



Liar, Liar, Pants on Fire

I remember a young woman who graduated from high school with my son. During that first year post high school I overheard someone ask what she was doing “these days.” She very calmly, and most sincerely, replied, “I’m working on my PhD.” That was it – no further explanation. I was dumbfounded and later asked her why she would reply that way (I think she might have been taking one freshman-level college class at the time, but certainly no more). She told me that getting her PhD was her intention, so she felt comfortable responding that way. I said, “Well then, you already have 12 years under your belt.” She replied, “Yes, that’s true.”

But was it true? What is truth? Is stretching the truth the same as lying, is it acceptable? It seems that the primary issue is one of “intent.” What was her intent? Did she mean to show herself in a greater light? **Did she intend to deceive?**

I must ask myself that question regularly. “**What is my intent here?** Is it honesty, integrity, or do I hope that the other person thinks or believes something that is not entirely true?” For me, this happens most frequently when I am recounting a story to someone and **embellish it - just a bit** – perhaps make the other person look a little “worse” or myself seem just a little “smarter, more clever, more forceful” – anything like that. I seem to get in trouble more for this than anything else (at least these days). And much to my chagrin, I have not mastered it yet. It’s not really an outright intent on my part, I don’t think, “wonder how I can make myself look better, cooler, etc.” but my mouth gets the best of me and off I go – sinning.

I was at a Christian conference several years ago when I heard a man say, “I’m just a sinner, saved by grace.” Another man admonished him exclaiming, “**I’m not! I’ve been saved! I’m no longer a sinner! And neither are you – you should stop saying that!**” What do you think? On which side of this argument do you fall?

Let’s take a quick look at some passages penned by the Apostle John, written to believers (saved people) about the topic of sin in our lives:

*⁵ This is the message [of God’s promised revelation] which we have heard from Him and now announce to you, that God is Light [He is holy, His message is truthful, He is perfect in righteousness], and in Him there is no darkness at all [no sin, no wickedness, no imperfection]. ⁶ **If we say that we have fellowship with Him and yet walk in the darkness [of sin], we lie and do not practice the truth;** ⁷ but if we [really] walk in the Light [that is, live each and every day in conformity with the precepts of God], as He Himself is in the Light, we have [true, unbroken] fellowship with one another [He with us, and we with Him], and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin [by erasing the stain of sin, keeping us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations]. ⁸ **If we say we have no sin [refusing to admit that we are sinners], we delude ourselves** and the truth is not in us. [His word does not live in our hearts.] ⁹ If we [freely] admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just [true to His own nature and promises] and will forgive our sins and cleanse us continually from all unrighteousness [our*

*wrongdoing, everything not in conformity with His will and purpose].¹⁰ **If we say that we have not sinned [refusing to admit acts of sin], we make Him [out to be] a liar [by contradicting Him] and His word is not in us.***

1 John 1: 5-10 Amplified Bible (emphasis added mine)

Bam! In 5 short sentences we find:

1. **we lie**
2. **we delude ourselves**
3. **we make Him out to be a liar**

So it is difficult for me to think that although I am a believer and I am saved, **I am no longer capable of sinning.** Or else, **why would these passages be necessary?** I DO AGREE that because of the finished work of Jesus on the Cross I will be forgiven for all my sins, past, present, and future (He made that possible, if I put my faith and trust in Him). But I don't think it implies that I cannot and do not sin – nor does it mean that I don't have **two responsibilities when I do:**

(note V9: If we [freely] admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just [true to His own nature and promises] and will forgive our sins and cleanse us continually from all unrighteousness [our wrongdoing, everything not in conformity with His will and purpose]

1. **To confess and repent of my sin** (acknowledge it and change my mind about what I have done), thus asking Him to apply His blood to atone for my sin.

I like what Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum says in his booklet entitled *The Present Work of the Messiah*, “When a believer sins, he offends a righteous God, and that is why we still need the Messiah as our Advocate; in order to plead our cause.

The last thing to note about the Advocate is that the basic necessity of having an Advocate is to counteract the accusations of Satan. According to Revelation 12:10, Satan has the right to appear before the throne of God to accuse the brethren. Whenever a believer falls into a state of unconfessed sin, sooner or later, Satan will appear before the throne to accuse that believer before God the Father. That is why believers need the ministry of Yeshua as an Advocate: whenever Satan has any grounds for accusation, Jesus can then say, “Lay that sin upon my account; I have already paid for that sin when I died for that person on the cross.”

He doesn't excuse our behavior, He heaps it on Himself.

2. **Work – through the power of the Holy Spirit – to stop sinning** (one area at a time). In the Wiersbe Bible Commentary, Warren Wiersbe says, “John makes it clear that Christians do not **have** to sin. ‘I am writing these things to you that you **may not sin**’ 1 John 2:1. The secret of victory over sin is found in the phrase “walk in the light” (1 John 1:7):

*⁷ but if we [really] walk in the Light [that is, **live each and every day in conformity with the precepts of God**], as He Himself is in the Light, **we have [true, unbroken] fellowship with one another [He with us, and we with Him], and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin [by erasing the stain of sin, keeping us cleansed from sin in all its forms and manifestations] Amplified Bible (emphasis added mine)***

“To walk in the light means to be open and honest, to be sincere. The word sincere comes from two Latin words, sine and cera, which mean “without wax.” It seems that in Roman days, some sculptors covered up their mistakes by filling the defects in their marble statues with wax, which was not readily visible – until the statue had been exposed to the hot sun awhile. But more dependable sculptors made certain that their customers knew that the statues they sold were sine cera – without wax.

“To walk in the light means to be honest with God, with ourselves, and with others. It means that when the light reveals our sin to us, **we immediately confess it to God and claim His forgiveness.** And if our sin injures another person, we ask his forgiveness too.

But walking in the light means something else: it means obeying God’s Word (1 John 2:3-4). *‘Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path’* (Psalm 119:105). **To walk in the light means to spend time daily in God’s Word, discovering His will; and then obeying what He has told us.**

“Obedience to God’s Word is proof of our love for Him. There are **three motives for obedience.** **We can obey because we have to, because we need to, or because we want to.**

“A slave obeys because he has to. If he doesn’t obey, he will be punished. An employee obeys because he needs to. He may not enjoy his work, but he does enjoy getting his paycheck! He needs to obey because he has a family to feed and clothe. But **a Christian is to obey his heavenly father because he wants to** – for the relationship between him and God is one of love. *‘If you love me, keep my commandments,’* John 14:15

“This is the way we learned obedience when we were children. First, we obeyed because we had to. If we didn’t obey, we were spanked! But as we grew up, we discovered that obedience meant enjoyment and reward; so we started obeying because it met certain needs in our lives. **And it was a mark of real maturity when we started obeying because of love.**

“Baby Christians’ must constantly be warned or rewarded. Mature Christians listen to God’s Word and obey it simply because they love Him. Walking in the light involves honesty, obedience, and love.”

I don’t know about you, but I’m not “there yet” (sinless). So I am grateful that I have an Advocate (Jesus) and another helper (the Holy Spirit). It is my sincere belief that in them, by them, and through them, I will attain maturity. I believe: *I am convinced and confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will [continue to] perfect and complete it until the day of Christ Jesus [the time of His return].* Philippians 1:6

Maranatha, My Friends!