

# Let's Be Honest!

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**Instructions:** The format of these mini-studies is similar to that of the Bible On-Line Study Course. Look up and read in your Bible the scripture references given in answer to the questions. Comments following the questions further explain the scriptures just read. That's all there is to it! (These studies are based on the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise stated.)

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Have you ever wondered what life would be like if everyone were honest and told the truth?

No one would be afraid of being cheated anymore. Manufacturers would no longer mislead consumers with false and deceptive advertising. Politicians wouldn't make promises they knew they couldn't keep. You could trust all your friends to tell the truth and keep their word.

How refreshing it would be if people everywhere always told the truth!

The Bible has much to say about telling the truth. In this study we will learn something about the basic nature and character of God. We'll discover who the first liar was and examine the first lie recorded in the Bible. Then we'll learn about some of the many benefits that automatically come to those who build a reputation of being truthful.

Before you begin this study, be sure to get a Bible, pen or pencil and some paper. Look up, read and then write down the verses that answer each question. This will help you to remember the important principles you'll be learning.

1. What are some of the qualities and characteristics of God? Deuteronomy 32:4; Revelation 15:3. What is one thing God will never do under any circumstance? Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18.

God reveals Himself as a God of truth. You can always rely on what He says. God can be trusted to keep all of His promises because He has willed never to lie!

2. Did Jesus Christ, the Son of God, always speak the truth? Matthew 22:16.

Christ exemplified the character and nature of God the Father throughout His life. This is because He also was God – the “Word” or Spokesman of the God Family before He became a human being and the Son of God (John 1:1-3, 14; Matt. 14:33).

3. What is the origin of the Holy Bible? 2 Timothy 3:16. What did Jesus, who spoke and lived by the truth, define as truth? John 17:17. Under inspiration of God, did King David also define God's law as being the truth?: Psalm 119:142, 151.

God's Word, the Holy Bible, contains essential truth inspired by God that reveals a way of life based on the Ten Commandments. This is the way the two members of the God Family have always lived.

“God is love” (1 John 4:16) and the fulfilling of God's law is love (Romans 13:8,10). Therefore, the Ten Commandments express the character of God. The Ten Commandments tell us how to show God's outgoing love to both God and other people (Matthew 22:37-39).

4. Did Jesus teach obedience to the Ten Commandments? Matthew 19:17-19. Did He keep them Himself? John 15:10.

5. Exactly what does the Ninth Commandment say? Exodus 20:16.

Bearing false witness (lying) is the opposite of God's nature and character. Since God wants us to develop His character (Matthew 5:48), it is His desire that we learn to always tell the truth. Intentionally misleading or deceiving others does not show the true love and concern that God wants each of us to be developing toward our parents, teachers and friends.

6. Who was responsible for telling the first recorded lie? Read and summarize Genesis 3:1-5, especially verse 4. Who was this serpent? Revelation 12:9. Is he identified as the “father” of all lies? John 8:44. What has he done since to the entire world? Read Revelation 12:9 again. Has all mankind therefore disobeyed God's commandments, including the ninth? Romans 3:12-13, 23.

God reveals the existence of a super-powerful spirit being – an archangel – who rebelled against God and all that He stands for (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28: 13-17). Now known as Satan, his character is the exact opposite of the faithful and true nature of God!

Taking on the identity of a serpent, the devil lied to Eve in the Garden of Eden. He told her that she would not die, implying that God was a liar when He warned her that she would die if she ate of the forbidden fruit (Genesis 2:16-17). Believing Satan, Eve ate the forbidden fruit and shared it with her husband Adam. Thus, they chose to disobey God. The result? They were driven out of the garden of Eden (Genesis 3:23-24) and died as God had said (Genesis 5:5).

As the god of this world or age (2 Corinthians 4:4), Satan has also succeeded in spiritually blinding all mankind into also disbelieving God and living contrary to God's law.

7. Is lying one sin that God especially hates? Proverbs 6:16-19. Is it an absolute abomination to Him? Proverbs 12:22. But does God take great delight in those who deal truthfully? Same verse.

God is extremely concerned with the truth. That is because all forms of lying and cheating destroy character, in the long run hurting the one who tells the lies as well as others.

Even so-called “white lies” fall into the same category with outright, blatant lies! Telling a “white lie” is a false statement made to another person with the intention to mislead. God hates that and so should we.

8. How did King David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22), view lying? Psalm 119:29, 163. What was his advice to those who seek to please God? Psalm 34:13; 15:1-2.

King David realized the importance of telling the truth. He knew from personal experience that God grants special favors to those who strive to be truthful.

9. There is often a temptation to mislead and deceive others, and many succeed at first. But what do these lies become like to those who speak them? Proverbs 20:17. Can it be dangerous to fool others, even in fun? Proverbs 26:18-19.

In today's society young people are constantly bombarded with pressures to compromise their character and integrity. Situations often arise in the classroom, on the playing field, on the job or at home where there is a temptation to lie or twist the facts in your favor. But don't do it!

Honesty is always the best policy, even if it hurts. This is because the Ninth Commandment is a part of God's great spiritual law. If it is broken, it exacts penalties just as surely as the penalty you would suffer if you broke the physical law of gravity by jumping off the top of a 10-story building!

10. Will special benefits come to the young person who chooses to speak and will live by the truth? Proverbs 3:3-4. How will those in authority feel toward a person who carefully guards his or her tongue? Proverbs 22:11.

A young person who is careful about what he or she says and who strives to tell the truth will be building a reputation for honesty among friends, instructors and superiors at school and on the job. They will know that his or her word can be relied on. Such a person will often be favored and rewarded in different ways, including higher pay. And his or her parents will know they can entrust him or her with greater privileges.

11. Will there be any liars in God's coming Kingdom? Revelation 21:8. Will those who sincerely strive to keep God's commandments, including the ninth, receive eternal life as children of God in His ruling Family? Matthew 19:16-17; Revelation 21:7; 5:10. Also notice Proverbs 12:19.

God, who cannot lie, has promised membership in His Family to those who strive to obey Him in everything they do. As members of His universe-ruling Family, they will live and rule with God and Christ forever.

What an awe-inspiring, incredibly wonderful future awaits those who learn to obey God and tell the truth!