

Honesty

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The 13th Article of Faith states that “we believe in being honest.” Think of the word honesty, what comes to mind? Two words come to my mind. Truthful and Straightforward. Furthermore, honesty implies a refusal to lie, steal, or deceive in anyway.

There are three categories of people that we should be honest with.

First, we should be honest with God. In the book of Alma, he speaks to the people of Gideon.

“I perceive that it has been made known unto you, by the testimony of his word, that he cannot walk in crooked paths; neither doth he vary from that which he hath said; neither hath he a shadow of turning from the right to the left, or from that which is right to that which is wrong; therefore, his course is one eternal round.” [Alma 7:20]

God does not lie, he doesn't vary, he is a God of truth.

In the Book of Mormon, Enos states that he knows that God cannot lie. By God's own example through the words of the prophets, we are shown the way to follow.

When Jesus walked the Holy Land and the American Continent, He commanded everyone to be perfect even as our Father in

Heaven is perfect. One way to do this is by being honest with our maker.

Let's take a moment to look briefly at the story of Adam and Eve. God commanded Adam and Eve not to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Satan tempts them and they eat the fruit, disobeying God's command. Now they have two choices. Either they can confess to God admitting they had done wrong, or they can deny it.

As we know, they chose to be honest with God and took the consequences.

Now let's turn to the story of Cain and Abel. "Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground." [Genesis 4:2] Both Cain and Abel brought "an offering unto the Lord." [Genesis 4:3]

We find that "the Lord had respect" [Genesis 4:4] for Abel's offering but not Cain's. Cain was angry with Abel and slew him. The Lord inquired Cain where Abel was, then the famous words came from Cain's mouth. "I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?" [Genesis 4:9] Cain lied to the Lord, he was not honest and was cursed for murdering Abel and then lying about it.

Second we should be honest with our fellowmen. After the Savior visited the American Continent, we find peace throughout the land. [4th Nephew 1:2-3] Think of how wonderful that must have been. Everyone was honest with one another and they dealt justly with each other. There was no contention in the land.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had those same conditions today?

Third we should be honest with ourselves. We are here to make good choices and to learn. When we do wrong, we might want to make excuses. "People lie to protect themselves and to have others think well of them. Some excuse themselves for stealing, thinking they deserve what they took, intend to return it, or need it more than the owner. Some cheat to get better grades in school or because 'everyone else does it' or to get even...President Kimball taught that when we excuse ourselves, we cheat ourselves and the spirit of God ceases to be with us." [Gospel Principles pg 205]

In the end, we need to remember the commandment of the Lord. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." [Exodus 20:16] If we follow the Lord's instructions, we will have no reason not to be honest with God, our fellowmen, and ourselves.