

Honor
Pants On Fire
Clay Weed

TALK IT OVER

Key Scripture:

Exodus 20:16 (NLT)

16 *"You must not testify falsely against your neighbor.*

Psalms 120:2 (NLT)

2 *Rescue me, O LORD, from liars and from all deceitful people.*

Proverbs 12:22 (NLT)

22 *The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth.*

James 3:3–10 (NLT)

3 *We can make a large horse go wherever we want by means of a small bit in its mouth. 4 And a small rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot chooses to go, even though the winds are strong. 5 In the same way, the tongue is a small thing that makes grand speeches.*

But a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire. 6 And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.

7 *People can tame all kinds of animals, birds, reptiles, and fish, 8 but no one can tame the tongue. It is restless and evil, full of deadly poison. 9 Sometimes it praises our Lord and Father, and sometimes it curses those who have been made in the image of God. 10 And so blessing and cursing come pouring out of the same mouth. Surely, my brothers and sisters, this is not right!*

Genesis 3:1–5 (NLT)

Start **talking**. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- In honor of Mother's Day, share a memorable piece of advice or a funny story about your mom or a mother figure in your life. How has that wisdom or humor impacted the way you approach life?

Start **sharing**. These questions are to help get your group thinking and to create openness.

- **Read Exodus 20:16.** What does this commandment reveal about the value God places on truth and honesty?
- Considering the sermon's mention of societal pressures to bend the truth, share a time when you found it challenging to maintain honesty. What helped, or could have helped, you stay truthful?
- **Read Psalm 120:2 and Proverbs 12:22.** How do these verses deepen our understanding of God's perspective on truth versus deceit?
- The sermon discussed the power of the tongue as described in **James 3:3-10**. What are some practical ways you can use your speech for good rather than harm in your daily interactions?
- **Genesis 3:1-5** introduces deceit with significant consequences. How can this account of the first lie help us understand the destructive nature of dishonesty?
- Discuss the scenarios mentioned in the sermon where lying was used to protect lives (e.g., Corrie ten Boom, the Hebrew midwives). Is it ever acceptable to lie? Under what circumstances might this be considered?

Start **doing**. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Reflect on the acronym T.R.U.T.H. shared in the sermon. Choose one element from this acronym to focus on this week. Share your choice and why it's important to you.

Start **praying**. Be bold and pray with power.

- Pray for each other, that you would be bold and gracious in speaking truth and that your hearts would align more closely with God's perfect will for your life. And ask Him to reveal to you where you have fallen short, seeking His forgiveness.

Question: "Is it ever right to lie?"

Answer: The Bible nowhere presents an instance where lying is considered to be the right thing to do. The ninth commandment prohibits bearing false witness (Exodus 20:16). Proverbs 6:16-19 lists “a lying tongue” and “a false witness who pours out lies” as two of the seven abominations to the Lord. Love “rejoices with the truth” (1 Corinthians 13:6). For other Scriptures that speak negatively of lying, see Psalm 119:29, 163; 120:2; Proverbs 12:22; 13:5; Ephesians 4:25; Colossians 3:9; and Revelation 21:8. There are many examples of liars in Scripture, from Jacob’s deceit in Genesis 27 to the pretense of Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5. Time after time, we see that falsehood leads to misery, loss, and judgment.

There are at least two instances in the Bible where lying produced a favorable result. For example, the lie the Hebrew midwives tell Pharaoh seems to result in the Lord’s blessing on them (Exodus 1:15-21), and it probably saved the lives of many Hebrew babies. Another example is Rahab’s lie to protect the Israelite spies in Joshua 2:5. It is important to note, however, that God never condones these lies. Despite the “positive” outcome of these lies, the Bible nowhere praises the lies themselves. The Bible nowhere states that there are instances where lying is the right thing to do. At the same time, the Bible does not declare that there is no possible instance in which lying is an acceptable option.

The question then remains: is there ever a time when lying is the right thing to do? The most common illustration of this dilemma comes from the life of Corrie ten Boom in Nazi-occupied Holland. Essentially, the story is this: Corrie ten Boom is hiding Jews in her home to protect them from the Nazis. Nazi soldiers come to her home and ask her if she knows where any Jews are hiding. What is she to do? Should she tell the truth and allow the Nazis to capture the Jews she was trying to protect? Or, should she lie and deny that she knows anything about them?

In an instance such as this, where lying may be the only possible way to prevent a horrible evil, perhaps lying would be an acceptable thing to do. Such an instance would be somewhat similar to the lies of the Hebrew midwives and Rahab. In an evil world, and in a desperate situation, it may be the right thing to commit a lesser evil, lying, in order to prevent a much greater evil. However, it must be noted that such instances are extremely rare. It is highly likely that the vast majority of people in human history have never faced a situation in which lying was the right thing to do.

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