

Dealing with a Lying Tongue

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

Many men and women of God speak the truth in love, exalting the character of Jesus Christ. They do not criticize other Christians who are doing the work of God. For example, Jesus Christ commanded us to go into all the world, to preach the Gospel, and to make disciples of men. If other believers would find fault with that kind of obedience by calling it a “works program,” it is because they do not go themselves. Such ministers are in error. As far as God is concerned, they are liars.

Lying takes on many forms, but all of it comes from hell where Satan, “the father of lies,” reigns. Distortions and fabrications cause division and heartache in the Church of Jesus Christ, corrupting our testimony to the world.

In this booklet, we will explain different types of lying and show how to help those who are caught up in it to overcome pathological patterns of deceit.

Chapter One

DEFINING LIES

No one can lie against the truth (2 Corinthians 13:8). There are lies of expedience that are told as a means to an end, usually by a person who wants to protect or defend himself.

There are lies that are very convenient and lies that are half-truths. In other words, you tell half the truth but leave the rest out. You are a liar if you do this. Others plan lies to protect themselves and their reputations. These lies are organized and well thought out.

To this, I can only quote Numbers 32:23b: "Be sure your sin will find you out." Don't misunderstand me. A person can lie and rebound. Lying can be forgiven just as any other sin.

"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” (Revelation 21:8).

This is the Word of God, not the words of a man, declaring that those who lie consistently are bound for the lake of fire.

Religious Lies

“But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession,

“And kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it, and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles’ feet.

“But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy [Spirit], and to keep back part of the price of the land?

“Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God.

“And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

“And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him.

“And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in.

“And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much.

“Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out.

“Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost: and the young men came in, and found her dead, and, carrying her forth, buried her by her husband.

“And great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things” (Acts 5:1-11).

This passage relates the story of Ananias and Sapphira who lied to the Holy Spirit about their offering, and they were killed instantly. They died after committing the sin unto physical death for a period of time. God had to make a point with the Church, which was just beginning.

Lies Found Out

“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another” (Ephesians 4:25).

Lying is always found out—guaranteed.

Usually, it doesn't even have to involve investigations or inquiries. Somehow the lie is exposed, often by someone who didn't even suspect that a lie had been told. This is such a serious matter, and yet God has a provision for us.

Chapter Two

LIVING IN THE POWER OF GOD

Look at an electric lamp. If it is on, there is obviously electric power going through the light bulb or it wouldn't give off light. Because power is going through the lamp, we have light. Some bulbs are burnt out; they have no light. Those who make provisions for sin are Christians who give forth no light (that is assuming they have really received Jesus Christ as their Savior). A believer is known by his fruits.

A Christian is a communicator of *dunamis*—God's power. Just as when the power effortlessly flows through wires as a current to an electric lamp and the light works, when the Holy Spirit flows through us, we are lights to the world.

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy [Spirit] is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost

part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).

This isn’t just referring to power for witnessing. It speaks of our whole life being a witness of power. Ours is a life of God’s power flowing through it. This is what we need to be vessels of honor.

If there is no *dunamis* going through me, I am a liar. I cannot live with integrity and honesty apart from the Holy Spirit’s power.

Honestly Dealing with Issues

Jesus was addressing a certain group of religious hypocrites when He said, “You are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it” (John 8:44).

One of the great problems people have is when they lie against everything that they have been taught by not being honest in dealing with issues. If you have been lying, deal with the issue right now. No matter what it costs you, deal with your lying and be through with it.

Having been a salesman and having been around salesmen, I know how some lie in order

to bring a deal to a close. Actually, that is extortion. Many times their lies are not outright, but they are just not providing the complete truth. They may make lots of money by lying to their customers, but in the end they lose integrity and will probably suffer from the principle of reaping what they have sown.

Have you ever lied because you did not want to face the consequences of your wrong actions? If you have an honest weakness, a man of God can receive the truth from you about the sin, pray, and offer a covering. But you must be honest and deal in truth. It is the only way to handle such issues.

Truth Continually Prevails

“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 John 4).

“Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6).

Just before He was crucified, Jesus prayed to the Father for His disciples: “Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth” (John 17:17). The picture painted here is that truth always prevails, even if there are consequences to being honest and truthful. This is all very simple, and

yet very deep.

We have discussed lies of expediency, used as a means to an end for self-defense. Lies of convenience allow a person to avoid paying certain consequences at that moment. There are half-truths (or “the sins of omission”), which neglect expressing the whole truth. Many people think telling a half-truth is fine, and they are quick to justify it. Premeditated lies can cause a person to become a pathological liar.

Another kind of lie is when one person provides a false covering for someone else who is doing something wrong. That person insists that he cannot reveal what the other party is doing. Yet if the situation is handled properly, according to the Scriptures, he will avoid living in the guilty person’s lie. Please understand that no one is helped by a false covering. The one who is trying to provide the covering is living a silent lie, because a little leaven leavens the whole lump. It is wrong to go to others and tell them about the situation. What is the solution?

