



Walk Worthy

of the calling with which you were called.
Ephesians 4:1-5:21

PART TWO – WALK IN TRUTH – EPH. 4:17-32
LESSON 26 – SPEAKING TRUTH – EPH. 4:25
PASTOR PHILLIP M WAY

UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED, ALL SCRIPTURE TAKEN FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION. COPYRIGHT © 1982 BY THOMAS NELSON, INC. USED BY PERMISSION. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

Ephesians 4:25-32

- ▶ Ephesians 4:25 Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another. 26 “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath, 27 nor give place to the devil. 28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. 29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Recap

- ▶ In our study from Ephesians 4:17-32 titled Walk in Truth, we have worked through verses 17 to 24. To recap briefly we have seen a detailed comparison between the walk and life of a lost man and of a saved man.
- ▶ The lost man walks in the futility of his mind, having his understanding darkened, being beyond feeling with a hardened heart.
- ▶ The saved though have put off this old man and have begun the process of being constantly renewed and conformed into the image of Christ. As this saved man has been taught by Christ and has repented of his sin and trusted Christ he has put on a new man. This new man is a new creation created according to God in true righteousness and holiness.

Watching Our Walk

- ▶ This shows us then that there is a difference in the way the saved and lost live, think, speak, and behave.
- ▶ John MacArthur stated in his commentary from this passage, “The only reliable evidence of a person’s being saved is not a past experience of receiving Christ but a present life that reflects Christ.”
- ▶ That means simply that when we compare the way a lost man and a saved man walk it should be clear which that man is! But how do we know what a saved man walks like?

Ephesians 4:25

- ▶ The remaining verses in this paragraph of text demonstrate for us how this new man walks, lives, thinks, talks, and acts. Let us begin to work our way through these verses then by starting with Ephesians 4:25.
- ▶ **Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.**
- ▶ This new man, this new creation that we are in Christ – with a new heart, new mind, and new way of life – is instructed right away to put away lying. There is no place in the life of a believer for deceit. Right away I do want to address attempts by some to justify lying through moral relativism. These are those who argue that there may indeed be times where it is acceptable to tell a lie. Let us look at the case they make and then get back to what the Word of God tells us so plainly on this topic.

Right to Lie?

- ▶ Often the illustration used is either one of extreme situations or of a misunderstanding of a Biblical text. Let us look at these two scenarios.
- ▶ Extreme Reality - First, in order to illustrate a situation where it is right to lie we are told that we must think as if we were hiding Jews in our house and the Nazi's knock on the door and ask if we are hiding Jews. We know that they mean only to capture, kill, or torture them and so we decide to lie.
- ▶ Another illustration I have heard often is the idea that our family is in the back of the house when a man with a gun breaks in and asks if there is anyone else in the house. Well obviously, to tell him the truth is to fail to protect our family and then we are left with images of our wife and children beaten or killed or worse all because we thought we had to tell the truth and could not conveniently tell a lie.

Right to Lie?

- ▶ Now let us think about this. Both of these seem like a moment in time where we are forced to at least choose between the lesser of two evils and so to lie is a better alternative than the other options. But as we will see in a moment, the Bible says that as disciples of Christ we are to put away lying and speak the truth.
- ▶ All this requires is a little thought. If we are hiding Jews from the Nazis, do we have to tell them that we are hiding Jews? Do we have to tell them anything at all? You see, it is not necessary to lie in this situation for we can easily dodge the question or redirect the conversation or simply refuse to answer. The bottom line here is that we must act by faith – trusting God to protect us in our endeavor to preserve human life.

Right to Lie?

- ▶ In the second scenario we really only have to ask what right does an armed intruder have to expect any answer at all from us as they are invading our home. Our choices here are to fight and defend the home, or flee. Either way we must do whatever it takes to protect our family. There is nothing at all that says we have to lie, or answer at all!
- ▶ So the hype and fear these scenarios prey on really do nothing to bolster the false argument that at times we must tell a lie.

Scriptural Blanks?

- ▶ Filling in the Scriptural Blanks
- ▶ The other case often is taken up as there ensues a discussion about Rahab in Jericho. She hid spies, lied to protect them, and was saved by the Israelites and is even listed in the line of the genealogy of Jesus! But this simply is filling in a Biblical blank with a presupposed answer.
- ▶ The Bible commends Rahab for helping the spies. It commends her faith. It gives her a prominent place in the hall of the faithful (Heb. 11:31). But the Bible never says, “Rahab was blessed for lying.” It just doesn’t. She was commended for faith, but never for her sin.
- ▶ So this is a relatively easy case to debunk. We cannot add to the Bible by expecting that Rahab was ever praised or rewarded for any sin she ever committed. That brings us then to the testimony of Scripture, and it is a unanimous testimony. The Bible never commends deceit and in fact always condemns it.

