

Speaking the Truth

By Mark Mayberry
8/3/2008

Introduction

Ephesians 4:25 ... 25 Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another. (NKJV)

Ephesians 4:25 ... 25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth each one of you with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. (NASB95)

Duty of Israelites (Lev. 19:11; Ps. 101:7; Zech. 8:14-17)

Leviticus 19:11 ... 11 'You shall not steal, nor deal falsely, nor lie to one another. (NASB95)

Psalms 101:7 ... 7 He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house; He who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me. (NASB95)

*Zechariah 8:14-17 ... 14 "For thus says the Lord of hosts, 'Just as I purposed to do harm to you when your fathers provoked Me to wrath,' says the Lord of hosts, 'and I have not relented, 15 so I have again purposed in these days to do good to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not fear! 16 'These are the things which you should do: **speak the truth to one another**; judge with truth and judgment for peace in your gates. 17 'Also let none of you devise evil in your heart against another, and do not love perjury; for all these are what I hate,' declares the Lord." (NASB95)*

Duty of Disciples (Zeph. 3:12-13; Eph. 4:14-15; Col. 3:9-11).

Zephaniah 3:12-13 ... 12 "But I will leave among you A humble and lowly people, And they will take refuge in the name of the Lord. 13 "The remnant of Israel will do no wrong And tell no lies, Nor will a deceitful tongue Be found in their mouths; For they will feed and lie down With no one to make them tremble." (NASB95)

*Ephesians 4:14-15 ... 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 **but speaking the truth in love**, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, (NASB95)*

Colossians 3:9-11 ... 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him— 11 a renewal in which there is no

distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all. (NASB95)

White Lie

David lied without malice (1 Sam. 21:1-10).

1 Samuel 21 ... 1 Then David came to Nob to Ahimelech the priest; and Ahimelech came trembling to meet David and said to him, "Why are you alone and no one with you?" 2 David said to Ahimelech the priest, "The king has commissioned me with a matter and has said to me, 'Let no one know anything about the matter on which I am sending you and with which I have commissioned you; and I have directed the young men to a certain place.' 3 "Now therefore, what do you have on hand? Give me five loaves of bread, or whatever can be found." 4 The priest answered David and said, "There is no ordinary bread on hand, but there is consecrated bread; if only the young men have kept themselves from women." 5 David answered the priest and said to him, "Surely women have been kept from us as previously when I set out and the vessels of the young men were holy, though it was an ordinary journey; how much more then today will their vessels be holy?" 6 So the priest gave him consecrated bread; for there was no bread there but the bread of the Presence which was removed from before the Lord, in order to put hot bread in its place when it was taken away. 7 Now one of the servants of Saul was there that day, detained before the Lord; and his name was Doeg the Edomite, the chief of Saul's shepherds. 8 David said to Ahimelech, "Now is there not a spear or a sword on hand? For I brought neither my sword nor my weapons with me, because the king's matter was urgent." 9 Then the priest said, "The sword of Goliath the Philistine, whom you killed in the valley of Elah, behold, it is wrapped in a cloth behind the ephod; if you would take it for yourself, take it. For there is no other except it here." And David said, "There is none like it; give it to me." 10 Then David arose and fled that day from Saul, and went to Achish king of Gath. 11 But the servants of Achish said to him, "Is this not David the king of the land? Did they not sing of this one as they danced, saying, 'Saul has slain his thousands, And David his ten thousands'?" 12 David took these words to heart and greatly feared Achish king of Gath. 13 So he disguised his sanity before them, and acted insanely in their hands, and scribbled on the doors of the gate, and let his saliva run down into his beard. 14 Then Achish said to his servants, "Behold, you see the man behaving as a madman. Why do you bring him to me? 15 "Do I lack madmen, that you have brought this one to act the madman in my presence? Shall this one come into my house?" (NASB95)

Black Lie

Doeg lied with malicious intent (1 Sam. 22:1-19).

