
Words of Truth

“...And I Mean It”

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A parent says to his or her child, “If you dare touch that I will beat the daylights out of you for it.” That parent then follows up that promise with, “And I mean it!” A husband looks at his wife and says, “You are the most beautiful woman in the world.” Then the husband follows that statement up with, “And I mean it!” I am sure that we all have heard, in many different contexts, someone make a statement and then emphasize that statement with, “And I mean it!”

You may have also heard similar statements that seem to emphasize that this particular statement carries more weight than other times that person states something. Statements such as: “I swear”, “I really mean it”, “honestly”, “to be honest with you”, etc. are often used to state that something is somehow more truly stated than a person’s normal statement might.

Why does a person think they need to emphasize some statements as though they are truer than others? I realize that the world we live in expects dishonesty because worldly people are dishonest. I also understand that some people hear you talk, but they are not really listening (more people than not fit that one). Thus, I know that sometimes we need to emphasize things or even repeat them. However, should a Christian ever use terminology that implies that they do not always mean what they are saying? That is a question we all need to consider and think about when we communicate with others. What are we saying “between the lines” (so to speak)? As a Christian, we should always communicate in a way that leaves no room for one to honestly be able to charge us with not always meaning what we say. Why? Let’s start with examining how we are supposed to be a people who need not emphasize our statements.

Our Words Should Carry Weight WITHOUT Statements Of Greater Emphasis

Notice these Scriptures as we begin to study this subject: *“Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths: But I say unto you, Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: Nor by the earth; for it is his footstool: neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black. But let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil... But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation”* (Matthew 5:33-37 and James 5:12).

Our Lord, in the Scriptures you just read, shows us clearly that the word of a Christian is good enough. “Yes” should mean yes and “no” should mean no. We do not need to swear or take oaths for our words to mean more to people or God. People should know, by our quality of character and our

conduct, that we are honest (Philippians 2:14-16 and I Peter 2:12). Creditors in our world measure one's willingness to pay debts by a credit score. Our credit score (figuratively), in the sight of God and men, should measure beyond what this world calls honest. Honesty is part of the mindset of all of God's true people.

Honest – It's What We Are

Consider these Scriptures: *"I hate and abhor lying: but thy law do I love... A righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame... Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men... Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying... That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another... Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds"* (Psalms 119:163, Proverbs 13:5, Romans 12:17, Romans 13:13, Ephesians 4:22-25, and Colossians 3:9).

Christians should not have two different faces. We should not act or pretend to be something we are not. We should not try to hide ourselves from others. We should all realize that our conduct is always under observation by our God (I Samuel 16:7, I Chronicles 28:9, Hebrews 4:13, and Revelation 2:20-23). We should be real with ourselves and other people. That's honesty! Don't put up a front like your trying to sell yourself as something you are not.

Don't Be A Fraud

People are supposed to change when they truly obey the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We are supposed to put the old man to death and put on the new man (Romans 6:3-6, II Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, and Colossians 3:5-15). Our spiritual clothing is supposed to change as we put on Christ in baptism (Galatians 3:27). Our mindset is supposed to change (Romans 12:1-2 and II Corinthians 10:5). We change our service from Satan's kingdom to God (I John 3:8-10). That's real change.

Instead of really changing, some people perpetrate a fraud. That is, they continue to pretend to be a Christian when they really never have changed. Why? I don't understand it. It makes no sense. No one is fooling God (Psalms 139:4, Isaiah 29:15-16, Jeremiah 23:24, and Acts 5:1-11). If you want to be a sinner, jump in. If you want to be a saint, jump in. God wants you to choose one or the other (Deuteronomy 30:15-20, Joshua 24:15, I Kings 18:21, Ezekiel 20:39, Luke 13:1-5, and John 6:60-71).

Conclusion

When you talk or act, mean what you say and what you do. Be a decisive person. Consider the words of wisdom as our conclusion: *"Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are in righteousness; there is nothing froward or perverse in them. They are all plain to him that understandeth, and right to them that find knowledge"* (Proverbs 8:6-9).