

Sermon Notes – Sunday 15th July 2018

Mind the Gap – Truthfulness

Read Acts 4:32 – 5:11 and discuss. What were Ananias's and Sapphira's sins? How did lying contribute to their downfall? Why do you think they had to be treated so harshly?

Share examples you have heard or read of lies or deception: in the media, on social media, in advertisements, in communication with businesses or in everyday conversation. In these areas how much is deception increasing or decreasing?

Do you agree with the survey that found that in conversation we tend to lie every 3 minutes or so?

Share examples, if you will, of times when you have lied or been tempted to lie. What was (or would have been) your motive for doing so?

Read Exodus 20:9, Leviticus 19:11-16 and Matthew 5:33-37. How much of all this refers to making legal statements (what you might say to the police or in court), and how much to our everyday conversation?

How much do your friends and associates trust what you say? Do you ever prefix your statements with words such as "I swear to God ...", "As God is my witness ...", "I promise ...", or "To be honest with you ..."? Does the use of such prefixes add or diminish your trustworthiness?

Read and discuss the following, using as many different translations as you have available: Proverbs 12:22, 1 Corinthians 13:6, Ephesians 4:25, Colossians 3:9-10. How much of a challenge are those verses?

What titles of Jesus and the Holy Spirit challenge us in the matter of truthfulness, bearing in mind that, as Christians, we have them dwelling in us? See John 14:6, 2 Corinthians 1:22, John 16:13.

Can we commit ourselves to a life without lying? If so:

- How pedantic should our truthfulness be?
- How can we get around telling "white lies" i.e. how can we balance truthfulness with love? See Ephesians 4:15.
- How could such a commitment help us to fight temptations and so enhance other areas of our Christian life?

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