

# “THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

## On The Use Of The Word “*Liar*”

Tommy L. McClure

Occasionally, some will “*lie*” (tell “tall tales”) for fun and entertainment. They do not tell their stories to deceive: they don’t believe them and don’t expect those who listen to believe them. A farmer, bragging about how rich his land was, said “I was working in my field and lost two eight penny nails through a hole in my pocket. By the time I went back the next day, those things were six foot crowbars!”

I am not concerned about such “lies,” for they are only funny tales designed for amusement.

However, all should be concerned about lies uttered for the purpose of covering evil deeds, hurting another’s reputation, gaining an unfair advantage, obtaining ill-gotten gain, or leading people into sin, moral or spiritual. Lying for any and every evil purpose is a serious sin fraught with serious consequences. Such lies are detrimental to their victims and disastrous to all who devise and spread them.

No one, not even the greatest of liars, likes to be called a “*liar*.” But, what else should a person who lies be called? One with a “highly skilled imagination”? An “adroit composer of fiction”? An “adept craftsman in fabrication”? Should a thief be called a “thief” or some less offensive term? What should one who commits murder be called—a “*murderer*” or something more palatable to the taste of our modern, sophisticated society? The present-day Justice Department is so fouled up it gives about every advantage to the criminal, and that same permissive philosophy has permeated religion and the church. God made a difference between manslayer and murderer (Num. 35:9-34), but called the latter a “*murderer*” and repeatedly declared that he was to be put to death (vv. 16-21).

Just so, the Bible calls people who lie “*liars*” — plain and simple!

When some claimed to be what they were not, John said they were *liars*! Revelation 2:2, “...*thou hast tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars.*” The Holy Spirit did not give John some sweet, sugary, syrupy term which would be more palatable to the taste of liberal religionists — He inspired John to call them what they were! When people become more “nice” than the Holy Spirit, they have gone a bit too far—overboard into the sea of liberal delusion, if not satanically generated hallucinations!

Jesus was not too “nice” to apply the term liar to those who lied. He called the devil a “*liar*” and “*murderer*” and told Jews of His day the devil was their father (Jn. 8:44). In His controversy with the Jews, He said, “... *if I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say that he is your God: Yet ye have not known him; but I know him, and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him and keep his saying*” (Jn. 8:54, 55). When those Jews claimed to know God, while refusing to keep His sayings, they were “*liars*,” plain and simple.

John made similar statements. “*He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar and the truth is not in him*” (1 Jn. 2:4). “*Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?...*” (3:22). “*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen*” (4:20). According to John, those who deny they have sinned and believe not God make HIM a liar! (1:10; 5:10). The reason is evident — their word is diametrically opposite to His word, which is TRUTH (Jn. 17:17). This was the basic idea when Paul said, “... *yea, let God be true, but every man a liar...*” (Rom. 3:4). The context shows that “*every man*” means men who disbelieve and contradict God.

In every conflict between God and man, we must take the side of God to be on the side of truth. Psalm 19:9, ***“...the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”*** ***“Thy word is true from the beginning...”*** (Psa. 119:160).

Since God is a God of truth, without iniquity, just and right (Deut. 32:4), and no guile (snare, deceit) was in Jesus’ mouth (1 Pet. 2:22), a liar is neither Godlike nor Christlike! He is Satanlike, Satanic—like his father! (Jn. 8:44).

The most sad and serious thought about liars is their eternal doom: ***“... ALL liars shall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”*** (Rev. 21:8). Therefore, we had better tell the TRUTH and stay in the favor of God.

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## Attendance Problem?

I am persuaded to believe that every local congregation has members who are not faithful in their attendance. These saints would not think of missing work or missing an important appointment, yet they often think nothing of being absent when the saints gather together for work and worship. Usually it is said that members like this have an “attendance problem.” Is the problem really attendance? I recently discussed attendance with another preacher and his comments were as follows: *“Usually, attendance is not a person’s problem. It is but a symptom of a larger, deeper problem. Visitation and exhortation, with an attempt to figure out what the real problem is, would be all that I know to do. Most often, folks simply lack true faith and real conviction about the Lord, eternity and the judgment. They become so hardened in the world and are of the worldly mind-set, though they may not lead an immoral lifestyle, that the word is choked out of their hearts—see Mark 4:19. I believe Mark 4:19 is related to Hebrews 3:12, 13, and describes that individual, who, though he may not be a moral reprobate, is simply given over to the cares, riches and pleasures of this life that he becomes dull and insensitive to spiritual and eternal matters. This person’s conscience may be as seared with a hot iron as is the conscience of the one described in 1 Timothy 4:2. We may visit, exhort, even “nag” such people, but it will do no good, for they are hardened and are oblivious to efforts to redeem and reclaim them. Encourage as you are able, but understand that you cannot spend all your time chasing down those whose hearts are not receptive, being impervious and ‘past feeling’ toward spiritual truth.”*

An “attendance problem” is really the symptom of a deep spiritual illness—a heart problem. In the parable of the sower (Matt. 13:1-23; Mk. 4:1-20; Lk. 8:4-15), Jesus taught in parabolic style using four different soils to represent the differing hearts of men. Anyone who has done any gardening can easily understand the Lord’s message in this parable. The member who is unfaithful in attendance could be represented by any of the three soils — the ***“way side”*** ground, the ***“stony”*** ground, or the ***“thorny”*** ground.

Let us heed the words of the Hebrew writer where he wrote: ***“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching”*** (Heb. 10:24, 25). When a saint willfully chooses to absent themselves from the assembly of the saints, how can they give scriptural consideration to other saints? How can they provoke other saints to love and good works? How can they exhort other saints? The answer is simple, they cannot! I once heard a preacher express this truth—willfully absenting oneself from the assembly is like removing a coal of fire from the fireplace. That coal of fire that is removed from the presence of the other hot coals will die out quicker than it would have if it had been left in a heap with the other burning coals.

Willful absence from the assembly is a symptom of a dying love for the Lord, His word, His church and other saints. Let us strive to maintain an undying love and not let our love become ***“lukewarm”*** (Rev. 3:15, 16) or ***“wax cold”*** (Matt. 24:12). — ***tgmc*** ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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