

## **HONESTY: SILENCE IS NOT ALWAYS GOLDEN**

As a Christian seeking personal revival, you have an enemy in this ongoing struggle with deception. Jesus Christ called him "a liar and the father of lies" (John 8:44). Dr. Bill Elliff observes:

*(The devil) has successfully taught us that lying will produce some benefit... We will be more respected, more appreciated, live more comfortably if we will just cover the truth. At the costs, we must never admit who we really are ("Think of how it would ruin our reputation!").*

*The enemy is lying about lying! His very nature keeps him from telling the truth about the benefits of truthfulness. In reality, the wellspring of truthfulness yields a river of redemptive results. Honesty is as refreshing as a mountain stream and is God's intended means to wash and purify our hypocritical lives.<sup>1</sup>*

Yes, we have a strong enemy, but Christ's power is stronger still! Take time to meditate on the following Scriptures and to prayerfully respond to the questions below. As you do, allow the Holy Spirit to examine your heart. Ask God to show you any areas where you are not walking in the light with Him, with yourself, or with others. Thank Him for His grace and power to cleanse and revive honest hearts.

### **Honesty with God**

"Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts" (Psalm 50:6)

- Do I often participate in corporate praise and prayer while my heart is cold, indifferent, or resistant to the Lord?
- Are my prayers honest? Do I say words that I think will impress God, or do I honestly communicate my real feelings and desires to Him?
- Do I honor Him with my lips when my mind and heart are far away? What am I really thinking about when I pray?
- When called upon to pray in public, am I more aware of God's presence or the fact that others are listening to what I say?
- Do I serve God out of a heart of genuine love and devotion, or do I have a subtle, secret desire to be noticed and applauded?
- Do I volunteer for service and good works to glorify God (Matthew 5:16) or to impress others?
- Am I quick to agree with God when His Spirit convicts me of sin, or do I tend to rationalize, justify, and defend myself?
- Do I see my sin as God sees it, or do I tend to think in terms of "weaknesses," "problems," "slip-ups," or "personality quirks"?
- Do I love the truth so much that I actively and regularly ask God to search my heart and to reveal anything that is displeasing to Him?

### **Honesty with Myself**

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22)

- Are there truths in God's Word that I know in my head or that I "preach" to others but am not practicing in my life?

*"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (1 John 1:8)*

- Do I ignore, resist, or deny the conviction of God's Spirit or His Word in relation to my sin?

*"For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself."*

(Galatians 6:3)

- Do I think more highly of myself than what God knows me to be? Do I have an inflated view of my gifts and my value to God and others?

### **Honesty with Others**

*"Therefore, putting away lying, 'Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,' for we are members of one another." (Ephesians 4:25)*

- Do I sometimes seek to create a better impression of myself than is honestly true?
- Do I often leave others with the impression that I am more spiritually mature and committed than is actually true?
- Am I allowing my mate to believe that I am morally pure and faithful when I have failed morally?
- Am I covering up sins of my past rather than dealing with them biblically?
- Am I hiding specific sins or failures from my mate, a parent, a teacher, or an employer?
- Am I guilty of speaking graciously to others while harboring hatred or bitterness in my heart toward them?
- Do I put up walls to keep people from seeing the "real me"? Am I willing to let others into my life – to be honest about my spiritual needs, to ask for prayer about those needs, and to be accountable to others for areas where I need to grow or change?

<sup>1</sup>Bill Elliff, "When I Kept Silent," *Spirit of Revival*, Vol. 25, No. 2, September 1995, published by Life Action Ministries, p.20.