

Putting Off Lying

Sermons on Ephesians

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Bible Text: Ephesians 4:25

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“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.” Ephesians 4:25

We come this morning to the preaching text, Ephesians 4:25. Last week we considered a text which encompassed all the way from verse 17 down to verse 24. I did so because we have a united whole within those verses, in which, as you heard, the Lord charges us to not walk in Gentile darkness but rather, to walk in Christian light. We considered that the person of the Lord Jesus and his gospel are opposed to iniquity, and how in the person of Christ lies all power, the *only* power that there is to put off and mortify the deeds of the body. We considered this great theme of the Christian life, which has two parts—that of putting off the old man, and that of putting on the new.

Truly there is much to absorb within those verses. And partly because of how much there is to absorb, I want to intentionally slow down this morning, and bring to you a concrete instance that has to do with putting away lying. I want, in fact, to slow down to the point where we will just consider the *putting off*, and then Lord-willing next week consider what we are to *put on* to the contrary. The reason I want to do so is because this matter of mortifying sin by the Spirit and drawing by faith from Christ, is a spiritual mystery that is contrary to our natural way of thinking about how sin should be mortified—and so it bears repetition. Also, we tend to be more affected by things that are concrete and specific than by things that are general.

When you hear “put off the old man and put on the new,” you might wonder, what does that mean? So here we come to a specific divine injunction to “put away lying.” It’s interesting—this is the very first particular thing that the apostle names, when he speaks of putting off the old man. When he was speaking of the unbelieving Gentiles, we noticed how much he emphasizes their vanity, their blindness, their darkened understanding, their absolute absence of truth within. And the new man by contrast is said to be “after God created in righteousness and true holiness.” So the last word in verse 24 is that of *truth*. And so, there’s a natural progression to why he now commands us to put away *lying*.

We were considering last time that the Lord commands us to put off the *old man*—why is the body of sin called an “old man”? That’s because of Adam, the First Man. And it’s through Adam that the old man has been propagated to us. He’s called a man because it’s not just one member or another, but a *complete body* of sin. It’s sobering to consider this, but how was the old man “begotten,” if you will? The seed by which the old man was begotten was a *lie*. You remember in the garden, how the Tempter told a lie, a lie first of all about the word of God: “Yea hath God said?” And also, a lie about God’s character: “God knows when you eat your eyes will be opened and you will become as gods.” The world is the way that it is, as Martyn-Lloyd Jones rightly said, because of a lie. And that gives a priority, a kind of zeal, to the spirit of a Christian, whereby he is determined in some sense as the first order of business, to put away lying.

So what truth is God teaching us this morning, even simply in the first few words of verse 25? *Through his knowledge off and abiding in Christ by faith, that the believer must put off and mortify all lying.* I want to do several things to unfold that.

The first will be to give you the EXPLANATION of this duty.

What does it mean “Wherefore putting away lying”? Let me give you some things that are not lying. So for instance, *a just concealment [of the truth]* should not be accounted lying. There are concealments that would be unjust, as for instance if a lawful authority demands to know certain things that are within the purview of his oversight of us, then we are required to disclose; but especially when it comes to enemies. We are not under obligation to tell them everything we know. So Samuel is told by the Lord to go and anoint David, and he says “but Saul will kill me if he finds out.” The Lord tells him, “bring a sacrifice with you and say that you’re going to offer a sacrifice.” And so he did, and when he said, “I’m here to offer sacrifice,” it was the truth. It wasn’t *everything* that Samuel knew, but Samuel was

not under obligation, particularly in view of danger. He had no obligation to say everything. So it shouldn't be accounted as lying when there is a just concealment of information.

Likewise, one who makes an *expression of their sincere future intention* should not be accounted as lying. Like the angels who came to Lot, and Lot says, "Come into my house," and they say "No, we will stay in the street," and he insists and they come in. We shouldn't say they lied when they said they were going to sleep in the street. We shouldn't say that Paul lied when he told the Corinthians, "I'm going to come visit you," but then later he said "I'm not coming to visit now because I'm going to spare you all the difficult things I'd have to deal with if I came right now." So, we should apply that standard to others. If they're sincerely expressing their future intent, oftentimes that is with the understanding "barring some unforeseen circumstance" I will do this or the other. So we shouldn't account that to be lying.

