**THE TONGUE - 3**

**JAMES 3:1-12**

**INTRODUCTION** - Today we continue our study of the tongue.  The purpose of this lesson is to address the sins of dishonesty -   lying in its various forms.  The term dishonest is defined as, “1. Disposed to lie, cheat, defraud or deceive. 2. Resulting from or marked by a lack of honesty.” (American Heritage Dictionary).   When speaking of the tongue, it is conversation that is LESS THAN HONEST.  Often times the tongue is used to either hide or distort the truth in a given situation.  We ought to know that as Christians, we should ALWAYS tell the truth, but do we?

**I.** **WHAT IS LYING?**

a.     Defined – “Marked by or containing falsehoods” (Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary)
”The act of telling falsehoods as truth” (Harper’s Bible Dictionary)

b.     Another word to consider in this category is “deceit” – “to be false to…to cause to accept as true or valid what is false or invalid” (Webster’s)  In essence that is what a lie is.  It is a TYPE OF deceit.

c.     Notice how in defining these words there is no inclusion of intent.   IF something is not the truth, it is a lie.

d.     Lying is something we ought to clearly understand.  Like so many other sins, it has consequences.   Lies are often involved in gossip.  They can also be a product of hatred.  They have ruined friendships, partnerships, marriages, and brotherly relationships.  They can damage one’s trust.  They have also ruined reputations – some as a result of them being told, and others as one becomes known for his lies.
Lying tongues have also been responsible for driving away prospects from the truth.  Those of the world want nothing to do with a religion that defends or accepts liars.  This is also true when they can see that doctrinal beliefs are based upon what they know or perceive to be lies.

**II.** **GOD’S WORD AND LYING -**

a.     Lying has always carried serious consequences in God’s eyes
**EX. 20: 16** - It is found among the 10 commandments where it says, ***“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”***
**DEUT. 19:15-21** - Under the Old Law the penalty was severe – it called for the consequences to be reversed upon the one bearing a false report (i.e. an eye for an eye, etc.)
**ISA. 59:2-3** - Iniquities that separate one from God includes lying lips
**ACTS 5:3** – Lying to God & the Holy Spirit resulted in Ananias & Saphira dieing immediately
**REV. 21:8** – ***“all liars” shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.*** Also note vs. 27 which says no liar will enter into the kingdom of heaven.

b.     Many passages call our attention to the seriousness of lying
**PROV. 12:22** - ***“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord,…”***
**PROV. 6:16-19** – Among the 7 things God hates, lies are listed TWICE – “a lying tongue” and “a false witness who speaks lies”
**PROV. 21:6** – ***“Getting treasure by a lying tongue is the fleeting fantasy of those who seek death.”*** The point of this verse is to note that obtaining anything by deceit COULD backfire seriously.
**COL. 3:9** – Christians are challenged, ***“Do not lie to one another…”***

c.     Lying in its various forms is contrary to the life of a Christian.
**EPH. 4:25** - We are to speak truth with our neighbors
**MATT. 5:37** - Christians are to ALWAYS be truthful

**JAMES 5:12** - Let your “yes” be “yes”
It is stressed throughout the New Testament that we need to be concerned about our character.  We ought to live with integrity and honorably in society

**1 PET. 2:12**

**1 THESS. 4:12**

**2 COR 8:21**

d.    **JN. 8:44** - He who lives his life by lies is of the Devil.  Don’t forget, that the first sin was the product of a lie by Satan.  In fact, the word devil means one who is a deceiver.  The Greek word, diablos, is defined by Thayer as, “Prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely”
Jesus referred to Satan as the devil and the father of lies
**2 THESS. 2:9-11** - Satan works with “will all power, signs and lying wonders.”

**III.** **SINS OF DISHONESTY** -

a.     Straightforward lies – this is what we have identified thus far.  But there are other types of lies.

b.     ***Excuses*** – Sometimes, rather than telling the real reason why one does something or not, they begin to make excuses to “soften the explanation.”  Perhaps we don’t want to say, “I just didn’t want to do that” or “NO!” when asked to do something, so we make excuses.
Often times, excuses are not the truthful answer to a question, thus they become a sin of dishonesty.
One person described an excuse as, “a skin of a reason wrapped in a lie.”  But the key word to remember is, LIE!
Perhaps a classic example of this was when Moses returned from Mt. Sinai with the 10 commandments and broke them because the Israelites were worshipping a golden calf.  Aaron said, **“﻿*22﻿ So Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord become hot. ﻿ ﻿You know the people, that they are set on evil. ﻿23﻿ For they said to me, ‘Make us gods that shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ﻿24﻿ And I said to them, ‘Whoever has any gold, let them break it off.’ So they gave it to me, and I cast it into the fire, and this calf came out*.”**

c.    ***Empty promises*** – saying you will do something and then not doing it.
**MATT. 21:28-31** - Jesus told the parable of two sons.  One said he would do something but did not do it.  He was said to be the one who disobeyed.
How often do we find ourselves making promises to others and then we fail to keep them.  While we all understand that things come up, if we are honest, when we make that commitment – do we REALLY mean it or is it a weak lie?

