

Honesty—The Best Policy

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 5
Focus:
Live honestly.

Lesson 5
Bible Basis:
Exodus 20:16;
Numbers 23:11-20

Lesson 5
Memory Verse:
For we are taking pains to do what
is
right, not only in the eyes of the
Lord
but also in the eyes of man.
—2 Corinthians 8:21

Students will discuss signs of dishonesty as they explore what it means to take pains to do what is right.

Materials:

- Internet access

If you are meeting virtually for this lesson, ask teens to get an index card and a pencil before the lesson. These will be used in Step 4.

No one likes to be lied to. But how do you know if someone is telling the truth? Do you think you could tell if someone was lying to you? Sometimes the most convincing, charming people can hide deception behind their words. Let's take a look at different ways you can tell if someone is lying to you.

Share the following video with your students [7:22: stop at 3:48].

Source: YouTube.com

URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oyf5S7BN4I8>

Short Description: Liars use many tactics. These signs help identify when a person is lying.

➤ **Some experts say there are two reasons people often lie: because they are embarrassed about something or because the outcome of a situation is very important to them. When might this be true in a high school situation?** (Teenagers are often insecure and can lie in order to exaggerate or redefine a narrative. They can also lie in situations such as homework completion, etc. to keep them from suffering the consequences of a bad decision.)

➤ **Why does telling a story backward often reveal a dishonest retelling?** (Since liars often memorize a story, they don't have the natural memory to assist them.)

➤ **What other clues help us know if someone is lying?** (Talking too fast, speaking in an overly formal way, averting eye contact, etc.)

➤ **Now that these “tells” of dishonesty have been pointed out to you, do you recognize any of them in yourself when being less than truthful? Which ones?** (Answers will vary; to initiate the conversation, share at least one sign you’ve seen in yourself.)

The Bible records many warnings against dishonesty—and even the occasional situation when godly people withheld the truth in order to protect or further the will of God. Today we will study some of the risks and rewards of telling the truth.

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher’s guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Honesty—The Best Policy

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STEP 4 

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Materials:

- Index Cards
- Markers
- Pencils

In this step, you will be challenging your students to live holy, honest lives in the many areas in which they live, study, play, and socialize.

We're going to go through a speed discussion. We'll spend a couple of minutes talking about different times teenagers might be tempted to lie: the classroom, the living room, and the Internet. For example, we've all spent a lot of time lately at home with our families. When we talk about the "Living Room," you might consider lies we tell our parents or siblings, etc.

Work through the three areas allowing two minutes for each area. Invite students to talk about different reasons or how teens lie in each situation. Here are some possible scenarios that might arise:

The Classroom: lying to teachers about missing work, embellishing excuses, asking to copy someone's homework or assignments, faking a sickness or absence, asking parents to lie for you in order to get out of an unpleasant task, hiding a progress report, or lying for a friend, cheating while working on an online assignment.

The Living Room: Asking brothers and sisters to lie for you (or lying for them), exaggerating a story to get sympathy from parents, being dishonest about television programs or other "off-limits" activities, sneaking home late, or withholding important information.

The Internet: Exaggerating on social media to improve your "status" or social standing, deceptive comments on chat boards or threads, lying about sites you've visited, plagiarizing schoolwork, or creating fake profiles on Twitter or Instagram, etc.

At the end of your sharing time, hand every student an index card and a pencil if you are meeting in a physical setting. If you are meeting virtually, have teens take out their cards. Tell teens they will be taking a quiz that helps them formulate a personal plan of action.

I will be asking you a series of questions. You will write your answers on your index card, but no one else will see what you write—it's for your personal evaluation.

- Out of these three areas, in which place have you found yourself lying most often?**
- In which of the three areas do you find it easiest to be 100% honest with others?**
- In which area do you think teenagers (in general) struggle the most with dishonesty and deceit?**
- Out of these three words: EXAGGERATION, DECEPTION, FLATTERY—which one is your biggest struggle?**

Before you leave today, identify several areas that might require repentance, habit-breaking, or confession to another person. This week spend some time correcting situations you've made note of. Let's spend a few moments in reflective prayer as you ask God to help you live an honest, God-honoring life.

After students have had some private time, close in prayer.

Be sure to take time to text or e-mail each student during the week. Encourage them to continue working on living honestly—even if they feel they messed up.

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