

Lying is a Serious Matter

Believe it or not, there was a time in the not too distant past when you could take a person at their word. Their word was their bond. In other words you could believe everything they said, because it was the truth. However in today's society most people think nothing about telling a lie or two or three or even more. Parents at one time in our history were responsible enough to teach their children the difference between lying and telling the truth; but most parents today don't even frown at the thought.

We have become a society who has forsaken a multitude of good habits (of which truthfulness is just one) for the world's idea of "eating and drinking for tomorrow we die" (1 Corinthians 15:32). Preachers no longer tell the members of their congregations that it is wrong to lie, and the worldly minded certainly won't take a stand against it because it suits their needs. Lying has become so second nature to most individuals today that they don't even think of it as wrong – after all – "Everybody's doing it!" So why not follow a multitude to do evil (Exodus 23:2)?

Lying is **A VERY SERIOUS MATTER!** As you will see as we continue our study, it will prevent a person from inheriting a heavenly home. No matter how large or how small your lies are, in the eyes of God they are all sinful and will condemn you to the lake of fire that burns for all eternity. The Lord's brother James spoke of the abuses of our tongues when he said, "The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature: and it is set on fire of hell" (James 3:6). Strong words for such a little member of our bodies, but when allowed to spew its deadly poison because we either fail or refuse to maintain self-control, our tongues can get us into a lot of trouble; not only with those around us, but also with God. It is our hope that you will seriously think about the things that are said in this study, and consider how lying tears down our moral standards and creates an untrustworthy nation of people.

Biblical Examples of Liars

Not one book, chapter or verse of the Word of God speaks in a positive way about the subject of lying. It is a very serious matter that every one of us must never associate ourselves with if we truly desire a heavenly home. The words liar, liars, lies, lies, lied, deceit, deceitful, deceitfulness, and deceive are found approximately 300 times in the Bible. The Hebrew and Greek equivalents denote "falsehood, a lie, speaking falsely or speaking lies; to consciously and intentionally lie for the purpose of deceiving men, false witness, and false testimony." For religious purposes lying refers to the perversion of religious truth, the practice of false religion, idolatry, false prophets, false Christ's, perverse doctrines. Therefore, it is clear that what we are dealing with is willful and deliberate acts meant to mislead.

The Apostle Paul wrote, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4). Then again he recorded, "Now all these things happened unto them for examples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Corinthians 10:11). God has seen fit to leave us examples of men and women who in the past lived lives that were not pleasing to Him. From the very beginning of human existence the sin of lying has been a problem. Satan, through the agency of the serpent, 'deceived' Adam and Eve into disobeying God and eating from the forbidden tree (Genesis 3:1-6). Jesus referred to this incident when He said to the Pharisees, "You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it." (John 8:44).

To be the father of lying brings forth the idea of begetting, or causing to be brought into existence. Therefore, the devil is the inventor of lying and because he has done so from the beginning, he is very good at it. The art of lying or deceiving

others is just a small portion of Satan's arsenal used by him to snare the souls of men. Concerning this sin Jeremiah wrote, "...they will deceive everyone his neighbor, and will not speak the truth: they have taught their tongue to speak lies, and weary themselves to commit iniquity. Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD." (Jeremiah 9:5-6 KJV). Cain falsely assumed that he could lie to God when he denied knowing where his brother Abel was (Genesis 4). In 1 Kings 13 we learn of an old prophet who lied to a man of God thus causing the young man's death because he disobeyed the Lord. It was through the lips of lying men that multitudes lost their lives – from those who constructed the golden calf at Mount Sinai to the spies who convinced the people they could not take the land God promised to give them (Exodus 32; Numbers 13 & 16).

In the New Testament we continue to find examples of liars. While Peter did not intend to be found a liar as Jesus foretold that he would 'deny' the Lord three times before the rooster crowed, nevertheless he did so (Matthew 26:75). Jesus told of the man who had two sons, whom he told to go work in his vineyard, one said he would not, but later repented and went, and the other son told his father he would go, but did not. Here we find the case of the second son making himself a liar (Matthew 21:28-31). In Acts chapter five we are told of a couple named Ananias and Sapphira who sold a piece of their own land in order to give to those in need. Their sin was that they lied to God and the apostles about the amount that they received for the land, and what they were giving (Acts 5:1-11). The apostles said, "Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God" (Acts 5:4). This is a very important point that most men and women forget today!

As the gospel began to be preached in the first century the Jews used the art of lying in order to instigate hatred for Christians and the gospel of Christ. Many times the apostles together with innocent parties found themselves caught up in the uproar (Acts 17:5, 13; 18:6, 12-17; 21:27-32; 24:1-6; et al.).

Various Methods of Lying

The world today has little problem lying through their teeth and all the while acting as if it is acceptable behavior. It doesn't seem to matter from what background you come from, whether white or blue collar, young person or adult, lying has become the norm. The reason appears to be the false idea that "little white lies" never hurt anyone. The fact is that **ALL LIES** injure someone, whether it is those to whom the lie is told, or the person telling the lie. Let's consider for a moment some methods of lying:

Half-Truths: We mentioned the example of Ananias and his wife Sapphira who sold a piece of land that was theirs for the purpose of helping others in need. Theirs was a noble motive as God tells us to "Do good to all men" (Galatians 6:10), however sin entered their lives when they made the conscience choice to tell a 'half-truth.' The money was theirs to do with it as they pleased, so it was their choice to give a portion of the money they received from the selling of the land instead of 'lying' by making others think they were giving the entire amount. Even the father of many nations, Abraham, while trying to protect himself and his wife 'lied' to Abimelech the king of Gerar. Assuming that the king did not fear God, he told him a 'half-truth' that Sarah his wife, was his sister (Genesis 20:1-15). Although it was true the Sarah was both his half-sister and his wife, Abraham sinned by not telling the whole truth.

