

# The First Thing God Requires From Us Is Honesty

by Zac Poonen

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of honesty in our relationship with God, highlighting its role in spiritual growth and fellowship with God.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 139:23, Proverbs 11:3, Matthew 6:1, John 1:47, 1 John 1:7

**Topics:** "Spiritual Honesty", "True Worship"

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## Description

Zac Poonen emphasizes the importance of walking in the light and being honest before God and others. He highlights that true spiritual progress is hindered by hypocrisy and the desire for the praise of men. Poonen stresses that God values honesty above religious activities or outward appearances, and that our spiritual worth is determined by our sincerity before God, not by human standards.

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## Transcript

The Bible says in 1 John 1:7 that we cannot have fellowship with God if we do not walk in the light. If we walk in the light, we certainly can't hide anything, for the light exposes everything. The man who walks in darkness is the one who has something to hide in his life.

If we walk in the light, our life is an open book. We can then invite people to examine our private life, our account books and everything. There is nothing we want to hide. It doesn't mean that we're perfect. No, it only means that we are honest.

The first thing that God requires from all of us is honesty - absolute honesty. If we are willing to be honest first, many of our other problems will be solved very quickly. We will progress in leaps and bounds in our spiritual life if we live by this fundamental rule of honesty before God and men.

But you'll find that this is a battle. You may say, "I'm really going to take that exhortation seriously. I'm going to be honest from now on." But you'll find before the week is out that you're tempted to be an actor again and to seek for the praise of men rather than the praise of God. So you have to determine to fight that battle and win.

It is a great grief to God that there are so many Christians today who have been born again for twenty, thirty or forty years, but who haven't progressed spiritually because they have not learned this

fundamental lesson of being honest. We can't progress if there is hypocrisy in our life. Our prayers will not be heard. We can have all-night prayer meetings; but we are wasting our time. Our prayers will not be heard if we do not get rid of hypocrisy first.

We must recognize that our true spiritual worth is what we are before God and nothing more than that. Our spiritual state is not determined by our knowledge of the Bible, nor by how much we pray, nor by how many meetings we attend, nor by what the elders or others in the church think of us. On the contrary, ask yourself, "What does God, Who can see into every area of my life, think of me?" The answer to that is the real measure of how spiritual you are. We need to remind ourselves of this daily, or else we may find ourselves becoming actors again.

I love those words that Jesus said about Nathaniel, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile" (John 1:47). If Jesus could say that about you and me, that would be a greater commendation than almost anything else. Nathaniel was not perfect. He was imperfect. But he was honest about his imperfections. He didn't pretend to be something that he wasn't. That's where he was different from Ananias and Sapphira.

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