God’s Heart on Lying and Telling the Truth

- **Lying** is a sin detested by God. (Proverbs 12:22)
- **Lying** is contrary to the character of God. (Hebrews 6:18)
- **Lying** to others is lying to God. (Acts 5:4)
- **Lying** disrupts the unity of Christians. (Ephesians 4:25)
- **Lying**, if allowed by leaders, corrupts those who listen. (Proverbs 29:12)
- Liars who mask their lies as “jokes” are deceptively deadly. (Proverbs 26:18–19)
- Liars go from one sin to another. (Jeremiah 9:3)
- Liars listen attentively to other liars. (Proverbs 17:4)
- **Lying** tongues won’t last forever. (Proverbs 12:19)
- **Lying** people will not go unpunished. (Proverbs 19:5)
- The **truth** brings delight to the Lord. (Psalm 51:6 ESV)
- The **truth** is a way of life we can choose. (Psalm 119:30 NKJV)
- The **truth** brings us into the light. (John 3:21)
- The **truth** is what we speak from the heart. (Psalm 15:1–2)
- The **truth** is what will guide us. (Psalm 43:3 NLT)
- The **truth** purifies us. (1 Peter 1:22)
- The **truth** is what we should walk in. (Psalm 26:3 NKJV)
- The **truth** is what we should correctly handle. (2 Timothy 2:15)
- The **truth** is what we should be faithful to. (3 John 3)
- The **truth** is Jesus, who shows us the way to live life. (John 14:6)

What Lies Do We Tell Other People?

- We lie to avoid humiliation. (“Yes doctor, I floss every day”—when we don’t.)
- We lie about how we feel. (“I’m fine”—when we’re not.)
- We lie with excuses. (“I have other plans”—when we don’t.)
- We lie in denial. (“I am not an alcoholic”—when we have a problem.)
- We lie out of kindness. (“This meatloaf is delicious!”—when we don’t like it.)
- We lie out of obligation. (“Yes, I’d be happy to work this weekend”—when we really don’t want to.)
- We lie to protect ourselves. (“No officer, I had no idea I was speeding”—when we know we did.)
- We lie by procrastinating. (“The doctor is booked all week”—when we didn’t even check.)
- We lie to cover our wrongdoing. (“I had to work late”—when we really went shopping.)
- We lie to carry out traditions. (“Yes, the tooth fairy is real”—and we don’t know why we lie.)
- We lie to save time. (“I have read and agreed to the above terms and conditions”—when we wouldn’t understand it anyway.)
- We lie to get our child out of school. (“My son is sick today”—when he really isn’t, we just want to leave early for vacation.)
- We lie to manipulate a situation. (“His birth father has never paid a dime of support”—when we know he has.)
- We lie to fellow Christians. (“I’m praying for you”—when we have no intention of doing so.)

> “Nothing in all creation is hidden from God’s sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.”
> (Hebrews 4:13)

What Lies Do We Tell Ourselves?

- “Dieting doesn’t work for me because I have a slow metabolism.”
- “When I find the perfect mate, then I’ll be complete.”
- “Her behavior drives me to drink!”
- “When I get the perfect job … then I’ll be happy.”
- “I can’t” … can’t get out of bed before 8:00, can’t exercise, can’t learn the computer.
• “I’m not” … not good enough, not beautiful enough, not smart enough.
• “My life is harder than anyone else’s.” “My childhood was worse than yours.”
• “I’m too” … too young, too old, too qualified, too fat, too dumb, etc.
• “I’m not judgmental. … I’m discerning.”
• “He’s not perfect, but he’s good enough.” “She’s not perfect, but she’ll do.”
• “I need lots of money if I’m ever going to be truly happy.”
• “I’m a bad wife.” ... “I’m a bad husband.” ... “I’m a bad mother.”
• “I’m too fat and ugly to go to the gym.”
• “I don’t make enough money to be a good husband and provider.”
• “I’ll start my diet tomorrow.”
• “I’ll never find someone to love me.”

