

**Spiritual How-to's**  
**To Tell the Truth**  
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**Intro. Over a period of 31 TV seasons, from 1956-1978 (& then in reruns & updated versions) there was a TV show that featured 2 impostures, and one genuinely employed person, who a panel of 4 celebrity panelists tried to guess the job of.**

**You can still find it on YouTube and HULU today.**

**Do you remember or know the show?**

**\*\* Show clip\*\* To Tell the Truth**

**I'm not an imposter and you don't have to guess my occupation, but I am gonna talk today about Telling the Truth.**

**I. As we continue our look into Matthew 5 and the principles that Jesus addresses as being values within His kingdom, we come upon these words of His in Matthew 5:33-37- NLT**

**READ IT**

**A. A common practice in Jesus day was when someone made a promise, he swore to fulfill it by naming a power greater than himself.**

- 1. The 4 things He mentions were sacred to the Jews – heaven, earth, Jerusalem, and a person's head**
- 2. Jesus was telling them, not swear by any of them because they had no power over them.**

**B. What they did have power over, was their own words.**

- 1. Therefore, He told them just say a simple yes or no**
- 2. With no strings attached or need for another's validation**

**C. His point was, as followers of The Way, the integrity held within one would hold them to fulfill their vows and promises. Nothing else was needed.**

**D. The message within this lesson is don't say anything that you don't mean.**

- 1. Remember, words are powerful**
- 2. Words have the power to give life and take life.**

**II. Vows and oaths today.**

**A. Isn't it interesting that there are institutions today that require people to "take an oath"? Military enlistment, testimony in court, naturalization, congress, president, wedding, scouts, attorney, medical & fiduciary...**

**B. Many of these oaths even require an expected behavior or code of ethics to follow the oath.**

**C. There's even an act of congress from 1789 that requires and regulates the time and manner of certain oaths. (Article VI of the Constitution)**

**D. Why? Because oath taking is serious and carries significant penalties for failing to fulfill the oath.**

1. "under penalty of perjury"
2. "false testimony"
3. there are consequences

E. The oath taken is calling upon "a higher power" to help you, "So help me God", and to hold you **accountable/punishable if you do not tell the truth.** (perjury)

**F. Again, why? Because civilized society must depend on truth telling, that is how people make informed, accurate decisions.**

1. **Truth is vital for people to be genuine in their interactions**
2. **Telling the truth builds trust and cooperation**
3. **Telling the truth shows respect for people**
4. **Even weights, measures and scales must be truthful.** (Deuteronomy and Leviticus)

G. **Corruption comes from dishonesty.** Lies, deception, manipulation of words, or hiding truth under layers of misrepresentations make for corruption.

H. Look around. DO you see corruption, deception, and misrepresentations?

I. **Where are those who live their lives to tell the truth? Is there one? Are you one?**

**III. The oath one takes is only as strong as the integrity of the person who makes it.**

Your personal character and integrity will determine your level of truthfulness.

**A. If the institutions of men hold us accountable for our oaths and truth telling, do we really expect God to not notice when we lie and violate our promises?**

B. Jesus said, "Let your yes be yes and your no be no." Whatever you promise, keep.

1. **Be there, do it, follow through, stay true to your word.**
2. No excuses, blaming, explanations, apology, criticism, etc.
3. Anything beyond a simple yes or no springs from the evil one.

C. The more words of exceptions we use, the deeper we find ourselves mired in deceit, cover up, and corruption in our heart.

D. We used to live in a day when men lived by the motto, "your word is your bond".

E. Some say, we are living in a post-truth world.

1. Having taught for over 40 years, I can tell you truth is disappearing
2. Observing our political leaders I believe truth is distorted, and misrepresented

F. Why? Because men's (and women's) hearts are corrupt and wicked.

G. If we are to live by God's values and standards, then we must keep our word, our promises and vows and not be liars. We must tell the truth.

**IV. Bible verses for your study and strengthening.**

John 8:44 – the devil has nothing to do with the truth, there is no truth in him,  
He is the father of lies

John 17:17 – your Word is truth

Ephesians 4:25 – put away lying, speak the truth

Ephesians 4:15 – speak the truth in love

Titus 1:2 – God cannot lie, He is ever truthful and without deceit

Proverbs 12:19 – truthful lips endure forever

Proverbs 14:25 – truthful witness rescues lives

Jeremiah 4:2 – be truthful, honest and upright when you take an oath

Jeremiah 5:1 – go into the city, look up and down to find a single person who does honestly and tries to be truthful

Galatians 4:16 – am I your enemy by being truthful to you?

1 Corinthians 13:6 – love rejoices in the truth

Luke 8:15 - ...with an honest and good heart...

Matthew 22:16 – we know that you are truthful and teach truthfully

- V. Untruthfulness is easy.** We fudge on facts, leave out pieces, ignore certain issues, deny others, tell people what they want to hear, and refuse to be held accountable or own up. We exaggerate, and belittle to make our case, and we feel none the worse for it.
- A. As believers, tho', God's values of righteousness and integrity are to shape us to be like Jesus.
  - B. The Bible says, when we see Him, we shall be like Him. That's our goal.
  - C. So we submit ourselves to Jesus, the Truth and seek to live in that truth, honesty and integrity.
  - D. Lying, falsehood, deceit, exaggerations, and discounting honesty has no part in our life or coming from our lips.
  - E. We seek to live in all our ways to tell the truth, and give a simple yes, I will or no, I won't to our commitments. Everything else is from the evil one.

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