a lie. Saul claimed to have obeyed the command of the Lord in utterly destroying the Amalekites when in reality he spared king Agag and the best of the animals.<sup>33</sup> Because of this he lost his kingdom.

Dishonesty is a serious problem. The lake of fire is the eternal destination of liars.<sup>34</sup> Lying is not just a lip problem but a heart problem.<sup>35</sup> It is extremely important that we put away all forms of lying<sup>36</sup> and ask God to cleanse our heart. If we have not been born again God wants to give us a new heart.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John 14:6 Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. NKJV

<sup>2</sup> Hebrews 6:18 ...that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, NKJV

<sup>3</sup> John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. NKJV

<sup>4</sup> Proverbs 6:16-19 These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren. NKJV

<sup>5</sup> Proverbs 12:22 Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight. NKJV

<sup>6</sup> Exodus 20:16 You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. NKJV

<sup>7</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:2 But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. KJV

<sup>8</sup> 2 Corinthians 8:21 Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men. KJV

<sup>9</sup> Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. KJV

<sup>10</sup> 1 Thessalonians 4:12 That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing. KJV

<sup>11</sup> Ephesians 6:13-14 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, NKJV

<sup>12</sup> 1 Peter 2:12 Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. KJV

<sup>13</sup> Proverbs 7:5 That they may keep you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words. NKJV

<sup>14</sup> Proverbs 20:19 He who goes about as a talebearer reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with one who flatters with his lips. NKJV

<sup>15</sup> Proverbs 26:28 A lying tongue hates those who are crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin. NKJV

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<sup>16</sup> 1 Thessalonians 2:5 For neither at any time did we use flattering words, as you know, nor a cloak for covetousness--God is witness. NKJV

<sup>17</sup> Leviticus 19:13-14 'You shall not cheat your neighbor, nor rob him. The wages of him who is hired shall not remain with you all night until morning. NKJV

<sup>18</sup> Proverbs 11:1 Dishonest scales are an abomination to the LORD, but a just weight is His delight. NKJV

<sup>19</sup> Psalms 101:5,7 Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, Him I will destroy; NKJV

<sup>20</sup> Genesis 3:4-6 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. NKJV.

<sup>21</sup> 1 Kings 13:11-25 Now an old prophet ... went after the man of God, and found him... Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." And he said, "I cannot return with you ... For I have been told by the word of the LORD, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.' " He said to him, "I too am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.' " (He was lying to him.) So he went back with him... Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; ... "Thus says the LORD: 'Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which the LORD said to you, "Eat no bread and drink no water," your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.' " ... When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. NKJV

<sup>22</sup> Ephesians 5:5-6 For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. NKJV

<sup>23</sup> Matthew 15:7-8 Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: 'These people draw near to Me with their mouth, and honor Me with their lips, but their heart is far from Me. NKJV

<sup>24</sup> Matthew 23:3-8 Therefore whatever they tell you to observe, that observe and do, but do not do according to their works; for they say, and do not do. ... But all their works they do to be seen by men. (See also Matthew 6:1-16 regarding their giving, praying and fasting)

<sup>25</sup> Matthew 23:5-7 They make their phylacteries broad and enlarge the borders of their garments. They love the best places at feasts, the best seats in the synagogues, greetings in the marketplaces, and to be called by men, 'Rabbi, Rabbi.' NKJV

<sup>26</sup> Matthew 7:3-5 And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck out of your brother's eye. NKJV

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<sup>27</sup> Matthew 23:23-28 Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you pay tithes of mint and anise and cummin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith. These you ought to have done, without leaving the others undone. Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel! Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of extortion and self-indulgence. Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also. Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. NKJV

<sup>28</sup> James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. NKJV

<sup>29</sup> 1 Peter 2:1 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all guile, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, NKJV

<sup>30</sup> Acts 5:1-3 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession. 2 And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? NKJV

<sup>31</sup> Proverbs 19:5 A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies will not escape. NKJV

<sup>32</sup> Deuteronomy 19:18-19 And the judges shall make careful inquiry, and indeed, if the witness is a false witness, who has testified falsely against his brother, then you shall do to him as he thought to have done to his brother; so you shall put away the evil from among you. NKJV

<sup>33</sup> 1 Samuel 15:18-21 Now the LORD sent you on a mission, and said, 'Go, and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.' 19 "Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD?" 20 And Saul said to Samuel, "But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal." NKJV

<sup>34</sup> Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." NKJV

<sup>35</sup> Matthew 15:19 For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies. NKJV

<sup>36</sup> Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," NKJV Colossians 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, NKJV

<sup>37</sup> Ezekiel 36:25-26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. NKJV