

Junior 1 Year 3 Book 4 Lesson 8
A Life of Integrity
Passages: As listed in the lesson.

Memory Verse

“Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight.” (Proverbs 12:22)

Knowledge of God’s Will [God’s Word]	Knowledge of God [God’s Divine Nature]	Good Works [Behavior]
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God has commissioned us to speak the truth and to walk in it.2. Dishonesty damages all relationships.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. God hates lies.2. God is truth.3. God is involved in every detail of our lives.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Never compromise the truth.2. Take God’s word seriously and allow it to control our speech and actions so that we live a life of integrity.

Overview

Events and Spiritual Teachings

- A. God’s Nature Is Truth
- B. The Father of Lies
- C. The Destruction of Liars

Life Application: Living a Life of Honesty

Memory Verse

Conclusion: It is easy to fall upon deception and dishonesty when we are in a tight spot, but our speech and actions should always reflect our identity as children of God. If, however, we live a life of deception, then we are declaring ourselves as part of the father of lies, and will share in Satan’s punishment.

Introduction

What does “integrity” mean? If I asked you to think of someone who has integrity, what kind of characteristics would this person have? The dictionary definition for this word is, “The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles.”¹ If you know anyone who is incredibly honest, always truthful, and who never makes questionable decisions, then that is someone with integrity. A person who has spiritual integrity can also be described as righteous, upright, and God-fearing. One of the basic foundations of integrity is honesty or truthfulness, which is what we will be focusing on today.

A. God’s Nature Is Truth

When was the last time you let a lie slip out of your mouth? Have you ever told a half truth in order to protect yourself? Would you say you are honest all the time? Culture and society place great value on public image and self-protection. As a result, truthfulness takes a backseat in people’s lives most of the time. Some truly believe that it is okay to tell lies in order to make themselves feel good or look good to others. Even many Christians bend the truth, use flattering speech, or tell half-truths. This shows that they struggle to understand the heart and will of God.

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Proverbs 16:2 says, “All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs the spirits.” This means that however we try to justify our actions, God judges us according to His values, not ours. What is God’s stance regarding truth and lies? Refer to the following verses and pick out the common characteristic of God that is described in each of them.

- Psalm 31:5 – “Into Your hand I commit my spirit; You have redeemed me, O LORD God of truth.”
- Psalm 51:6 – “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.”
- John 14:6 – “Jesus said to him, ‘I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.’”

From these verses, we can see that God is truth, and the Holy Spirit is also truth itself. This means lies can never exist with God. His nature is the opposite of deception. And if we are to draw closer to Him and become more like Jesus, we must also learn to tell the truth as He desires us to do.

B. The Father of Lies

Satan has many names. The Bible also calls Satan a “deceiver” (Rev 12:9), “tempter” (1 Thess 3:5), “the ruler of demons” (Mt 10:25), and “Belial” or “wicked one” (2 Cor 6:15). Let’s read 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.”

What does it mean to be the “father” of lies? It means that Satan was the originator of deceit; he was the first to use deception. This is Satan’s true nature. As the very first one to lie, all deceit comes from him, from the moment he deceived Eve in the garden of Eden by telling her, “You will not surely die” (Gen 3:4). His words were a half-truth. From this moment on, sin and death entered the world, and they became separated from God. They experienced physical and spiritual death due to their disobedience.

¹ *Oxford Dictionaries*, s.v. “integrity,” accessed October 4th, 2019, <https://www.lexico.com/en/definition/integrity>.

It doesn't matter what kind of lie it is, or how "big" or "little" the lie. The Bible teaches us that "[a] false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies shall perish" (Prov 19:9). Revelation 21:8 also says that "all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." In this verse, they are named right next to the unbelieving, sexually immoral, and idolaters! Clearly, deception is a serious sin in the eyes of God. Let's now look at a few examples in the Bible.

1. Abraham (Gen 12:10–20; 20:1–28)

<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abraham didn't tell the whole truth because he feared being killed. He lacked trust in the Lord's protection. 	<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> He suffered a loss of respect among his people. He lost the opportunity to bear witness to Gentiles.
<p>What can we learn about God? From these verses, we can see that God is involved in every detail of our lives. When we trust in Him, He can help us avoid sin. And even when we are faithless, God remains faithful.</p>	<p>How can I apply this to my life? Our fears often lead us to lie. We shouldn't let our fears control us. Instead, trust in God and place our faith in Him. Then, we will be less afraid, and will no longer see any reason to lie.</p>

