

Josh McDowell Ministry

RIGHT FROM WRONG

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Right From Wrong – **Distinguishing Between Right and Wrong** (Part 1)

King Solomon responded to a question when God said, “Ask me anything you want and I will give it to you.” He [Solomon] said, “Give me the ability to discern, to distinguish, between right and wrong.” [1 Kings 3:9 – “*So give Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people to discern between right and wrong.*”]

And you know, most people can't do that. They can tell you what is right, what wrong but they can't tell you why. For example, with killing. Is killing wrong? Almost every Christian, anyone that I've ever talked to has said, “Yes!” And, I'll say, “Why?” Not one person, even in the Right-To-Life movement has ever given me an intelligent or a Biblically-based answer of *why* it is wrong.

They say, “Well, because it's illegal.” No, now hear me. Absolutely nothing is morally right or wrong because it's legal or illegal. All it means is, it's illegal or it's legal. Legality has nothing to do with morality. It has to do with the law.

And if you say, “Well, killing is wrong because it's illegal.” Then, you have to say that that killing is right because it's legal. The aborting of small babies is legal in the United States. Do that it make it morally right? No, it just makes it legal.

Apartheid in South Africa was legal. The holocaust, the killing of six million Jewish people, was legal in Nazi Germany. There were many years here in the United States where racism was legal. Does that make it right? You say, “Well, no!” I say, “That's right.” Nothing is morally right or wrong because it is legal or illegal.

I would never dream of teaching my children, “Obey the law because it's morally right. “ I've had to raise my three daughters and my son to question all authority. Now a lot of Christians get upset with me with that. But I'll tell you this: there are a lot of Catholic parents that wished to God that they would have raised their children to question the moral authority of the priest when it came to sex abuse.

If I don't train my children to question all authority, respectfully, then I have failed as a father. I want my children to understand why things are right and why things are wrong, not just because it's legal or illegal. If I just teach my children that, then I have failed as a father. Then others will say, “Well, lying is wrong because it hurts people and because of the consequences.”

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Right From Wrong – **“But My Parents Taught Me!”** (Part 2)

Is lying wrong? As I've said before, when I meet somebody on the street – Christian or non-Christian – I'll say to them, “Do you believe lying is wrong?” And, they'll say, “Well, yes.” And I'll say, “Why?” And only one person in five years has given me an intelligent answer. But you know, when I ask that question, one of the first two or three answers I get is this: “It's because my parents taught me it was wrong.” Or they'll say “because of family values.”

The day before 9-11, which I guess was 9-10, they¹ released a major survey of the ethics of the American people. The question was: “What is the foundation for you to make moral choices?” 17% of the American people said: “Because my parents taught me” or “Because of my family values.”

Now, I want you to hear me clearly. Absolutely nothing is morally right or wrong b/c your parents taught you. That is ridiculous. You say, “What? Well, my whole life I’ve believed that – my parents taught me that.” Then, you were taught wrong. Let me show you why.

If lying is wrong b/c your parents taught you it was wrong, then, you’d have to say lying is right “b/c my parents taught me it is right”. There are a lot of parents that would teach lying is wrong; there are a lot of people in organizations that would teach that lying is ok because they taught you. Absolutely nothing is morally right or wrong b/c your parents taught you.

See here would be the problem. You would disarm your child morally. Say your child says to another child, “Well, you know lying is wrong?” “No, it’s not. Lying is right.” And they say to your child, “How do you know?” “Because my parents taught me it was wrong.” And the other kid says, “Well, my parents taught me it was right.” Your child has been totally disarmed morally. And, if you say “Lying is wrong b/c my parents taught me” you can almost justify any evil in the world.

You say, “But it IS wrong b/c my parents...” Look, apartheid parents in South Africa taught their children it was right. Does that make it right? Racism in the United States, for many years many parents taught their children it was OK to be a racist. Does that make it right? You say, “No.” But their parents taught them that. Almost every Nazi parent taught their child that the killing of six million Jewish people was right. Nothing is morally right or wrong because your parents taught you. You say, “Then why? Is it because my church taught me?”

Right From Wrong – **“But My Church Taught Me!”** (Part 3)

Why is lying wrong? As I’ve asked that over 500 people in 5 years. Only 1 person has ever given an intelligent answer. One of the first answers is: “Because my church taught me it was wrong. Because my pastor – oh, I love so much and I trust him – taught me that lying was wrong.”

