

# 20 Days of Trouble

## Topic #10 – Dishonesty

### **Textbook Def:**

Not being honest; disposed to lie, cheat, or steal; not worthy of trust or belief.\*

### **Real-Life Look:**

“Gimme a break! She’s married with two kids,” Derrick snarled. “She understands what I’m going through and offers great advice. She’s just a good friend. Why do you have to look for a problem in everything I do?”

“We were planning on inviting you but it was a just a last minute thing. I’m so sorry we hurt your feelings. It wasn’t intentional.” Her sister tried to sound convincing but Stella knew better.

“Mom, it wasn’t my fault. It was Rob’s idea and I had no idea what he was going to do.” Alicia’s heart broke as she looked into her son’s eyes. She desperately wanted to believe him but the facts were the facts. He was lying. And this wasn’t the first time.

Alex didn’t have as much time to complete his work project as he would have liked. Well, actually, he just didn’t commit the time he should have. Jessica’s idea was an offhand comment months ago. It’s not like she’s going to do anything with it anyway. He knew the boss would love it, so what would be the harm in including the idea in his proposal?

I’m just going to my mom’s house for a few hours. I need to give her a hand with some stuff around the house this evening. Don’t wait up for me...

I’m sorry, my ringer was off so I didn’t hear the phone.

### **Sword of the Spirit:**

*“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” Exodus 20:16*

*“There are six things that the Lord hates, seven are an abomination to him; haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that make haste to run to evil, a false witness who breaths out lies, and one who sows discord among brothers.” Proverbs 6:16-19*

*“Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.” Col 3:9-10*

## **Breaking It Down:**

God hates a liar and so do I.

Nothing like starting out with a bang, huh?

There’s really no other way to put it. Lying breeds mistrust and is an indicator of major character flaws. I have no tolerance for it. When growing up my mom told me, “I’d rather hear the worst truth than a good lie.” Clearly, it stuck. She made SURE it did!

What IS Lying?

Lying is exhausting - Remembering your stories will take a toll, and eventually, you’ll get tripped up and fall flat on your face.

Lying is wrong - It’s an abomination to the Lord, and to your friends and family alike.

Lying brings guilt and heartache – Some liars do so without conscience but most are emotionally tortured by their wrongdoing.

Lying breeds disaster - Not only is the initial lie a sin, but often you must continue to cover-up and support the lie, exponentially multiplying the problem, and the exhaustion.

Unfortunately, most of us, at one time or another, have told a lie. Whether it was a sudden, kneejerk response or a story intentionally contrived to cover up an issue, we’re all guilty. I’m sure you’ve heard the question, “Have you ever taken a stamp or envelope from work without asking?” Yup, exactly. Most of us, including me, would say yes.

Are we all, then, just liars who fall short? Yes, I suppose we are, just like we are all sinners who fall short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23)

But should we embrace our flawed human nature and use it as an excuse to behave poorly? Of course not. Using that justification to permit evil to freely run amok is abusing the gift of grace. While God has promised salvation to all who believe, we shouldn’t use it as a license to sin.

So when it comes to lying, if a sin is a sin is a sin, how do we combat our sin nature and find victory over evil? I've got two suggestions to get you started. Evaluate your:

Heart motive - In school you may not get an 'A' for effort, but I believe in the Kingdom of Christ, intentions count for something. This isn't to say you can 'mean well', sin, ask for forgiveness, check it off your list, and then sin again. Well, at least not without consequence. The point is, however, to at least start out with right intentions.

Response – When you trip and fall, what is your response? Do you shrug it off, repeat the poor behavior, or deny the transgression? Or instead, do you admit the wrongdoing, apologize, learn from your mistakes, and commit to not making the same mistake again? Your response to sin can say more about your character than the initial sin itself.

### **The Benefit in Decluttering Trouble:**

There is no more desirable quality in a friend than trust. Who do you confide in? Turn to for sage advice? Trust to have your best interests at heart? Who came to mind? Likely it's someone you find to be honest and honorable. I strive to be that person. And not just for my friend's sake, but surely for my own as well.

When you declutter lying, you'll

- Have the capacity to bring value and worth to the table
- Attract a higher quality of friends
- Gain respect of your peers and coworkers
- Enjoy more peace in your heart and mind
- Develop a deeper, more meaningful relationship with those in your life, most especially God

While lying might seem like a quick fix or harmless response, it is never that. The consequences are ongoing and far reaching. Declutter lying and embrace deep, meaningful character and life benefits.

\*dictionary.reference.com

@2016 www.actionplanministries.com Permission granted to reproduce this document providing website is not removed.