

Sins of the Tongue -- Lying

Introduction; Many keep pets around the house.

A. Most of these are harmless.

1. We have dogs and cats and fish and birds. Most of these are allowed to roam the house. They can go where they want and we don't think about it.
2. However some have exotic pets like ant farms, tarantulas, snakes and other kinds of wild, untamed creatures.
3. These usually do not have the run of the house. These are usually caged some way. If these creatures are allowed to roam freely we would be in some danger or at least be bothered by them—the ants and so forth.

B. Yet we all have an equally dangerous thing with us that runs free.

1. *James 3:6-8 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. 7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and creature of the sea, is tamed and has been tamed by mankind. 8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*
2. We can capture and tame or control every kind of beast and bird and so forth. Yet we cannot tame the tongue. It is both dangerous and bothersome. Yet we cannot cage it nor leave it at home.
3. We oftentimes suffer because of our tongue when it speaks without thinking. We also suffer sometimes when we do think before we speak.

C. The tongue has many sins.

1. One is lying. Lying is defined as 1) *to deliberately say something untrue: to say something that is not true in a conscious effort to deceive somebody*, and 2) *being deceptive: to give a false impression* —Microsoft Encarta Dictionary.
2. Lying is one of the 'acceptable' sins. It is a minor sin to many. Many believe that everyone lies. They lie on their taxes, they lie to insurance companies, they lie to their bosses and they even lie to their friends.
3. Yet scripture condemns lying. We need to know that it is wrong.

D. We will consider the sin of lying today.

I. First, God does condemn lying.

A. The world finds ways to justify lying.

1. Joseph Fletcher taught Ethics at the **Episcopal Theological School** at Cambridge. He wrote a book called, *Situation Ethics: The New Morality* in 1966. This became a cornerstone of modern humanism.
2. He tried to find a middle point between **legalism** and **antinomianism**. He labeled his philosophy **situationism**. He even tried to base his philosophy on the Bible. He said this was a philosophy for Christians.
3. **Antinomianism** is a, 'flexible concept of morality: the belief that it is impossible to apply a universal moral code because it will have a different meaning for different people' —ibid.
4. In antinomianism one enters into a decision-making situation with no principles or maxims whatsoever.
5. **Legalism** is, 'adherence to letter of law: strict adherence to a literal interpretation of a law, rule, or religious or moral code' —ibid.

6. In legalism one enters into a decision-making situation with absolute rules that guide the decision making process.
 7. Neither one of these appealed to Fletcher. He developed situationism as a middle of the road philosophy to making decisions. He did this in the name of religion.
- B. In situation ethics right and wrong are not absolute but situational.
1. For Joseph Fletcher **love** was the motivation for all decisions. Love was more important than law. Decisions were to be made on what one thought was best for a person and not on rules of right and wrong.
 2. The Bible does put a lot of emphasis on love. However it does not do so at the expense of law. The law is to be obeyed in love.
 3. Fletcher would say that things like lying are ordinarily wrong, but not always wrong. Certain situations make lying and other 'sins' OK. Love however, is the overriding reason for all choices and decisions.
 4. Situation ethics assumes that man is able to always know the right thing to do. He knows the 'loving' thing to do and does not always need the guidance of the Bible.
 5. *Jer 10:23 O LORD, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.*
 6. *Psa 119:133 Direct my steps by Your word, And let no iniquity have dominion over me.*
 7. *Eph 4:15 ... but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head; Christ;*
- C. God clearly condemns lying.
1. *Rev 21:7-8 "He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*
 2. Notice that 'all' liars have a part in the 2nd death. It does not say *some* but *all*. It does not say those who 'lie without love' are lost. It is 'overcomers' who will not be in the lake of fire. They have overcome all these sins.
 3. *Col 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,*
 4. *Eph 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.*
 5. These passages clearly show that lying is wrong. Lying is part of the old man of sin. We cannot continue to lie and be a part of God's kingdom.
- D. We see that God says lying is wrong, regardless of what man may say.

II. God knows when we lie.

- A. We have a tendency to think we get away with wrong doing.
1. We speed and get home without being caught. We got away with it. We no longer even think about it.
 2. We do something wrong. We steal or damage someone's property and a long time passes. We breath a sigh of relief after the long time because we feel we are free of the consequences of our wrong doing. At least if we are caught, it is an old sin.
 3. We sometimes feel this same principle applies to Jehovah God. We do something wrong and get away with it with men. God hasn't punished us either. Perhaps He has forgotten as well.
 4. *Psa 50:20-22 You sit and speak against your brother; You slander your own mother's son. 21 These things you have done, and I kept silent; You thought that I was altogether like you; But I will rebuke you, And set them in order before your eyes. 22 "Now consider this, you who forget God, Lest I tear you in pieces, And there be none to deliver."*
 5. God does not always settle accounts at the end of every week. If we lie and no man catches us, God does. We will not get away with it. We must repent and make things right with God and man.
- B. There are no real 'secret sins' before God.
1. Many have thought they were doing things in secret and found out they weren't. Several times politicians thought they were speaking privately and found out a microphone was on.
 2. People have thought they were just out with the 'boys' or 'girls' and said and did things that weren't

right. And someone tells. God's word lets us know He is always listening.

