

When Lying Feels Right

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

Introduction:

- A. What does the world think about the morality of lying? It will be based, more often than not, on situation ethics.
1. Some believe lying is necessary: "This is an absurd moral, for you and I both know that sometimes not only is it good to lie, it is necessary to lie." (Lemony Snicket)
 2. Some lie to protect themselves from embarrassment or harm: "Lying is not only a defense mechanism; it's also a coping mechanism and a survival technique." (Monica Raymund)
 3. Some lie to others for the same reason: "The thing about lying to your parents is, you have to do it to protect them. It's for their own good." (Sophie Kinsella)
 4. Some believe that when lying is a kindness, it is acceptable. Tell a grieving family that their departed reprobate friend is in Paradise
 5. Some believe that when lying will prevent harm, or keep someone out of trouble, or save a life, it is acceptable.
 6. Some believe that when lying helps someone who is at a disadvantage, it is acceptable.
 7. Some believe that when a lie makes someone feel better, it is okay.
 8. Some believe that if a lie does no harm to anyone, it is acceptable.
 9. Some believe that when a lie hinders or hurts an evil person, it is overlooked by God.
- B. What does God say about lying? - Eph. 4:21-25

I. PUT AWAY LYING

- A. For some folks, lying is a part of their nature that needs to be deliberately put aside - Col. 3:9
1. Lying is a part of the world's ethics. It has never been part of God and His moral nature. It may be accepted by the world, but it is not accepted by God - Titus 1:2; 1John 1:5
 2. We have to be set free from sin - Rom. 6:17-18
 3. That means we put to death and bury the old man of sin - Rom. 6:6-7
 4. And it means leaving the old man of sin in the grave - Rom. 6:1-2
- B. We cannot speak truth until we stop lying; tThey are incompatible opposites - Prov. 12:17
2. Our words must be reliably truthful - James 5:12
 - a. People who are truthful have no need to promise to tell the truth.
 - b. People who lie will promise anything to get others to believe that they are telling the truth, adding a lie to reinforce the lie.
 - c. They have brought themselves, by a history of dishonesty, into a position where everything they say is under suspicion.
- C. We speak truth because of love - Eph. 4:15
1. Love is without hypocrisy; it is not an act - Rom. 12:9

2. Love not just with words, but in actions and in word - 1John 3:18
- D. We speak truth because we are bound to one another - Rom. 12:5
 1. Lying, at its root, is a selfish act. It makes no sense to lie to ourselves, though nearly everyone does; and, often more to themselves than to anyone else. Still, it serves no benefit to anyone.

II. WHY DO PEOPLE LIE?

- A. The liar thinks there will be a benefit to himself.
 1. Ananias and Sapphira lied because they wanted the recognition without the cost - Acts 5:3-4
 2. Abraham lied about his wife because he thought it would save his life - Gen. 12:12-13
 3. Gehazi lied because he believed the foreign oppressor Naaman should pay for the prophet Elisha's help - 2Kings 5:20
- B. Some people lie instinctively to avoid trouble.
 1. Peter did this when challenged - Luke 22:55-60
 2. We believe the harm that could come to us is greater and more important than the harm we do to our souls with our lies.
- C. Others plan their lies with care; progressively self-destructive - Isa. 59:13-15
 1. Jeremiah criticized the powerful liars of his day - Jer. 9:2-8
- D. Some will lie to bring harm to others.
 1. Naboth was lied about to get him killed - 1Kings 21:13
 2. It was attempted against Jesus - Matt. 26:59-61
 3. It was done to Stephen - Acts 6:9-13
- E. Still others lie out of habit.
 1. Jesus said Satan's native tongue was lies - John 8:44
 2. No faithfulness in their mouth - Psalm 5:9

Conclusion:

- A. Telling the truth that results in someone crying is far better and more healthy than telling a lie to make them smile.
- B. A real man will be honest no matter how painful the truth. A coward hides behind lies and deceit.
- C. When you lie to someone, it is because you do not respect them enough to be honest, and you believe they are too stupid to know the difference.
- D. Regardless of the reason for the lie, the outcome is still the same - Rev. 21:8