Opening text: Prov. 6:16-19

God is the most authentic Person you will ever find. Everything about Him is truth. Paul said to the Romans (3:4): “Let God be true and every man a liar”. God is true, Jesus in Revelation is called ‘Faithful and True”. The Holy Spirit in John is the Spirit of truth. Everything about God is true. God is the real deal, all the time. We can trust Him because He is authentic.

Like God, the Bible is such an authentic book. No truth is exaggerated, no facts are stretched and the Bible keeps it so real regarding its characters – even the heroes of the faith. No one is painted with an aura of perfection or embellished. The Bible keeps it real.

By contrast, satan is described in John 8:44 as not having any truth in him, unable to stand in the truth and as the father of lies. Paul says in 2 Corinthians that his nature is all about deceit and he would even transform himself as an angel of light.

God feels very strongly about the truth. He rejects dishonesty, dissimulation, insincerity and hypocrisy

This is not a topic we often talk about, but when you read the red letters in the New Testament, we see that Jesus spoke much about authenticity:

1. Jesus’ call to authenticity

Matthew 5:37 - But let your ‘Yes’ be ‘Yes,’ and your ‘No,’ ‘No.’ For whatever is more than these is from the evil one.

Matthew 6:1-5, 16 – Jesus taught the importance of keeping it real.

V.1-4 – authentic in giving
V.5, 16 – authentic in prayer

That’s the difference between religion and relationship. In religion you can put a façade, you can do something exterior that has nothing to do with how you really feel on the inside. However, in a relationship, you will have to be authentic.

Lets consider now John 6:26-27:

Jesus answered them and said, “Most assuredly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw the signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. 27 Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to everlasting life, which the Son of Man will give you, because God the Father has set His seal on Him.”
This multitude first came to Jesus as ‘sheep without a shepherd’ and He healed them and fed them. It was a banquet for 5000 people. However, when they came to Him the second time, they just came to be fed. Jesus exposed their true motivation.

2. Paul’s call to authenticity

In his Epistles, the Apostle Paul spoke about people like Timothy who were genuine.

2 Timothy 1:5 - when I call to remembrance the genuine faith that is in you, which dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am persuaded is in you also.

By contrast, he also spoke of people who had the opposite spirit, and he even mentioned them by name: Demas, Alexander the coppersmith, Hyrmaneous, Philetus, Phygelus, Hermogenenes, James and Jambres. In 2 Timothy 3:8, he says that they ‘resisted the truth’ – they were not the real deal.

In his epistles Paul spoke about

- **Deceivers** – Titus 1:10 For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.

- **False brethren** - Galatians 2:4. And this occurred because of false brethren secretly brought in (who came in by stealth to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage),

Also 2 Corinthians 11:26 - in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

- **False Apostles** – 2 Corinthians 11:13-14 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.

Also in Revelation 2:2 Jesus praises the church of Ephesus because they rejected those who were false apostles and liars.

- **Impostors** – 2 Tim.3:13 - But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.
• Ephesians 4:14-15, *that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting.* 15 *but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ*

24-25 *and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.*

The truth about lying

However, why do people lie? What would cause someone to be dishonest? Why would someone not be sincere about how he or she really feels? Are there factors that perhaps could tempt even you and I to lie? Where do lies come from? What is the truth about lying?

1. The devil is the father of lies. Lies originate with him. He is the ultimate deceiver. Everything about him is dark and deceptive. We need to be careful not to give him any foothold.

2. People lie to cover up or not to get caught (or to save face)
   The first lie in the Bible came from Cain after he killed his brother. God asked him, where is your brother? He said, “I do not know. Am I my brothers’ keeper?”

3. Lies can be triggered by our own fears
   Ananias and Sapphira lied about their offering because, at the end of the day perhaps they feared going without and experiencing lack. The bottom line is that they did not trust God to provide.

4. Some lie as a means to gain advantage or to getting ahead
   Jacob is the classic example of that (Genesis 25-27). Jacob means *supplanter or deceitful.* At birth, he took hold of his twin’s brother’s heel. He wanted to come first and get ahead all his life.

He tricked his brother into selling him his birthright and he deceived his father by pretending to be Esau.

He got ahead in many ways but he had trouble on every side. He was a deceiver who ended up being deceived also by Laban, his father in law. However, when he decided to get real with God in the valley of Jabok, there God changed his nature and he never walked the same again.

There is enough blessing to go around. We have an inheritance in God that no one is going to take. We don’t need to try to succeed in life through dishonest gain or deception. What we need is an encounter with Him who supplies our every need.
We are not orphans and we are not second class citizens of heaven. We need to stay secure in who we are in Him and what He has already provided for us.

5. Lying because of self preservation and survival
While Jesus was taken to be crucified, Peter lied, saying 3 times that he did not know Christ. Survival is such a basic natural instinct. God called us to live life on a different level!