

## Honesty

- Ron Stullenbarger -

Deciding to live openly and honestly is foundational to experiencing fullness of life in God. God doesn't deal with our facades. He doesn't speak to, heal, deliver, or empower the fake self we try to portray. Rather, He faithfully pursues who we really are, drawing us out from the walls we've built up around our hearts.

1 Peter 3:10 says, *"Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit."* When the Bible talks about honesty, it isn't just talking about God's heart for us not to speak lies, but also that we wouldn't believe or live out lies. In living honestly we will love life and see good days. Nothing good comes from being dishonest. There is no life in trying to appear as something we are not. Abundant life comes with communion with God, and God always meets us where we are.

Assess your life today. Are you living honestly? Are you trying to portray yourself as something you are not? Are you deceiving yourself or looking at yourself honestly? Are you coming before God just as you are or trying to appear like you have everything together?

Honesty is at the foundation of encountering God, loving others, experiencing abundant life, and doing good works. Everything God does is about the heart. He is about that which has substance, that which is real. He is not calling you to share your *"picture-perfect"* life with others. He is calling you to be vulnerable with others that they would see the unconditional, grace-filled nature of relationship with God. He's not asking you to deceive yourself before you worship Him. He's asking you to come as you are that He might reveal the love He already has for you, even in your imperfections.

Take time to make honesty a core value in your life. Reflect on the importance of being open and vulnerable. Allow the Spirit to illuminate any ways in which you are valuing appearance above reality. And choose to be who you truly are, and then change if you need to. May you find new peace and joy as you remove the pressure of appearance.