2. Achan (Josh 7)

<p>Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Achan didn't fear God nor take His commands seriously. He also didn't understand that we cannot hide anything from God. He thought that his actions were small and unimportant. 	<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Israelites suffered a humiliating and terrible loss at the hands of the city of Ai. Achan and his family were stoned to death.
<p>What can we learn about God? God sees everything we do, and He is not content with us doing what is right only when it is convenient for us. He wants us to do what is right all the time.</p>	<p>How can I apply this to my life? We must be careful not to rationalize our sins by believing lies, or by thinking that our actions are too small to affect anyone but ourselves.</p>

3. Micaiah, Ahab, and Jehoshaphat (1 Kgs 22:1–37)

<p>Ahab's Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is clear that Ahab did not respect the Lord God. The Bible even says that "Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him" (1 Kgs 16:33). Ahab only listened to what he wanted to hear; the truth was irrelevant. <p>Jehoshaphat's Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unlike Ahab, Jehoshaphat valued God's truth. He mistakenly sought for help from the wicked King Ahab. The prophet Jehu 	<p>Results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ahab's life of deception and disobedience to God resulted in a shameful and sudden death. Because he sought help from Ahab, Jehoshaphat almost lost his life in battle. Micaiah may have been physically punished for speaking the truth, but he ultimately refused to disobey God. As a result, his prophecy came true, and Ahab was killed in battle despite his disguise.
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<p>reminded him not to seek help from the ungodly (2 Chr 18:2–3).</p> <p>Micaiah’s Actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micaiah’s mocking words (2 Chr 18:14–15) transformed into a deadly proclamation for Ahab, despite Ahab’s power over his life. • Despite the messenger’s request, Micaiah courageously told the truth (2 Chr 18:13). Even with Ahab’s command that he be imprisoned, he spoke only God’s words. 	
<p>What can we learn about God?</p> <p>God wants us to seek Him instead of the ungodly. It is also apparent from Ahab’s death that no matter what measures we may try to take, we cannot fool the Lord. He is always in control!</p>	<p>How can I apply this to my life?</p> <p>We should seek out the Lord before making any big decisions and accept what He wants, even if it isn’t our preferred answer. We should also learn to stand up and tell the truth, no matter what others say or what may happen to us if we do.</p>

C. The Destruction of Liars

Let’s read Jeremiah 5:1–4, 12–17. In this chapter, the Lord told Jeremiah that if Jeremiah found just one fair and honest person in Jerusalem, God would spare the city. Jeremiah observed the poor and rich, and searched every level of society in the city, but he found no true followers of the Lord. Without even a single honest person in the city, God decided to bring their enemies to destroy the city, their possessions, and even the families within.

Let’s read Proverbs 6:16–19. Did you notice that lying appears twice on this list? This is because lying involves deception, cheating, and disregard for the truth. We should never join in such practices because deception can bring destruction to ourselves, to those around us, and even to the church. This includes false testimony against other people, something difficult to avoid in an age where social media serves as a breeding ground for false accusations!

Why should I live a life of honesty?

What are the rewards for living a life of honesty? What punishments do we face if we live a life full of dishonesty? Look up the following verses and write down what the Bible says the rewards and punishments are for being honest or dishonest.

- **Rewards for Honesty**
 - Proverbs 12:22 – *Our actions will delight the Lord.*
 - 1 Peter 3:10–12 – *The Lord watches over the righteous and listens to their prayers.*
 - Titus 2:7–8 – *Our enemies will be ashamed, being unable to speak evil of us.*
 - Matthew 25:23 – *We will be made ruler over many things and enter into the joy of the Lord.*
- **Punishment for Dishonesty**
 - Psalm 5:6 – *God abhors and destroys liars.*
 - Proverbs 19:9 – *We will experience punishment and death.*
 - Revelation 21:8 – *We will be cast into the lake of fire.*
 - Joshua 7:11–12 – *God will no longer stand with us but allow our enemies to destroy us.*

It is important that we strive to be different from the world, because to lie means to associate ourselves with the father of lies and share in his punishment in the end times. It is a serious sin against God (Prov 19:5), and there will always be consequences, no matter how “small” or well-intentioned our lies may be. Ultimately, we must always abide in truth and integrity because that is where God is. If we do, then God will watch over us and reward us with salvation.