Please hear me clearly on this. Absolutely nothing is morally right or wrong b/c your pastor taught you. That’s ridiculous. Nothing is morally right or wrong b/c your church taught you. You say, “Yes it is! I’ve believed that my whole life.” Then you’ve been believing wrong. Look, if lying is wrong b/c your church taught you it was wrong, then lying is right b/c your church taught you it was right. You can’t have one without the other.

You say, “Well, that’s not reality.” Yes, it is. There are many churches today when it comes to immigration that teach their people it’s ok to lie to the authorities. And so, if you say b/c your church taught you then you disarm every single believer in the world because my church can say it is wrong and somebody else’s church says it is right. Then you have no argument. Both of you are right and both of you are wrong. Nothing is morally right or wrong b/c your church taught you.

¹ <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/58-practical-outcomes-replace-biblical-principles-as-the-moral-standard>

Don't get me wrong. I attend a church where they teach that lying is wrong. But lying is not wrong b/c they teach it, but rather, they teach it b/c lying IS wrong. But the question is "Why is it wrong?" Why is killing wrong? Some people say that killing is wrong because it's illegal.

Right From Wrong – **"Consequences: It Hurts People"** (Part 4)

Why is lying wrong? One of the first five answers you get is "Because of the consequences." Or especially young people say: "B/c it hurts someone." I say then, "If you can lie without someone being hurt, is it right?" They go, "Oh, I've never thought of that." Why is lying wrong? It is not wrong b/c of the circumstances.

Now here's the problem. The day before 9-11 when they² released this major study on ethics of what is the foundation for Americans making moral decisions for choices, 28% said, "B/c of the consequences." Now, do you know this justifies almost every evil in the world, and yet almost every American young person in almost every school in America is trained to make moral choices based upon consequences.

I went through 17 textbooks after 9-11, I pulled them out of the high schools, to see how young people are taught to make moral choices. I want to read you two parts of two different textbooks that reflects every single textbook that I looked at.

The first one, World History: The Human Experience [Glencoe. McGraw-Hill]. It says you do two things to make a moral choice:

- 1) "Evaluate both the positive and negative consequences."
- 2) "Make a sound decision about which alternative is best for you." Not which is right or which is right for most people. No. You make the decision for the choice that is best for you.

Do you realize this textbook would justify any evil in the world? Those terrorists who flew the planes into the twin towers and killed about 2800 people from 50 different countries, do you realize they lived out these two steps – they evaluated both the positive and negative consequences – of flying those planes into the building. Then, it says, "Make a sound decision about which alternative is best for you." That's exactly what they did. They weighed the alternatives and said "this is what is best for us." And they flew the planes into the tower and killed over 2800 people.

The consequences never, ever justifies a moral choice.

Right From Wrong – **"Consequences: It Hurts People" Part 2** (Part 5)

Why is lying right or why is lying wrong? If you're a student in the schools of the United States and you take a course where you have a textbook on how to make moral choices, the 17 textbooks that I examined, took everyone through almost the identical steps – whether doing it in two steps or four steps.

² <http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/5-barna-update/58-practical-outcomes-replace-biblical-principles-as-the-moral-standard>

For example, in the textbook Civics for Americans, it says this to a young person on how to make moral choices: “When faced with a decision, you should ask yourself three questions.

1. What are my alternatives?
2. What are the likely consequences of each alternative?
3. Which alternative do I prefer?”

Not which alternative is right, or which alternative is the best for most people, no. Which alternative do I prefer? With this, you justify almost every evil act. Timothy McVeigh, when he made the decision to park that truck in front of the federal building in Oklahoma City and kill scores of lives with the bomb that was planted there, he did these three steps. He looked at the different alternatives, he weighed each one and then he made the decision that he preferred. And that was to kill all those people and bomb the federal building.

If you say that things are morally right or morally wrong because of the consequences, then you would justify almost every single evil in the world. The bombers that rammed the planes into the twin towers – they looked at the different alternatives, they weighed each one and they made a decision based upon the alternative that was best for them.