We shouldn't account it to be lying if *an allegory is employed or a parable*. Even as our Lord Jesus did, in which the letter of the allegory or parable is nonfactual, but yet the sense inculcated is in fact the truth. Also there is some place for the use of irony. For instance Elijah to the priests of Baal, as they're calling on Baal: "Cry aloud, for he is a god, maybe he's asleep and you need to wake him up." And so taken strictly according to the letter, Elijah said the opposite of the truth, Baal is not a god; but Elijah actually promoted the truth by saying the opposite. And it was obvious that this was his intent, and so on. So a proper use of irony should not be counted as lying.

That said, what *is* God telling us to put away? What is a lie? Or, as we could also render this, a "falsehood." And notice that he tells us, "Putting away lying, speak every man truth to his neighbor." So God's requirement is that we absolutely eliminate untrue content from our speech, that what we speak not be false. And there are two big categories of lies. The first is the *mental* lie, in which the tongue doesn't agree with the heart. The heart thinks one thing and the tongue says another. There is, however, another category of lie, the Bible calls it a lie. The *material* lie, which is not that there's a discord between what is thought or believed and what is said, but there is a discord between what is said and what is factual. So that this *material* lie may be a *sincere* lie, but it is still a *lie*. The Lord tells the Ephesian church, Revelation 2 that they had "tried those who said they were apostles, and who are not, and had found them liars." Now there cannot be any conceivable process, that I can think of, in a church court where you could—apart from someone saying, "I said X but I really thought the opposite of X,"—the only thing that could be demonstrated by evidence would be the material lie. That when

they said “We’re apostles,” they were lying—they might have really thought that they were apostles, but rather the facts and the evidence demonstrate that what they said was false and therefore a lie.

Now here’s why I’m insisting on this. There’s a danger today that you might let this all sail over your head and say, “Why insist on this? Why do I need to be told to put away lying?” You may have overlooked the importance of this second category of lies, the material lie. The best of men in this life has a *huge reservoir of remaining ignorance*. There is a lot of stuff you do not know, and there are remaining errors in your heart and mind. Those remaining errors and ignorance stand ready at any moment to betray you into lying. Until you can say, “I know all truth perfectly and have no errors remaining within”—until you can say that, you cannot say, “I am past the need actively and daily to put off lying.”

Other categories of lies: what God is forbidding here includes both the *pernicious* lie and the *officious* lie. Pernicious—that’s obvious, a lie told with a malicious intent to harm someone. But God is also forbidding us the officious lie, the so-called dutiful or charitable lie. The reason why I believe that God forbids us the officious lie is because he simply says, without any limitation, “Putting away lying (falsehood).” What’s evil in its nature cannot be amended by its supposed end or purpose. We would not reason in other cases that something that is repugnant to the nature of God in and of itself, like a falsehood is, is justifiable by its intent. So we would not say, there’s a need to publish Bibles, so therefore we will steal someone’s money in order to publish Bibles. Don’t you know how important it is to have Bibles? Their souls could be ruined if they don’t have Bibles, and so we’ll steal money. Obviously we wouldn’t reason that way. And also if we look at history, we could see how much David’s lies to Achish got him in trouble. Then he sent Hushai, who made false statements to Absalom—but what trouble could have followed from that, if Hushai’s advice had been followed in such a way that David would have been killed by the large army that Hushai told Absalom to amass and go after David? So for these reasons the Lord tells us also to put off the so called officious or dutiful lie.

But now that we understand what is a lie, what is it to *put it off*? That’s God’s command: “wherefore putting away lying.” Now God tells you to put away lying *as lying*. To put it away because it is sinful before God. He does not say, put away the consequences of lying or shame of lying. All of us are influenced by that—praise the Lord, that there’s a kind of shame attached to lying. We would be embarrassed to be found out in a lie. But God says put it away as lying, as sin before God. Not only put away the *act* of lying but also the *lust* of lying. Because,

notice in this whole section how he's telling us that the thing that we need to do is put off the old man, that is the body of sin that remains within, the corruption that remains within. Suppose a dam has leaks—we need to not only put our thumbs in the holes in the dam—we need to not only stop the outflowing of this or that act of lying—but we need to dry up the fountain itself, kill the old man.

