

James 5:12

23 August 2020

ICE BREAKER: What has been one of the most difficult things for you during this coronavirus pandemic?

LARGE GROUP QUESTIONS:

(Read verse 12) We admire those in our homes, schools, and workplaces who live with **integrity**. **Success** in the home and the workplace **depends on honesty** and **faithfulness** to decisions and commitments made.

Society commends those who are true to their words, who 'talk the talk and walk the walk'. A person of integrity understands he is **only as good as his word**. Why? Because **your word is your bond**.

1. Describe an area in your life you have **integrity**, where you **live out your values consistently**.

(Read verse 12 again) We admire persons of integrity because so often we encounter those who operate without integrity. As Proverbs 20:6 declares, "**A faithful person who can find?**" Unfortunately, we live and work with those whose 'Yes' and 'No' mean either 'Yes' or 'No' or 'Maybe'.

As Proverbs 13:12 states, "**Hope deferred makes the heart sick.**" When our word is not our bond, when we make promises to our spouses, children, friends or co-workers that we do not keep, we live not in integrity but in **hypocrisy**. And we create pain and heart sickness to those we care for the most.

2. Describe an **area** in your life where you struggle with **hypocrisy**.

(Read Matthew 5:33-37) Jesus declares when we qualify our promises by referring to God in heaven, ('I swear to God') or an important person on earth ('I promise on my mother's grave'), we only reveal that **our plain word is not enough**, is not dependable on its own.

Secondly, Jesus says be careful when your speech is not honest and plain, but qualified and dramatic. Why? Because your words may be more influenced not by Heaven, but by '**the evil one**', as we often seek to avoid conflict or fall into people-pleasing.

3. Why do we say 'Yes' to people when we **really want to say 'No'**, or 'No' when we want to say 'Yes'?

(Read Isaiah 6:1-6) You and I don't realize the extent of **hypocrisy** in our **words** and **lives**. Only until we come to **encounter the Living God** will we ever find out. When the Lord came to the prophet Isaiah, what was the first thing Isaiah realized? " 'Woe to me!' I cried. 'I am ruined? For **I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips.**'

Although a righteous prophet, Isaiah realized he was a man of 'unclean lips' and that he lived 'among a people of unclean lips'. Notice **how Isaiah was saved** from his unclean condition. An angel flew to him with a burning, live coal from the altar and touched his mouth to burn away his guilt and sin.

There is no **rescue** from our hypocrisy of words and life unless we **allow the Lord to purify us**.

4. What is one **area** of your **life** or **use of words** you need the **Lord to purify**?

Cut along Dotted Line & use Notes as Book Marker

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to witness Christ to this week.)
