

He Who Winks With the Eye
Proverbs 10:9-10

Topic: Honesty

Aim: To reinforce the need to be honest in our lives.

1. A young lady was soaking up the sun's rays in a park when a little boy with something clutched in his hand, came up to her and asked her, "Do you believe in God?" She was surprised by the question but replied, "Why, yes, I do." Then he asked her: "Do you go to church every Sunday?" Again, her answer was "Yes!" Then he asked: "Do you read your Bible and pray every day?" Again she said, "Yes!" But by now her curiosity was very much aroused. At last the lad sighed and said, with obvious relief, "Will you hold my quarter while go swinging?"
2. Honesty is a quality long admired in society:
 - a. "No legacy is so rich as honesty." - William Shakespeare
 - b. "An honest man's the noblest work of God." - Alexander Pope
 - c. "I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man." - George Washington (1732-1799)
3. Honesty is a quality in a person that we all admire and respect, but it is not found as often as we would like.

I. The Bible has a great deal to say about honesty.

A. It is commanded and commended

1. Deuteronomy 25: 13-16
2. It is the honest man that comes before God, Psalms 15, 24:1-5.
3. We are to think on honorable, honest things, Philippians 4:8-9.

B. A Biblical example of:

1. Honesty, 2 Kings 12:1, 7-15. Compare 2 Kings 22:7.
2. Dishonesty, Acts 5:1-5.

C. Dishonesty and hypocrisy can destroy our influence. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 2:12.

II. But some of the most enlightening words about honesty come from the wise man Solomon in Proverbs.

A. Proverbs 11:1,3-6, 12:22, 13:5, 16:11, 17:7.

B. But I especially like Proverbs 10:9-10.

1. What does the wise man mean, "He who winks with the eye"?
2. Note that it is contrasted with the man of integrity, and the prating fool.
3. Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary made this comment: "Winketh-- namely, with malicious intent. Feigning kindness to his neighbour, but all the while giving a secret hint or sign to his accomplices to cheat or rob him.
4. Compare this to Proverbs 6:12-15.

C. Solomon is warning against the man who is devious, who gives a wink, as if that excuses his dishonesty.

1. Certainly we ought to be wary of such.
2. But should we not take care to avoid being such?

II. Many in our day "wink the eye" when it comes to being honest. They give it lip service, but when the need to be honest comes, or when it is hard to be honest, they wink the eye. They rationalize, justify, and excuse their lack of dishonesty.

A. Consider the following illustration of honesty from a few years ago and the accompanying comment:

At a national spelling contest in Washington an incident occurred that made me feel good--and made me wonder. In the fourth round of the contest, Rosalie Elliot, then an eleven-year-old from South Carolina, was asked to spell "avowal." In her soft Southern accent she spelled it. But did the seventh grader use an a or an e as the next to last letter? The judges couldn't decide. For several minutes they listened to tape recording playbacks, but the critical letter was accent-blurred. Chief Judge John Lloyd finally put the question to the only person who knew the answer, "Was the letter an a or was it an e? he asked Rosalie. Surrounded by whispering young spellers, she knew by now the correct spelling of the word. Without hesitating, she replied she had misspelled it. She walked from the stage. The entire audience stood and applauded, including half a hundred newspaper reporters, one of whom was heard to remark that Judge Lloyd had put quite a burden on an eleven-year-old. Rosalie rated a hand and it must have been a heartwarming and proud moment for her parents. The thing that makes me wonder, however, was the apparent feeling on the part of so many that the issue might have been in doubt and that honesty might have bowed to temptation. Have we in this age stopped taking honesty for granted, even from our children?

B. Notice that I said when it is hard to be honest.

1. Sometimes, we know it will be hard to be honest.
2. Look again at Psalms 15 and particularly verse 4.
3. Often the easy thing is being dishonest!

C. Finally look again at Proverbs 10:9-10.

1. He who walks with integrity walks securely.
2. Secure in his own integrity, honesty.
3. A life of honesty is a better, and in many ways an easier life to live.

1. Psalms 15:1-2.

2. Honesty and integrity or winking the eye?

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