Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Desire, Deceit, and the Descent of a Nation, Part 2
Scripture: Selected Scriptures
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As you know, last Sunday morning, I addressed the issue of the destructive sin of lying, and I really only got through the introductory part of that message, and this morning, I want to continue on that theme. We have been, in our country, overexposed, I would say, to the serious sin of lying and all the complications that it produces. We have all had our eyes on Washington, on the White House, on the President, with all that's been going on.

We know that the President has lied. He, himself, has confessed to that. He has, in effect, perjured himself in a court of law, which means disdain for the oath and the upholding of the law in our nation, and all of this has created a tremendous amount of stir in this country and an almost endless barrage of verbiage. And into the mix, I have desired to interject God's perspective on all of this, and I think that it's very important for us to have that.

Last week, we talked about the fact that, though the President has lied, and, of course, conducted himself in an adulterous fashion, this doesn't seem to bother people very much. His approval ratings have never been higher. In fact, it seems as though the more people know; the higher the ratings go. What is interesting to me about this is to see this in the perspective of the larger picture, and I think it is fair to say this.

In this western world in which we live, this western civilization of which we are a part, I believe we are watching the death of a once-great social civilization. I don't think this is some kind of anomaly. I don't think this is some kind of momentary aberration. I think this is the manifestation of a deep-seated problem that I could call the death of our civilization.

Whatever influences Judaism and Christianity; whatever influences the Bible had on western society are now behind us, and we are living in a time when the great civilization that we have known in the past has disappeared or is in the process of disappearing, and in its place is neo-paganism. It's as if we have come full circle, starting out in a pagan environment, being exposed to the Bible, the truth of God, developing a civilization based upon those things which are taught in the law of God in Scripture, coming to the place where we reject all of that and descending into a neo-paganism.

And the dominating notion of this neo-paganism is the idea, the philosophy, the thought that truth is not important. There are many things far more important than truth. Economics is more important than truth. Somehow, elevating the disenfranchised masses is more important than truth. Welfare is

more important than truth. Anything and everything is more important than truth. Whether someone tells the truth or not doesn't matter to us if it doesn't affect our jobs; if it doesn't affect our paycheck; if it doesn't affect our bank account; if it doesn't affect our economics.

Let's go this morning to Jeremiah, Chapter 5, and I want to bring you to the text that I think speaks to this in a very pointed way. To complete our perspective on this tragedy being played out before our eyes and ears, we turn to the Old Testament prophet, Jeremiah. Jeremiah wrote under the inspiration of God Himself, so that what he wrote is the very Word of God, and when you read the 5th Chapter of Jeremiah, you will find out what God thinks of a lying President, what God thinks of a nation of men and women who love to lie and who give high approval ratings to those who do.

Jeremiah, Chapter 5: Just a little bit of the background. God had been pronouncing judgment on Judah for a long time. Remember the nation Israel was divided after the reign of Solomon into two kingdoms. The northern kingdom was known as Israel. The southern kingdom was known as Judah. The southern kingdom had as its capital, of course, the City of Jerusalem, the City of God. Israel, the northern kingdom, had already gone into captivity. They had been taken captive by the Assyrians already, 722 B.C.; only Judah is left; Judah, the southern kingdom. They constitute the nation of Israel still in the land, and with their city of Jerusalem still in place, they have their king; they have their priests; they are still constituted as a nation.

However, God has, through the prophets, been telling them that because of their sin, they're going to be judged. They're going to be judged severely. They're going to be judged devastatingly. They're going to be . . . more than that, they're going to be destroyed. That's the scene. Jeremiah knows it, and Jeremiah preaches a message of judgment that the people do not want to hear. In fact, they so hate to hear Jeremiah that they eventually throw him in a pit and leave him to die. They reject what he says.

Chapter 5 then puts us at that very point where Jeremiah is addressing the coming judgment of God upon the nation of Judah and, in particular, the city of Jerusalem. This is how Chapter 5 begins: "Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem. See now and know and seek in her open places," for what? "If you can find a man; if there is one, anyone, who executes judgment, who seeks the truth, and I will pardon her."

