

The Old Paths

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“Lying”

Jarrod Jacobs

Abraham Lincoln once said, “No man has a good enough memory to make a successful liar.” George Washington was quoted as saying, “I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain what I consider the most enviable of all titles, the character of an honest man.” In a time in which lying to one another (and to ourselves) seems to be in epidemic proportions, it is only natural for us to look at the Bible and see what God says about lying.

If there is anything the Bible talks about, it is the subject of lying and dishonesty. God consistently condemns lying in both the Old and New Testaments. Looking to the Old Testament we read, “*Let the lying lips be put to silence; which speak grievous things proudly and contemptuously against the righteous*” (Ps. 31:18). David also prayed that God would consume those who sinned by lying and cursing with their mouth (Ps. 59:12). Proverbs 6:17 reveals that God hates a “*lying tongue*.” Solomon also said, “*Lying lips are abomination to the LORD: but they that deal truly are his delight*” (Prov. 12:22). The righteous man will hate lying (Prov. 13:5). Jeremiah says that “*lying words*” are words which “*cannot profit*” (Jer. 7:8). These are but a few of the passages which reveal God’s thoughts concerning lying.

Looking to the New Testament, we learn the Christian must put away, “*lying*” and “*speaking every man truth with his neighbour*” (Eph. 4:25). In Colossians 3:9, the apostle Paul says to “*lie not*.” Could a Scripture be any plainer than this? In a very well known account, we read in Acts 5 of Ananias and Sapphira who lied to God (Acts 5:1-11). As a result of their deception, and lying to God, they were struck dead (v. 3-5, 10)!! Jesus said, “*But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death*” (Rev. 21:8).

Could there be any plainer language used? What else needs to be said to get people to understand that God demands honesty? It is a sad situation when we see so many people who not only lie, but PREFER hearing a lie rather than the truth! Consider the polls that come out from time to time saying that a great number of people are dishonest, and not only this, but consider others dishonest as well. It is as if because people expect dishonesty, this gives them the license to be dishonest themselves.

Why talk about dishonesty? Perhaps we can answer this question by considering our advocate (I Jn. 2:1) and our adversary (I Pet. 5:8). When we consider the Lord, we see Jesus is “*the truth*” and God’s word is truth (Jn. 14:6, 17:17). Satan, on

the other hand is the father of lies (Jn. 8:44). He introduced lies into the world (Gen. 3:4), and has been lying ever since. Therefore, when we are dishonest, who are we following? When we are honest, who are we following? Answer those questions, and we will see why honesty is imperative with God!

“The truth hurts” is an accurate statement at times. But, isn’t greater damage done when we lie to others (or to ourselves)? Isn’t it a far worse thing to be found out as a liar and a dishonest person than if you’d just told the truth in the first place? TV shows give the impression that lying “a little bit,” or simply “bending the truth” (?) is an acceptable thing. However, when it comes down to it, isn’t it better, and so much easier, to always tell the truth? As Mr. Lincoln said, “No man has a good enough memory to make a successful liar.” Make no mistake, “*your sin will find you out*” (Num. 32:23). If it doesn’t come in this life, it will come on the day of Judgment (II Cor. 5:10; Ecc. 12:13-14). What then, friend? Consider the consequences of your choices before it is too late. “*It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment*” (Heb. 9:27). Are you ready for the Judgment Day? Can you honestly say that you have obeyed Christ and are a Christian (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38, 22:16)? Or, have you been lying to yourself all this time? The truth is that Jesus Christ is “*the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him*” (Heb. 5:9). Don’t deceive yourself by thinking that simply hearing His word is enough. You must obey His will today (Jas. 1:22-25).

**WHEN WILL THE LYING
STOP IN YOUR LIFE?**

“*Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls.*” (Jer. 6:16)

If I Am Lost

Dan Richardson, Sikeston, MO

"Lost" - the very word strikes fear within us. I recall the night many years ago when my brother (at age 5) was lost at a fair, the terror we felt, and later, our joy when he was later found unharmed. I also vividly remember being lost while hunting, groping my way through the woods until finally finding familiar signs which led me back to camp as night fell. The Bible also speaks of being lost, but in a context that is even more frightening than those related above. We can be lost in sin, alienated from God in this life (Isa. 59:1-2), and, if unrepentant and disobedient, such will lead to being lost eternally in hell (Rev. 20:15, 21:8). Let's consider these lessons.

If I Am Lost, It Will Be My Fault. You can't blame God, because He doesn't wish any to perish in sin (II Pet. 3:9). He has left evidence of Himself so that we can believe He exists (Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19:1; Heb. 11:1-3, 6). He has provided the only means to save mankind in sin — His Son Jesus Christ, and likewise, gives evidence necessary to produce faith in Him (Jn. 20:30-31). The death of Jesus on the cross constitutes the only perfect sacrifice for sin by which God will forgive sinners (Rom. 3:24-26, 5:8; Heb. 2:14-15; I Pet. 1:18-20). Also, you can't blame other people for being lost. While there may be those in your life who have wielded a wicked influence — an unbelieving spouse who would never support and encourage you in your service to God, or materialistic, spiritually apathetic parents who did not teach

you to remember your Creator in the days of your youth (Ecc. 12:1), or worldly associations who corrupted your good morals (I Cor. 15:33), or hypocrites in the church, who were stumbling blocks to you — as influential as these people are, you are accountable for your own choices and actions. If you find yourself facing God on the day of Judgment unprepared, you will have no one to blame but yourself (Ezek. 18:20).

If I Am Lost, I Won't Be Alone, but this won't be any consolation, because God's word has warned that it is the majority who will be lost. Many will choose for their path in life the "broad way" that leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13-14). Along this "broad way" there are "fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, the effeminate, homosexuals (abusers of themselves with mankind) thieves, covetous, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners" (I Cor. 6:9-10). Also, there are the "fearful, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, whoremongers, sorcerers, idolaters, all liars, and the unclean" (Rev. 21:8, 27, 22:15). Likewise, there are even "religious" people there, who act without guidance of God's law in their religious beliefs and practices (Matt. 7:21-23). I've heard the wicked joke about how all their friends will be in hell, but in all truthfulness, of the many who will

be lost, I doubt that a single one of them will find their presence in hell to be a laughing matter.

If I Am Lost, It Will Be Punishment Forever. While there are those who deny the reality of hell, or who deny the severity and duration of hell, the Bible reveals the truth when it teaches us that hell is "the second death" and "the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone" (Rev. 20:14, 21:8). It is the place Jesus described where the "worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched" (Mk. 9:47-48), and where the inspired apostle Paul taught was a place of "eternal destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his might" (II Thess. 1:9), and a place of "wrath and indignation, tribulation and anguish" (Rom. 2:8-9). The very prospect that anyone will go there should scare us and motivate us to righteous living.

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The most exercise some folks get is "jumping" to conclusions!

Remember: "The first one to plead his cause seems right, Until his neighbor comes and examines him."

(Prov. 18:17, NKJ)

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