**PROV. 15:4** - which is speaking of those who will dwell with the Lord.  ***“﻿﻿In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the Lord;  He who ﻿swears to his own hurt and does not change;”*** ***[[1]](http://www.roseavenue.org/sermons/The%20Tongue/Study%20of%20Tongue%205%20-%20Dishonesty.html%22%20%5Cl%20%22_ftn1%22%20%5Co%20%22)***

d.     ***Half-truths*** - Sometimes when we speak with others, we only tell part of the story.  While what we say is all true, we conveniently omit that which is damaging to our argument or benefit.  Many reason, as long as I am not lying, what I say is acceptable.
What you say in such circumstances may not be an outright lie, but it can be a sin of dishonesty.
The very first lie was of this nature.  When Satan said, ***“You shall not surely die”*** – **GEN. 3:4.**

e.    ***Twisting the words of others*** – This is something that really concerns me.  It is not uncommon for people in society to take something that is said and twist it to serve their own purposes.  They accomplish this by taking a phrase out of its context; reading into it more than what was intended, judging motives, and many other factors.
What is even more disturbing is when we see this among brethren.  Sometimes brethren ASSUME they know what someone else meant.  Like the world they ASSUME motives and often they take snippets of a conversation and run with it.  Often times they use this to ASSASINATE THE CHARACTER of someone they disagree with.
**MATT. 26:61** - When Jesus was crucified, it was because the Jewish leaders twisted the words of Jesus.

**2 PET. 3:16** - Peter spoke of some who were untaught and unstable that took the words of Paul and twisted them to their own destruction
Before we make accusations against another we NEED all the facts.  When they are lacking, such can definitely be a sin of dishonesty.

f.      ***Bearing false-witness*** – God’s word is clear about dealing with accusations against one another.

**MATT. 18:15-16** - There are rules in place we must respect, such as two or more witnesses and going to the one we have a concern with, going to the one we have a concern with
It bothers me that many today will not hesitate to perjure themselves in courts of law.  They are simply not afraid of making false accusations against others.  Obviously such is wrong and sinful.  BUT what about bearing false-witness against one another as brethren.  Sadly, we have probably all heard of brethren who made unfounded accusations against each other.   This can happen at times when brethren are simply either lazy or sloppy in determining facts about a situation.
**PROV. 14:5** - Is one of many passages warning against this.  It says, “*A faithful witness does not lie, But a false witness will utter lies*.”

g.     ***Teaching false doctrine*** – can also involve dishonesty.  Understand, if someone is NOT teaching the truth, it IS false doctrine.  Whether or not the teacher is sincere is not relevant where this fact is concerned.  But the truth is there are many who KNOW what they are teaching is false and self-serving.  They exploit the gullible and teach their doctrine, conveniently avoiding that which might contradict their teachings.  Peter warned against such **2 PET. 2:1-3**
**1 JN. 2:22** - which clearly states that one who denies the truth (in this case about Jesus Christ), in God’s eyes he is a LIAR.

h.     ***Speech inconsistent with conduct*** – **1 JN. 4:20** he warned, ***“If someone says, ‘I love God’ and hates his brother, he is a LIAR.”*** How often do we find ourselves saying, “I would never do that” to find ourselves “doing that” shortly thereafter.

**ROM. 2:17-24** - How often do we bind upon others that which we will not do ourselves? Such things are sins of dishonesty.

i.      We could add many other examples to this list including, exaggerations, flattery, slander, gossip.  These are all abuses of the tongue that can involve dishonesty.

**IV.** **DEALING WITH LYING -**

a.    **PROV. 19:5** - Realize what God thinks of the lying tongue – ***“A false witness will not go unpunished, and he who speaks lies will not escape”***

b.     **EPH. 4:25** - If you are guilty of it in any form – REPENT

c.     **PSA. 119:163, PROV. 13:5** - Don’t let it become a habit.  Learn to HATE lying!

d.     **JAMES 1:19** - Be slow to speak.

e.     **PROV. 17:7, 29:12, 30:8** - Pray for strength in removing lies.  Ask God to give you wisdom so that you don’t find yourself having to repair some damage because you find what was said was not the truth. INVESTIGATE before you say something.  IF you are not sure of the truthfulness of something – BE QUIET.

**CONCLUSION** –

Sins of the tongue that involve dishonesty ought to be avoided by Christians at all costs.

Lies and distortions of the truth will NEVER accomplish good and lasting goals for His cause.

IF we learn to be honest in all things we say, we will be well on our way to controlling our whole bodies, which ought to be our goal.

Think about it.