Do you want to know what the problem in Judah was? Nobody told the truth. It, too, was a nation of liars. God says, "Jeremiah, go through Jerusalem. Just find one person who speaks the truth, who operates justly, and I will pardon Jerusalem." Boy, is that magnanimous? Is that gracious if there's just one who seeks the truth? He's not talking about theology here. He's not talking about doctrinal truth. He's not talking about accurate interpretation of Scripture. He's talking about general honesty, truthfulness, integrity.

Can you find just one person? Make a search. Find one person, just one who's truthful. Just produce one man who's not a liar. Just produce one man who doesn't operate on an unjust basis. In Verse 3, Jeremiah responds, "O, Lord, are not Your eyes on the truth?" You're the only one that can find that person. That's what he's saying. "Lord, You are the one who can look to see if such a truthful person exists." Well, those two verses alone demonstrate the situation. Here's a nation under judgment for sin.

And I told you last week that I believe this nation is under the judgment of God, as indicated in Romans, Chapter 1 because God has given us over to sexual sin, Romans 1:24, given us over to homosexuality, Romans 1:26, and given us over to a reprobate mind, Romans 1:28-32, and we not only do these wicked things, but we approve of those who practice them. The people who are practicing these sins characteristic of a reprobate mind get high approval ratings in our nation. I believe that Judah was in that same situation. They were under the judgment of God. God was promising them judgment, promising them destruction because of their sin. Jerusalem was wicked. Jerusalem was rotten to the core. At the very heart, on the surface, it looked religious. At the hearts it was wretched. The nation was filled with lies. There wasn't anybody who was honest. They couldn't find anybody in the city who was honest. Lying had become a way of life. Deception, in all its forms, was the very fabric of society. It was as if the fabrication of society was the weaving together of threads of lies and deceit.

Go over to Verse 27, and you see that in some sort of graphic terminology. Using a different metaphor, the prophet says in Verse 27, "As a cage is full of birds, so their houses are full of deceit." Like a cage just crowded with birds, their houses are just jammed with deceit. There were deceptions, lies, schemes, plots, tricks, and they were moving in the minds of the people like many birds in a crowded cage. Their heads were just full of deceptions. Every evil purpose was being devised, and even so; go back to the beginning of the chapter. Even so, God graciously would have spared His beloved Jerusalem if they could find somebody who wasn't a liar.

I am not surprised that a liar has a high approval rating. We have a nation of liars, a culture of liars. There's no interest in the truth. Honesty, integrity, truthfulness; we don't hold those up as virtues, to say nothing of adultery. That's the most common sin; everybody participates. We shouldn't be surprised at all. Neo-paganism simply played out, maybe, before our eyes, in a way that it's never been played out before. Stark and sad, isn't it? But this is America. This is this nation. I believe that that's why we can safely say we are experiencing the judgment of God as defined in Romans, Chapter 1, and Judah was about to experience the judgment of God in the Babylonian captivity and the devastating death that occurred to the nation at that point.

So that's how I see us now, under the judgment of God, a nation of liars, and God may be saying, "Is there somebody somewhere who tells the truth here?" Now, the sin of lying is never isolated. It's

never isolated.You're going to see that in the chapter. It's not just a lying problem. You see, lying is a means by which you cover up other sin, right? The sin of lying is never isolated. It is inseparable from a myriad of companion sins that exists to cover up, and we've seen that played out. The reason the President lied was to cover up his sin, right? That's pretty typical.

Let me tell you something. Spurgeon; whenever I read Spurgeon, I'm amazed at his insights, tremendous insights, profound insights, and on one occasion, he wrote this, and this is one of those very profound insights that he was capable of making. He said this: "When a heart is untruthful; when honesty has gone from it;" in other words, when it's characteristically untruthful; when it is habitually a deceptive heart; when it lies as a pattern of life, he said, "then it is prepared to be the seed plot of every evil thing. Any crime is possible to a liar. He who is wroughten with falsehood will break at the touch of every temptation." That is a profound insight and absolutely accurate.

