

What Does the Bible Say About "White Lies"?

by Heath Rogers

This article is a response to blatant false teaching concerning the subject of white lies that was found in the Jan. 21 issue of the Victoria Advocate. In separate responses, the Rev. Holly McKissick, pastor of St. Andrew Christian Church, and Rabbi Amy Walik Katz, associate rabbi of Congregation Beth Shalom, both agreed that it was all right to tell a white lie in order to "serve life" and to keep from hurting someone's feelings. Katz was even so bold as to suggest that God Himself told a white lie to Abraham to keep the peace in his and Sarah's home. I deny this blasphemous notion with every ounce of my being! It is impossible for God to lie (Heb. 6:18, Titus 1:1).

What these ladies don't realize is that they have actually undermined their own effectiveness as religious teachers with their answers. If it is all right for **me** to lie, then it must be all right for **them** to lie. As such, **how can we know when they are telling the truth?** Such a careless disregard for the truth on the part of so-called religious leaders is appalling, but it is to be expected. Humanism has infiltrated much of mainstream religion. This explains why both responses placed a greater importance upon maintaining peace among men rather than upon maintaining the truth. Their responses were found in a column that was titled "Voices Of Faith." A more appropriate title would have been "Voices Of Humanism."

What does the Bible say about white lies? First, we need to understand that a "white lie" is a lie. The Bible makes no distinction between kinds of lies. Neither the intent of the heart, nor the seriousness of the subject matter, can keep a lie from being a lie. This fact can be illustrated with another sin – stealing. Is "petty theft" still theft? Let's ask the storekeeper. Theft is theft, regardless of the motive behind the action or the value of the property that has been stolen. The same is true with telling a lie.

What does the Bible have to say about telling lies?

"These six things the LORD hates, yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift in running to evil, a false witness who speaks lies, and one who sows discord among brethren" (Prov. 6:16-19).

Notice three things about this passage. First, God hates lying. It is an abomination to Him. Second, lying is mentioned alongside sins such as murder, devising wicked plans, running to evil, etc. Someone may not place fibbing about how her friend looks in her jeans in the same category as murder, but God does. Third, lying is the only sin in this passage that is mentioned twice. That ought to get our attention.

"Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him" (Col. 3:9-10). Preachers and rabbis may tell us that it is all right to lie to others as long as our motives are good. A religious organization may even instruct its

members to lie in order to protect their church. However, the Bible says that we are not to lie to one another. Lying is something that characterizes the old man of sin. This old man of sin was put off when we became Christians. One who encourages lying reveals that he has yet to be "renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created" us. He thinks he has the truth on this subject, but his answer shows that the old man of sin is still alive in his heart.

"But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8). The Bible says that "all liars" will have their part in Hell. This includes every lie, including the little "white lies" that some religious leaders encourage us to tell.

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