

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

“The Truth About Honesty”

Matt 5:33-37

From Sunday, Feb 28

Appetizer:

In building his case for the value of our witness in reaching lost people, Pastor Phil admits that he is “part of the problem”, and makes a side comment about how challenging it is for him to invite people to church events because of how few non-Christian friends he actually has.

Question: Is he unique in this, or is this common to many Christians? Do you have more meaningful relationships with non-Christians today than you did 20-30 years ago?

Main Course:

- a. Jesus pinpoints a flaw in the Jewish justice system. He exposes a socially accepted tolerance for dishonesty in making vows. He then tells his followers to stop the hypocrisy and put an end to making vows altogether.

Some Christians feel that this is a directive to not make vows, not use lawyers, and not sign contracts.

Question: Is this what Jesus meant? Does this interpretation to never make a vow have any validity?

- b. Historians agree that one of Christianity’s great contributions to humanity is the introduction of a legal system and society that is built upon the foundation of honesty and truth. It is probably that Western culture takes this reality for granted.

Question: Have you ever travelled to a country that was politically corrupt and experienced

having to bribe officials or look the other way to certain things? How did it make you feel?

Pastor Phil highlights how difficult it is to discern truth when everyone declares that their source of truth is true. In a world of bias, opinion, exaggeration, deception and twisting of facts in a world where determining the veracity of source is next to impossible – how are we to determine what is truth and what is “fake news”?

Discuss.

Is Ben McGillivray correct in stating that 5”-7” thickness of ice on Shannon Lake is safe enough for people to ice fish? (Just kidding. This topic is a serious one. I threw that in there just to try to lighten things up.)



Dessert:

1. The message concludes with a strong word of encouragement.

Quote: *We need to BE LIKE JESUS if we want people to COME TO JESUS.*

Our witness to a lost and dying world needs to matter more to us than winning an argument. Being a light has to be more important than being right.

LIGHT > RIGHT.

How can we balance this tension of behaving like Jesus when we want to engage in controversial issues, without damaging our witness to the world?

How can we stand up to injustices and still represent Jesus without looking like a push-over?

Discuss.

