

Questions for Interacting with the Deception & Integrity Bible Studies

1. God works to accomplish his will through a wide variety of actions he doesn't condone (sinful human behavior). Does this give us encouragement to take part in such actions? ("*What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?*") Romans 6:1-2)

2. What role should biblical examples of a behavior (in this case, deception) play, relative to New Testament teaching on the subject, in shaping our understanding and application of it?

3. Concerning the idea of not telling everyone everything one knows: How would you distinguish deception from discretion (wisdom)? Can we agree that different audiences and contexts rightly call for different presentations (and amounts) of the truth? If so, can we discern any biblical teaching or examples that would offer guidelines for what, who and when to adjust our speech?

For example: During most of Jesus' ministry, He did not clearly verbalize his identity as Messiah, much less his deity. What relevant principles can we draw from His approach to these vital aspects of the truth about Himself and His ministry?

4. Do we know (or have educated guesses about) why in Paul's list of hardships encountered by the apostles he lists "regarded as imposters/deceivers, yet true" (2 Cor. 6:8)? Was it (as when Jesus received the same accusation) that he was engaging in activities could be interpreted to imply that he believed something different than what he actually believed? Or was it that his opponents believed he was pointing people to a wrong message of salvation, and thus a "deceiver"? Or something else?

5. Jesus was often misunderstood by his listeners – usually because

- He was speaking of something spiritual and they understood it literally
- He was using a figure of speech they didn't grasp
- He didn't make a point of correcting their wrong assumptions.

What are some situations and ways where it would be helpful for us to follow Jesus' example in this?

6. When is it important (the Lord's best) to clarify our words or actions so that people will not misunderstand our beliefs or intentions?

- In what kinds of situations?
- Concerning what issues?
- For what reasons?
- When is it better *not* to clarify?
- What biblical teachings and/or examples are relevant to this question?