

Messenger of Truth

"Holding forth the Word of Life" (Phil. 2:16)

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Exaggerate

"Never exaggerate your faults, your friends will attend to that." – Bob Edwards

"We exaggerate misfortune and happiness alike. We are never as bad off or as happy as we say we are." – Honore De Balzac, French Novelist 1799-1850

"I've told you a million times, I don't exaggerate." – Charlie Nicholas

"Isn't it a comfort to worship a God we cannot exaggerate?" – Francis Chan

"There are people so addicted to exaggeration they can't tell the truth without lying." – Josh Billings

Many people love to exaggerate. For instance, there is the fisherman, who catches a nice fish. And when he retells the tale, the fish keeps getting bigger and longer. Or the young boy who looks upon a girl and remarks, you are the most beautiful girl in the world. (Perhaps so, in his eyes.) Or, there is a strong rain storm and someone remarks, "It is raining cats and dogs." Well, not literally.

It is rather common to express our calamities and embellish it to the point that it hardly resembles the truth. We may do so as we desire the sympathy of others. And some will do so to attract attention to themselves. Lonely people have often been known to do this.

In Scripture, there is a figure of speech known as a hyperbole. Merriam-Webster defines it as, "Extravagant exaggeration." And Webster gives the example, "Mile high ice cream cones."

Jesus used hyperboles in His teaching. "For it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:25). Be it a sewing needle or even a surgeon's needle, the very idea of a camel fitting through it is impossible. But Jesus used this effectively to illustrate just how difficult it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

In another example, "Blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel" (Matt. 23:24). The idea of straining a gnat, an extremely tiny insect, or a human being swallowing a camel, are great exaggerations. The religious leaders were notorious at binding their traditions upon others and holding everyone accountable to their ridiculous rules.

Again, "The Pharisees therefore said among themselves, 'You see that you are accomplishing nothing. Look, the world has gone after Him'" (John 12:19). Did the whole world go after Jesus? It was an exaggeration as the crowds that often followed the Lord were large in size.

If you do exaggerate, use it to teach and not to embellish upon the truth.