

**Sermon Topic:** Honesty VS Cutting Corners by Mr Rufus Chan (20 Nov 2016)

**Sermon Text:** Acts 5:1-11, Joshua 2:1-24

Character formation is important as it helps us deal with everyday issues.

**1. WHITE (The good route)**

- Honesty is grounded in the character of God.
- God is honest, therefore, we should be honest.
- Honesty is highly valued by God. There is no place for sin in the purity of God.

**2. BLACK (The bad route)**

- Dishonesty is used by the devil as a tool. The devil fills our hearts with it (Acts 5: 1-10)
- God uses the word "Abhor" – a very strong word to show how He feels about dishonesty.
- Ananias and Sapphira: They were stricken down by God after being dishonest. This was the only instance that God had stricken someone down in the New Testament. This shows the severity of dishonesty.
- Why do we struggle, even though the Bible clearly tells us that it is a serious sin?
  - o It is because we rationalize. Rationalization shapes our decision to be dishonest. We know God's standards, but when we start to rationalize is when we start to sin. e.g. "I deserve it because I've worked so hard / the company is so rich, they can afford it "

***"Cheating has nothing to do with morality, or getting caught or how much money is to be gained. It has to do with rationalization. Most people, he found, think of themselves as good people who deserve to have something that they have not earned, so they cheat a little"-Dan Ariely***

- The boundaries of what is cheating/lying starts to be pushed more and more outwards when we rationalize.

**3. GREY (The confusing route)**

- Devil creates confusion in grey areas – areas where the Bible is not clear whether it is black or white. The devil uses deception and incorrect rationalization in these areas, to try and battle for our moral positioning.
- Rahab and the 2 spies (Joshua 2:1-24):
  - o Rahab lied to protect God's men. Was she right, or wrong? Some people say that the decision to lie was right as the ends justify the means, or it was the lesser of 2 evils.
  - o However, one way to look at it is that Rahab was honoured for her faith, and not remembered for her ethics. Further, even if Rahab did not lie, perhaps God would have still saved the spies in His sovereignty.
  - o Moreover, God sometimes uses sinful people/sin for His Glory to defeat the Devil (beat him at his own game).

