

13. Lying

December 27, 2009

One of the most recent well-known deceptions was done by none other than former vice president Mr. Al Gore who invented the internet and we all are getting a tremendous benefit from his ingenious invention. Ever since he lost the presidential election to George W. Bush nine years ago, he probably thought that he was too high and mighty to go get a job to make living and he was too proud to be unknown just as another former vice president. So he made a film called "Inconvenient Truth" which led to the biggest worldwide sucker scam "the Global Warming".

Recently hackers (apparently Russian) got hold of over 1000 emails from climatologists at the Climatic Research Unit at East Anglia University in Great Britain and published them on the web. They got hold of correspondence in which researchers stated that they have been using "tricks" to hide data that conflicted with the anthropogenic global warming theory. Also they were using peer review to exclude papers that would contradict. A very, very inconvenient truth I might say!

Senator Diane Boxer from California demanded to find out who leaked these damaging e-mails rather than wanting to know why they alter the facts. Only a California liberal senator would make such a non-sense idiotic comment over truth.

How ironic! Al Gore's major money and fame making project, the global warming is completely debunked via the very Internet he supposedly invented.

Before we go any further, if there is any of you have never lied before, please stand up. Since all of us have lied one time or another, this teaching is for everyone in this sanctuary.

This morning we are going to look at the reasons for lying, the characteristics of lying, some of the deceptions in the Bible that God didn't punish, the consequences of lying and how not to lie.

A. THE REASONS FOR LYING

Genesis 3:1-5 Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, "Has God indeed said, 'You shall not eat of every tree of the garden?'" 2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; 3 but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.'" 4 Then the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

When we've studied about 'Pride' a couple of weeks ago, I quoted these verses. The first sin 'pride' was recorded here and the method to bring out the pride of the first woman and man was 'lying.' Whenever we do not understand God's Word like Eve did not, we have bullseyes on our foreheads from satan to be deceived.

Ever since we can remember, we all were taught not to lie because it is wrong to lie. But the problem we have is that, because of our wicked sinful nature, we all love to lie to make ourselves look better and sound better, or get out of a tight corner, or to authenticate the previous lies or just because we can.

It has been said, "A little lie is a lot like a little pregnancy. Either a woman is pregnant or she ain't. Besides, as time goes by, it grows bigger."

Some say, "It was not a terrible lie. It was just a little white lie." Do we categorize lies in color now? If that is the case, all the lies the politicians make in Washington, D.C. would be total black. There is no such a thing as a little lie or big lie. Anything other than truth is a lie and it is a deception. Then others might say, "Preacher, deception is such a harsh word. Maybe a little exaggeration here, a little stretch of truth there, a little editorial comment now and then..."

Then, I have a question to ask, "Was that the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth?" If not, it is a deception and it is a sin. Yes, it is not easy to tell the truth all the time. But that pleases the Lord. It is a good thing for us that God does not allow our noses to grow whenever we lie like it did to Pinocchio in his story. Otherwise, we would whack each other with our noses or we would have to dodge other people's noses all the time.

Lack of trustworthiness brings out lies from our hearts.

Proverbs 14:5 A faithful witness does not lie, But a false witness will utter lies.

Proverbs 25:19 Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble Is like a bad tooth and a foot out of joint.

What a description of lying!

The biggest reason for people lying is the fear of other people. People lie because of their reputation. Christians are no different in this matter. We have a tendency to think that we have to make others think that we are more spiritual when we are not. So what do we do? We lie. "I was praying until two o'clock this morning," or "During my devotion at 4 am this morning, I read Psalm 119 five times." Just in case you don't know much about Psalm 119, it has 176 verses.

Let's remember this: Reputation is what people think about you and it only lasts as long as they like you. But character is what God knows about you while you try to hide any of your negative things from other people's eyes.

Colossians 3:9-10 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, 10 and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

B. LET YOUR 'YES' BE 'YES' AND 'NO' BE 'NO'

James 5:12 But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath. But let your "Yes," be "Yes," and your "No," "No," lest you fall into judgment.

Since we are studying about lying, we need to be promise keepers, not just promise makers. Once you make a promise with someone – whether it is with children, friends, strangers, or God – do everything within your power to keep it. We ought to be men and women of word for the sake of the glory of God. If we don't keep our promises as Christians, how in the world do others believe what we say about Jesus?

While I am on a roll, let me dare to talk about keeping time. You all know I am very punctual when it comes to time. My daddy taught me when I was a little kid, "It is OK for you to wait for others and end up wasting your time. But it is not OK for you to make others wait for you and waste their time." If you have a meeting with an unbeliever and you show up a half hour late, would that person take you seriously when you talk about Jesus? I don't think so.

