

CCC TELLING THE TRUTH Part 9

Ten Values That Build Strong Families - Part 9

A few months ago Time magazine did a cover story called "Lying, Everybody's Doing It". It starts off like this: "Lies, lies, lies. The current political campaign is erupting into a series of charges and counter charges of dishonesty and deception, in other words they both claim the other is lying, which raises the question: Is anyone around here telling the truth, does anyone want to tell the truth, anymore..." A recent survey of Americans said 66% of Americans say it's **not** wrong to tell lies. Or maybe we need to look at it this way, that only 31% of people agreed that, "Honesty is the best policy." Dr. Leonard Keeler, inventor of the lie detector machine, tested 25,000 individuals and came to the conclusion that human beings are basically deceptive. I guess I could of saved him a lot of time and money and I

could of told you that... A little boy was caught lying by his dad. His dad said, "You know there are no liars in heaven." Son: The little boy thought for a moment and replied, You mean Daddy you and mommy won't be there...

It's hard trying to be honest in a dishonest world? In a lot of case it is much easier, more profitable to tell a lie then to tell the truth... But we who call ourselves and carry the name of Christian need to try and figure out; How do I tell the truth? See God's Word, the bible says, lying is an intention to mislead. It says when you're just telling a half a truth you're telling a whole lie. You can also lie by falsifying or you can lie by concealing. You can lie without even saying a word. So let's first look at:

II. HOW TO TELL THE TRUTH the first thing is to:

1. TELL THE TRUTH COMPLETELY. Proverbs 10:10

"Someone who holds back the truth causes trouble." He's talking about concealing. What kind of trouble? You cause resentment, mistrust, superficiality. You get into trouble by not saying what you mean and not meaning what you say.

When Edna-Wynne and I got married, we lied to each other for years, not overtly but we lied by not facing the issues in our marriage... if you don't face issues honestly... what will happen is eventually in that relationship... it will explode.

If you are not being honest about your feelings in your marriage you are undermining your marriage. God's word, the bible says, tell the truth completely. Proverbs 28:23 *"In the end people appreciate frankness more than flattery."*

Circle the phrase *"in the end"*. It may be unpleasant at first. But when it comes down to being honest, yes, it may cause

a confrontation, but God says, in the end people appreciate honesty. So tell the truth completely.

2. TELL THE TRUTH CONSISTENTLY. Being honest 80% of the time is not integrity. It's like the little boy who cried wolf. Eventually you don't know whether the guy's telling the truth or not so you don't believe him at all. They may be telling you the truth 80% of the time but if they're not truthful all the time, how do you know if this is not in the 20% that's false. So you must tell the truth consistently.

The Bible says, *"Let our lives lovingly express the truth in all things speaking truly, dealing truly, living truly."*

Honesty is to be a life style. I've got to be consistent. Prov. 11:3 *"People who can't be trusted are destroyed by their own dishonesty."* Circle the word *"destroyed"*. Dishonesty destroys. Nobody has a good enough memory to be a good liar. If you lie you have to remember what did you say to

each person. If you tell the truth at all times you don't have to remember anything because you've always told the truth. Lying sabotages success. It destroys relationships. It damages character. God says don't do it. Tell the truth consistently. Every relationship is built on one word – trust and truth telling produces trust building... Deception destroys trust. If you are a dishonest person pretty soon you will have no relationships, why, nobody can trust you. Prv. 13:7 "*Reliable communication permits progress.*" But being honest, telling the truth, does not mean being brutal.

3. TELL THE TRUTH LOVINGLY. Eph 4:15 "*Speak the truth in a spirit of love.*" Don't use the truth as a club. Don't beat people over the head with the truth. Think of somebody you would like to help change. If you want to help somebody change you've got to remember two things:

1. People change easier and people change faster when you

speak the truth in a spirit of love.

2. People always perceive truth without love as an attack and it doesn't matter if it is the truth or not... They will resist it... they become defensive against it, they won't want to hear it, because they perceive it as an attack. You must speak the truth in love.

4. TELL THE TRUTH TACTFULLY. What am I saying here... Consider: Who are you not being honest with? What problem are you ignoring in a relationship? What are you pretending is not there? What will you not face up to because you're afraid to face the truth about you or somebody else? The truth sets you free. But when you speak the truth you must speak it completely, consistently, lovingly, and tactfully. "Thoughtless words can wound as deeply as any sword. But wisely spoken words can heal and bring forth change." You have an option with your

words: you can either hurt people or you can heal them.

You can develop people or you can destroy them. You can build them up or you can tear them down. You can delight or you can devastate. Your words have tremendous power.

Prov. 16:23 "*Intelligent people think before they speak.*"

Circle "intelligent". Contemplate before you communicate.

Think it through. Put your mind in gear before you put your mouth in gear. I would suggest that you plan your presentation. If there is something in your marriage or in a relationship that is a problem that you have not been willing to deal with, you need to set down and plan out your presentation. How could I introduce this in the best way? Choose the right time. Timing is everything. Don't lay it on them as they're going to sleep at night. Don't do it when they're tired, fatigued, hurried. Find the proper

time to deal with the truth honestly. If you'll do these four things, the Bible says you will begin to be an honest person. Speak the truth completely, consistently, lovingly and tactfully.

The problem is we don't do that. Why don't we do that? Matthew 12:34 "*For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of.*" Jesus is saying the real problem is not my mouth but my heart. What's coming out of my mouth, these lies, are really an indication of what's inside of me. It's not what comes out that matters it's what's inside of me. Matthew 15:19 "*For out of the heart comes evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, lying and slander.*" The heart of the issue when it comes to lying is an issue of the heart. This is the problem. If I am going to become a person of integrity, if I'm going to become an honest person, I have to deal, not with my lips; I have to deal with what motivates me to lie.