In the next segment, I’m going to start out by making a statement that will be contrary to probably just about everything that you have ever thought about moral choices and consequences, and it’s cause you to reevaluate why things are right and why things are wrong.

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Right From Wrong – **“Can’t see beyond the end of their nose.”** (Part 6)

Many people say that you make moral choices based upon the consequences. But here’s a major problem. This is a phrase that you’ve probably heard – but I wonder how many people really understand it – they reference it to children but adults do the same thing.

They say, “You know, kids can’t see beyond the end of their nose.” Now what does that mean? It means this. Young people, just like adults, make most choices based on the immediate consequences. In other words, they can’t see beyond the end of their nose or past the immediate consequences. Now here’s the problem.

Almost always, right choices, if you make a right choice in life, there’s an immediate negative consequence. If you make a wrong choice in your life there’s almost always an immediate positive consequence. You say, “What?” Yes, right choices, negative consequences. Wrong choices, positive consequences. That true in almost everything in your life.

For an example, my daughter Katie, when she was 15 years old, we lived outside of Dallas and it was about 45 miles to her school. And at 15 years old the government gave her a special driver’s license to drive a death machine. She could only drive to and from the school, daylight hours, no one could be in the car with her, she could not use a cell phone, and she could not depart from the route more than several blocks, or the license was suspended.

So, let’s say a businessman says to me, “BTW Josh, I saw your daughter Katie up in McKinney at the plaza with some of her friends.” And I said, “Are you sure it was Katie?” “Yeah, she had that little convertible that she drives all the time.” Wow – that’s a long ways off the route.

So, let's say Katie comes home that afternoon. I say, "Honey, how was school today?" "Just great, Daddy." I set my kids up and I say, "Well, do you have anything to share with me or need to tell me?" "Oh, no, Daddy. Everything's great."

So I started to walk away and stopped. "Oh by the way... yesterday afternoon when you were up there in McKinney, did you drive up there with some of your friends?" She immediately said, "How did you know?" In other words, she confessed right there. Now, she has a choice to make.

One, she can make a right choice and tell me the truth. "Yes, Daddy, I was." Immediate negative consequences - she's grounded, she can't drive.

Let's say she makes a wrong choice and she lies to me. Wrong choice, immediate positive consequences - she's not grounded.

Do you know that's true in almost everything in life? Every time you go to cheat on a test, that's a wrong choice but you usually have immediate consequences. Why? Maybe you're not grounded, you pass the course...b/c you made that choice to cheat on the exam and the immediate consequences you're not grounded by your parents b/c you would have got a flunking score or just bombed out on the test.

This is true in almost everything in life. But what about feelings? Is it ok if it feels good to me? In the next clip I want to deal with the issue of feelings and moral choices.

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Right From Wrong – **"Because of how I feel!"** (Part 7)

Why are things right and why are things wrong? Boy, that's a big question in today's culture. And, I can tell you this – if you don't have a deep conviction and understanding, not just *what* is right or what is wrong, but *why* – when you come up in a crisis in your life, you will almost always choose the wrong way if you don't have convictions and understanding.

Now a lot of people say "Well, lying is wrong." Why? B/c the way I feel. They believe their feelings determine what is right and what is wrong. Again, in that study that was released one day before 9-11 when asked, "What is your moral foundation for making choices?" 17% of Americans said, "B/c how I feel." Do you know what I concluded from that? Another 17% of Americans lost the right to judge 9-11.

Absolutely nothing is morally right or morally wrong b/c of your feelings at that moment. You have to realize, feelings come and go – they change with circumstances. Does that mean that this is right at this time, wrong at this time, right at this time? Killing is wrong now, killing is right then.

Have you seen any of the videos done by the homicide bombers who flew the planes into the twin towers on 9-11? The day before, they [the terrorists] did a video testimony of why they did it. And as you watch that, you can see they had the feelings, they had all the feelings in the world, that what they were doing was right. They were high on it and they flew those planes in and killed 2800 people.

Now if you say you make moral choices based upon your feelings, then how can you judge what the homicide bombers did in killing all those people? Your feelings will come and go but in no way do they determine what is right or what is wrong. Maybe you've just had a bad hair day or maybe you have an upset stomach and you don't feel very well, so something looks like it might not be right.

Well then, how *do* you make choices? You know the biggest answer I get whenever I ask anyone, "Why is lying wrong?" Almost every Christian comes back and says, "B/c the Bible says so."

