



# SERMON NOTES

From In Touch With Dr. Charles Stanley

## BUILDING TRUTH INTO YOUR LIFE

KEY PASSAGE: Ephesians 4:17-25 | SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: Exodus 18:17-21; 20:16 | Proverbs 3:3  
John 3:16; 14:6; 18:38 | Romans 8:28 | Galatians 4:16 | 1 John 1:9

### ► SUMMARY

#### Truthfulness is an essential character quality for believers.

When it's lacking, both individuals and nations begin to crumble internally. Because Jethro understood this concept, he advised Moses, his son-in-law, to only appoint men who feared God and hated dishonest gain to positions of leadership (Ex. 18:21). But this character quality is not reserved only for the chosen few. We all influence others, so we should be people who know and speak truth.

Society is confused about this issue, and many people are asking the same question Pilate posed to Jesus, "What is truth?" (John 18:38). Though the world is reluctant to hear the answer, Jesus tells us He is the truth and that He has given His church the Spirit of truth so they can know and understand His Word. However, becoming people of truth won't happen automatically. We must be willing to accept and speak it even when it causes us discomfort or pain (Gal. 4:16).

### ► SERMON POINTS

#### Truth is based not on feelings or desires but on reality.

Falsehoods, however, are always misleading statements that misrepresent the truth. This is why you can't claim to be honest and tell lies or half-truths at the same time. Also, honesty shouldn't vary with external circumstances, so a person with this quality speaks truthfully even if it's inconvenient or costly.

#### How can we tell if we're honest?

Self-examination is crucial in determining if we're characterized by honesty. We should each consider the following questions because our answers reveal not only our attitude toward truth, but also how much we truly value it. For example, ask yourself:

- Do I consider myself to be a truthful person?
- Do I tend to slightly alter the truth?
- Do I sometimes feel threatened by the truth?
- Do I think it's acceptable to lie if I don't hurt anyone?
- How do I feel when I don't tell the truth?
- How do I feel when I know someone isn't telling me the truth?
- Do I want people to be honest with me?

#### What are the benefits of building truth into our lives?

When the Bible is our source of truth, we have a firm foundation for life. It's natural to want to believe whatever suits us best, so truth is our only protection from deception's dangers. Knowing biblical truth anchors our souls in times of difficulty and gives us guidance for crucial decisions. Everything in life is distorted when it's absent, and without it, we're likely to go astray and miss God's blessings. A foundation of truth helps us live according to God's will. It provides the:

- Guidance to know what to do in any situation.
- Wisdom to know the best way to go.
- Strength to enable us.
- Courage to motivate us to do what God asks.

- Comfort to assure us the Lord will handle the consequences.
- Faith to help us act on the truth.

## What happens when we fail to build truth into our lives?

If we continue to deny or resist truth, we will:

- **Believe error.** Those who fail to believe that God's Word is the only source of truth will be misled and confused by false teachings.
- **Develop evil habits.** When we disregard Scripture and deny that certain activities are sinful, we deceive ourselves and make them a part of our lives.
- **Live in emotional bondage.** The sin of falsehood affects our personalities. That's why there's no such thing as a harmless lie.
- **Lack spiritual growth.** As God's children, we can't ignore truth while maturing in the Lord.
- **Be thrown off-balance emotionally.** Dishonesty always creates emotional and mental conflict in us.
- **Destroy our testimonies.** If we have bad reputations and are known for not telling the truth, no one will believe us when we talk about Jesus.
- **Grieve God's heart.** In His eyes, lies are not categorized. Every falsehood causes Him grief.
- **Suffer continual disappointment.** As Christians, we cannot lie and have peace in our hearts. We'll always be dissatisfied if we don't heed the Spirit's promptings.
- **Have poor relationships with others.** Deception causes a lack of trust, and honesty is essential in any relationship.
- **Hurt our self-image.** If lying becomes habitual, we'll begin to see ourselves as liars.
- **Dwell on past failures.** If our lives have been characterized by dishonesty, we will likely keep looking back on our past wrongs rather than moving forward.
- **Fail to reach our full potential.** Without truth, we'll never achieve all God has planned for our lives.

## How can we build truth into our lives?

Understanding truth's importance is not enough. We must build it into our hearts and minds by:

- Recognizing truthfulness is a foundational principle for life.
- Examining past failures and understanding that dishonesty is never worth the consequences.
- Accepting the Bible as the ultimate guidebook to practicing truth.
- Choosing to speak the truth and carefully observing the results.
- Being honest about our failures and why we veered from the truth.
- Asking God to give us an ever-increasing desire for truthfulness.
- Identifying any areas of weakness, finding applicable Scriptures, and quoting them daily.
- Filling our minds with God's Word.
- Purposing in our hearts to be trustworthy, reliable people whose words are true.

### ► RESPONSE

- The most important truth to understand is that of eternal life. Until you recognize that your sins have separated you from the Lord and that you can never be good enough to gain His acceptance, you'll be deceived.
- The only way to receive His forgiveness is to believe in Jesus, acknowledge He paid the penalty for your sins, and accept His offer of salvation. This world tells you there are a thousand different paths you can take to be reunited with God in heaven, but the simple truth is that Jesus is the only way.

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