3. *Luke 12:1-3 In the meantime, when an innumerable multitude of people had gathered together, so that they trampled one another, He began to say to His disciples first of all, "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 For there is nothing covered that will not be revealed, nor hidden that will not be known. 3 Therefore whatever you have spoken in the dark will be heard in the light, and what you have spoken in the ear in inner rooms will be proclaimed on the housetops."*
4. Jesus often condemned the Pharisees. The people thought they were very righteous. Jesus called them 'hypocrites.' That was because God knew what they were doing and thinking when no one else was around.
5. *Luke 12:4-5 "And I say to you, My friends, do not be afraid of those who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. 5 But I will show you whom you should fear: Fear Him who, after He has killed, has power to cast into hell; yes, I say to you, fear Him!"*
6. The Pharisees were afraid of men. They did not want men to know what they really thought and did. They didn't want men to know how they really were. Yet Jesus says they are worrying incorrectly. They needed to worry about God knowing who they really were.
7. *Luke 12:6-7 "Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. 7 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows."*
8. The Holy God of Hosts knows all about the birds and creatures of the earth. He keeps up with what happens to them. Don't think He does not keep up with us too.
9. God is not overworked like men are. He keeps complete records and knows all that goes on. We need to fear Him. There are no real secret sins.
10. *Psa 90:8 You have set our iniquities before You, Our secret sins in the light of Your countenance.*

C. Lying does not come from God.

1. God does not lie and does not condone lying. Lying is not the work of God but of Satan.
2. *Heb 6:17-18 Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, 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.*
3. The Lord of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob made a promise to Abraham. He then confirmed it with an oath. Since God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) these two things are unchangeable. It must come to pass.
4. God cannot lie. Yet who has greater love for man than God? Telling the truth is not situational with the Lord.
5. *John 8:43-45 "Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word. 44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it. 45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe Me."*
6. Lying comes from Satan. He told the first lie on earth when he said to Eve, "You will not surely die" — Gen 3:4. God cannot lie. Satan lied from the beginning.
7. Many are so used to lies that they do not believe the truth. This is true even in religion. The Jewish leaders of Jesus' day could not understand Jesus' words because they were so much like Satan. They preferred lies.

D. We see then that we will not get away with lying.

III. The Bible shows lying is wrong.

A. Scripture gives us many examples of lying being a sin.

1. We often excuse lies by saying, 'No one is hurt by them'. However usually this is not true. Consider Abraham's lie.
2. *Gen 12:11-13 And it came to pass, when he was close to entering Egypt, that he said to Sarai his wife, "Indeed I know that you are a woman of beautiful countenance. 12 Therefore it will happen, when the Egyptians see you, that they will say, 'This is his wife'; and they will kill me, but they will let you live. 13*

Please say you are my sister, that it may be well with me for your sake, and that I may live because of you."

3. Abraham was right. Pharaoh took Sarah and she became a part of his household.
4. *Gen 12:17-19 But the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai, Abram's wife. 18 And Pharaoh called Abram and said, "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? 19 Why did you say, 'She is my sister'? I might have taken her as my wife. Now therefore, here is your wife; take her and go your way."*
5. Notice the consequences of Abraham's sin and who was hurt. Abraham lost his wife. Sarah was going to be left in a strange land with strange people and not be with her husband. Pharaoh's house was plagued.
6. Pharaoh had not taken her as a wife. He realized that if he had things would have been worse. All these consequences would have been permanent if God had not intervened.
7. There are times that the only one hurt by a lie is the liar. He stands condemned before God. Yet oftentimes many others are affected.

B. Lying is wrong under both covenants.

1. *Exodus 20:16 "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*
2. *1 King 13:15-18 Then he said to him, "Come home with me and eat bread." 16 And he said, "I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. 17 "For I have been told by the word of the LORD, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.'" 18 He said to him, "I too am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.' " (He was lying to him.)*
3. The Ten Commandments condemned lying about one's neighbor. The God of truth expects us to tell the truth.
4. An older prophet, who certainly knew better, lied to a younger prophet to get him to stay in Bethel and visit with him. God had told the young prophet to go, preach and return. He was not to even eat in the Northern kingdom.
5. Later the younger prophet is killed by a lion. The older prophet probably thought his lie was innocent. Yet a young man lost his life. His parents lost a son and God lost a servant.
6. *Acts 5:3-5 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself? 4 "While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.*
7. Ananias and his wife Sapphira both lost their lives. The praise they coveted did not come to them. An innocent lie caused two deaths and many people to be afraid.

C. There are also many lies in religion.

1. *1 John 1:5-6 This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.*
2. Many lie to even themselves. They walk in sin and think they are pleasing to the Lord. This is not true.
3. *James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.*
4. *James 1:26 If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless.*
5. We see again many are self-deceived. They think they can be pleasing to God and not faithfully serve Him. A great lie in religion is salvation by **faith only**. This is not true. We must know and obey God's word.
6. It is not love that keeps us from telling men the truth in religion. It is not love that keeps us from hurting people's feelings in matters of truth. If we love men we tell them what God says so they can be saved.
7. *Gal 4:16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?*

D. There is no way around it. Lying is sin.

Conclusion; We need to tell the truth.

A. We must always tell the truth.

1. We must tell the truth in life, on the job and to our neighbors.
2. We must tell the truth in religion, both to ourselves and to others.

B. We must believe and be baptized to be saved.

1. *Mark 16:15-16 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned."*
2. *Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

C. If we can help anyone obey the truth, please let us.