Ohhh.. that's absolutely false! And in the next segment I'm going to explain why it is false.

Right From Wrong – **"Because the Bible says so!"** (Part 8)

I ask the question, "Why is lying wrong?" and one of the three top answers I ever get – especially by Christians – is "B/c the Bible says so." "Thou shall not bear false witness." Everyone, "because the Bible says so."

Now hear me clearly all the way through this segment. Absolutely nothing is morally right or wrong because the Bible says it. That's ridiculous. That's heresy. You say, "Wait a minute. I've been taught this my whole life." Then, you've been taught wrong. Nothing is morally right or wrong b/c the Bible says so.

You say, "What about the Commandments?" What about the Commandments? Did you ever realize that not one of the Ten Commandments, not one Commandment contains any moral authority of *why* it is right or *why* it is wrong. I bet you never thought of that, did you? A commandment is a statement of *what* is right and *what* is wrong. Within it, it contains no moral authority of *why* it is right or *why* it is wrong.

Let me pose two questions to you. And, just think through how you would answer them. Is lying wrong b/c the Bible says, "Thou shall not lie?" Now, probably 95% of Christians would agree with that, or does the Bible say "Thou shall not lie" b/c lying is wrong? But it's not wrong b/c the Bible teaches it, but rather the Bible teaches it b/c it IS wrong.

You say, "Wow – I never thought of that." Well, lying is not wrong b/c the Bible teaches it. But rather, the Bible teaches it b/c it *is* wrong. And until you know *why* it is wrong, you're probably living pure legalism.

I would never dream of saying to my children, "B/c the Bible says so!" If I did that, I would be a derelict father, I would be raising my children legalistically. You say, "What?" I would be giving them a list of "Do's" and a list of "Don'ts." That's legalism. I would never dream of saying that to my children unless I followed through and explained to them "*Why* the Bible says this is right" or "*Why* the Bible says this is wrong." B/c that would be teaching legalism. I believe a majority of Christian young people raised, "Why can't I do that?" "B/c the Bible says ... B/c the Bible says..."

I believe that parent is a derelict in teaching their children legalism, they're teaching them to be spiritually defeated. You say, "Whoa, whoa, wait a minute. You've just undermined my entire authority of right from wrong." Yeah, I probably did b/c your authority was wrong.

In the next segment, we're going to start looking at why is lying is right or wrong. Why is anything right or wrong? Why does the Bible say, "Thou shall not...?" And, when we do, it will cause you to have a whole new perspective of the Christian faith. And, what motivates you to accomplish that which is right and not do that which is wrong.

Right From Wrong – **"The Foundation of Right and Wrong"** (Part 9)

We've looked at various reasons that people have given why things are right and why things are wrong. And we've been centering mainly on the question, "Is lying wrong?" If so, WHY is it wrong? We've seen five, six different responses of people and now it's come down to this, where people say, "B/c the Bible says so." Absolutely not. Nothing is morally right or wrong b/c the Bible says it. But rather, the Bible says that it is wrong, b/c it IS wrong. But it's not wrong b/c the Bible says it. Then why is lying wrong?

For this reason. And, folks, it's no small issue. This is a major issue. Why is lying wrong? B/c the person and character and nature of God is Truth. Jesus said, "I am the Truth." And anything contrary to the person and character and nature of God is false. Lying is not wrong b/c the Bible says, "Thou shall not lie." But the Bible says, "Thou shall not lie" b/c lying is wrong. Why? B/c God in his very nature is Truth. The very foundation of why things are right or why things are wrong, are personal in the personal character and nature of God. Lying is wrong b/c God is Truth. These things are not right or wrong b/c your parents taught you, or b/c of your church, or b/c of the consequences, or b/c it's legal or illegal, or b/c the Bible says "Thou shall not." But rather, lying is wrong, b/c of the person, the character and the nature of God.

For example, why is injustice wrong? Yeah! B/c God is just. Not b/c your parents taught you to act justly. But b/c the person, the character and the nature of God is just. Unrighteousness is wrong b/c God is righteous. Impurity is wrong – why? B/c your parents taught you that it was wrong, your church? No! B/c the person, the character and the nature of God is pure.

