

Honesty

Joe Slater

Truth can be uncomfortable! To avoid the distress, one of the first bad things we learned to do is lie. We soon discovered lying only makes matters worse, but still we do it. Will we ever learn?

Satan is “*a liar and the father of it*” (John 8:44). He deceived Eve in the Garden, and has been plying his devious trade ever since.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, “*it is impossible for God to lie*” (Hebrews 6:18; also Titus 1:2). It isn’t only that God *won’t* lie – He *can’t*! It is impossible. His nature (holiness, righteousness, justice, etc.) is such that lying isn’t even an option.

The first sin recorded in the early church was lying. Ananias and Sapphira lied about what they gave to help the needy. Peter asked, “*Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit? . . . You have not lied to men, but to God*” (Acts 5:3-4). Fortunately for us, God no longer strikes people dead for lying as He did those two!

Paul exhorted the Colossians, “*Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds*” (3:9). Just as you would remove filthy, smelly clothes, you must remove lying from your way of life. You are a new person in Christ; don’t act like Satan!

That includes the “little white lies,” that so many try to excuse. Scripture knows no such classification. It’s futile to minimize sin! Hear John’s words from Revelation 21:8 – “*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.*” Not “some liars”; not “most liars”; not “big liars,” but all liars!

Truth can be uncomfortable; Hell is more so!

Of Love And Light

The other day I overheard someone talking about how they love to buy things online. They even observed that as soon as drone delivery is perfected, they won’t have to interact with the UPS person.

Have you noticed that our society is becoming more and more isolated from each other? You no longer have to go to the department stores; just order what you want online. With self-checkout lanes, you don’t even have to talk to the clerk at the grocery store. From drive-through windows to internet shopping, it’s supposed to make our lives easier; but it’s also taking away our interaction with each other.

Unfortunately, many of us apply this same attitude to the church. We slip in, talking to as few people as possible. We find a pew that will allow for a quick get-away, and as soon as the last prayer is over, we make our dash to the car.

I heard a quote which captures this attitude:

To live above with those we know,

Now that will be grace and glory;

To live below with those we know –

Now that’s a different story!

One of the greatest commands we are given is to love one another. How can we do that if we refuse to interact with each other? How can our good works be a light to the world if we refuse to let the world see them? One purpose for gathering together in worship is to encourage each other, but how can we do that without talking to, or interacting with, one another?

Let’s make every effort to love one another and let our lives be a light to those we meet!

--Luke Bower (Abilene, TX) via *Old Paths* (adapted)

Great Preaching

A mechanic went to hear a visiting evangelist in a little town. The preacher preached that night on money, and presented the sermon under three points.

First point: “*Make all you can.*” The mechanic nudged his wife and said, “That man is the best I’ve ever heard. He is no nitwit. He knows what it’s all about. He is one smart man.”

Second point: “*Save all you can.*” This excited the mechanic and he whispered again, “This beats anything I’ve ever heard. He’s smart enough to be President. This town has never had a preacher that could hold a candle to him.”

The preacher commended hard work and thrift, denouncing laziness and waste. The mechanic couldn’t keep quiet. He whispered, “I’ve believed this all my life.”

Third point: “*Give all you can.*” “Oh my,” exclaimed the mechanic, “now he’s gone crazy. He has quit preaching and gone to meddling.”

Thought: Isn’t it strange that some people’s conception of great preaching is a sermon that compliments [or agrees with] them and rebukes others. Remember, your preacher did not write the Bible. He is not responsible for any word in it, but he is definitely responsible for preaching every word in it. And when it is preached, people judge themselves by their reaction to it.

--Leroy Brownlow (deceased) via *Bulletin Gold*

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Write your troubles in the sand;

Carve your blessings in the stone.

--Clayton Arnold (Buchanan Dam, TX)