

ESSENTIAL CHRISTIAN VIRTUES - HONESTY

THIS IS YOUR RADIO FRIEND, PASTOR AMARA UWAEZIOZI, BRINGING YOU: **“HEALING WORDS FROM THE MASTER”**, A *RADIO PROGRAM OF THE MASTER’S VESSEL MINISTRY WHOSE AIM IS TO LET YOU KNOW THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AND GOD’S UNSEARCHABLE RICHES AVAILABLE TO YOU.*

Beloved friends, what a pleasure to welcome you to today’s broadcast! I thank GOD for you who have been listening to these messages. We give GOD the glory for open doors and for the provision of resources to maintain the program.

You are very free to support this program financially and prayerfully. Contact any of the phone numbers normally released at the end of the message.

I was privileged to meet a young man in our branch at Owerri who began to fellowship with them. He came to church as a result of the radio messages. He has been a regular listener. We have the same testimony from Amawom in Ikwuano Local Government Area of Abia State. We thank GOD for such confirmations. GOD bless you real good as you commit yourself to our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

In the next four weeks we shall be speaking on Essential Virtues.

Essential Christian Virtues

Today, I am going to be taking the first one, on **honesty**: *Developing the Culture of Honesty.*

DEVELOPING THE CULTURE OF HONESTY

Our bible reading will be taken from two portions of the bible. The first one is in Exodus 20:16.

Exodus 20:16

¹⁶ “*You shall not give false witness against your neighbor.*

The second one is taken from Matthew 5:39.

Matthew 5:39

⁷Let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’

Let us pray.

PRAYER

Heavenly FATHER and the FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, I bless YOUR Name for the opportunity to bring YOUR Word to our readers. Grant that the eternal Words which YOU have used to save us will impart on our lives and bring the necessary transformations...in JESUS Name I pray. Amen!

Let us look at the command: To be Honest. The command, to be honest, is our first subject. Honesty is the attitude and practice of speaking and living truthfully. Truth is an important quality that characterizes the Christian believer. Our text in Exodus 20:16 is the ninth commandment. GOD himself handed this law to Moses so as to guide the day-to-day lifestyle of his people in relation to his fellow human beings.

GOD prohibited peddling of falsehood against one's neighbors. Our LORD JESUS instructed HIS followers, and of course all who intend to follow HIM, to make honesty one of the values they were to be known by. That is why HE said in Matthew 5:39, "*Let your ‘yes’ be ‘yes’ and your ‘no’, ‘no’.*

GOD demands that we tell the truth at all times. Christians are expected and empowered to speak and live the truth, even if they have to suffer for it. GOD is always on the side of truth and on the side of those who tell the truth.

Secondly, let's look at the compromise of honesty.

The compromise of honesty

It has become commonplace for people who claim to be Christians to alter truth or even tell blatant lies whenever it will be to their advantage or help them avoid other problems. This has led to a situation where you have to verify what a Christian tells you to ascertain its truthfulness. What a tragedy! The adage, “trust

but verify" will not have been applied to those who profess Christianity if we are practicing the teachings of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. The practice of dishonesty in our time has taken an alarming dimension. I cannot imagine that someone who wants to be employed as a pastor will present fake certificates. Why do politicians make false promises? Their stock in trade? Someone says, do you not know he's a politician? Is dishonesty synonymous with politicians? Are there no politicians in other places? Must you make dishonest promises to win an election? Anyway dishonesty can take many forms other than simply speaking untrue words. The bible is full of examples of dishonesty in business:

- i. False measuring devices: the alteration of scales for weighing market items and changing of meters on petrol and kerosene pumps to increase profit is a common form of deception.

Hear what the bible says in Proverbs 20:23: *The LORD detests deferring weights, and dishonest scales do not please HIM.*

Let me take liberty to read some scriptures on this issue to you. A lot of praying and dancing fill our markets today; but I will not sound judgmental that people who pray, drum and dance are cheats or promote dishonesty.

Hear the Word of the LORD – Deuteronomy 25:15

Deuteronomy 25:15

¹⁵ *You must have true and honest weights and measures, so that you will live a long time in the land the LORD your God is giving you.* ¹⁶ *The LORD your God hates anyone who is dishonest, and uses who dishonest measures.*

Proverbs 11:1

The LORD hates dishonest scales, but HE is pleased with honest weights.

Proverbs 10:32

Good people know the right thing to say, but evil people only lie.

Hello friends, discard those dishonest measuring instruments: rulers, cups and others – because you now know the truth.

ii. Dishonest Bargaining

Sometimes advertisements project wrong project wrong images of products. This leads to deceit.

Proverbs 20:14 states: "*It's no good, it's no good, says the buyer; then goes off and boasts about the purchases.*

This occurs when a buyer undervalues a product in order to cheat.

iii. Abusing workers

Abusing workers is a form of dishonesty. Many employers make extra profit by underpaying workers.

James 5:4 says, *Look the wages you have failed to pay the workers who mold your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the LORD Almighty*

Perhaps you think there are no consequences. Dear friends, we should not overlook such...we should not overlook such consequences.

Let's then look at the consequences of dishonesty. What actually leads people to live in dishonesty? What is it actually that leads people to live in dishonesty? They fear the consequences of truth. The consequences of lying is worse than what one can suffer for dishonesty. Dishonesty leads to distrust. One who tells lies cannot be trusted. It has been said that it takes a life time to build up reputation but it takes a moment to tear it down.

Friends, it is important you make a commitment to always tell the truth in every circumstance to promote your reputation.

Dishonesty leads to more deceit. One dishonest act often leads to another. Gehazi approached Naaman and told him that Elisha has sent him to collect a talent of silver and two sets of clothing. This story is found in 2 Kings 5:22. Naaman released the items to him. Later on when Gehazi came in and stood before Elisha, Elisha asked him, where have you been, Gehazi? In verse 25, Gehazi replied, Your servant didn't go anywhere. Can you imagine

that? The consequence of that dishonest behavior is found in verse 27. In that verse 27 Elisha pronounced a verdict: "Therefore, the leprosy of Naaman shall cling to you and your descendants forever."

Sometimes instant death may be the consequence of dishonesty. In the New Testament a couple decided to be dishonest. Ananias and Sapphira sold a landed property. They had their liberty to bring in any fraction or percentage they want to give to the body of Christ. But rather they kept back some and pretended that all that they brought was a complete amount realized from the sale of the land. The HOLY SPIRIT would not have such a dishonest behavior at that new beginning of the church. They died.

Dishonesty also leads to hell. In revelation 21:8 the bible says, that the cowardly – the unbelievers, idolater and all liars: their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulphur.

Friends, you need to escape from the consequences of dishonesty and embrace honesty as a lifestyle.

I will like to pray for you.

PRAYER

Repeat after me.

Heavenly FATHER, I am sorry for my dishonesty. Have mercy on me and cleanse and deliver me. I surrender my life to YOU.

Let me pray for you at this moment.

Heavenly FATHER, YOU gave YOUR SON to deliver us from these vices. Have mercy and deliver any person who is committing himself to honest lifestyle after hearing this message. Grant that his or her life will change for good. I rebuke the spirit of lying and dishonesty operating in their lives...in the Mighty Name of JESUS CHRIST. Amen!

I remain your friend Pastor Amara Uwaeziozi. GOD bless you real good