You see, if you are an inveterate liar; if you are a liar by practice and habit and profession, and if you have trained yourself to be good at it, you don't ever fear getting caught. You don't ever fear getting confronted because you're so adept at lying, and the absence of that fear of confrontation removes a great barrier to temptation. Let me tell you what I mean. If you're devoted to the truth; if you're committed to truth and speaking truthfully and being honest, you are restrained in temptations because you're afraid that somebody might ask you about your life.

Somebody might ask you about your behavior, and you really don't want to lie, and so that disdain for lying; that reluctance to be put in a position to have to lie becomes a restraint in the time of temptation. You see, for a person whose heart has been cultivated to being truthful; the thought of lying produces fear, guilt, shame, apprehension, anxiety. You know, some people just wouldn't make good liars.

I have an aversion to lying. My parents developed it in me with rather painful means. They established the love of the truth, the commitment to the truth; it was clear that we were honest and truthful about everything, and to tell a lie was to bring upon yourself severe, painful consequences. So I never developed into being a very good liar. If I ever took a lie detector test and tried to lie, I'd probably blow the machine up, the thing would go so high. Everything would start moving, my eyes, my ears, my feet, my hands. I don't do that very well. The very fact that I love the truth and the very fact that I fear lying is a restraint in my life because I don't want to have to confess to some things. That becomes a help to me in temptation, but, you see, one who is very skilled in lying, who shows absolutely no guilt, no anxiety, can simply, with clear eyes and a clear face and a steady hand, point a finger and say, without wavering, "I never had sex relations with that woman." He's good at that, practiced at it. You see, when you can do that, then the restraint is off from so many temptations that you're so good at covering up.

Parents, let me tell you something. In the parenting process, teach your children to tell the truth. Don't ever let them get away with a lie. Make the consequence for lying more severe than any other consequence. I used to tell my children; in fact, I remember a particular child, who will remain nameless in order that I might continue to visit my grandchildren. Don't be guessing. I told my children . . . I can remember one particular conversation, "I'm telling you, your punishment will be ten times worse if I find out you're lying than if you tell me the truth." It wasn't that I was mad. It wasn't that I was angry. It was that if there's anything I wanted to provide for that child, it was the fear of lying because that is a restraint. You understand that? That is a restraint in temptation.

You want, in your training and your educating of your children, to provide so much emphasis in this area that you produce a truthful person, who has a strong aversion to lying, and; therefore, has some strength against the strong impulses in his or her fallen nature to lie, and if he or she is restrained from lying, they're; therefore, going to be restrained from doing sins that they would have to lie about to cover up. The love of truth, the fear of lying is a critical part of God-honoring righteous character.

You see, on the other hand, where there's no fear of lying, then lying is an option all the time to cover up everything, and you can be sure that if the truth were known, someone who is a good liar has all kinds of other sins all over the place. Telling the truth and learning to love the truth and hate to lie is a barrier to iniquity, and when you remove that barrier, then every sin finds its place, and the liar is thereby the most unrestrained person of all.

Now, as I said, lying is not isolated. There are all kinds of sins that liars commit and cover up with their lies. Look what happened in this text. Verse 1 indicates there was no justice. Verse 2 indicates perjury; liars don't mind perjuring themselves. They say, "As the Lord lives, surely they," what? "Swear falsely." "I promise, before God, to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," and then they proceed to lie, so they commit the sins of injustice. They abuse people. They commit the sin of perjury. They make an oath to God. They swear by His name, as in our law courts today, and with that sacred name called as witness to their truthfulness, they lie blatantly.

That's what the President did in the Paula Jones deposition and in the testimony from the map room to the Grand Jury; took an oath, and then lied. Swearing falsely by the name of God is pretty serious stuff, isn't it? That's why the founders of this nation put it in the oath, but it's only serious if you understand who God is and if you believe in the God who is, indeed, witnessing. But a liar will not stop short of perjury, even if he carries a Bible and claims to believe in the true God.

Verse 3: "O, Lord, are not Your eyes on the truth?" In other words, you're going to have to find somebody who tells the truth; the prophet can't. "You've stricken them. They haven't grieved. You've consumed them. They have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than rock. They have refused to return."

