



[John 1:46-47](#)

(46) And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." (47) Jesus saw Nathanael coming toward Him, and said of him, "Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!"

New King James Version

Without deceit means "simple, without subtlety, candid and sincere." Was this a compliment or a mild sarcasm? [Jesus](#) may actually have been pleasantly surprised.

All need to pay heed to His comment, in which He is teaching that "a real Israelite is one in whom is no falsehood." Nathanael represented the way a true Israelite should be, a person without deceit, candid and sincere. Jesus seems to be referring to the post-[conversion](#) character of the once-deceitful [Jacob](#), the ancestor of the Israelites, whose name [God](#) changed to "Israel." Before Jacob's conversion, [Isaac](#) had said to Esau, "Your brother came with deceit and has taken away your blessing" ([Genesis 27:35](#)), yet afterward, Jacob dealt honestly and fairly with others.

However, lying is such an integral part of the fabric of our lives that we have coined such expressions of mild disbelief as "Is that so?" and "Do you really mean it?" We expect advertisers to exaggerate the quality of their products. We expect politicians to be crooked, to lie, to be evasive, to use their positions to become wealthy, and to make under-the-table deals with contractors or even crime figures. We expect policemen to be "on the take" and businessmen to give little in return for as high a cost as the traffic will bear.

Indeed, the protestors of the 1960s justified the turmoil on the streets because of their disillusionment with the obvious hypocrisies of leaders becoming wealthy on a prolonged, senseless war. During that same general period, Presidents Eisenhower and Johnson were caught openly lying at news conferences. A web of intrigue and lies brought about President Nixon's resignation. Even General Motors misrepresented Oldsmobile cars with Chevy engines!

The Berean: Daily Verse and Commentary for John 1:46-47 (<http://www.theberean.org>)

People in government commonly lie "in the national interest," as the saying goes. Many have testified that Bill and Hillary Clinton spent eight years continuously lying about a wide variety of personal failings, moneymaking deals, and political intrigues they were involved in. The media took the Bush administration to task on its obfuscations regarding the Iraq War.

British Prime Minister Winston Churchill served his nation most critically in wartime, during which artful lying, called disinformation, is a common tactic. He once said, "In wartime, [truth](#) is so precious that she should always be attended by a bodyguard of lies." Do we as a people think that no one is listening?

— John W. Ritenbaugh

To learn more, see:
[The Ninth Commandment](#)

Related Topics:

[Deceitfulness](#)

[Exaggeration](#)

[Jacob's Cunning](#)

[Jacob's Deceit](#)

[Jacob's Deceitfulness](#)

[Lying](#)

[Nathanael](#)

[Sincere](#)

[Sincerity](#)

Commentary copyright © 1992-2016 [Church of the Great God](#)
New King James Version copyright © 1982 by [Thomas Nelson, Inc.](#)