

# (Clip) The Importance Of Honesty

by Zac Poonen

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*This sermon emphasizes the importance of honesty in the Christian life, highlighting that honesty with God is the key to spiritual growth. It discusses the significance of being truthful, acknowledging faults without blame-shifting, and approaching God with complete transparency. The speaker encourages genuine, humble prayer, free from pretense or hypocrisy, stressing the need for a sincere relationship with God in prayer.*

**Scripture:** Proverbs 12:22, 1 John 1:5, Psalm 51:6, Luke 18:9, James 5:16

**Topics:** "Honesty", "Transparency in Prayer"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of honesty in the Christian life, highlighting that honesty with God is the key to spiritual growth. It discusses the significance of being truthful, acknowledging faults without blame-shifting, and approaching God with complete transparency. The speaker encourages genuine, humble prayer, free from pretense or hypocrisy, stressing the need for a sincere relationship with God in prayer.

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## Transcript

One of the most important things in the Christian life is to be honest. I have for many many years said the first thing God requires from every person is honesty, not purity, not even hatred for sin, not repentance. If we begin with honesty and remain in honesty with the Lord, we will make tremendous progress in our Christian life.

That's one of the things I've sought to be all my life. Even when I was backslidden and defeated in the early years, I'd say, Lord, I'm going to be honest. I will never never be dishonest.

If something is wrong, it's wrong. And that has helped me to grow because that is the meaning of walking in the light. Walking in the light can sound like a very spiritual phrase, but basically it means be honest.

That means don't pretend with the Lord. This pretense is what the Bible calls hypocrisy. A person who's honest is one who's got no pretense, no hypocrisy.

So, for example, if you get angry, just say, Lord, you got angry. Don't try to cover it up and like Adam say, my wife gave it to me and all those type of stuff. That is dishonesty.

Dishonesty is where you blame somebody else even though you did it. You say, but he tempted me to do it. That's what Adam said.

Honesty is to be like the thief on the cross. Lord, I'm guilty. It's not the way my parents brought me up.

It's not my bad friends. It's nothing. It is me alone.

You'll make tremendous progress in your Christian life if you learn to be honest. But I have found very few Christians who are willing to be honest. That is the reason why they don't grow spiritually.

In fact, when they're confronted with the challenge to be honest, they get disturbed and upset. So, that's everybody's choice. All that God wanted Adam to do in the garden was be honest.

Don't blame somebody else. I did it. I'm sorry I did it.

Eve also. Oh, did you do it? Yeah, the serpent made me do it. No, I liked it and I wanted it.

That's honesty. And so, as you heard me say before you kneel at the feet of the cross of Jesus, go and sit at the feet of the thief on the cross. Has anybody ever told you to sit at the foot of the thief on the cross? That's the one you need to sit at first.

A lot of people say, I want to sit at the feet of Jesus at the cross. No, sit at the feet of the cross where the thief died and learn from him first how to be 100% honest, then come to the cross of Jesus. Many people need to go to the cross of the thief.

That is their fundamental problem. They're not honest. Even husbands and wives, they're not honest in admitting that was my fault 100%.

Please forgive me. Simple thing to say. The reason why we are not honest is because of pride and pride came from the devil and that's the reason why, you know, the devil gets a little foothold in some people's lives because he's saying, yeah, I got a little foothold there.

This guy's proud and that's why he will not be honest about that matter. He tries to find some excuse for it. Always finding some excuse for something wrong that we do.

So if we want to come to the Lord, you know, when it says, if we walk in the light, we have fellowship with one another. Prayer is communication with God and the reason why prayer is boring to so many people, if they are honest, there again honesty, you must be honest and say, Lord, my prayer life is pretty boring. He won't be offended if you say that.

But if you face up to it, like you go to a doctor, people are really serious about wanting to get rid of a sickness. They will never tell a lie to a doctor. Many people are more honest with their doctors than with God and that's why a good doctor can cure them and God is never able to do anything for them because they're not honest.

Just like you would tell a doctor 100% your symptoms. Say, this is how it is with me. Whenever you go to God, walking in the light means be 100% honest with him.

He will not get offended. I've spoken to atheists. I tell them about the gospel.

I say, you go to God, you don't believe he exists but pray like this. I don't know whether you exist there God but if you do, please reveal yourself to me and they tell me, don't you think God will be offended to that? I said, offended? Only human beings get offended. God is never offended with anything you tell him.

