

THE BELLEVILLE MESSENGER

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“Honesty Is The Best Policy”

Although many today take the sin of lying lightly, we all need to understand the seriousness of it, and we need to avoid it. So, with that thought in mind let's consider a few reasons for why “honesty is the best policy.”

God Punishes Those Who Lie.

First of all, we need to recognize that “honesty is the best policy” simply because of the fact that God punishes those who lie. We learn about this truth in 2 Kings 5, when a man named Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, ran down Naaman to receive the gifts that Elisha declined to receive for healing the leprosy of Naaman. You see, Gehazi thought that he could receive the gifts from Naaman, and greatly gain without anyone knowing about. However, when Gehazi returned, Elisha asked, “Where did you go, Gehazi? Then Gehazi replied and said, “Your servant did not go anywhere” (2 Kings 5:25). However, Elisha the man of God, knew he had lied, and because Gehazi lied he and his descendants were punished with the leprosy disease forever (2 Kings 5:26-27).

Another example of God punishing those who lie is found in Acts 5. There, we read about Ananias and Sapphira who lied about keeping back part of the proceeds from the land they sold. Therefore, the apostle Peter would confront Ananias and ask, “...*why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...*” (Acts 5:3). In Acts 5:4, Peter still speaking to Ananias said, “*You have not lied to men but to God.*” After hearing those words Ananias fell to the ground and breathed his last (Acts 5:5). We go on to read were Ananias's wife Sapphira was also punished by death for lying (Acts 5:7-10).

You see, God hates lying (Proverbs 6:16-19), it is an abomination to Him (Proverbs 12:22). Therefore, He takes lying seriously, and just as He punished those of old who were guilty of lying, he will likewise eventually punish all those who are guilty of lying (Revelation 21:8).

The Bible Instructs Us Not To Lie To One Another.

We also need to understand that “honesty is the best policy” because the Bible, God's all inspired word (2 Timothy 3:16) instructs us to not lie. For instance, the apostle Paul, wrote “*Therefore, putting away lying, Let each one of you speak truth to his neighbor, for we are members of one another*” (Ephesians 4:25). Also, Paul, guided by the Holy Spirit, penned, “*Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds...*” (Colossians 3:9). Now, in the context of these two texts, Paul expresses that lying is not to be associated with the life of a Christian. Therefore, take heed to those inspired words my beloved brethren, and always strive to refrain from lying.

Liars Will Not Inherit An Eternal Home In Heaven.

Last, but certainly not least, we need to know that “honesty is the best policy” because of the fact that liars will not inherit an eternal home in heaven. John, in reference to a heavenly city revealed, “*But there shall by no means enter it anything that defiles, or causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lambs Book of Life*” (Revelation 21:27). You see, those who are guilty of lying will not dwell in the presence of God (Psalm 101:7). So, if liars will not inherit heaven, where will liars spend eternity? Well, John penned, “*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*” (Revelation 21:8). My friend, we learn that all liars will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and spend their eternity in hell. Therefore, refrain from lying, never forgetting that whoever loves and practices a lie will miss heaven, and make a direct hit on hell (Revelation 22:14-15).

Once more, beware of lying, and take it seriously. For, when we lie, we not only damage our reputation by not being respected as trustworthy, but more importantly we sin, and sin separates us from our God (Isaiah 59:2). Therefore, always remember, “Honesty Is The Best Policy.”

✍ Brad Phillips

Do We Lay It To Heart?

Every parent knows the difference in “Do I have to go?” and “Do I get to go?” “Do I have to go to bed?” means the child wants to stay up. “Do I get to go to the show?” means the child wouldn’t miss it for anything.

Isn’t it strange that some of us will wave those same clear signals with reference to the Lord’s service, and not see that we are being just as transparent as our children? “Do we have to go to Bible study?” says the same thing about our desires as it does when voiced by our child. When one asks, “How much must I give?” he is saying clearly, “I do not want to give anything, and would like to know how little will pay the bill.” Either that, or he has failed to grasp the most fundamental and essential element in the spirit of acceptable service unto God.

There can be no coming to Christ except we deny or give self (Matt 16:24). Translated into the context of “doing” this means we must first want to do all possible (100% committed) to serve the Lord. The proper spirit must motivate the doing, or it is shallow and empty --- may even be an abomination in His sight (Hos 6:6). God told the priests of Judaism, “If ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name...then will I send the curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart” (Mal. 2:2).

Lay it to heart! That means truly respect God; take Him seriously. The priests had offered polluted bread on the altar (1:7); offered blind and lame animals as sacrifice (1:8). They said of the worship, “What a weariness it is!” (1:13-14). To make this current, they said, “Do we have to go to worship?” “How much do we have to do, or give?” “Do it any old way, just get it over with; we want to go home to the TV.” And to top it off, when rebuked, they acted so innocent and said, “When did we ever do that?”

“Oh that there were one among you that would shut the doors, that ye might not kindle fire on mine altar in vain” (1:10). Better to close up shop - call it off - than to play at worship, and not “lay it to heart.”

✍ Robert F. Turner

Before You Leave

Many times it is observed that Christians have lost their zeal to be active in the local work and they often give the excuse that they didn’t feel appreciated, etc. Sometimes they become so discontented they finally quit assembling. Others may boldly say they want no part of being a faithful Christian anymore. Think!

Answer the question the Lord asked the apostles. Write the answer down to the question and address this note to Jesus. Here is the question Jesus asked, “Then said Jesus unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?” (John 6:67)

Write down the answer to the question the apostle Peter asked in response to Jesus’ question – “To whom shall we go?” Peter then answers his own question – “Thou has the words of eternal life!” (John 6:68).

Remember we each will stand before God to answer for our own actions (2 Cor. 5:10). If we forsake the Lord we surrender all hope of eternal salvation and force God to execute his wrath upon us (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

✍ John Craig

Belleville church of Christ

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Website: www.bellevillechurch.net

Schedule of Services

Sunday Bible Study	9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship	10:30 a.m.
Sunday Evening Worship	4:00 p.m.
Wednesday Bible Study	7:00 p.m.

Evangelist

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