

LIFEGROUP NOTES: MATTHEW 5:33-37

As ever, please use (or discard!) these ideas as is most suitable for your group. Don't feel you have to use everything.

Preparing for God's Word

1. Fake news! Spin-doctors! Alternative facts! Post-truth! What does the growth of this kind of vocabulary suggest about the world we live in? What are the consequences for a society if we cannot be sure of people's honesty, or the reliability of information?

Read Mt 5:33-37

2. See vv.33-36. Some people in Jesus' day seem to have thought they could keep God out of their dishonesty if they swore their oaths by something other than God's own name. What does Jesus say is wrong with this kind of thinking?
3. Where does dishonesty and lying come from, according to Jesus (v.37)? Why do you think Satan is so closely associated with lying?
4. We might describe the problem in vv.34-36 as a "loophole mentality" – looking for a way to wriggle out of our commitments while excusing ourselves to our conscience. Why is this unworthy of a Christian? Why should "Yes" or "No" be enough for someone who claims Jesus as his or her Lord, without the need for any oaths to guarantee our word (v.37)?
5. When you say "Yes" or "No," can people reliably take it as a fact – at school, work, home, with friends, with family, etc? If not, why is it, do you think, that you say one thing and do another?
6. If we practiced Jesus' word in v.37, what would be the result in our speaking? In our credibility?
7. How does the gospel help us become people of integrity?

Responding in Prayer

Give thanks that God's word is always true and reliable, and that He is the ultimate promise-keeper in Jesus Christ. Pray that in a world of lies and deceit we may be different, people whose integrity reflects the goodness and faithfulness of our heavenly Father.

Eddie Larkman, February 2017