

Honesty and Integrity; Reported Missing!



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VIRTUAL

The title should not be true, but unfortunately it is! *Honesty, Integrity, and Morality*—are definitely lost in today’s world of *dishonesty, cheating, no integrity, and immorality*. The search for Truth always brings one back to the Bible and asking God to enlighten us to the divine principle of trust that enables us to be in harmony with His commands. Our desire is to be *moral and honest* during our life on earth.

Commandment #7 Exodus 20:14 “*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*” Most think they are *not* guilty of this sin, but Jesus takes this command further. Matthew 5:27 “*You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’* 28 *But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.*”

If we have looked *once* with lust, we have *broken* the commandment—we need to repent so we would not be *judged* by the Judge of everyone. It is *not* okay for us to dwell on adulterous thoughts. Others cannot read our mind—but *God can and does!*

Various types of media can *cause* lust—photos; images; videos; music, and conversations. The world has become desensitized to wrong *thoughts*—but they can eventually lead to wrong *actions*. What we often *think* about will often lead to decisions and actions outside the will and Word of God.

It is usually not the *first quick* look that is wrong but the *second long* stare—it is not the *glance* but the *gaze*. Lust can take us far from God and to places we *never* intended or wanted to go. It is often called the *3-second lust* look—and which can lead to destructive and ruinous paths.

We should treat the 1 Timothy 5:2 “*Younger women as sisters, with all purity;*” but Satan suggests *impure* thoughts that would defile our conscience. God’s plan is to keep a *clear* conscience. 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.*”

The apostle gave scriptural advice to his young helper. 1 Timothy 4:10 “*For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.* 11 *These things command and teach.* 12 *Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity [love], in spirit, in faith, in purity.*”

To be a right example in our home, with our friends and to those around us, we have to conduct ourselves scripturally in the way we talk; the conversations we have; and showing divine love toward everyone and all groups at all times. It is possible through *faith* and *trust* on Jesus every moment—asking God every day to enable us to maintain *pure* thoughts concerning moral issues.

Commandment #8 Exodus 20:15 “*Thou shalt not steal.*” Some think that it is not really *stealing* if the value of the item is *small*; but theft is theft and does not define the value of the item. To steal one dollar or one-hundred dollars is still wrong because it violates the eighth commandment.

Cheating on a test in school is stealing answers from someone’s paper. Many steal from the

government by cheating on tax returns. Stealing *time* from an employer is theft—although *not* an item, it is *work time* taken *from* the company.

Satan wants people to think it is *not* stealing—when it *is!* Colossians 3:22 “*Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to win their favor, but with sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord.* 23 *Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men.* 24 *since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.*”

Satan is a thief and no one would want to agree with him on this matter or any *other*. It is the *devil* who convinces people that a little cheating is not stealing. There is only one *God*, one *Truth*, and one way—the way of honesty and integrity! John 10:1 “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber.*”

Satan is *not* moral and definitely *not* honest with anything. Keeping commandment #8 then, separates us from the accuser of everyone—that ancient serpent whose only desire is to *steal, kill, and destroy* believers John 10:10.

Even if someone has never *read* God’s Commandments, they *know instinctively* in their heart that stealing is wrong. It may not *change* what they do, but they *know* it is wrong. Romans 2:14 “*When Gentiles, who do not have God’s written law, instinctively follow what the law says, they show that in their hearts they know right from wrong.* 15 *They demonstrate that God’s law is written within them, for their own consciences either accuse them or tell them they are doing what is right.*”

God has written His Law onto the hearts of mankind, so that our conscience will bear witness with the knowledge of right and wrong. Even

though many do not *admit* it, they *do* have knowledge of wrong ways; wrong attitudes; and sins—they *know* it is wrong because God has written His Law on their hearts. Every day we pray that God enable us to *know* and *live* these words—*Honesty is the only policy*—and never taking anything that does not belong to us.

Commandment #9 Exodus 20:16 “*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*” Telling a *lie* is a *sin*. Bearing false witness means to *testify falsely*—it is *saying* something that is *not* true. Some tell *white* lies—but the *color* of a false statement does not make it true.

The entire justice system is based on the premise that witnesses will tell—*the whole truth and nothing but the truth*. Perjury is lying in court and is considered a felony because of breaking civil law. A survey says that 91% of Americans admit to lying on a regular basis. Others just say they have—*Stretched the truth a little*, but how far can *truth* be stretched before it is a *lie*!

We cannot leave out *part* of the truth for personal benefit. If we *know* that a lie is being told, and we just let it stand, it is a sin of omission. Telling a lie may be *easier* than telling the truth—but what *God* thinks is what *matters*.

Overcoming the temptation to lie or to give false testimony is very important because only overcomers inherit the kingdom. Revelation 21:8 “*The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.*”

God wrote the Commandments for our *benefit* and our *salvation*. God takes sinning against His Word more *seriously* than most people think. Matthew 12:36 “*I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.* 37 *For by thy words*

thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”

If every *idle* word we speak will be held against us on Judgment Day, how about *resentful* and *angry* words! How about *cruel* and *unkind* and *inconsiderate* remarks! Matthew 5:37 “*But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these [cometh of evil].*”

Many think they can *hide* their sins, but everything is brought out in the open before the One to whom we will answer. Hebrews 4:13 “*Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*” God takes lying *very* seriously—so *we* must too! Every day we pray for God to enable us to *always* tell the truth!

Commandment #10 Exodus 20:17 “*You shall not covet your neighbor’s house; you shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor’s.*” Being content with what God has given prevents coveting.

Coveting is desiring strongly for something that is not rightfully ours. Coveting leads to other sins—a person would *covet* before they *steal* what they covet. Someone would covet another *person* before they commit *adultery*. We *covet* something and then are *tempted* to disobey God’s Word to get what it is we covet. *Coveting* is *craving* something.

Advertisers work on people’s desires to make them want to *buy* a particular product. If they succeed in awakening that desire, it can lead to coveting—which is being *envious* or *jealous* of what others have. The wrong is *taking* what we want instead of *praying* for it. We must be content *without* it until God *supplies* it through the prayer of faith.

The Christian life is continual *learning*—no one knows everything about God’s Word, but we

must be *willing* to *listen* and *learn*, as He *teaches* and *guides* us to *know* what we need to *know*. We read the Ten Commandments and then have to admit that we have broken one or more many times. James 2:10 “*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*”

Just looking religious on the *outside* has zero impact on whether we will be *inside* the Kingdom of God. Matthew 7:21 “*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*” Doing the will of the Father is *trusting* on the Blood of His Son.

Appearing religious on the *outside* will not help us, so we *must* be *trusting* God in faith on the *inside*—to *heal* our body; to *supply* our needs; to *right* our wrongs; and *do* anything else He promises to do. Our search for *God’s Truth* always takes us back to *God’s Word* for the answer.

If *idle* words can *condemn* us Matthew 12:37, *bitter* and *angry* words *surely* will. The *hope* we have is the *promise* given—John 3:18 “*He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.*”

Honesty, integrity, and morality—are all seriously *lacking* today, but if we *believe* and *trust* God in faith we will *not* be condemned—because we *have believed* and *acted* on the *Name* of Jesus—trusting Him for *contentment, peace, and His Spirit* within to keep us *moral, honest, and a person of integrity!*



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