1 Samuel 22:1-19 ... 1 So David departed from there and escaped to the cave of Adullam; and when his brothers and all his father's household heard of it, they went down there to him. 2 Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him; and he became captain over them. Now there were

about four hundred men with him. 3 And David went from there to Mizpah of Moab; and he said to the king of Moab, "Please let my father and my mother come and stay with you until I know what God will do for me." 4 Then he left them with the king of Moab; and they stayed with him all the time that David was in the stronghold. 5 The prophet Gad said to David, "Do not stay in the stronghold; depart, and go into the land of Judah." So David departed and went into the forest of Hereth. 6 Then Saul heard that David and the men who were with him had been discovered. Now Saul was sitting in Gibeah, under the tamarisk tree on the height with his spear in his hand, and all his servants were standing around him. 7 Saul said to his servants who stood around him, "Hear now, O Benjamites! Will the son of Jesse also give to all of you fields and vineyards? Will he make you all commanders of thousands and commanders of hundreds? 8 "For all of you have conspired against me so that there is no one who discloses to me when my son makes a covenant with the son of Jesse, and there is none of you who is sorry for me or discloses to me that my son has stirred up my servant against me to lie in ambush, as it is this day." 9 Then Doeg the Edomite, who was standing by the servants of Saul, said, "I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech the son of Ahitub. 10 "He inquired of the Lord for him, gave him provisions, and gave him the sword of Goliath the Philistine." 11 Then the king sent someone to summon Ahimelech the priest, the son of Ahitub, and all his father's household, the priests who were in Nob; and all of them came to the king. 12 Saul said, "Listen now, son of Ahitub." And he answered, "Here I am, my lord." 13 Saul then said to him, "Why have you and the son of Jesse conspired against me, in that you have given him bread and a sword and have inquired of God for him, so that he would rise up against me by lying in ambush as it is this day?" 14 Then Ahimelech answered the king and said, "And who among all your servants is as faithful as David, even the king's son-in-law, who is captain over your guard, and is honored in your house? 15 "Did I just begin to inquire of God for him today? Far be it from me! Do not let the king impute anything to his servant or to any of the household of my father, for your servant knows nothing at all of this whole affair." 16 But the king said, "You shall surely die, Ahimelech, you and all your father's household!" 17 And the king said to the guards who were attending him, "Turn around and put the priests of the Lord to death, because their hand also is with David and because they knew that he was fleeing and did not reveal it to me." But the servants of the king were not willing to put forth their hands to attack the priests of the Lord. 18 Then the king said to Doeg, "You turn around and attack the priests." And Doeg the Edomite turned around and attacked the priests, and he killed that day eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. 19 And he struck Nob the city of the priests with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and infants; also oxen, donkeys, and sheep he struck with the edge of the sword. (NASB95)

Tragic Outcome

While Doeg stood condemned for his malevolence (Ps. 52:1-5), David was not without fault (1 Sam. 22:20-23).

Psalm 52:1-5 ... 1 For the choir director. A Maskil of David, when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul and said to him, "David has come to the house of Ahimelech." Why do you boast in evil, O mighty man? The lovingkindness of God endures all day long. 2

Your tongue devises destruction, Like a sharp razor, O worker of deceit. 3 You love evil more than good, Falsehood more than speaking what is right. Selah. 4 You love all words that devour, O deceitful tongue. 5 But God will break you down forever; He will snatch you up and tear you away from your tent, And uproot you from the land of the living. Selah. (NASB95)

1 Samuel 22:20-23 ... 20 But one son of Ahimelech the son of Ahitub, named Abiathar, escaped and fled after David. 21 Abiathar told David that Saul had killed the priests of the Lord. 22 Then David said to Abiathar, "I knew on that day, when Doeg the Edomite was there, that he would surely tell Saul. I have brought about the death of every person in your father's household. 23 "Stay with me; do not be afraid, for he who seeks my life seeks your life, for you are safe with me." (NASB95)

Conclusion

God's word consistently commends those who are truthful and condemns those who are liars (Ps. 15:1-5; Prov. 12:17-22; Jer. 9:1-6; Acts 5:1-11).