What member of the old man are we talking about? Lying is the *tongue* of the old man. We need to not rest from our warfare until we have laid the axe to the root of the tress and we have mortified the lust of lying. This is an act of the whole man, an act of the tongue which is the outward member by which the lie could be told. But also, the *mind* needs to be involved in putting away lying, so that falsehoods are not contemplated or remain in the fancy and imagination, but rather, what the mind holds on to and meditates upon is truth, truth, truth. The lying needs to be put away with the *will*, that God calls you to refuse the evil. This is the Christian's way, the believer's way of putting off lying. And it's different from what appears to be mortification in something that an unregenerate man would do, in which his will still loves lying, and his will is still pleased with lying, but his conscience comes and lashes him and stings him. So in his will he loves falsehood, but he dares not step very far along the path of outwardly telling falsehoods because of his conscience and his sense of the anger and wrath of God against liars. You see the Christian is different from that—he puts away lying with his will. He refuses lying and hates it as sin, he puts it off with his affections. He hates and despises it. When Job came to his lowest point of humiliation, when he said “Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes,” what was he repenting for? “Because I've spoken words without knowledge.” He spoke what wasn't true, and he abhorred himself for the lying lust that expressed itself in his ignorant words. That's what God calls you to—put off lying. That's an explanation of the duty.

Next consider the DIFFICULTY of this duty.

This is a hard duty, putting away lying. You can see that it's difficult by looking at the world and the people around us. If we were to ask someone on the street, “Do you think a liar is a despicable person?” Ten out of ten would say yes, a liar is a despicable person. However, the world runs on lying. Half-truths, play-acting and show—everyone says they hate lying but everyone's doing it, apart from the grace of God. That demonstrates for us that the light of nature is quite clear on this point—the purpose for which God has given you a tongue and mouth is so you might speak what is *true*. Otherwise we may as well grunt and groan like animals. Why should we have lips if not to speak what is true? So everyone understands that at some level but yet it goes no distance at all towards making the world a truthful

place. That shows us this is hard, this is a gospel duty. This is what can only be done by the Spirit of God.

Another manifestation that this is difficult is that most professed Christians, or many, are ignorant of how much work they need to do in this area. To hear a sermon to saints, to brethren in the Lord, chosen by God before the foundation of the world, the ones to whom Ephesians is written—to hear a sermon that you have a continual duty to be putting away lying, I fear there are many who would say, “What? Not me, I’ve conquered this one, I don’t have work in this area, that’s for someone else.” However, just to meet that head on, let me tell you this. If you say “I don’t have much work to do” and “This is for someone else,” my friend, you have just told a lie. You are a liar, if that’s what you say. Because what you are saying isn’t true. God says, you saints, you’ve got work to do. Here’s what I want you to do, put away lying. And the truthful man begins by saying, “Yes, Lord. I have work to do. And I will by thy grace do this work.”

Let me illustrate it for you more. Why is it that you have so much work to do? Continual work to do? It is because the old man is still there in the believer. The old man, a fully formed body of sin with a multitude of members, a multitude of strong lusts that are ready at any moment to betray into a lie, is there within—though crucified in Christ, and we’ll consider this. But there is remaining in the believer a *proud* lust. Your proud lust stands ready at any moment to betray you into lying. When you are telling a story, your proud lust will whisper within and say, “Put that touch of exaggeration on the story to get more attention unto yourself.” And you have just lied, if you obey the proud lust. There is a *covetous* lust that wants to grab, take hold of, and hoard. When you enter into bargaining and buying, selling and dealing as we must do in this world, the covetous lust will come and say about the thing you’re selling, “Exaggerate its value a little bit.” Or when you’re buying something: “Portray yourself as poor, poorer than you are. Twist the story a little bit to get buyer to come down on the price. Say, ‘You wouldn’t believe how many times I’ve lost this and that.’” The covetous lust betrayed you into lying. There’s an *angry* lust within that gets heated up and flows from the proud lust. This angry lust is ready to betray you into lying. In the heat of friction, the angry lust will tempt you to overreach the mark of truth. Because you want to hit someone, you will push words farther than truth will warrant, and you’ve just lied. There is a *fearful* lust within, because the saint is not yet perfected in the fear of God. If we were perfected in the fear of God, we would have less temptation of lying. But Sarah lied through fear. The Lord came to her tent and said, “Sarah will have a child at the time of life,” and she laughed. But then, when the Lord said, “Why did Sarah laugh?” she denied because she was afraid. She

