

Are You a Liar?

By: Don Wright

Sometimes we tend to categorize sin. Fornication, adultery, stealing and the like, we consider to be very serious. However, sins such as lying are dismissed with little thought. The fact is God abhors all sin (Psalms 5:4-5), and lying is no exemption. It was that form of sin that Satan used to entice Eve in the Garden which led to the demise of her and her husband, Adam (Genesis 3:1-6). As a result of the devil's lie, Jesus called him a murderer and a liar (John 8:44). Furthermore, John tells us that liars will have their part in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone (Revelations 21:8). Lying is not a "little" sin in the eyes of God.

In the letter of 1 John, we read of many who are called liars because of their conduct in this world. Let us examine the liars of 1 John.

In 1 John 1:6, John wrote, *"If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth."* The "Him" in this verse is God. To be in fellowship with God means to be in communion with Him. It has to do with partnership or joint participation. Only those who walk in the light can be partners with God, for as John stated in verse 5, *"God is light and in him is no darkness at all."* Everything about God is right. Tolerating, ignoring, or fellowshiping with sin is not right; thus, God cannot do it and still be the God depicted in the Bible. Now, those who are in darkness are those who are living in sin or living apart from God's will, whether it be intentionally or ignorant!

The liars that John refers to in our text are not only lying to others, they are lying to themselves. They have deceived themselves into believing that all is well spiritually, yet the truth is they have no fellowship with God. This self-deception can be produced by not knowing God's will. Some, during New Testament times, certainly believed that they were in communion with God, but, being ignorant of what made that communion possible, they, in reality, were not (Romans 10:1-4; Matt. 7:21-23).

To be in fellowship with God, one must obey the gospel (Romans 1:16). If someone tells you that you do not have to obey the gospel, or they teach you something other than what the gospel of Christ teaches (e.g. saved by faith alone), you will not be in fellowship with God by following their teaching. One in that situation will certainly claim fellowship with God, but John calls him a liar for he is still in darkness.

John refers to others who are liars in 1 John. In 1 John 2:4, John wrote, *"He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him."* The number of religious people who claim, not directly, but by their particular doctrine, that keeping God's commandments is not important is staggering. Nevertheless, John affirms that all who do not keep the commandments of God do not know Him. Sure, they may know of Him and believe that He exists, but they do not know the true character and make-up of God. If they knew God's character, they would know that He is a God that demands obedience, and they would realize that God has the power to punish those who refuse to obey Him (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

There has never been a time when God has not demanded obedience from His people. Anyone who claims that obedience is not a part of being right in the sight of God is simply ignorant of God's true nature. They are liars because they claim to know God, but, in truth, they do not.



Finally, in 1 John 4:20, John said, *"If a man says, I love God and hateth his brother, he is a liar..."* One rule that should govern our lives as Christians is to love our brethren. To do otherwise and then to claim that we love God is contradictory. To love God is to keep His commandments (1 John 5:1-3). One of God's commandments is to love our brethren (John 13:34; 1 John 2:7-11; 3:14-18; 4:7-11). Therefore, we cannot love God and hate our brother. If there is any brother in Christ that we hate, we are in disobedience to God, and again, the Bible teaches that our love for God is demonstrated by our obedience in all things.

We should also remember that God is love (1 John 4:8), and we should all strive to be as much like God as we can be. When we act in the best interest of our brother, we are doing what God does. So, let us always act in the best interest of our brothers and sisters in Christ so that when we claim to love God, we are speaking the truth and not a lie. John asked a good question when he said, *"...he that loveth not his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"*