

The Old Hickory Bulletin

Old Hickory Church of Christ

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THE PROBLEM OF LYING

I preached this last Lord's Day on the problem of lying. I believe it to be one of the most prevalent and damaging problems in the lives of not only the world, but Christians as well. It has become epidemic. It is in our private relationships, our families, our social lives, our business practices. It's everywhere – at school, at the golf course, at the PTA meeting, even in the church.

Coincidentally, The Houston Post, in its June 4 issue, carried a review of *The Day America Told the Truth*, a new book by J. Walter Thompson Advertising Exec., Peter Kim and his associate James Patterson. It is an astonishing look at the morals of our people. The picture is not pretty. For instance:

- 91% of Americans lie regularly
- 63% of American men and 52% of American women have lied to protect themselves.
- 40% of the people interviewed admitted to having lied on job applications.
- 62% think there's nothing morally wrong with the affairs they're having.
- And get this: 13% of the people have had an affair with a fellow worker. And 26% have shoplifted.

What a sad description of our times! How deplorable that people have such little regard for truth, such little respect for morality.

Can you believe that?

A lie is a false statement deliberately presented as being true; something meant to deceive or give a wrong impression. And we all have trouble with that at various times, some chronically. My Dad once spoke of a man who "would lie for a check when he could get cash for telling the truth."

Why do people lie? Sometimes it's done to deceive (Psalms 50:19); sometimes to shirk responsibilities (Luke 14:18, an excuse is not a reason, it's a lie); sometimes out of fear

(Matt. 26:69-74, Peter's denial). And sometimes it's done to hurt someone (Gen. 39:14-17, Potiphar's wife); or to get gain (Acts 5:1-10, Ananias and Sapphira).

And yes, there is such a thing as a religious lie (1 Tim. 4:12; Rom. 1:25). 2 Cor. 11:13-15 is an apt description of those televangelists who have duped people in this age by making claims of inspiration or having powers like those of the apostles. They have charmed old ladies out of fortunes, talked the ignorant and superstitious out of their life savings, while they live in houses with gold-plated faucets or carry on illicit relationships with prostitutes. This is religion?

Some lies are hard to detect. Self-righteousness, for instance, looks good on the surface, but is no more than a subtle lie, an impression created to deceive (Matthew 27:27-28).

One of the worst forms of lying – and very subtle – is the innuendo. It is a rather indirect implication or impression which often takes the form of an insinuation. In fact, the word is from the Latin innuere, "to nod to." Some of us nod just at the right time to leave a wrong or derogatory impression. And one of the worst forms of the same is to not stand up for a friend when you know what is being said is not so. Dereliction in such instances is no different than a blatant lie. I see entirely too much of this among brethren!

There are other forms of subtle lies: To appear to be more than you are. To discredit someone who has been praised. To transfer suspicion. To procreate gossip. To get ahead in line. And that most subtle of lies, self-deception, lying to yourself about yourself.

The end of all liars is predicted. Lying is repulsive to God (Prov. 16:16). He warns against it (Eph. 4:25; Col. 3:9; 1 Pet. 3:10). He will punish all liars (Prov. 19:5; Rev. 21:27). Make no mistake about it, God will deal with all liars, those who make lies and those who proliferate them.

No one is immune. The problem is huge, greater than most of us realize. Let every man examine himself and take care about lying. Let every person be impressed with the value of truth. And let us teach our children that all lies are sin.

- Dee Bowman

What We Were Told

(1) We were told that abortion would eliminate the problem of unwanted and abused children. We were told that women who were "forced" to give birth often abuse and neglect the children. We were told to choose between abortion and abuse.

What we were sold was both abortion and abuse. Abortion has not eliminated the scourge of unloved, unwanted, ignored, neglected and abandoned children. If you do not agree, check your newspaper.

(2) We were told that the theory of evolution ought to be accepted by Christians. We were told that it could be made to harmonize with the Bible. We were told that opposition to evolutionary theories was equivalent to being anti-scientific. We were told that both God and the Bible would have more acceptance in the circles of higher learning if we acknowledged "his evolutionary processes."

What we were sold was infidelity. What we brought was open ridicule and sneering mockery. The package we were sold was evolution and the Bible, but when it arrived, the Bible was missing. Sorry, no refunds or exchanges. All sales are final.

