

JANUARY 23, 2024 TUESDAY - DAY 16

PRAY THAT WE WOULD NOT LIE TO ONE ANOTHER

COLOSSIANS 3:9

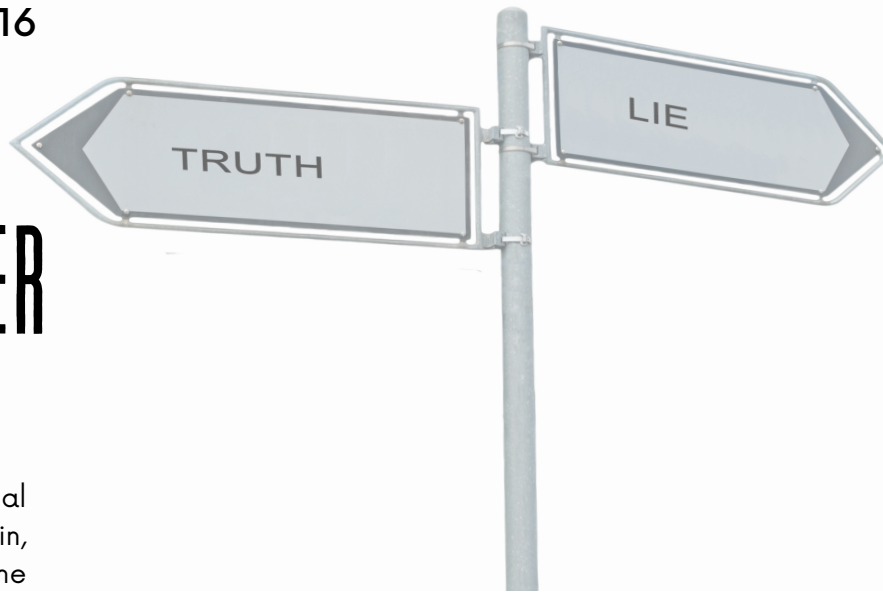
Paul may have singled out the sin of lying for special treatment because in it, more than in any other sin, we demonstrate ill will toward one another. The verb is present imperative, which combined with the negative, forbids the continuation of the act. So some translations word this, "Stop lying!" or "Do not continue the habit of lying."

PUTTING OFF LYING

When we "put off the old man" and "put on the new man," we should be done with lying, since lying is clearly not a part of the new nature. Lying is listed in verse eight with the things that we must "put off" used in the sense of putting off clothes. When a new believer was baptized in the New Testament, he took off his old robe, and after coming up out of the water, put on a new robe.

It was a part of the symbolism of new life in Christ. Do you remember the story of Pinocchio, the wooden puppet who was miraculously changed into a living boy? The childless puppet maker was overjoyed! But there was one fatal flaw in the lad: He could not stop lying. Each lie would cause his nose to grow a little longer. One lie would lead to another. It was Sir Walter Scott who said, "Oh, what a tangled web we weave/when first we practice to deceive." Our first President was supposedly known for his truthfulness ("I cannot tell a lie"). Modern politicians are known for their unreliability ("I misspoke!"). We have become a nation of liars. We cheat on tests at school, plagiarize papers, falsify tax returns, and create sparkling resumes from nothing. According to the Institute of American Behavior, ninety one percent of us lie at least three times a day.

We are guilty when we tell bold untruths to one another. From the laws of Moses to the Code of Hammurabi, a false witness was considered to be an egregious sin. From the thoughts of Greek philosophers to the ideas of Roman senators, lying



lips were abhorrent. Proverbs 12:22 says,

**"Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord."
Nothing could be more contrary to God who is
truth personified.**

LYING IS GOSSIP

But we are also guilty when we are involved in slander and gossip with each other. Psalm 15:2 - 3 says he who truly worships, "speaks the truth in his heart... does not backbite with his tongue... nor does he take up a reproach against his friend." Someone has well said, "The only reason a gossip likes to talk so much is that we like to listen to it so well." The most popular sport in many churches is "jumping to conclusions." But we are also guilty of falsehood when we break our contracts.