Now let's go back to point I.

I. WHY DO WE LIE?

Once you understand the motivation behind your lying, then you can deal with the real issue. Lying is not your real problem. It's the symptom of a deeper problem. I find it helpful to categorize lies by what motivates the different kinds. Augustine said there are eight different kinds of lies. Mark Twain said there were 869 different kinds of lies. How he got that I don't know. I've listed just five of them, What are the primary motivations for each of these lies?

1. The cruel lie. This is the kind of lie that is intentional. It is destructive and malicious. You tell it to get revenge. You don't like somebody. They've hurt you for some reason so you're going to get even. You make up some lie about them. Politicians do this all the time to each other. They spend money on ads to put out cruel lies about their

opponent. This is called slander. Slander means when you make up something about somebody that's not true with the intentional purpose of damaging their reputation. When I don't like you and I'm bitter against you and I'm angry, hurt or whatever and I get resentful then it will be very easy for me to offer a cruel lie just to get back at you.

2. The cowardly lie. This is the kind of lie you tell to escape consequences. You want to avoid punishment. You're trying to protect yourself, prevent pain. You say things like, "My dog ate my homework." Adam told this kind of lie in the Garden of Eden, when he sinned, he took it like a man and blamed his wife. When you don't want to get into trouble you tell a cowardly lie. What is the motive behind that kind of lie? Fear is the motivation behind a cowardly lie. The Bible says the fear of man is a trap.

3. The conceited lie. This is when you lie to impress.

You're trying to create an image or cover up your low self-esteem so you brag. Bragging and lying are first cousins.

They go together. When you exaggerate and prop yourself up that's a conceited lie. What is the motive behind that kind of lie? Insecurity. What I mean is what comes off as pride and ego, when you pull away the layers is a very frightened and insecure person. Really at the root of it is insecurity. This is the kind of lie we use when we try to hide our hurts.

4. The calculated lie. This is the kind of lie used to manipulate other people. We want our way. When we think I need to get what I want to get when I want to get it. It can be motivated by greed or selfishness. This lie says, "This is what I want therefore I'm going to do whatever it takes to get it even if it means lie." If you love money you will use

a calculated lie to get it. I want what I want so I'll lie to get it.

5. The convenient lie. The convenient lie we tell because it takes effort to tell the truth, it takes energy to tell the truth, , it takes time to tell the truth. Parents do this all the time to their children sorry to say... Do your kids ever ask you to explain something and you don't want to take the time and you didn't want to get involved and just said something to them, a convenient lie? Why did you do that... Because it takes time to explain. Or you don't want to get involved with something so you tell the police officer, "I didn't see anything" when you really did. Or when you're too busy to check the facts you tell something you haven't really checked up on and you speak as if it is fact. When we lie, we think we're doing the right thing at the time. But the Bible says in Psalm 34, "*Would you like to enjoy life? Do*

you want a long life and happiness? Keep from speaking evil and telling lies."

Jesus said that what's in your heart is what's going to come out of your mouth. So the heart of the issue is the issue of the heart -- if my heart is filled with resentment then I'm going to find myself telling lies. If my heart is filled with fear and worry then I'm going to find myself telling cowardly lies. If my heart is filled with insecurity then I will find myself easily telling conceited lies. If my heart is filled with selfishness I will end up telling calculated lies to get what I want. If my heart is filled with laziness I will find myself telling convenient lies. So what's the solution? The only way to stop lying, if you want to be a person of integrity, is to get a new heart. But I bring you Good News... Jesus specializes in heart transplants. He says, Let me fill your heart with love instead of selfishness; with joy

and peace instead of hate; with confidence instead of insecurity; with energy and power instead of laziness. Jesus said I am the truth. The closer you get to Jesus Christ, the more you draw closer to Jesus the more you're going to love the truth and speak the truth, the more you're going to live the truth. Why, because Jesus said I am the truth.

So how do I break this habit of lying? The beginning of honesty is the actually the confession of dishonesty. That's the starting point. If you really say, "I want to be a person of integrity. I want to break this bad habit I've got of either cruel lies and gossip, cowardly lies, or conceited lies or bragging, whatever. You say, I want to break this habit in my life. You start by first saying "God I'm a liar and I admit it." How many lies does it take to be a liar? One. You're a liar. You say, God I'm a liar and I admit that I don't always tell the truth, sometimes I tell half truths. You

ask Christ to forgive you and ask Him to give you the power to change and ask Him put a new heart in me. It won't happen overnight. But He will begin to replace the deception with truth as you begin to let Christ to take more and more control of your heart. You do that by making a choice and saying, God help me to be more interested in character than in reputation. Reputation is what you want everybody to believe. Character is what you are in the dark, when nobody is looking. Reputation is what impresses people. Character and Integrity is what impresses God. Character is what lasts for eternity. When you say God I'm more interested in character than reputation, then you'll tell the truth even if it's not good for your reputation. Why, because you know its building my character. You ask God to help you, put a new heart inside of you. Then I would encourage you to get some support. If you're really serious

about this ask one person to hold you accountable. Say, Help me with my speech. Help me to be honest. God says, if you want to live a long life, a life of joy, peace and not guilt He says keep from speaking evil and telling lies. I would challenge you to take a calculated risk and begin speaking the truth to people this week and do it in a loving and tactful way.