You know, liars can become very, very obstinate. You know why? Because if they ever admit anything, it means they're going to wind up opening up the can of worms, and everything is going to come out. They lie to cover up so much. God had brought some chastening. God had stricken them. They weren't grieved. God had promised them judgment. They refused to receive his correction. They made their faces harder than rock. They refused to return. "I'm going to fight this. I'm going to resist this." That kind of attitude, we've seen in this situation as well, so liars can become obstinate because there's so much at stake if they ever really started telling the truth. Liars are unfaithful to God.

Look at Verse 4: "Therefore, I said, 'Surely these are the poor. They are foolish because they don't know the way of the Lord and the judgment of their God.'" We must be talking about poor people here, God. It must be all these poor people that are liars. Well, I'll go to the great men and speak to them. Now, we're talking about the leaders. "I'll go to the leaders. I'll go to the head people. I'll go to the people in charge of this nation, for they have known the way of the Lord, the judgment of their God." You know what? "These," Verse 5 says, "have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds," of what? Of the law of God. They're as guilty as the poor.

It's not just the poor; it's not just the masses; it's not just the hoi polloi; it's not just all the folks out there who are lying all the time in life. It's the leaders too. They're unfaithful to God, both the poor and the rich, both the common and the uncommon, and they're also not only unfaithful to God, but they're unfaithful to their marriage partners. Look at Verse 7. We expect this. "How shall I pardon you for this? Your children have forsaken Me and sworn by those that are not gods. When I had fed them to the full, then they committed adultery and assembled themselves by troops in the harlots' houses. They were like well-fed, lusty stallions. Everyone neighed after his neighbor's wife. Shall I not punish them for these things," says the Lord, "and shall I not avenge Myself on such a nation as this," where everybody is unfaithful to the marriage partnership, where everybody is like a stallion lusting after his neighbor's wife, where everybody is assembled together in huge troops, marching, as it were, in mass into the harlots' houses? They've committed adultery, forsaking Me. How shall I pardon you for this? How can I just overlook this," God says. Their corruption shows up in their relationship to God. Their corruption shows up in their relationship to their marriage partners. Liars are corrupt everywhere.

Verse 10: "Go up on her walls and destroy and do not make a complete end." You know, there is yet a future for the nation, Israel, so their judgment is not completely given here. God has, in the future, the salvation of Israel in mind, yet to take place in the future, when the Lord Jesus comes. "Take away her branches. They're not the Lord's, for the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously with Me," says the Lord. "I blessed them. I put them in a land of milk and honey; that didn't work. They were indifferent, and, eventually, they cursed me, so I chastened them. I sent enemies to punish them. Now, I'm sending an enemy to bring a great destruction," and what's their response?

Verse 12: "They have lied about the Lord and said, 'It's not He.'" What is that? They denied the providences of God. They denied that God was even involved. They were false to God. They were false to their marriage partners. They were false to the providences of God. They didn't give God any credit for what was good, and they didn't give God any credit for what was bad. When things started to fall apart, they didn't look to God to see what His providential working was. They just said, "It's not God. It's just bad luck, unfair, chance." They didn't see the Hand of God in anything. They didn't see the purpose of God in anything. "That's not God." They didn't even recognize God, no matter what He did. "Neither will evil come upon us nor shall we see sword or famine." They said, "Everything's going to be fine. This will all turn around." And the prophets didn't help. The prophets "become wind, for the Word is not in them. Thus shall it be done to them."

The prophets were just hovering around, blowing hot air. I wish the right prophet could get into Washington and say what needs to be said. I don't know what all these supposed religious counselors are saying, but it would be nice if they sounded like Jeremiah. "It's not God," they said. "This isn't God." This whole universe is nothing but an accident. I mean, this is all because of evolution, and there's no such thing as God intervening. It's just the way things go. Sometimes, the ball bounces that way. They were practical atheists.

And they did have a god, but you remember, they created the god of their own making. Verse 19: "They forsook the true God and served foreign gods," and those, of course, are gods that are made in their own image, like I told you last time. The God of man, today, is the god that he meets every morning in the mirror. "Good morning, god," he says, and he invents him to believe exactly the way he believes. You know, the President said, "This is between our family and our God," and his god is pro-abortion, pro-homosexuality, pro-feminism, pro-lesbianism, pro-adultery, pro-hypocrisy, pro-deception, pro . . . that's not the God of the Bible. That's the god of the mirror, who's perfectly happy with the way you're living your life, so lying is not isolated.