You can say, I don't believe in you. He won't get offended. You're not believing in him is not going to make him cease to exist.

He's still there. If you don't believe in him, you're the one who suffers. But he won't get offended.

It's like if somebody comes to me and says, but I don't believe you exist. I say, okay what do I lose by that? So God is not offended if you speak the truth. Remember that.

Whatever. So that's one principle I hope you will learn when you come to God in prayer. Be absolutely honest.

Don't pretend. Don't boast. It's another thing the Pharisee did boast about as an inward boasting which is part of that satanic poison of wanting to think that I'm somebody.

Even in prayer, you know, it's I'll tell you it's very difficult. I found it difficult. That's why I'm telling you.

When we pray in private, it's very easy to be broken, to be humble, to be honest. When we pray in public, the whole thing is a drama. And that is what I have to battle and say, Lord, I want to finish with acting.

I want to finish with pretending. I want to be honest when I pray. I don't want to pretend to be more spiritual than I really am.

I want to just pour out my heart before God. Now I agree that when we are praying with others, we cannot be as honest as we are when we are alone with God. That's fine.

That means you don't have to say everything. There are things we cannot say to people we say to God. But we must not pretend.

That's all I'm saying. Must not pretend. Very, very important.

And if you don't have a burden for something, you can still pray about it and say, Lord, I haven't yet got there, but this is something I'm I want to pray for, because it's something important to pray for. And all prayer also depends on our relationship. Prayer is based on a relationship.

The closer your relationship with the Lord, the more effective your prayer is. So please bear these things in mind as we go to prayer. It's very easy for prayer to become a formality and a ritual, even your personal prayer.

And I know I've had to battle it through the years till I don't believe today that I please God by how long I pray. No. I believe it's in a relationship.

You know, you can have a husband and wife who have a very good relationship, but their circumstances may be such that they're so busy with children or whatever it is they don't get much time to talk to each other, but they have a very good relationship. And then you have another husband and wife with no children at home, and they have hardly any time. There's no transparency in their relationship with each other.

That's not good. So in our relationship with God, we must always be ourselves, not pretend to be more spiritual than we are. So when we come to prayer, we are given something to pray for.

It doesn't matter if you don't have a burden for that. Never mind. If it's a good thing to pray for, let's pray for it.

Maybe one day you'll get a burden, and maybe you'll never get a burden. It doesn't matter. But pray about it.

That's very, very important. So we want to pray for a number of things that the Bible tells us to pray for. And always I believe that we must begin our prayer every single time.

I emphasize that. Make sure your heart is free from sin that has not been confessed. Anything that you know, silently, quietly, confess it to God.

That means you clear the blockage in the pipe. Otherwise your prayer will not go, and no answer will come. No answer will come.

So confessing something which is on your mind to God, you don't have to say it in public. That's the first step we must begin always in prayer. Because the Bible says, if there's sin in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

That's why we always begin with silently confessing any sin in your heart, any wrong attitude towards someone, or anything wrong that you've done to God, and cleanse it out with the blood of Christ. Very, very important. Otherwise you're wasting your time.

And then secondly, after that, I say it's very important to praise God because that is the basis of faith. I mean Jesus said, when you pray, say, our father who art in heaven. Why did he add, who art in heaven? Because when I pray, I must remember that I'm praying to someone who can solve every problem, do anything, and work miracles, because he rules the universe.

That's why he said, when you pray, pray saying, our father who art in heaven. There's nothing he cannot do. So you clear your conscience first, and then believe that God is in heaven.

So we praise him as a father who is our father, and we know he loves us, and that's one basis of faith. And the other basis of faith is that he runs this universe. Very important.

Very simple things. Then we can come with our petitions. Jesus taught us like that.

Our father, I know you love me in heaven. I know you can do everything. Now, Lord, I want your name to be glorified, and we think primarily of the glory of God's name first.

That's why we pray for the country. The bible says we must pray for our country because our freedom to worship and even come together like this, or preach the gospel, depends on how the government runs in this land. So we have a, the bible says in 1 Timothy 2, we have a responsibility to pray for the government.

And whenever you remember, we pray that God will control the affairs of this country, that there'll be freedom to preach the gospel, freedom to meet together like this, and that Christians will be a light in this land. Then we pray for all the other things.

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