Now it's critical to understand these are not right or wrong b/c of the Bible, b/c of your parents, your church or whatever but b/c of the nature of God.

Right From Wrong – **"Fall in Love with God, Not the Bible"** (Part 10)

We have looked at various reasons why people give that lying is wrong. And, most of them will say "b/c the Bible says so." And that is wrong. Nothing is morally right or wrong b/c the Bible says, "Thou shall not." But rather, the bible says "Thou shall not" b/c it IS wrong. But it's not wrong b/c the Bible teaches it. Then why is it wrong?

For this reason and I'll tell you, folks. This is no little, tiny issue. This is the difference b/t legalism and a relationship. Lying is wrong b/c the person and the character and the nature of God is Truth. Jesus said, "I am the Truth." Anything that's contrary to the person, the character and the nature of God is false. That which coincides with the person, the character and the nature of God is Truth.

Lying is wrong b/c God is truth. Not b/c your parents taught you, not b/c the church taught you, not b/c of the circumstances, or b/c it's legal or illegal or whatever... but b/c of the person, the character and the nature of God.

You see, what this does is takes it out of legalism b/c the Bible says "Thou shall not" to a personal relationship. You know what I've learned with my children over the years? It's a lot easier to get my children to respond morally out of a relationship with a personal God, than out of the legalism out of a book.

You say, "But, I believe the Bible is it!" No, the Bible is God's roadmap to take us to him. I don't want my children to fall in love with the Bible – I want them to fall in love with the God of the Bible. That's why God gave us the Bible.

You say, "Wait a minute. I still think it's the Bible." When Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees and he was correcting them, he really was, he was calling down the religious leaders b/c they were bragging that they were superior, the Jews were superior to everyone else b/c God had given them his oracles, he had given them his law and he have given them the word of God. They said, "Look we have life in the word of God!" Jesus said this to them, "You have the Scriptures and in them you think you have life. But no, you have life in Me."

This is why, I don't want to take my children back to the Bible but I want to take my children back to the God of the Bible. How do you do that? Through the Bible. That's why God gave us the scriptures. So he has revealed who he is and through that revelation we can see what is right and what is wrong and why - compared to his nature.

Why is killing wrong? Have you ever wondered why hatred is wrong? In the next segment I want to deal with that.

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Right From Wrong – **"Why is hatred or lying wrong?"** (Part 11)

Why is lying wrong? Not b/c the Bible says it, not b/c your parents taught you, not b/c your Church teaches lying is wrong, not b/c of the consequences where somebody could be hurt if you lied...but rather, lying is wrong b/c it's contrary to the person and character and nature of God.

Please, understand this principle. Lying is not wrong b/c the Bible says, "Thou shall not lie," but the Bible says, "Thou shall not lie" b/c lying is wrong. Why is it wrong? B/c the person and character and nature of God. This is why I never want to teach my children "That is wrong." "Why?" "B/c the Bible says so." That's legalism. That's giving a list of "Do's" and a list of "Don'ts." Rather, I want to point my children to the God of the Bible and his very nature. That way, my children are learning to respond morally out of a relationship not out of legalism.

And, I've got to tell you, as a Daddy, it's a whole lot easier to teach morality to a young person when it's out of a relationship and not legalism. God gave the Bible that we might know *him*, not that we would worship the Bible but that we would worship him.

Now, lying is wrong b/c God is Truth. Jesus said, "I am the Truth." Injustice is wrong b/c God is Just. Why is killing wrong? Most people say to me, "Well, the Bible says 'Thou shall not kill.'" And I say, "No,

killing is not wrong b/c the Bible says 'Thou shall not kill.'" But the Bible says, "Thou shall not kill" b/c killing IS wrong but it's not wrong b/c the Bible says it. It's wrong, b/c the person, character and nature of God is Life.

Jesus not only said, "I am the Truth" but he also said, "I am the Life." [John 14:6] And, the Bible says that God created life in his image and said, "It is good."

Lying is wrong b/c God is Truth. Killing is wrong b/c God is Life. Injustice is wrong b/c God is Just. Now, think it through. Why is hatred wrong? You got it! B/c God is Love. The person, character and nature of God is love. Purity is right – why? B/c God is Pure. It coincides with the person, character and nature of God.

