

THE REALLY GOOD LIFE

(Life of Christ Series)
Gospel of Luke

Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire

If only that were true! What a relief it would be if a person's pants were their main concern when lying or being lied unto about anything. But the fact of the matter is that when someone leaves life telling lies and believing them, their trousers are the least of their worries. His or her soul, engulfed in hell's unquenchable fire without hope of deliverance, becomes their new *hot* topic forever (**Mark 9:42-48**). Worse yet is the fact that *hell* is actually good news compared with the *second death* coming later at the *Great White Throne Judgment* (see **Revelation 20:11-15**).

'**The lie**' (**Romans 1:22-25**) is simply that people can live like the devil and for the devil, then still move in with God in the next life. This lie's origin was in the beginning (**Genesis 3:1-4**) where 'the father of lies' (**John 8:43-44**), the devil himself, persuaded Eve that God's warning about eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil didn't need to be taken seriously or literally. Paraphrased, Satan said to her, '**You won't die for eating that fruit! God didn't mean that you'll literally die. God will understand. You already know about good and you really should taste of a little 'evil' to be more like God.**' Well, you know the rest of the story and how it got us where we are today, not to speak of where it has gotten the majority of humanity who ever lived – eternal death in hell.

The father of lies, Satan, is the ultimate professional in creatively tailoring *the lie* to fit various lifestyles and personalities. Sometimes he uses twisted scripture or religion activity like spiritual sorcery to hypnotize multitudes into thinking a little religion without repentance will be good enough with God (**2 Corinthians 11:13-15**). Other times he is able to simply dupe wayward souls with a rampant lust for physical and/or material passions, deceiving them into thinking there will be no accountability at all or that there's still plenty of time to straighten out before they die (**2 Corinthians 4:3-4**). The devil has learned how to package and market *the lie* around the world to every possible kind of consumer (**1 John 5:18-19**). The package changes but the contents are always the same – a pack of empty lies saying that you don't need to repent – you can live like you're going to hell in this life and still go to heaven someday.

'The lie' has even been marketed for Christians and their churches saying that holy living, separation from this world and fervent service for the Lord in this life doesn't really matter (**2 Peter 2:1-3**). In the Bible there are no 'little white lies', only lies and those who tell them. Liars are grouped with seriously hardened criminals in **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**" and **Rev. 22:15**, "**But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters and whoever loves and practices a lie.**" That childish taunt: 'liar, liar, pants on fire' implies that some prevaricator's apparel has been 'given a light' from hell by what they said (**James 3:5-6**).

It is a serious matter with God if we choose to deceive, evade or misrepresent the truth with our words because it reveals an absence of respect for the person(s) listening to us and no 'fear of God' when we 'talk like the devil'. Its even more damning if the truth of God's Word is contradicted or abandoned by someone entrusted with the truth of God's message. The most heated words of condemnation in the Bible are for those in ministry positions who do not tell the truth about sin, death, judgment to come and hell. All who side with the evil arsonist of lies, Satan and desert 'the Way, the Truth and the Life' of our Lord Jesus Christ are headed for His 'flaming vengeance' (**2 Thessalonians 1:6-10**). Telling the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth as a lifestyle behavior keeps believers safe from buying into 'the lie' that spiritual perjury is no serious matter with the Lord. We who know and love the Lord are to be known for our radical commitment to honesty in all we do and say about everything, especially how to get right with God and be ready to face Him (**Acts 17:30-31**). Little lies or big ones, 'white ones' or gray ones, half-truths or twisted truth – all are incendiary weapons of the most notorious serial-killer and arsonist of history, Satan (**Isaiah 14:12-15 & Revelation 20:1-3**).

In profiling the godly person who pleases God, **Psalms 15** includes, among other things, "...**speaks the truth in his (or her) heart ... swears to his (or her) own hurt and does not change ... who does these things shall never be moved.**" Sincere Christians understand that restricting their words, fellowship and activities to whatever and whoever is completely honest before God, assures their personal closeness with the Lord. Associating with and listening to dishonest people will cause one to be an accomplice of the enemy and a friend of the world rather than God (**James 4:4-5**). Dishonesty in any way, shape or form is the entry-level sin to more serious trespasses against the Lord and others (**Ephesians 4:25-32**). So, the next time you are tempted to listen to or tell a lie, remember what happened in the beginning with our first parents in Eden; remember who it is whispering 'a sweet little lie' to your mind; remember all the 'liar, liar, souls on fire' who believed 'the lie', then please choose to "... **speak the truth in love, to grow up in all things into Him Who is the Head (of your life) – Christ**" (**Ephesians 4:15**).