It just spreads everywhere, and it assaults God and His part, and it assaults all relationships; most notably here, of course, the marriage relationship. And liars are not isolated either. Their deceit becomes the destroyer of others. Go down to Verse 26, just a brief mention there. "For among My people are found wicked men, and they lie in wait as one who sets snares. They set a trap to catch men." I mean, the whole idea of lying is just to trap people, to catch people for your own benefit. They become the destroyer of others.

Lying leaders; boy, that's so sad, lying at the level of the most high-profile leadership in the world. Lying leaders are effective, you know, in having their lips drop moral plagues among the young, say nothing of among everybody. Lying leaders should be put in everlasting quarantine, shut up like lepers, lest they infect the rising race with their corruption. "They are the creators of sin in others," Spurgeon said. But such was Jeremiah's day, and such is ours. The scepter in the land; the rule of

the land is carried by liars, deceivers. That's okay with us. We're all liars too, but judgment is present.

I don't know what God's going to do, but He hasn't changed His rules. Go back to Verse 14 of Jeremiah 5, and let me just give you a little look at the judgment that God brought upon Israel, upon Judah. "Because you speak this word," He says, "I will make My words in your mouth fire and this people wood." And the Word of God is going to come out the mouth of Jeremiah. It's going to be like a fire to burn the people. "I'll bring a nation," that's Babylon, "against you from afar, O, house of Israel," says the Lord. "It's a mighty nation. It's an ancient nation, a nation whose language you do not know nor can you understand what they say. Their quiver is like an open tomb, and they're almighty men. They shall eat up your harvest and your bread, which your sons and daughters should eat. They shall eat up your flocks and your herds; they shall eat up your vines and your fig trees; they shall destroy your fortified cities, in which you trust, with the sword."

This is the Babylonian terrible, terrifying destruction, after which they were carried off into captivity, you know, for over 70 years.

In Verse 20, He says, "Declare again, Jeremiah. Say this to the people in this in the house of Jacob. Proclaim it in Judah, saying, 'Here this now, O, foolish people, without understanding, who have eyes and see not, who have ears and hear not. Do you not fear Me,' says the Lord. 'Will you not tremble at my presence, who have placed the sand as the bound of the sea by a perpetual decree; that it cannot pass beyond it? And though its waves toss it to and fro, yet they cannot prevail. Though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it.'"

See, God is saying, "You better listen to me. You better respond to Me. You better fear Me. I am the God who controls the universe. I am the God who determined the boundaries of the sea. I am the God who determined the land and sea." You see, once you reject that and you buy the evolutionary lie, then God is just a fantasy. "You better fear Me. I'm the God who controls the universe." But Verse 23 says, "This people has a defiant and rebellious heart. They've revolted and departed. They do not say in their heart, 'Let us now fear the Lord our God, the one who gives rain, both the former and the latter, in its season, who reserves for us the appointed weeks of the harvest.'" We don't want to pay any attention to God. We're not going to fear God. Your iniquities have turned these things away, and your sins have withheld good from you.

We read those two verses, 26 and 27. Go to Verse 28. It says, "They've grown fat; they are sleek; they're prosperous; the economics are good," similar to our situation. Yes, they surpass the deeds of the wicked; they do not plead the cause, the cause of the fatherless. They're more wicked than the wicked. They don't care about the needy; sad situation. And I think this is the promise of God, of coming judgment on a nation of liars.

I don't know what God's purposes are in the future, but this is characteristic of our time as well, and I expect the judgment of God. Doesn't mean that people aren't going to be converted. Doesn't mean that God can't be merciful and gracious. The gospel is still to be preached to the ends of the earth until we can't preach it any longer.