Now in the next segment or two, I'm going to take you on a little bit of a rabbit trail. Did you ever wonder what Jesus meant when he said, "I am the Truth?" Do you know, in 48 years, in random questions I've never had anyone answer that? What did Jesus mean when he said, "I am the Truth?" It's not what you think and you're going to think that I'm off on a rabbit trail. But I'm going to come back to why is lying wrong.

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Right From Wrong – **"Defining Truth?"** (Part 12)

Why is lying wrong? As I said in the earlier segment, we're on a rabbit's trail that I'm going to bring back to the main issue.

What did Jesus mean when he said, "I am the Truth." Now, you need to define Truth. You know, I've probably asked 3,000 people to define truth and only 4 in about 12 years have ever defined "Truth." And you know people say, "I love the truth!" If you can't define truth, how can you know what it is? "I want to teach the truth!" If you can't define truth, then how do you know you're teaching the truth? "I want to go to a church where truth is taught." Well, if you can't define truth then how can you evaluate if that church is even teaching truth?

So, we need to define Truth. I want to give you a definition. Now look, I didn't come up with it, I'm not that smart. I read a book. In fact, I read this book 4 times by the time I was 21 years old. It's Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. I didn't find the plot but I sure found a lot of meaning. And I found this meaning of Truth.

Now, you've got to think with me or you will miss it. Webster defines truth this way; when I first read it, it took me a number of days to understand what it meant. And I knew I was in trouble when I needed a definition of a definition. Now, you're going to understand it in one minute.

How do you define truth, Webster defines "truth" this way: *Truth is that which has fidelity to the original.* You say, "What? That's not very life-changing, is it?" Truth is that which has fidelity to the original. Know what I learned? You've got to define "Fidelity." If this was a question and answer period with young people, one of the first questions would be, "Mr. McDowell, what's 'fidelity'?"

I would define "Fidelity" this way: *The same as or equal to... The same as or equal to...*

In other words, if I have a copy of my book *New Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (NEDV), and a volume of the Encyclopedia Britannica, this book (Encyclopedia) does not add fidelity to this book (NEDV). Why? They're different. But if I have a copy of NEDV and a copy in this hand of NEDV then I can say that this book has fidelity to this book. Why? "It's the same as or equal to."

So, let's put that into a definition. *Truth is that which is the same as or equal to the original.* Whoa! Now what do we mean by "the original"?

In the next segment, I want to give you a word picture, an illustration that will help you to understand what the original is and begin to understand what Jesus meant when he said, "I am the Truth."

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Right From Wrong – **"What is 'The Original' When Defining Truth?"** (Part 13)

Jesus said, "I am the Truth." What does that mean? You have to define truth and last time we defined truth by Webster's Dictionary as: "*that which has fidelity to the original.*" Then, we defined "Fidelity" as "*the same as or equal to.*" So, truth is: "*That which is the same as or equal to the original.*"

Now, what do we mean by "the original"? Let me give you a word picture, an illustration. Let's say I have a bottle of water. And I say, "I have a liter of water." "You say, you do not!" I say, "I do too!" You say, "No you don't!" Now, which one is true? Is my statement true and yours, false? Or is your statement true, and mine false?

Now remember, *truth is that which has fidelity to (or the same as or equal to) the original.* So you bring your spouse and I'll bring my spouse and we'll fly to Paris, France. We'll rent a car and drive far out into the suburb where there's the International Bureau of Weights and Measures. Where they have all the original metric measurements for liquids, solids, everything...

Now, *truth is that which has fidelity to the original* so we would take the original, determined to be a liter, metrically, accepted by the world, and then we would take my "liter" of water and we would compare it. Now if my container of water equals (in other words 'has fidelity' – the same as or equal to the original), then my statement was true. Why? There was fidelity to the original and your statement was false, for your statement had no fidelity to the original.

Truth is that which has fidelity to the original. What did Jesus mean when he said, "I am the Truth?" And we put in there *Truth - is that which has fidelity to the original.*

In the next segment I want to lay out what it really means when Jesus said, "I am the Truth." And you will find that to be one of the boldest declarations to being the Son of God and the Messiah in a way that you probably never dreamed that Christ ever claimed in this way.