We have read of athletes who refuse to play for "chump change" (\$500,000 a year) and walk out on their contracts. But every week churches languish because of volunteers who fail to show up for duty that they agreed to perform.

LYING IN SILENCE

Lastly, we lie to one another when we slink in cowardly silence rather than boldly speak the truth people do not want to hear. To say nothing when lies are being propagated is tantamount to agreement. The German Pastor Martin Niemoller confessed, "When they came for the Negroes, I said nothing. When they came for the Communists, I said nothing. When they came for the Jews, I said nothing. Now that they have come for me, there is no one left to raise their voice in protest."

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The most deadly lies of all, however, are the lies we live. Many have pretended for so long to be something they are not, and they are unaware of the real truth.

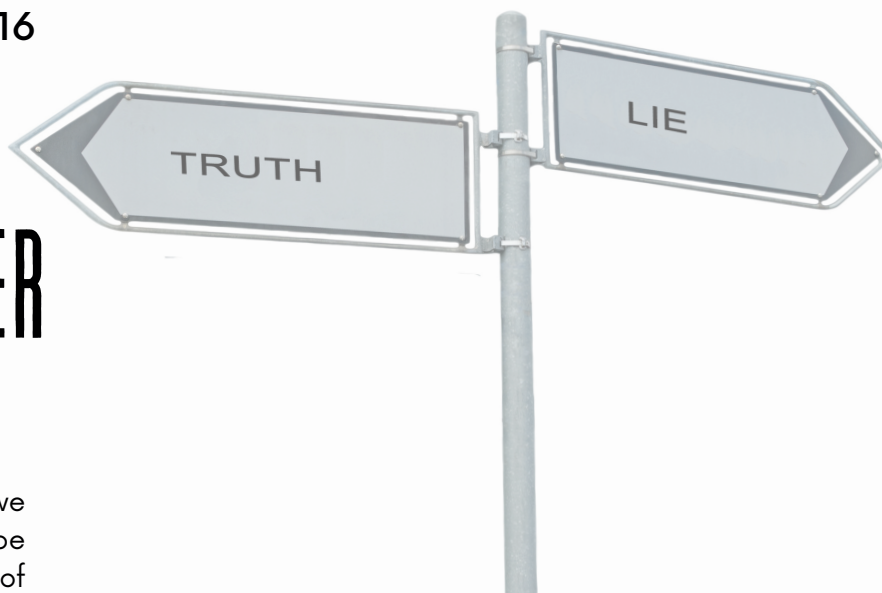
They are like the China man who was hired to play the flute in the Emperor 's orchestra when he couldn't play a note! For years he held the instrument to his lips and faked it. Then one day the Emperor decided he wanted to hear a solo from each man in the orchestra. As the fateful day approached, he became more and more distraught. Finally, on the morning of his own recital, he drank poison and committed suicide. The Chinese say he was "afraid to face the music." Our words ought to be fountains of consolation, illumination, and encouragement, yet they are more often floods of untruths and half truths that sting and bite like serpents. If all the talk that has its source in lies were suddenly made inaudible, what a deadly silence would fall on many a church gathering. Some who sing would be lip syncing. Some who pray in public would be leading in silent prayer. Even some who preach would have gaps of wordless content in their sermon illustrations.

Many would stand with lips moving, but no words coming out of their mouths.

Pray that we would not lie to one another.

**Do not lie to one another,
Saying that you have put off
the old man with his deeds...**

Col. 3:9



PRAYING FOR ONE ANOTHER

1. Pray for God to reveal and expunge every falsehood in your own life.
2. Pray that God will deliver you from the desire to hear information about others that should not be reported.
3. Pray that God will bless your congregation with transparent lives among its members.
4. Pray that you and your believing friends would be bold in speaking the truth in love.

God doesn't expect us to refrain from grief or mourning, but to "sorrow not as others who have no hope."

The worst this old world can do to us is kill us, and that only ushers us into the presence of the Lord in glory.