But the judgment will fall, and certainly, it will fall eternally on those who reject the true God. As I said last time, I really believe that what we're seeing played out in Washington with our President is symbolic of divine judgment on our nation. It sounds to me like Romans 1. It sounds to me like Jeremiah 5, but lying is useless because God sees through it, and lying is destructive because it brings judgment. Just find me one truthful man, apart from Josiah, apart from Baruch, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, who were the Men of God. Find me somebody outside that little circle of faithful men. Find me somebody, one leader, somebody, somewhere who tells the truth; just somebody. Deceptive corruption was so widespread, they couldn't find anybody. Jeremiah stood aside at this point at the end of the chapter, as if to view the moral wreckage, as astonished and horrified by what he saw.

Look at Verses 30 and 31. "An astonishing and horrible thing has been committed in the land. The prophets prophesy falsely. The priests rule by their own power." Now, look, folks, the prophets and the priests really were the ones that ran the country. It was a theocracy. They were the leaders of the land, and they were liars, and they were popular. "My people," what? "Love to have it so." If they'd have taken a poll, they'd have had very high approval ratings. But what will you do in the end? What are you going to do about judgment? Those responsible for being the moral backbone of the country had spinelessly defected to deceit, and treacherously disobeyed the laws of God. They were liars. Jeremiah was astonished. I suppose he could have expected to find it among the hoi polloi, the crowd, but at the leadership level?

We keep complaining about all the money that's being spent in Washington by the special prosecutors. It's all being spent for one reason, to uncover the liars, and millions more are being spent by the liars to cover themselves up, and so it goes the game. These are sad times, beloved, and I say this now.

I'm not in despair about this because the darker the night, the brighter the light, right? It just calls on us to be light bearers, doesn't it? This is a time to speak the truth. Speak truthfully. Be an honest person. Be without hypocrisy, without duplicity. This is a time to call for truth. If there was genuine repentance . . . they ask me all the time on the radio, "Do you think this repentance is genuine?" If there was genuine repentance, there would be an admission of the truth of everything.

Well, let me close with getting practical here. What do we mean by lying? I don't want you to get so carried away that you become irrational about this.

We don't mean kidding for fun. That's not lying. You say something just for fun to someone. We don't mean a mistake because someone said something, and it turned out later not to be true, but they thought it was true. That's not something that could be indicated to be a lie. That's just a mistake that you made inadvertently, and we're not talking about fiction. Some people think that you shouldn't write a book on fiction because that's not the truth. That's not what we're talking about. There's a place for stories; they have purposes, and even Jesus made them up.

We're not talking about figurative language. If you say, you know, "I was so and so, and it was the greatest experience in all the world." We understand what you mean. You don't want to say to someone, "Oh, you're a liar." You can't prove that. I mean, give them a little space. We have to have a little room for hyperbole in figurative language. We don't mean politeness, and, sometimes, politeness calls for restraining yourself from saying what might be true. Like you try to teach your children; there's a lady coming over who has a huge nose; don't comment. Politeness does restrain us.

Kindness? Holding back what is unnecessary or harmful for another's sake. There are things that you don't need to say. Proverbs 11, Verse 13, I think, is worth remembering because it's sort of basic to common courtesy is what it says. "He who is of a faithful spirit conceals a matter." You know, it's just, some things, you don't talk about. That's not lying. What is lying then?

Here are some practical things, just real simple. Direct untruth: Saying something that is not true. Half-truth? That's a lie. I'd rather they call it a half-lie. It's a lie intended to cover up or mislead.

Perjury: Saying something that is not true under oath. That's compounding your lying because, now, you've called God to be your witness, and you've sworn falsely against God, which, according to Scripture, is a very serious thing.

Exaggeration: You know, this is the 50th time you've told the story, and it's now greater than it ever has been before.

Boasting: That can be lying. You're speaking about your exploits, and each time you speak, the feats are greater than they were the last time.

Flattery: Flattery is saying something untrue about a person to gain something from them.

Slander, Gossip: Passing on things that are partially true or not true or miscasting someone.

False spirituality, false Humility, hypocrisy, deceptive behavior, deceitful promises to God, like Ananias and Sapphira. Those are the kind of things that are lies. Now, somebody's going to ask the question, "Isn't there a time when it's okay to lie?" I've heard so many people say, "Well, there are

some times when you have to lie." No. I don't think there's any time when you have to lie.

