

## **HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY.**

This is a very common proverb, and one very generally admitted to be correct; and it is correct, if we consider the ultimate consequences; but if we consider the immediate consequences it is not always true. It is the immediate consequences that are generally considered, however, and therefore a dishonest course is very often decided upon by worldly people, who seldom look far beyond the present.

But strange to say, the ultimate consequences are not always considered even by some of the consecrated children of God, and almost unconsciously, they sometimes pursue a dishonest course, considering it the best policy in view of the immediate consequences. We do not believe for a moment, that any sincere Christian would knowingly and deliberately act dishonestly, and yet it is necessary that we should specially guard ourselves on this point. There are many ways of acting dishonestly, deceptively, aside from business matters, in which dollars and cents are concerned. It is just as blameworthy to deal dishonestly with the truth, as to do so with dollars and cents; and yet with many there seems to be a great temptation to do it. It generally arises from a tendency towards approbation, a desire to be thought well of; and it is a great hindrance to real progress in the knowledge of the truth. When several are met together for Bible study, the tempter often whispers to one and another, Now, here is the place to win your laurels in Bible exegesis; now state your opinion and stick to it; don't let that insignificant little brother or sister there change your mind and prove your mental caliber inferior; if you are even driven to the wall in argument, don't own up to it, gloss it over with a few ecstatic expressions to divert attention from the real issue of the argument, and thus make your doubtful position appear more plausible at least.

The temptation is a severe one to some, and almost before they have time to recognize it as a temptation, or to hear the voice of

conscience protesting against it, they have yielded to it; and a few repetitions of the same thing soon confirms the habit. Thus erroneous ideas become stereotyped, and no reasoning, however forcible and scriptural, can change them. Beyond these barriers of self-deception we cannot grow. We may have grown rapidly, before we set up these barriers, but further growth in the direction thus blocked up, is impossible.

This is not the teachable, humble, childlike spirit, which can be led step by step along the narrow way. The narrow way is too narrow to admit of pride and vain-glory. Every child of God should strive against these, especially where self-examination reveals an inherited or acquired tendency in that direction.

Aside from personal considerations, the effect upon others of this double dealing with God's truth, is dangerous. Some will quickly discern the selfish principle which vaunts itself at the expense of the truth, and will begin to lose confidence in the Christian character and integrity of the erring brother or sister, while others will be confused and hindered in their efforts to comprehend the truth. Few have keen perceptive powers and the majority need to be helped, not hindered in the way.

"Let saints be on their guard,  
Ten thousand foes arise.  
The hosts of sin are pressing hard  
To draw them from the prize.

"O! watch and fight and pray.  
The battle ne'er give o'er,  
Renew it boldly every day,  
And help divine implore."

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