

Doctrine of Lying

Introduction

A businessman well known for his ruthlessness once announced to writer Mark Twain, "*Before I die I mean to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. I will climb Mount Sinai and read the 10 Commandments aloud at the top.*" "I have a better idea," replied Twain. "*You could stay in Boston and keep them.*" Though Mark Twain was not a Christian, he did believe there was a moral law in the universe. The *Bible* summarizes the moral law of God in Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. What are the Ten Commandments? Not everyone knows, though some pretend to know them. A Hebrew School student was asked to list the Ten Commandments in any order. He wrote, "3, 6, 1, 8, 4, 5, 9, 2, 10, and 7."

1. In summary form, the Ten Commands are as follows as found in Exodus 20.
 - There are to be no other gods in one's life except the one true God
 - No idols are to be worshipped
 - Do not take God's name in vain
 - Keep the Sabbath holy
 - Honor your father and mother
 - Do not murder
 - Do not commit adultery
 - Do not steal
 - Do not give false testimony
 - Do not covet

2. The third command and the ninth commandment forbids lying.
 - *Exodus 20:7 Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*
 - *Exodus 20:16 Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*

3. Lying is a universal problem. David grew so frustrated with people lying that he said in haste, "*All men are liars*" (*Psalms 116:11*).

4. The seriousness of lying is found in the fact that God calls it an abomination.
 - *Proverbs 6:16-19 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: 17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, 18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, 19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

5. Because lying is an abomination in the sight of a holy God, He has determined to extract the severest penalty from those who practice it.

- *Revelation 21:8 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.*
- *1 Timothy 1:10 [The wrath of God is reserved] For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;*

6. The *Bible* reveals the personal tragedy that accompanies lying or the potential of damage.

- When Abraham lied to a ruler by the name of Abimelech that his wife was only his sister, he set the stage for the death of this innocent ruler. The story is told in Genesis 20.
- Because Jacob lied to his father Isaac in order to steal the family blessing, he engaged the anger of his brother Esau, who vowed to kill him for the deception. The story is told in Genesis 25.
- In the days of the early church, a man and his wife united to lie to the Holy Spirit, and to the local congregation. Judgment fell. Their sin was exposed and they paid a terrible personal price.

Acts 5:1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 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. 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4 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. 5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things. 6 And the young men arose, wound him up, and carried him out, and buried him. 7 And it was about the space of three hours after, when his wife, not knowing what was done, came in. 8 And Peter answered unto her, Tell me whether ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yea, for so much. 9 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. 10 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.

7. Why do people lie?

- Some people lie in order to avoid punishment.
- Some people lie in order to secure an object.
- Some people lie for the fun of it.
- Some people lie to enflame their own ego.
- Some people lie because they are ashamed.
- Some people lie to be socially polite.

8. What is the cure for lying?

- An acknowledgment that lying does take place.
- A realization that it is a transgression of the Moral Law of God, and that its effects are harmful.
- A realization that a lying person is an untrustworthy person.
- Speaking the truth in small matters will lead to speaking honestly in larger matters.
- Being accountable to someone else who knows you well.

9. The rewards for speaking the truth.

- The judgement of God's wrath is removed.
- There is a measure of self-respect that is regained.
- A love for righteousness, integrity and honor has a chance to mature in the soul
- It is to be like Christ who said, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

10. It is the will of God that individuals speak the truth in love.

- *1 Timothy 2:7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not ;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.*