(3) We were told that the "new morality" would liberate us from guilt and unnecessary conscientious scruples. We were told that our Judeo-Christian ethic was to blame for unwed mothers, divorce, family trouble and sex crimes. Our Puritan philosophy, they said was too rigid. Laws and rules of morality stir rebellion. You cannot legislate morality, they argued. So, we stocked up on free love and the rights of "consenting adults." As the sale appeared to be such a bargain, we gladly traded in our values, gave away our virtue and surrendered our ideals.

What we were sold were more (not less) sex crimes, more (not less) divorce and family stress, more (not less) pregnancy out of marriage, more (not less) broken homes, battered wives, berated children and bruised hearts.

(4) We were told that women have the right to choose abortion. We were told that animals and criminals (sometimes one and the same, but here distinguished for literary purposes) have rights. We were told that laboratory rats and monkeys must be treated humanely (as though someone objects to that). We were told that murderers must not be "murdered" by the state.

What we were sold were laws to protect unhatched eagles, freedom for murderers to murder, and abortion rights. We received our shipment today. Enclosed was a white rat, playfully scurrying about, a cute but screeching eagle, the body of a murder victim, and oh, yes, the fetal remains of what would have been a baby girl. Have a nice day!

- Larry Ray Hafley, via Guardian of Truth, November 15, 1990

PONDER THESE THINGS

- If one can be saved without faith, why are we told that it is impossible to please God without it? (Heb. 11:6)
- If God promised to give faith when we ask for it, why are we told that faith comes by hearing the word of God? (Rom. 10:17)
- If "faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort," why did James say that we are NOT justified by faith only? (James 2:24)
- If God has promised to save men regardless of the kind of faith they have, why did Paul make it so plain that there is ONE faith? (Eph. 4:5)
- If one becomes a Christian the very moment he believes, as most denominations teach, why was not King Agrippa a Christian? (Acts 26:27-28)
- If one can be saved without wholehearted obedience to the Lord, why did Paul, "Obey from the heart"? (Rom 6:17).
- If the Lord will save us without baptism, why did he command us to be baptized? (Mk. 16:16)
- If the Lord has promised us salvation without baptism, as most denominations teach, why did Peter say, "Baptism doth also now save us"? (1 Pet. 3:21)
- If sprinkling and pouring constitute scriptural baptism, why did Paul say that baptism is a burial? (Col. 2:12)
- If we receive remission of our sins without baptism, why did Peter say that baptism is for the remission of sins? (Acts 2:38)
- If one can get into Christ without baptism, why did Paul say that we are baptized into Christ? (Gal. 3:27)
- If the baptism of infants is scriptural, why did Christ command us to baptize individuals who have heard and believed the gospel? (Mk. 16:15-16)
- If God has promised salvation outside the church, why did Christ die for the church? (Acts 20:28)
- If the church has nothing to do with our salvation, as most denominations teach, why does the Lord add us to the church? (Acts 2:47)

- Gospel Digest, 1964

The Name "Christian"

How strange it is that religious folk like to wear religious names other than the one which exalts Christ and is sanctioned by God's Word!

Despite the fact that Jesus prayed for unity and His apostles taught the necessity of it, some religious bodies wish to be distinguished from others, so they prefix distinguishing names. They are not known simply as Christians, but as some "kind" or "brand" of Christians.

In apostolic days, Christians were Christians - no prefixes and no suffixes.

- "The disciples were called CHRISTIANS first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26).
- "And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a CHRISTIAN" (Acts 26:28).
- "If any man suffer as a CHRISTIAN, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name" (1 Pet. 4:16).

Nowhere in the New Testament is there mention made of an "A-Christian" or a "B-Christian." There were none. Jesus' disciples were called simply "Christians." The church of Christ pleads that men be "Christians." Divine things are called by divine names; human things are called by human names.

"In the NAME OF JESUS CHRIST of Nazareth doth this man stand before you whole ... And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other NAME under heaven, that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." (Acts 4:10-12).

- R. Charles Garner

- > "The real measure of our wealth is how much we should be worth if we lost our money!" - J.H. Jowett
 - > "Life is tragic for the person who has plenty to live on but nothing to live for!"
 - > "I have lived to thank God that all my prayers have not been answered!"
 - > "Be as patient in bringing sinners to their potential in the kingdom as someone was in your own behalf!"
 - > "To hatch despair, simply brood over your troubles!"
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THIS WEEK'S LESSONS: Sunday morning: "*Gideon's Victory!*" (Text: Judges 6:11-16); Sunday evening: "*Triumph or Tragedy?*" (John 12:12-26).