Psalms 15:1-5 ... 1 A Psalm of David. O Lord, who may abide in Your tent? Who may dwell on Your holy hill? 2 He who walks with integrity, and works righteousness, And speaks truth in his heart. 3 He does not slander with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor takes up a reproach against his friend; 4 In whose eyes a reprobate is despised, But who honors those who fear the Lord; He swears to his own hurt and does not change; 5 He does not put out his money at interest, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things will never be shaken. (NASB95)

Proverbs 12:17-22 ... 17 He who speaks truth tells what is right, But a false witness, deceit. 18 There is one who speaks rashly like the thrusts of a sword, But the tongue of the wise brings healing. 19 Truthful lips will be established forever, But a lying tongue is only for a moment. 20 Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, But counselors of peace have joy. 21 No harm befalls the righteous, But the wicked are filled with trouble. 22 Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, But those who deal faithfully are His delight. (NASB95)

Jeremiah 9:1-6 ... 1 Oh that my head were waters And my eyes a fountain of tears, That I might weep day and night For the slain of the daughter of my people! 2 Oh that I had in the desert A wayfarers' lodging place; That I might leave my people And go from them! For all of them are adulterers, An assembly of treacherous men. 3 "They bend their tongue like their bow; Lies and not truth prevail in the land; For they proceed from evil to evil, And they do not know Me," declares the Lord. 4 "Let everyone be on guard against his neighbor, And do not trust any brother; Because every brother deals craftily, And every neighbor goes about as a slanderer. 5 "Everyone deceives his neighbor And does not speak the truth, They have taught their tongue to speak lies; They weary themselves committing iniquity. 6 "Your dwelling is in the midst of deceit; Through deceit they refuse to know Me," declares the Lord. (NASB95)

Acts 5:1-11 ... 1 But a man named Ananias, with his wife Sapphira, sold a piece of property, 2 and kept back some of the price for himself, with his wife's full knowledge, and bringing a portion of it, he laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back some of the price of the land? 4 "While it remained unsold, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your control? Why is it that you have conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God." 5 And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard of it. 6 The young men got up and covered him up, and after carrying him out, they buried him. 7 Now there elapsed an interval of about three hours, and his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. 8 And Peter responded to her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for such and such a price?" And she said, "Yes, that was the price." 9 Then Peter said to her, "Why is it that you have agreed together to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out as well." 10 And immediately she fell at his feet and breathed her last, and the young men came in and found her dead, and they carried her out and buried her beside her husband. 11 And great fear came over the whole church, and over all who heard of these things. (NASB95)

Accordingly, all liars will be excluded from heaven, being destined for the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Rev. 21:7-8, 25-27; 22:14-15).

Revelation 21:7-8 ... 7 "He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. 8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death." (NASB95)

Revelation 21:25-27 ... 25 In the daytime (for there will be no night there) its gates will never be closed; 26 and they will bring the glory and the honor of the nations into it; 27 and nothing unclean, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life. (NASB95)

Revelation 22:14-15 ... 14 Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter by the gates into the city. 15 Outside are the dogs and the sorcerers and the immoral persons and the murderers and the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices lying. (NASB95)

Malicious lies are obviously destructive, but even "white lies" may have adverse and untended consequences. Honesty is always the best policy. Therefore, let us strive to be truthful but tactful, not grating but gracious (Prov. 25:11; Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6).

Proverbs 25:11 ... 11 Like apples of gold in settings of silver Is a word spoken in right circumstances. (NASB95)

Ephesians 4:29 ... 29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. (NASB95)

Colossians 4:6 ... 6 Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person. (NASB95)