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Right From Wrong – **"I am the Truth."** (Part 14)

What did Jesus mean when he said, "I am the Truth?" And how does it relate to lying or killing, being right or wrong?

Anything contrary to the person, character and nature of God is false. That which coincides with the person, character and nature of God is true. Killing is wrong b/c God is Life. Injustice is wrong b/c God is Just. Purity is right b/c God is Pure. Hatred is wrong b/c God is Love.

Then we looked at, what did Jesus mean when he said, "I am the Truth." [John 14:6] We defined truth as: *"that which has fidelity to the original."* So, Jesus said, "I have fidelity to the original."

Who is the original? Not just God, but God the Father. God Yahweh. Jesus said, "I am the same as God Yahweh." This is why he would say to people, "If you have known me, you have known the Father." "If you see me, you've seen the Father." "If you hear me, you hear the Father." Why? "B/c I am the Truth. I am the same as or equal to the Father."

But Josh, how does that relate to what you were initially talking about? Why is lying wrong? Oh, are you ready for this? This is good! Now, think it through with me. Lying is wrong b/c there is no fidelity to the original. Oooo, who's the original? God Yahweh. Lying is wrong b/c it's not the same as or equal to the original.

I want you to understand this. The whole basis is the person, character and nature of God. It's not about you and me. It's not about what our church teaches us, or our parents teach us, the consequences, what is legal or illegal, or how you feel at the moment. But it's based on the person, character and nature of God.

Somebody says to me, "I believe lying is right." And I say, "Well, I believe lying is wrong." Why? B/c God is Truth. Then they'll say, "Well, I don't believe in God!" I'll say, "That's ok. Let's talk about that. That's why I wrote *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*. Then we'll come back to this." That's why I must always bring it back to the person, character and nature of God. And I must be able to explain to people why I believe that is true.

Now, in the final segment of this, I want to do this. Then, how do you make right moral choices? I want to give you a four step process. Four simple steps that I think will make sense to you if the basis of all morality is the person, character and nature of God.

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Right From Wrong – **"Conclusion – 4 Step Process – How to Make Moral Choices"** (Part 16)

In many segments we've looked at: Why is lying wrong? Why is killing wrong? We looked at various processes given by textbooks that you consider the positive and negative consequences and then make a choice based upon what you prefer or what is best for you – not what is right or wrong – but what is best for you - and how you can justify every evil in the world with that.

Lying is wrong – not b/c the Bible says "Thou shalt not lie" – but b/c the person, character and nature of God is Truth. And, when Jesus said, "I am the Truth," he said, "I am the same as or equal to the original, God Yahweh." This is why Jesus could say, "If you've seen me then you've seen the Father." How could he have said that? B/c he is the Truth. He is the same as or equal to the original. Or, "If you know me, you have known the Father." "The words that I speak are not my words, but the Father who sent me." "If you believe in me, you believe in the Father."

Now, how can we process this out in daily life? Let me give you a very simple four-step process. Now, this is fleshed out in my book called Right From Wrong, where I walk through illustration after illustration of applying these four steps.

- First, you're faced with a decision. Consider the decision, consider the choice.
 - Number two, compare it to God.
 - Number three – and this is where most people fail – commit to God's way. Now, here's the problem: if you make a right choice there you can have immediate negative consequences. If you make a wrong choice, you can have immediate positive consequences. Remember, we talked about that? Right choices lead to negative consequences immediately – not in the long run – and wrong choices lead to right [positive] consequences. So you must make that decision to commit to God's way.
 - Fourth – count on his blessings.
1. Consider the choice.
 2. Compare it to God.
 3. Commit to God's way.
 4. Count on his blessings.

You see, God said, "I have plans for you. Not plans to harm you but plans to bless you and to prosper you." [Jeremiah 29:11] Emotionally, spiritually – everything.

God said "Obey my commandments" in Deuteronomy 10. He said, "Obey my commandments" and most people say, "'cause if you don't God is going to curse you or send you to hell..." But God said, "Obey my commandments ... for your good." Every single commandment of God is an expression of his very nature – Love – which means to protect you and to provide for you.

So, consider the choice, compare it to God, commit to God's way, and count on eventually him blessing you for doing it. Why is lying wrong? B/c God is Truth. The very basis is not the word of God, it's the person, character and nature of the God of the Bible which we know through the Scriptures.

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