Here is how to handle it: We are to go to the person alone first (Matthew 18:15) and in an attitude of meekness (Galatians 6:1). If the party reacts, then go again with a pastor. It is not to be shouted from the rooftops. If you don’t go alone,

then you are practicing a lie against God's table of organization. Even if you just repeat the matter of the sin to your spouse, you are living a lie because you are not honoring God's way of dealing with these issues. But always go with the attitude of reconciliation, "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1*b*).

Chapter Three

THE GLORY OF GENTLENESS AND MEEKNESS

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient;

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:24-25).

Have you ever entered into striving? A person who is striving is not relaxed. Instead, he is tense and on edge, and other people can see it. They communicate a spirit of striving. Martha, Mary’s sister, communicated a spirit of striving in her “much serving” (Luke 10:40). Peter, the disciple, communicated that attitude when he vowed that he would never deny the Lord (see Matthew 26:34-35). Both of them were living in a lie against the revelation of God.

Striving is a lie against the Finished Work.

Christ has done it all, so there is nothing for us to attain to in our efforts. Whether it is in selling, raising children, or ministering, a great enemy against success and against spiritual blessings is striving. To strive is to approach people or circumstances with insecurity and stress. It involves internalizing negative possibilities in any situation.

Whenever I deal with a problem such as somebody lying, one of the things I have to be very careful about is that, as a leader, I never strive when I am dealing with people. If someone has a disagreement, I must make sure that I express a meaningful, gracious, and poised attitude—even if what he says is not true. I must let him say what he has to say, whether it is true or not. If it isn't true, I am still in good shape. I don't even need to defend myself. I simply say a few words, become quiet, and bless the person by letting him talk.

Also, I must deal with the problem privately, leaving room to be able to teach through the situation. In other words, I should not deal harshly, but gently and graciously (Nehemiah 9:20). When he leaves the office, we have taught him something. He will respond when he sees that we are gentle, honest, and meek. And because

our spirit isn't striving in a lie, we have already learned something, and we are able to display a tremendous attitude when dealing with the problem.

Instruction with Correction

Discipline includes teaching with instructions for correction. It is a marvelous thing when we can help a rebellious person turn failure or problems into lessons he can live by for the rest of his life. Our instruction can contribute something that will help to bring him out of the state he is in. We must, however, do it in meekness.

“Meekness” means to be God-conscious, having God's provision and God's Spirit. In meekness, we instruct those who oppose themselves (2 Timothy 2:25).

Let's be honest. If I were to do something wrong in my life, who would I be opposing? Myself. If I live in ignorance, rebellion, or sin, I am opposing myself.

God is inside of every born-again believer. When we pray, we should say, “My Father who is living in me...” This makes it very personal. Jesus taught the disciples to say, “Our Father which art in heaven...” in Matthew 6:9, because the Holy Spirit had not yet been sent to them.

Now, the Spirit is in us, the Father is in us, the Son is in us. Sin is simply me opposing myself.

Our desire for those who oppose themselves is to get them to stop hurting themselves in self-destructive patterns. In meekness, we instruct. The word is “instruct”—not “condemn.” There is a big difference.

If we instruct properly, our attitude is gentle, and our spirit is filled with meekness. Then there is a great possibility that they will receive from God a gift of repentance, so they can be changed and stop opposing themselves.

Liberating the Ensnared

“...That they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will” (2 Timothy 2:26).

A snare is a trap. Most of us have laid traps for mice or other pests. Satan lays traps designed to get Christians caught up in self-destructive patterns. He takes people captive at his will whenever he wants. Those who are living a lie can be taken captive in their experience for a couple of days and reveal a bad countenance and discouragement.

This is why it is so important to learn how to live in spiritual autonomy. Pride, arrogance, or

withdrawing from fellowship with spiritual Christians will not become our a problem when we are living in the truth of our convictions. To operate in spiritual autonomy is to function with God in truth in all situations.

Thank God for His provision to break down the devil's strongholds. Instead of the old lying tongue of Adam, we have been given a silver tongue of redemption, to speak truth into the face of every lie we encounter.

CONCLUSION

The apostle Paul wrote, in 2 Timothy 3:13, that in the last days, evil men would wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. Recognizing and resisting these deceivers and their deceptions requires spiritual autonomy that comes from knowing the Truth. Having this kind of autonomy means having freedom from the influence of the world system, able to think with God in every situation.

The spiritually autonomous believer is always part of the solution, not part of the problem. He is a faithful steward and caretaker of God's ministry. When he opens his mouth, it is to edify even when correction is involved. He draws near and is faithful to the assembly as he learns how to be a member in particular. He is a good steward of grace who presents his body as a living sacrifice daily. His mind is renewed daily through receiving the Word of God, and as best as he can, he obeys (Psalm 18:44). He works

hard, pays his tithes, stays current with his bills, and doesn't meddle in the business of others. He does not live in a lie nor in a lying spirit, but by the truth of every word of God.

Heavenly Father, we pray that each of us would learn to live by every word in the Bible, believing every single word of God and rebounding when we fail. We thank You that obedience to Your Word is the greatest single experiential achievement a Christian can enjoy by grace through faith. In Jesus' name, Amen.