



# The Planter

"The seed is the word of God", Luke 8:11



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## Cheating Is Cheating

Lance Armstrong was one of the most polarizing figures in sports. He made cycling more popular and interesting than it had ever been before. He won the Tour de France a record setting seven consecutive times. He battled and overcame stage-three cancer that had spread to his abdomen, lungs, and brain. He also founded the Lance Armstrong Foundation (LiveStrong), which has raised almost half a billion dollars to support people with cancer and also provides great information on health and exercise. Lance had become a worldwide figure of inspiration, determination, success, and an all-around "good guy," until a few years ago. In an interview with Oprah Winfrey, Lance admitted to using performance-enhancing drugs in all of his Tour de France victories and almost his entire professional career.

One of the most disturbing parts of the interview with Oprah was when Lance admitted that, while doping, he didn't feel wrong, or bad, and didn't even consider it cheating. In an attempt to convince himself, he said, "I went and looked up the definition of cheat. And the definition is to gain an advantage on a rival or foe. I didn't view it that way. I viewed it as a level playing field." The reason he viewed it this way is because many other cyclists also use performance-enhancing drugs. In fact, Wikipedia has an entire page dedicated to cycling doping cases, with hundreds of instances dating all the back to 1886.

For this reason, many have defended Lance's actions. They claim his actions were acceptable since so many cyclists are doing the same thing and gaining the same advantage. They make the argument that no cyclists could win in today's competitions without using the same drugs as everyone else. In other words, it isn't really cheating if everyone is doing it? Are they right? Does Lance's definition of "cheat" validate his actions?

When we look at the actual definition of cheat, not only do we not see Armstrong's definition, the many different components of the definition clearly would

condemn his actions (Merriam-Webster). For example: "to deprive of something valuable by the use of deceit or fraud"

"to influence or lead by deceit, trick, or artifice"  
"to practice fraud or trickery"

"to violate rules dishonestly"

It is clear Lance Armstrong cheated. The fact that many other cyclists were doing the same thing does not justify his actions nor make it anything other than cheating. It just means many others were cheating as well. Armstrong stated in the interview with Oprah that his intentions were "to win at all costs." This is not the attitude of a person who is just trying to level the playing field. Thankfully, Lance has now admitted his actions were wrong, but the damage is already done.

Lance Armstrong cheated, but is cheating really wrong? What does Scripture say about all of this?

God wants us to be "[people] of truth, and those who hate dishonest gain" (Exodus 18:21; 1 Timothy 3:8; Titus 1:7). Cheating is certainly a means of dishonest and sordid gain.

God condemns people who lie, trick, and deceive (Proverbs 6:16-19; Colossians 3:9; Ephesians 4:25; Proverbs 12:22; 2 Timothy 3:13). Cheating practices all of these.

God rebukes those who steal (Ephesians 4:28; Matthew 19:18). Stealing is not limited to physical objects; we can also steal advantages, answers, and ideas. This is simply another way to cheat others.

Cheating is cheating. Wrong is wrong. It doesn't matter if it is on a test, a term paper, a report, a High School football game, or even the Tour de France; cheating is wrong. Our culture models a "win at all costs" attitude, but God calls for us to be fair and honest. The next time an opportunity comes around where we could cheat, let's choose to do what is true, honest, fair, and right instead (Philippians 4:8).

(Armstrong was stripped of all 7 Tour de France wins and the 2000 Sydney Olympics Bronze medal.

## March 22, 2026

Sunday Morning  
Opening Prayer Tim Hester  
Closing Prayer Joey Jones

Scripture Reading Dallas York

Sunday Evening  
Opening Prayer Carter Logan  
Closing Prayer Jon Dyke

### Remember in prayer:

Luke Keller, Jill Spears, Wally Booker, Joan Henry, Norene and Ronnie O'Kelly, Don Duncan, Joe Chambers, Bill and Billie Nolen, Stefan Hoglund, Sammy Wyers.

**Oak View Nursing Home:** Betty Floyd.

**Brothers Keeper Group Three** will meet after services night.

Our **Fellowship Meal in April** will be on the second Sunday; The first Sunday services will be as usual; Jerry Reaves will preach that night.

The Pennville Church of Christ will have a Gospel Meeting beginning today through Wednesday night. **Jamie Davis** is the speaker.

**Adam Cordell** will preach next Sunday night.

Record for the week of March 15, 2026  
10 am 11 am 5 pm Wed Contribution  
89 82 72 86 \$3361.21

## Many Paths, Only One Way

In June of 2006, Warren Buffet announced that he would donate 85% of his 44-billion-dollar fortune to five charitable foundations. In response to questions about his generosity, Buffet said: "There is more than one way to get to heaven, but this is a great way." Unfortunately, Mr. Buffett is not the first to presume there are many paths to an eternal reward with our Heavenly Father. However, the Bible is quite clear that there is only one Way.

In John 14:6, while trying to comfort His disciples, Jesus said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me." That final phrase "through me" is significant. Throughout John's gospel he noted the importance of "through Jesus." The little Greek preposition is sometimes translated with other English words. Still, "through Jesus" is vital because:

Creation was through Him (1:3, 10, 14).

Grace and truth came through Him (1:17).

People believed through (because of) His word (4:41).

We can believe through (because of) His works (14:11).

Salvation comes through Him (3:17).

We can live through (because of) Him (6:57).

We find protection, salvation, and nutrition through (by) Him (10:1-2, 9)

John was not alone in his teaching the importance of the Way. The New Testament that peace (Acts 10:36), forgiveness (Acts 13:38), salvation (Acts 15:11), righteousness (Rom. 3:22), justification (Rom. 3:24), eternal life (Rom. 5:21), victory (I Cor. 15:57), redemption (Eph. 1:7), acceptance (I Pet. 2:5), and a host of other great blessings come only through Jesus!

There are many paths by which man will claim we can make it to eternal life. Jesus and the inspired writers of the New Testament assure us there is only one Way: "Jesus. We must go through Him. Galatians 3:36-27 and Romans 6:3-4 tell us how to get into Him. Jesus doesn't just show us the way, He is the way! So come to Him, follow Him, and go through Him today!

### Elders:

Steve Fletcher, Hugh Glaze, Dan Logan, Tim York

**Deacons:** Justin Glaze, Carter Logan, Adam Morgan, Jerry Reaves

**Minister:** Hugh Glaze

**Song Leader:** Adam Morgan