

“Proverbs 6:16-19—Part 2”

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued with a seven-part series. The title of the presentation was “Proverbs 6:16-19—Part 2.”

The presentation began with the second listed characteristic that God hates—that being a “lying tongue.” From there, I also talked about the second characteristic that God loves—that being a “truthful tongue.”

Two traits talk about lying

At the beginning of the presentation, I wanted to make some quick observations about the difference between trait No. 2 (a lying tongue) and trait No. 6 (a false witness who speaks lies).

Both No. 2 and No. 6 have a broad application to everyday living.

- People lie for an advantage—often for power, control and money.
- People lie for status—for recognition, popularity and acceptance.

But here is an element that is associated with No. 6—a false witness who speaks lies has overtones of dealing with a legal system. When we get to No. 6, we will be including Deuteronomy 19:15-19.

Quick reference to Rahab

Before we talk about both the evil of lying and the righteousness of telling the truth, I want to make a brief reference to Rahab in the book of Joshua.

(I often make positive comments about Rahab, because I am one of her biggest fans. Her example does not teach Christians to lie for selfish or hurtful reasons, but it does present a wonderful exception that is praised in Hebrews 11 and James 2.)

I have met several Christians who try to explain that Rahab didn’t lie. I hate to burst their bubble, but she lied.

- Joshua 2:6—She hid the spies on the roof.

In Joshua 2:4-5, notice a probable lie and three obvious lies.

- She said: "The men came to me, but I did not know where they were from." (I suppose it is possible that she did not know that it was Joshua who sent the two men.)
- She said: "As the gate was being shut (when it was dark), the men went out." (She hid them on the roof.)
- She said: "Where the men went, I do not know." (She had hidden them on the roof.)
- She said: "Pursue them quickly for you may overtake them." (She hid them on the roof.)

Notice how the New Testament praised her actions.

- Hebrews 11:31—"By faith, the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe, when she had received the spies with peace."
- James 2:25—"Was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works, when she received the messengers and sent them out another way?"

Lying tongue

Now, let's talk about a lying tongue.

Satan has a lying tongue. Notice how the Son of God described the devil in John 8:44.

- "He was a murderer from the beginning."
- "He does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him."
- "When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources."
- "He is a liar and the father of it."

Notice three effective approaches the devil used to entice Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-5).

- The serpent used a "setup" question (verse 1).
- The serpent contradicted the Lord God (verse 4).
- The serpent subtly created doubt about God's intentions (verse 5).

In the New Testament account of the devil tempting the Son of God, the devil sought to manipulate Him to react to his leadership (verses 3 and 6) and to ultimately fall down to worship him (verse 9).

Poignant examples

- Genesis 27:5-23—In one of Rebekah's worst moments, she lied to hatch a plan to trick her husband (Isaac) into taking the blessing from Esau and giving it to Jacob.

- Romans 1:25—Some religious people exchange the truth of God for a lie.
- Timothy 4:1-2— Paul described how some deceiving spirits and demons influence the speaking of lies in hypocrisy.
- Revelation 2:2—Some Christians spot the false leaders and have found them to be liars.
- Revelation 21:8—When John listed eight behaviors that point people toward the lake of fire, notice the final one listed—“all liars.”
- Revelation 21:27—When John listed three behaviors that will not be in the New Jerusalem, notice the final one listed—anything that causes a lie.
- Revelation 22:15—When John listed six behaviors that will be outside the New Jerusalem, notice the final one listed—“whoever loves and practices a lie.”

Truthful tongue

Now, let’s talk about a truthful tongue.

The Son of God is the perfect example of a truthful tongue.

- John 1:14—We have beheld the glory of the Word—the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
- John 1:17—The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.
- John 14:6—Christ said: “I am the way, the truth and the life.”
- John 18:37—Christ told Pilate why He came: “For this cause I was born and for this cause I have come into the world—that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”

Additional verses

Here are a few other verses that teach the importance of speaking the truth.

- Proverbs 8:7-8—“My mouth will speak truth. Wickedness is an abomination to my lips. All the words of my mouth are with righteousness. Nothing crooked or perverse is in them.”
- Zechariah 8:16—“Speak each man truth to his neighbor. Give judgment in your gates for truth, justice and peace.”
- Luke 3:12-13—Christ told the tax collectors: “Collect no more than what is appointed for you”—although this instruction would definitely be supporting the Eighth Commandment (of not stealing), it can also apply to government people not lying.
- Luke 3:14—Christ told the soldiers: “Do not accuse falsely”—which entails people not lying.

- John 4:23-24—Those who worship God must worship in spirit and in truth.
- 1 Corinthians 5:8—Christians should live their lives in sincerity and truth.
- Ephesians 4:15—Paul wrote to “speak the truth in love” that we might grow up to be like Christ.
- Ephesians 4:25—Paul wrote to put away lying and to speak truth with our neighbor.
- Ephesians 4:29—Paul wrote that the words coming out of our mouth should be those of edification to impart grace to the hearers.