The Master's Plan of Jesus (*The Disciple's Spiritual Matriculation*) Luke 17:1-10

Synopsis: Several weeks before going to the cross, Christ ministered east of the Jordan River in the region called Perea. Though His popularity had waned in Israel, the common folks of Perea were responding very favorably to His call to repentance and faith in Him as Messiah. However, leaders of the religious establishment in Jerusalem were present to discourage people from believing in Jesus and to build their case for His execution. Chapters 15 & 16 of Luke's gospel records Jesus' series of parables about lost and found things. These stories were word-pictures of spiritual truths about Christ's mission on earth. He came from heaven to earth *seeking to save* the souls of men, women, boys and girls who had lost their way in knowing God. These parables creatively teach much about man's true condition, God's character and love, and the real way of salvation. The storyboards of the Savior are also rich and deep with instruction for the disciples on how to live courageously for God and serve Him most effectively. But there is also an underlying rebuke to the religious leaders present who had utterly failed in their responsibility to teach the Bible and represent Him truly before the people. In every *lost and found* parable whatever had gone astray was retrieved except the last one – the unrepentant man's soul was forever lost. That one pictured the eternal damnation of all who die without having turned from their sin to the Savior. Although all who are perishing in hell have no one to blame but themselves for their hopeless estate, the religious leaders who misled them are guilty of the much more serious sin of altering, omitting, and evading the truth of God's Word. Jesus now turns to those replacing the Old Testament priesthood, the disciples (and indirectly all those who now follow them) (*1 Peter 2:4-12*). This teaching is on how to do the job of ministry right until the next time He comes to earth.

Stumble Not

(Subtraction of Offensive Things About Yourself)

"Then He (Jesus) said to the disciples, "It is impossible that no offenses should come, but woe to him through whom they do come. It would be better for him if a millstone were hung around his neck, and he were thrown into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones."

17:1-2

Discuss: Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal things that are hindering God's ability to be seen more clearly in your life. If you're serious about this ask someone you respect to share changes you could make to enhance your testimony. Don't get defensive – tell the Lord and the friend *thanks* and ask them to pray for you. (*Gal. 6:1, Prov. 25:9, Romans 14:12*)

Forgive A Lot

(Multiplication of God's Grace through You)

"Take heed to yourselves. If your brother sins against you, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. And if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to you, saying, 'I repent,' you shall forgive him."

17:3-4

Discuss: If another believer has *sinned* against you, have you lovingly talked to him or her (and no one else) about it? If it didn't go well, see *Matthew 18:15-18*. If they did *repent* (admit responsibility, regret and promise to change), have you now completely dropped it and are at peace? If not, it's your turn to be forgiven. (*2 Cor. 7:8-11, 2 Tim. 2:25-26, Eph. 4:32*)

Doubt Not

(Addition of Faith to the Potential within You)

"And the apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith." So the Lord said, "If you have faith as a mustard seed, you can say to this mulberry tree, 'Be pulled up by the roots and be planted in the sea,' and it would obey you."

17:5-6

Discuss: What is some biblically correct thing you really want to see the Lord do in your life or someone you care about? Have you prayed for *increased faith* that God will move obstacles in order for it to happen? When it happens it is proof that God *co-signed* the request when you made it! Be sure to praise Him for it. (*Rom. 10:17, Jam. 1:5-7, 1 John 3:21-22*)

Serve A Lot

(Division of Self-Glory from Service by You)

"And which of you, having a servant plowing or tending sheep, will say to him when he comes in from the field, 'Come at once and sit down to eat'? But will he not rather say to him, 'Prepare something for my supper, and gird yourself and serve me till I have eaten and drunk, and afterward you will eat and drink'? Does he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I think not. So likewise you, when you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.'"

17:7-10

Discuss: Every Christian has at least one primary and one secondary spiritual gift to use within a church family context (*Romans 12:1-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-6, 1 Peter 4:9-11, etc.*). What's yours? How are you using it for the Lord? How does the above parable of Jesus affect your attitude about serving Jesus as Lord and Master?