Check for Understanding

- 1. What is God’s stance regarding truth and lies?** God’s nature is truth, and the Holy Spirit is also truth itself. This means lies can never exist alongside God. His nature is the opposite of deception.
- 2. Why is Satan called the father of lies?** He was the originator of deceit, the first to use deception. As the very first to lie, all deceit comes from him.
- 3. Why did Abraham lie about Sarah?** He was afraid of being killed. He didn’t trust in God’s protection.
- 4. What lessons can we apply to our life from the example of Achan in the Bible?** We mustn’t rationalize our sins by believing lies or think that our actions won’t affect anyone but ourselves.
- 5. What is the ultimate punishment for associating ourselves with the father of lies?** We will share in Satan’s punishment and be cast into the lake of fire.

Life Application

Living a Life of Honesty

The Bible has a lot to say about being honest! Why is God so keen about this command? It’s because truthfulness is one of the attributes and characteristics of God. He does not and cannot lie (Num 23:19), and He hates deception. Therefore, as His children, we need to be truthful as He is (Ex 20:15–16). So how can we begin to live a life of honesty?

1. What does honesty mean?

People with integrity bring out the best in both themselves and in others. Those who speak truthfully build up their character and promote harmony. On the other hand, someone who practices deception often has to hide things in their lives. When the truth is revealed, their words are no longer considered reliable, and they must accept the consequences for their deceptive words and deeds. Let’s brainstorm the characteristics of an honest person by finishing the following phrase: “An honest person...”

(Teachers: Allow students to brainstorm. Example answers have been given below.)

- ...tells the truth to others and to themselves.
- ...is completely trustworthy.
- ...has personal integrity.
- ...represents God in their words and actions.
- ...keeps their promises.
- ...doesn’t manipulate others.
- ...avoids taking shortcuts.
- ...helps others grow spiritually and live upright lives.
- ...speaks the truth with love.

In the world around us, most people prefer to abide by their own standards of honesty, and these standards are often ever-changing and flexible. But as we learned today, we must learn to do what is right in God’s eyes, not our own. And any form of deception is considered a sin against God.

2. Taking steps towards honesty

It’s clear that being honest requires a lot of thought! What seems normal to the world should not be normal to us. For example, “forgetting” a promise that you made, making up excuses when you fail to do your homework, or keeping quiet when you are undercharged for a purchase. But speaking the truth is a sign of maturity that also shows our love for God. Paul calls us to “put off falsehood and speak

truthfully” (Eph 4:25 NIV). To do so, we need to first identify when and why we fall upon deception in our lives.

a. Observation

It takes discipline to catch ourselves lying. If we examine our lives, we will likely notice some patterns. Consider the following: When do I tend to lie? Are there certain people I lie to the most? In what situations am I most prone to dishonesty? When we can pick out why we lie and the patterns involved, we can begin to take steps to avoid those same situations in the future.

b. Admission

When we notice our lies, it is important to admit to them and expose them. If you take God’s word seriously and truly want to commit His words to your heart, then you must be just as serious about removing any dishonesty from your life. This requires that we confess when we have lied or acted without integrity. The action of confessing our sins aloud and in our prayers helps us to become more aware of our sin and makes us less likely to repeat it in the future.

c. Determination

Removing deceit and lies requires two key ingredients: the power of the Holy Spirit, and determination! It is impossible to change without the power of the Holy Spirit. But even if we have the Holy Spirit, unless we have the resolve to change ourselves, the Holy Spirit cannot help us, which is why the second ingredient is determination.

d. Love

The last step that is required for honesty is love. We need to speak the truth with love, not brutality! God doesn’t want us to hurt people with the truth. Rather, He wants our words to become a blessing to those who hear us. Therefore, we need to grow in our love in order to speak the truth in accordance with God’s will.

3. How do I live a life of honesty?

a. Never compromise

Whenever we prioritize the approval of mankind, we are compromising the approval of God. Therefore, the first key to maintaining our integrity is to always put our faith first. We should always seek the approval of God over the approval of men and never make the decision to compromise our faith. The Bible says that “[the] fear of man brings a snare” (Prov 29:25). We often fall back on deception out of fear—perhaps we are scared of punishment, or of losing the respect of our peers. Honest people, on the other hand, are unafraid. They don’t fear the truth or its consequences. Let’s look at a few examples of ways we might compromise our faith by using deception.

- “If I told my dad the truth, he’d never give me an allowance ever again.”
- “If I told the teacher the real reason I didn’t finish my paper on time, she’ll deduct points.”
- “If I just tell a half-truth, my parents will be more likely to let me go to the party on Friday.”
- “I’ll get better marks if I just take credit for all of the work.”
- “I should just say something other than the truth so that my friend feels better.”
- “Who really cares if I lie about the number of hours I spend playing games?”
- “It’s the teller’s fault for giving me extra change. No one will care if I keep the money.”