The Truth

- ▶ The Truth and Nothing but the Truth
- ▶ The verse we are examining today makes it clear that if we are saved we have put on a new man and the first thing this new man does is to put away lying. Because we are members of one another we must speak the truth with each other. In other verses Paul says that we must speak the truth in love. This is the standard for our speech. Let us look then at few of the many Scriptures that directly address lying and deceit.
- ▶ Jesus says that if we say yes we should mean yes and if we say no we should mean no (Matthew 5:33-37).
- ▶ In the Ten Commandments we are told that God forbids bearing false witness (Ex 20:16).

The Truth

- ▶ In the list of the seven things God hates above all else in this world lying makes the list twice (Prov 6:16-19). He hates “a lying tongue” and “a false witness who speaks lies.”
- ▶ Deceit then must be more severe than we realize if God forbids it in the Ten Commandments and then lists it twice in the list of the seven things He hates.
- ▶ Further we read in the Scriptures that we are to “hate and abhor lying” (Psalm 119:163).
- ▶ Lying lips are said to hide hatred (Prov 10:18).
- ▶ “Lying lips” in fact “are an abomination to the Lord” (Prov 12:22).

The Truth

- ▶ If we are righteous – which remember, when we put on the new man he has been created by God in true righteousness – we also hate lying (Prov 13:5).
- ▶ In the Book of Acts we see two people, Ananias and Sapphira, struck dead by God for lying to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:1-11).
- ▶ The Lord abhors deceit (Psalm 5:6).
- ▶ God blesses the man in whose spirit there is no deceit (Psalm 32:2).
- ▶ And we are commanded to keep our tongue from evil and our lips from deceit (Psalm 34:13).
- ▶ “Deceit” we are told “is in the heart of those who devise evil” (Prov 12:20).

A Little Sin?

- ▶ Now listen to this – we often think of deceit and lying as a minor sin, you know, telling a white lie. But the truth is that deceit is listed in the following list of sins attributed to those who repress the knowledge of God and have been given over to a debased mind are said to be filled with all unrighteousness in Roman 1 - And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a debased mind, to do those things which are not fitting; being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, strife, **deceit**, evil-mindedness; they are whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful; who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them. (Romans 1:28-32).

A Little Sin?

- ▶ Lying is not a small matter. And the reason is actually quite simple. When we see the character of God in the Scriptures what do we know about Him? His chief attribute is His holiness. As He is absolutely holy, holy, holy.
- ▶ We are told that He cannot lie. Note, the Bible does not say that God chooses not to lie. It says He cannot lie. He is unable (Titus 1:2) because He is that Holy!
- ▶ We also see that when Jesus became a Man, He humbled Himself, set aside His providential power, condescended, and was faithful and obedient even to the point of the death of a thief on the cross.
- ▶ Was He a thief? No. Did He ever sin? No. He was and always remains the spotless Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world (John 1:29, 36). Even beyond that though we see that Jesus proclaims this about Himself in John 14:6: "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

Jesus is Truth

- ▶ Jesus in His very nature is TRUTH. We just covered this in Ephesians 4:21. The truth is in Jesus. He is the truth. He is true. He cannot lie. He never deceives.
- ▶ And in thinking about the Holy Spirit we know that He has been given as our Comforter and He is called “the Spirit of Truth.” He has come so that He might lead us into all truth (John 16:13).
- ▶ As we have put on this new man then and are now right with God we must see that to entertain thoughts of deceit or lying is to think about doing something that is not only a heinous sin, but in fact goes against the very nature of God and Christ!
- ▶ That is why we are told to put away lying and speak the truth. We are members of one another, and it is our responsibility to edify and build up the body rather than tear it down and discourage its members by being deceitful and telling lies.

The God of All Truth

- ▶ The next time you are tempted to lie, remember that it is no small matter. There will be consequences. And God will be displeased and discredited!
- ▶ He is the God of all truth. If you feel you cannot tell the truth, then don't say anything at all.
- ▶ And if someone asks you what you will say if a man breaks into your house and asks if you are alone, the answer is simple. Just say, "No. God is right here with me!"
- ▶ Next week: Being Angry without Sin – Eph. 4:26-27