Discipleship Groups — Level 8
WEEK 6

Wisdom for Living: Honesty

Welcome to Level 8 of our discipleship small groups. For this level, we have drawn from the Book of Proverbs and titled this series *Wisdom for Living.*

> Proverbs 4:7 (NLT) tells us: *"Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do! And whatever else you do, develop good judgment."*

The Book of Proverbs reminds us that God's wisdom was given so that we might know it and live it out. We are at Class six, and today we will study what this book teaches us about honesty.

WHAT IS HONESTY?

To me, honesty means living in accordance with the truth and acting with integrity before God and others. An honest person:

- Tells the truth.
- Keeps their word.
- Does not deceive for personal gain.
- Admits their mistakes.
- Treats others fairly.
- Maintains the same conduct in public and in private.

Nowadays, some say that honesty is out of style and no longer relevant to the times. But you and I know that this is false. Honesty is necessary today because, through it, we reflect to the world that Christ lives in each of us. Honesty must be evident in every area of our lives. Our homes or families are great places to practice it.

At home, we should interact with truth, transparency, and respect—in other words, with honesty. I recall a story about a family:

A bill collector knocked on the door, and a young boy answered. The collector said, "Hello there! I'm the bill collector. Is your mom home?" The boy closed the door, went to the kitchen, came back, and told the collector, "My mom says she isn't here."

The fool lies, while the wise person tells the truth. Our identity is found in Christ, not in Satan, the father of lies. As I said earlier, honesty must be reflected in all areas of our lives.

Think for a moment about giving. We must ask ourselves: Are we giving to God honestly? Honesty must also be practiced when we give our tithes and offerings. If offering means giving according to what is decided in our hearts, and tithing means giving ten percent of our income, then…why not be honest regarding what belongs to God?

Some give only what is left over, while others put off giving whenever the time comes. God does not need our money; He requires our obedience.

Acts 5:1–11 recounts the story of Ananias and Sapphira. They were not honest. They sold a piece of property and handed over only a portion of the money. The problem was not that they kept a part for themselves—they were free to do so. Their sin was conspiring to lie and pretending that they were giving the full amount.

They tried to deceive the church, but the Apostle Peter made them realize they had lied to the Holy Spirit. In the end, both received divine punishment and died.

Likewise, you and I can act dishonestly when paying our taxes.

We are dishonest if we submit false information to pay less than what is legally required. It is valid to take advantage of deductions permitted by law when filing taxes. What is dishonest is lying, concealing income, or fabricating expenses to evade taxes.

Honesty remains necessary today because it is a principle that comes from God. Therefore, we must examine ourselves and ask: Am I being honest with God, with myself, and with others?

Let us look at three principles regarding honesty that the Book of Proverbs teaches us.

1. **INTEGRITY GIVES US SECURITY**
   Proverbs 10:9 (NLT) tells us: *"People with integrity walk safely, but those who follow crooked paths will be exposed."*

We all want to live securely. We want to feel at peace in our marriages, our families, our work, our relationships, and also in our relationship with God. No one wants to live in fear of being found out, losing the trust of others, or suffering the consequences of a bad decision.

What this proverb teaches us is that integrity offers us that security because it allows us to live without leading a double life. When our words, decisions, and actions align with the truth, we can walk with peace of mind and look others in the eye.

Say it with me: Integrity gives us security!

That is why I want to live with security. I want to have peace in my heart, keep my family's trust, maintain a good testimony, and know that I am walking rightly before God.

Something we must realize is that lying places a heavy burden on the person who lies. When we lie, we have to remember what we said, to whom we said it, and how to keep that version of the story going.

An honest person walks securely because they have nothing to hide. An honest person does not need to invent explanations or live in fear of being found out. Their conscience is at ease, and their conduct inspires trust.

Someone who lies might gain a momentary advantage, but they become trapped in their own deceptions. One lie always leads to another, and sooner or later, it will be exposed.

Returning to the biblical account of Ananias and Sapphira, they tried to feign a generosity that was not genuine. They thought they could hide what had happened, but their deception was uncovered because nothing can be hidden from God.