You say, "What about Rahab? Rahab lied, and God commended her." God commended her for her faith. God commended her for her act toward those spies. God did not commend her for her lie. God hates lies. You say, "Yeah, but if she hadn't have lied, then the spies would have been discovered, and all of the history of Israel would have changed." No. You think God is reduced to such impotence that He is dependent on the lie of a harlot to achieve His eternal purposes? Come on. If she'd have said, "Oh, the spies? They're on the roof. They're hidden up there." Who knows what wonders God would have performed.

There's an interesting story that Corrie Ten Boom tells about some people hiding Jews. They had a kitchen table, the legs of which were stuck to the floor, nailed to the floor, and the floor was a trap door, so there was a carpet nailed there, and there was a table nailed there, and you could just push the table up, and up would come the trap door, and down there were all the Jews, and as the story goes, the Germans came to the door and came in the house, and they said, "We believe you're hiding Jews. Where are they," to which the owner of the house said, "They're under the table." And the Germans thought they were so foolish, they were mocking them and left. You don't have to say how far under the table.

It's amazing how God can work, isn't it? It's amazing. God will achieve His purposes. You remember when David wanted to escape from the Philistine king? He was afraid that he was going to lose his life, and so in order for him to escape, he had to do something ridiculous, and so he acted as if he had lost his mind, and he began to scratch the walls like a maniac, and he began to drool and dribble all over his beard and play the part of a madman, and the king said, "You know, we've got enough of those around here. Get rid of this one." And David goes off, and he's in a cave in the wilderness, and he says to God, "What am I doing? Why would I ever do that? Didn't I believe that You could have delivered me?"

I'm just convicted enough about the love of the truth that I think, whatever the situation, you don't have to necessarily say all that there is to say about something, but you don't want to speak untruthfully, and then watch God do what only He can do. Truthfulness is priceless. It thwarts Satan. It pleases God. It removes judgment. And one final thing: It is those who tell the truth who will be in Heaven. Revelation 21:27: I have to read it to you. Looking at the glorious Heaven; "There shall, by no means, enter it anyone that defiles, causes an abomination or a lie, but only those who are written in the Lamb's Book of Life."

Liars don't go to Heaven. Revelation 22, Verse 15, the city, the great New Jerusalem: "Outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters and whoever loves and practices lying." Liars: Those who, by nature, are liars; those who, by character, are liars; those who, by pattern of life, are liars, though there are all of us as Christians, who have been transformed from

darkness to light, who have come to love the truth.

There are occasions when we may sink to the sin of lying or deceiving, but that's not the pattern of our life. That's not the normal practice. The normal thing is to love God. The lie is the exception, but those who continually love and practice lying aren't going to be in Heaven; serious issue from the President on down. This is where you have to start in the discussion. Someone who is an inveterate, chronic liar, by life pattern, needs to understand that that person is not a citizen of God's kingdom, right?

I hope whoever these spiritual counselors are that are talking to the President; that they show him these passages in Revelation. Such people are outside the hope of Heaven. Heaven belongs to those who have been transformed to love the truth. It's not something we decided to do. It's something God wrought in us. Truthfulness is priceless. It not only removes judgment; it promises Heaven. I hope you're a person of the truth, transformed by faith in Jesus Christ. Let's pray.

Father, we do pray for our President. We pray for all in leadership in this nation. We just pray, Lord, that there would be a turning to you; that there would be a reaffirmation of the truth, the truth of the Gospel, truth in general, honesty, integrity. Lord, we are a nation of liars in a world of liars. Oh, Father, how we pray that Your great grace would break the bonds of the sin of lying; that You would deliver our President, our leaders, any of us in bondage, speaking lies from birth because of our fallenness.

Father, I pray that You would bring great conviction of sin, which is so difficult for one who lies because they're so skilled at covering. Father, I just pray that You would do a mighty work in the heart of the President and all others who are caught up in lying. Any of us in the hearing of this message, Lord, who are outside the kingdom and have no hope for eternal life will never enter Your Heaven because we love and practice lying. Lord, forgive us. Grant us salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and make us a people who love the truth and speak truth. Help us to shine, indeed, as lights in the darkness. For Your honor, we pray. Amen.

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