“But he [Jesus] said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’”
(2 Corinthians 12:9)

12 Common Causes for Lying
• To save face (Psalm 34:13)
• To make us seem more interesting (Proverbs 8:8)
• To shift blame (Genesis 3:12–13)
• To control a response (Proverbs 11:3)
• To give a false impression (Hebrews 13:18)
• To avoid confrontation (Psalm 12:2)
• To cover up mistakes (Psalm 32:2)
• To replace pain temporarily (1 Corinthians 3:18)
• To escape accountability (Galatians 6:4–5)
• To create a fantasy (Colossians 2:18)
• To avoid punishment (Amos 5:10)
• To exploit others (2 Peter 2:3)

Key Verse to Memorize
“Set a guard over my mouth, Lord; keep watch over the door of my lips.”
(Psalm 141:3)

Key Passage to Read
Proverbs 6:16–19

How to Tell the Truth When It’s Tough!
• Know that you cannot please everyone. (Galatians 1:10)
• Know that you are not responsible for everyone’s feelings. (Proverbs 9:7–9)
• Know that you can speak the truth in a loving way. (Ephesians 4:15)
• Know that you are not a perfect person—no one is perfect. (Isaiah 53:6)
• Know that you are not accountable for how others respond to the truth. (Romans 14:12)

Steps to Self-Control
• Start with a commitment to truth, admitting that God wants you to change. (Deuteronomy 32:4)
• Separate from your sin of lying, writing out what it’s costing you. (Romans 6:1–2)
• Set a new goal, picturing yourself telling the truth. (2 Corinthians 5:9–10)
• Stand on the truth, setting a time to begin. (Romans 6:6)
• Substitute God’s thoughts for your thoughts, identifying your weak points. (Romans 12:1–2)
• Surrender your will to God and seek out an accountability partner. (Romans 6:19)
• Stay on track, practicing your new commitment to tell the truth. (Romans 5:1–2)

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”
(Galatians 5:22–23)

Deliverance from Deceit
• Discover God’s consequences for lying and His hatred for deceit. (Psalm 5:6)
• Demand complete honesty with myself and examine my motives. (Psalm 51:10)
• Determine to be totally honest with God and admit my failures. (1 John 1:8)
• Discern my areas of personal temptation. Stop and think before I answer. (Proverbs 21:23)
• Decide that I want my life to reflect Christ, if He truly lives in me. (Romans 8:29)
• Depend on the strength of Christ within me to enable me to change. (Philippians 4:13)
• Delight in the truth, which is more rewarding than lies. (Proverbs 28:13)
• Desire to please the Lord and bring honor to Him in all that I think, do, and say. (Ephesians 5:8–10)

Questions and Answers

“Is it ever right to tell a lie?”

Not according to the example Jesus set for us. Even with all the trap questions asked of Him and the life-threatening snares set for Him, Jesus never lied. While He did not directly answer every question, He never lied to protect Himself or others. Instead, He entrusted Himself to His heavenly Father, who cannot lie, and spoke as the Father directed Him to speak. Then upon His earthly departure, He explained that all of His followers would be given His Spirit of truth to guide us “into all truth.”

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come.”

(John 16:13)

“How do I teach my child to distinguish what is real from what is make-believe?”

Just as you teach your child every other virtue, you must demonstrate the value of truth. As you reward your children for truth telling, they will learn that lying results in a loss for them. As they develop and grow, they will also be able to distinguish and discern the difference between a fib and a fairy tale ... between a wish and a whopper ... between fact and fiction.

Be certain that you, too, lead by example, for the Bible says ...

“If you are convinced that you are a guide for the blind, a light for those who are in the dark, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of little children, because you have in the law the embodiment of knowledge and truth—you, then, who teach others, do you not teach yourself?”

(Romans 2:19–21)