Do you know someone who always makes you wait for him or her? It is wrong. If you have promised to meet someone at a particular time, be there on time. Don't let your hair style or make-up be an excuse to be late, ladies. I heard that there is another lame excuse nowadays – showing up fashionably late. What a garbage lame lousy ungodly excuse that is! Be there on time consistently, then you will earn their respect to speak about your God.

You may wonder, "Yo JK, why are you so hot under the collar for this subject? It is just being late a few minutes." Our God is never late, and He is always on time. As the followers of Jesus Christ, should we follow His example or the example of the world? If you are late all the time, you are thinking that it is OK for you to be late and make others wait for you because you're important. It is pride.

C. THE LORD HATES LYING

Our God cannot and will not lie because of His holiness and righteousness.

Numbers 23:19 "God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

Hebrews 6:18 18 that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

As the believers of our truthful and righteous God, we are told not to lie in the Ten Commandments:

Exodus 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Proverbs 6:16-19 These six things the Lord hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: 17 A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, 18 A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, 19 A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.

The Lord hates lying. And He deals with liars with judgment.

Proverbs 12:22 Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, But those who deal truthfully are His delight.

Abomination always brings God's judgment. One of the clearest judgment of God for liars is being exposed. It is embarrassing or worse. Think about what is happening with Cheetah Woods, I meant Tiger Woods. Think about what happened to Jimmy Swaggart and Jim Baker, more recently Ted Haggard of Colorado Springs. The people who are Christians and live in deception bring disgrace to our Lord Jesus.

D. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF LIARS

1) They love gossiping.

Proverbs 17:4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips; A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.

The people who lie often, love to hear gossips that give them a false higher ground than others. They don't seek the truth of the story or stop it.

2) They boast about what they do with exaggeration and deception.

Proverbs 27:1-2 Do not boast about tomorrow, For you do not know what a day may bring forth. 2 Let another man praise you, and not your own mouth; A stranger, and not your own lips.

Galatians 6:3 For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

If we take out exaggeration and boast out of our lying, there is not much left. Our tongues have a natural tendency to boast.

James 3:5-6 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.

3) They don't live as they claim.

1 John 1:6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

1 John 2:4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

It is a terrible thing to live in deception. Some people do not live the way they claim to be. They say that they are Christians but their lives show that they are anything but the followers of Jesus Christ. They even believe their own deception that they wouldn't think otherwise. I hope that none of you fall into this category. You and God know about it. Make it right with God today before you leave this place.

E. THE DECEPTIONS IN THE BIBLE THAT WERE NOT PUNISHED

There are several lies recorded in the Bible that were done by the followers of our righteous and holy God and they were not punished for deceptions. How are we going to explain these? Does it mean that God encourages us to come up with deceptions that can be justified for His will or does He command us not to lie at the same time He winks at a certain kind of lies?

Allow me to list a few examples of these occasions:

1) In Genesis 27, Jacob lied to his father about him being Esau to get the blessings from his father. The Lord still blessed Jacob and didn't punish him for his lie.

2) In Exodus 1, the Hebrew midwives lied to Pharaoh about the Jewish women who supposedly had their babies before they got to the place so that they could not kill the infants. The Lord blessed the midwives and allowed them to have their own children.

3) In Joshua 1, prostitute Rahab lied to the soldiers of Jericho who chased after the two Israel spies, in order to save their lives because she believed the God of Israel. God blessed her and included her in the lineage of the Messiah.

4) In 1 Samuel 20, when king Saul asked his son Jonathan whereabouts of David, he lied to his father on behalf of his friend David's safety.

There are many other occasions that we find godly believers lied and they were not punished by God for their deceptions. How do we explain this? Just as He uses Satan in His will, the Lord uses the free will of men and their own mindsets to deceive to accomplish His will. It does not mean that the Lord is endorsing any of our deceptions, but because of His infinite wisdom He has prepared the next event according to His will.

F. THE CONSEQUENCES OF LYING

Proverbs 12:19 The truthful lip shall be established forever, But a lying tongue is but for a moment.

Deception will not last forever. It will come to its end sooner or later and it will be ugly for the liar.

Proverbs 19:5 A false witness will not go unpunished, And he who speaks lies will not escape.

Liars will be punished. The Lord will judge them according to what they have done.

Proverbs 21:6 Getting treasures by a lying tongue Is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.

Those who make money at any cost including hurting people's lives should take heed.

G. HOW NOT TO LIE

1) When we love others like ourselves, we would not lie to harm them.

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

2) Speak the truth.

Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

Some of you are thinking, "Pastor, in truth you are ugly. Do I need to tell you that?" No, I already know, so you don't need to remind me.

3) Be on alert, because our sinful nature always wants to lie.

Matthew 26:41 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

4) Walk in the Spirit by following the Word of God.

Psalms 119:9-11 How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. 10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! 11 Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!

Galatians 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.