> Proverbs 12:22 (NLT) tells us: *"The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth."*

Christian honesty is not merely about avoiding lies. An honest person strives to ensure their words and actions align. We may appear righteous before others, but God knows our hearts. We cannot deceive Him. The deception we use to gain something can end up being the very thing that causes us to lose everything. Lying may seem like a quick fix, but it ultimately damages our reputation, relationships, work, family, and spiritual life.

Remember: God delights in—is pleased by—those who tell the truth! God rejoices in your honesty.

2. WHAT WE HIDE EVENTALLY CONTROLS US

> Proverbs 28:13 (NLT) tells us: *"People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and forsake them, they will receive mercy."*

Our natural tendency when we do something wrong is to hide it. We see this in children. Suddenly, they take something, and when asked about what they grabbed, they place it behind their backs and say, "I don't have anything."

To hide means to conceal something to prevent others from knowing or discovering it. It could be a lie, a sin, a bad decision, a debt, a conversation, or improper behavior.

We say that "what we hide controls us" because we live in constant fear of it being discovered. We begin to feel fear, guilt, and anxiety; we invent explanations, avoid certain conversations, and often tell new lies to protect the original one. Even if no one else knows, what we conceal begins to influence our emotions, decisions, and relationships.

In contrast, when we acknowledge our mistakes before God and seek to correct them, we cease to be prisoners of what is hidden.

In the Bible, we find the case of Achan, whose story is told in Joshua 7. After the people of Israel's victory at Jericho, God had commanded that no one take for themselves the things destined for destruction.

However, Achan saw a beautiful cloak, silver, and gold; he took them and hid them beneath his tent. He thought no one would discover his sin, but his action affected all of Israel. Subsequently, the entire army of Israel was defeated in the battle of AI .

When we do something wrong, we believe that if no one knows, the problem will disappear. But what we hide continues to grow and can affect other people.

Achan remained silent until he was discovered. The lesson here is clear: God does not want us to live in hiding, but rather to confess and forsake what is wrong. Confession opens the door to forgiveness, and true repentance leads us to change direction.

What we hide keeps us captive; what we confess and forsake leads us to freedom.

3. AN HONEST LIFE BUILDS TRUST

> Proverbs 12:19, NLT *"Truthful words stand the test of time but lies are soon exposed."*

Trust takes time to build. Every time we keep our word, admit a mistake, speak the truth, or do the right thing even when no one is watching, we are building trust.

Daniel is a great example of how an honest life fosters trust. The Bible tells us that his enemies wanted to find something they could use against him. Daniel 6:4 states that they looked for some fault in how he handled government affairs, but they could find nothing to criticize.

Daniel was faithful, responsible, and completely trustworthy. King Darius had considered placing Daniel over the entire empire. Consequently, his adversaries scrutinized his life for corruption but could not find any. What a testimony Daniel had!

To me, this could be another way to define honesty. Just as Daniel did, he lived in such a way that even those looking for something against him struggled to find it.

Truth leads us to freedom.

CONCLUSION

Honesty reflects the character of Christ and must be present in our relationship with God, our words, our finances, our work, and our private lives.

- Integrity allows us to walk securely.

- Confessing what is hidden leads us to freedom.
- And an honest life fosters trust.

The challenge is to abandon everything that contradicts God's will and decide to live in the truth, even when doing so comes at a cost.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Gather in your small group and answer the following questions:

1. Why is it sometimes difficult to tell the truth?
2. Are there "little lies" that we have culturally come to consider normal?
3. What can we learn from Daniel about our public and private lives?
4. Is there any area where God is calling us to live with greater transparency?

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Ask yourself this question before God: *Is there anything I am hiding, exaggerating, pretending about, or justifying that I need to set right?*

Do not just identify the problem. Take a concrete step to correct it. This could mean acknowledging a mistake, asking for forgiveness, telling the truth, returning something, keeping a promise, or giving up a wrong practice.

To conclude, pray this **PRAYER** with me: *Lord Jesus, examine my heart. I want to be a person of integrity. Help me to speak the truth, keep my word, and do what is right even when no one is watching. Show me any area I need to set right and give me the courage to do so. I ask for Your forgiveness and repent of my dishonesty. Keep me far away from lying, and, God, extend Your mercy and forgiveness over my life. I ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.*

That concludes today's lesson. We hope that everything shared proves to be of great benefit to your life.

Blessings!