As God’s children, we should always take the high ground, because everything that we say and do represents who we are. This is easier when we surround ourselves with honorable people,

who can inspire us to become a better person. But if we spend our time with dishonest people, our own integrity becomes affected, and we start to compromise our faith. Ultimately, refusing to compromise means never pushing the rules, but courageously speaking the truth and walking in God's commands no matter what others may think, see, or do in response.

b. Take God's words seriously

The world around us often misinterprets the Bible, dismisses its teachings as outdated or conservative, or simply ignores it. But we know that the Bible is important: it's full of God's instructions on how to receive salvation! So, we have to learn to be different from those around us, and take God's words seriously. Let's read Nehemiah 8:5. Ezra brought the Book of the Law of Moses out to the people to read it to them. The Bible says that "when he opened it, all the people stood up." This was a sign of the people's reverence and respect for God's word.

Is reading the Bible at the bottom of your list of priorities? Do you just read a verse or two and immediately forget what you read? Do you deliberately ignore the Bible's commands, or convince yourself that its warnings aren't that serious? Our spirit and our attitude towards the Bible determine how much we get out of it. If we don't take it seriously, God's word can't help us. But if we do take it seriously, we will be touched by teachings from the Scriptures. If we approach our Bible studies with the correct attitude, God will bless and encourage us.

Testimony

I lied so much during my high school years that I really didn't know who I was anymore. But God took hold of my heart one year when I went to NYTS! When I heard teachings about being pure and being right with God, I couldn't help but respond with a broken heart. During that NYTS, I truly encountered God – what He said, what He meant, and how important it was for me to stop lying. When I read God's word, it was like a mirror. It grabbed hold of me and stirred my emotions. God's word is truly like a sword piercing to the soul!

I couldn't hide it anymore; I told my counselor about my hidden sin. I repented and wept in all of my prayers as I asked God for forgiveness. I felt a deep sorrow for what I had done to my friends and family members, especially towards my parents. I sincerely asked God to renew me, and to help me recommit myself to the Scriptures and become a doer of His word. His words became my strength to stop lying, and I am now ready to face the challenge of being truthful.

– Anonymous

Memory Verse

"Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, but those who deal truthfully are His delight." (Proverbs 12:22)

Meaning

God has created and continues to sustain us every day! If we truly love Him, then we should listen and follow His command by not telling lies. When we live upright lives by speaking only the truth, God delights in us and blesses us.

Conclusion

It is easy to fall upon deception and dishonesty when we are in a tight spot, but our speech and actions should always reflect our identity as children of God, so that we can be blameless before men and

glorify God with our lives. If we do, we can be confident of our salvation. But if we choose to live a life of dishonesty and deception, then we are declaring our identity as sons and daughters of Satan, the father of lies. Doing so means that we will also share in his punishment and will be cast into the lake of fire in the end times. Therefore, it is important to learn to live lives of integrity and honesty, so that we can please God and ultimately be blessed by Him.

Lesson 8 Homework Assignment Answer Key

1. What happens if we follow God's command to live upright lives?
If we speak only the truth, then God will delight in us and bless us.
2. Why is Satan called the "father" of lies?
He was the first to use deception. As the very first one to lie, all deceit comes from him.
3. Write down one reward for honesty and one punishment for dishonesty, with biblical references.
 - a. *Rewards for Honesty*
Proverbs 12:22 – Our actions will delight the Lord.
1 Peter 3:10–12 – The Lord watches over the righteous and listens to their prayers.
Titus 2:7–8 – Our enemies will be ashamed, being unable to speak evil of us.
Matthew 25:23 – We will be made ruler over many things and enter into the joy of the Lord.
 - b. *Punishment for Dishonesty*
Psalm 5:6 – God abhors and destroys liars.
Proverbs 19:9 – We will experience punishment and death.
Revelation 21:8 – We will be cast into the lake of fire.
Joshua 7:11–12 – God will no longer stand with us but allow our enemies to destroy us
4. Today, we learned four steps that we can take towards living a life of honesty. Follow each step, taking the time to reflect upon yourself. Use another sheet of paper if you need more space.
 - a. **Observation:** Think of a recent situation where you were deceptive or dishonest.
 - b. **Admission:** Write a prayer to God explaining why you acted this way and repent of your mistake.
 - c. **Determination:** Continue your prayer from part (b), this time outlining how you will avoid acting the same way in similar situations in the future. Remember to ask for help from the Holy Spirit.
 - d. **Love:** Conclude with how you will show your love for God towards the person(s) you deceived.

Dear God...

(Personal answers)