Although we are not told in any specific terms that Abraham and Sarah repented, the implication is certainly there, as God would not have blessed Abraham, had they not done so (Luke 13:3, 5; Acts 3:19). David reminds us, "Deliver my soul, O Jehovah, from lying lips, (and) from a deceitful tongue" (Psalm 120:2ASV). Solomon also understood God's view of lying when he said, "Lying lips are an abomination to Jehovah; But they that deal truly are his delight" (Proverbs 12:22ASV), therefore telling 'half-truths' is deceiving, and deceiving is the same as lying. It is NEVER right to tell 'half-truths' to others because it can and will destroy our souls.

False Doctrine: *“Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”* (Proverbs 30:5-6KJV). *“Take heed lest there shall be any one that maketh spoil of you through his philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ:”* (Colossians 2:8ASV). *“For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”* (Romans 16:18 KJV). A multitude of passages warn of those who willingly lie about the will of God. Radio and TV evangelists who use the Bible as a way for them to get rich quick will one day weep in torment that they did not tell the truth. Yet billions of souls ignorantly give heed to the seducing lies of such prevaricators, rather than take the time to search out for themselves whether or not they are receiving the truth. God hated the false doctrine of Nicolaitanes and He continues to hate the lies of men and women today who lead others astray (Revelation 2:6, 15).

False Witness: *“There are six things which Jehovah hateth; Yea, seven which are an abomination unto him: Haughty eyes, a lying tongue, And hands that shed innocent blood; A heart that deviseth wicked purposes, Feet that are swift in running to mischief, A false witness that uttereth lies, And he that soweth discord among brethren.”* (Proverbs 6:16-19ASV). *“He that uttereth truth showeth forth righteousness; But a false witness, deceit.”* (Prov 12:17 ASV).

To be a ‘witness’ is to declare true facts that were seen and/or heard personally. Therefore, to bear ‘false witness’ would be the declaration of falsehoods, or to fabricate a story that is untrue. At Jesus’ trial, the Jewish leaders sought out false witnesses who could help them put the Savior to death (Matthew 26:57-62). Later the Apostle Paul faced the same type of deception when some Jews gathered false witnesses to set the city of Thessalonica in an uproar (Acts 17:5). Example after example can be given on how men will

resort to this type of lying when things are not going their way.

False Weights: *“Are there yet treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked, and a scant measure that is abominable? Shall I be pure with wicked balances, and with a bag of deceitful weights? For the rich men thereof are full of violence, and the inhabitants thereof have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth”* (Micah 6:10-12ASV).

God considers the use of unjust weights, measures and balances unrighteousness (Leviticus 19:35-37). The use of false weights is akin to lying and stealing (Leviticus 19:11). The Apostle Paul wrote, *“For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law”* (Romans 13:9-10KJV). Having the attitude of Agape love is the fulfilling of the law of Christ (Galatians 5:14; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8).

Deceit: *“Thy tongue deviseth mischiefs; like a sharp razor, working deceitfully”* (Psalm 52:2KJV). *“The transgression of the wicked saith within my heart, there is no fear of God before his eyes. For he flattereth himself in his own eyes, that his iniquity will not be found out and be hated. The words of his mouth are iniquity and deceit: He hath ceased to be wise (and) to do good”* (Psalm 36:1-3ASV).

One is said to be ‘mendacious’ when they make a habit of deceiving others. Deceit comes in many packages, false witness, false doctrine, false weights, and half-truths. Paul warns, *“Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple.”* (Romans 16:17-18 KJV). Deceit is only one of the tools of the devil (John 8:44; 1 Timothy 2:14).

Conclusion

As king Solomon so wisely contended, *“There is nothing new under the sun”* (Ecclesiastes 1:9), meaning simply, that the sin of lying has always been around and will continue until the day that this world is burned up. Lying and deceiving are very serious actions that men and women must realize will damn their souls. *“But for the fearful, and unbelieving, and abominable, and murderers, and fornicators, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and, ALL LIARS, their part (shall be) in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death.”* (Revelation 21:8ASV). Our society has grown into one that thinks nothing about telling a lie in order to get ahead, but **ALL LIES**, small, medium and large are a sin and are not pleasing to God. It is never right to tell a lie, no matter what men say. It is God who will judge in the end, not men. *“A lying tongue hateth those whom it hath wounded; And a flattering mouth worketh ruin”* (Proverbs 26:28ASV). *“Thou lovest evil more than good, and lying rather than to speak righteousness”* (Psalm 52:3ASV). **LYING IS A VERY SERIOUS MATTER!**

Compliments of:

Order From:
Yellowrose Publications
1899 St. Joseph Street
Dubuque, Iowa 52003
WSTS-021 - 01/08

*What Saith
the Scriptures?
Concerning.....*

Liars



By Michael S. Demory