didn't want to be found out, and just as quick as that, she told a lie. This woman who is commended to us as, "by faith Sarah received strength to conceive seed," and "Sarah, whose daughters you are as long as you do well and are not afraid with any amazement." A holy woman betrayed into a lie at the blink of an eye, by her fearful lust.

There is a *vain* lust within, whereby the mind is filled up with a whole lot of nothing and hot air. We know that there is a vain lust because people speak idle words. The Lord Jesus has said that we'll answer for every idle word that we speak. And where words are many, sin is not wanting. And so it would be just on God's part to hand over him that speaks *idle* words into speaking *lying* words. His words are about nothing and nothing, and then before he knows it, he has told a falsehood amidst all the other nothingnesses that he's speaking. There is a lust of *enmity* whereby this lust tempts us to blacken the name of our enemy. There is a *man-pleasing* lust that's ready to betray you into a lie. Hosea 7 says, they make princes glad with their lies. That desire that you have to look on someone else's face, and see a ring of faces around you, for people to be pleased with you, smile at you and laugh and accept you, can betray you just as quick as that, into saying something that isn't true, to please them.

You have, in fact, in this one divine commandment to put away lying, a kennel full of lusts that you need to mortify in order to carry through with what God tells you. Not only can other lusts within come and stir up the lying lust, but also the lying lust works overtime to protect all the other lusts. The lying lust is like the gatekeeper of the old man, that keeps the old man from being touched because, verse 22 says that the old man is "corrupt according to the deceitful lusts." So you bring yourself under the word of God, you're reading something and it's an arrow from the Lord that's aimed at one of your inward lusts, and it looks like it's about to strike home... but then the lying lust steps in and says, "No, that belongs to someone else, someone else is worse than I am, after all it's only a little small thing, something else is more important to think upon and focus on. If it's kept, it won't disturb my peace very much, or if it does I'll be able to get my peace back afterwards," and before you know it there have been a thousand falsehoods the lying lust has produced, to keep the old man from being touched by the sword of the Spirit.

We have work to do putting away lying. The Lord tells us, Jeremiah says that the heart is deceitful above all things. It is the most crooked and slippery thing that there is, man's heart. And it is allied with the tongue. The tongue is the most fluid of man's members whereby it is the widest highway for letting forth what's in the

heart—man’s tongue. We have a deceitful heart, and the tongue is accustomed to venting what is in the deceitful heart. The tongue which is that by which God distinguished us and made us better than the creatures, the tongue which is man’s most glorious member, the tongue which is endowed with rare abilities, has become the exhaust pipe of a deceitful heart. That is man’s desperate condition. And if that accursed lying lust—if you’re going to stop it from wheedling and pleading and evading and excusing and inflating and dodging, you’re going to have to kill it. “Mortify the deeds of the body, and you shall live.” James says that the tongue is a fire, therefore you must quench it. It is world of iniquity that you must conquer. It is an unruly evil that you must tame, and a deadly poison that you must heal. This is the work that a believer has to do.

If you’re hearing this today but you’re not in the Lord Jesus Christ, then you have all the same duty, but you haven’t yet laid hold upon the resources that I’m about to tell the believer that he has for killing this lust. You need to know that there’s no truth in you. You need to know, as sobering as it is, that you are dry wood for the lake of fire where liars will go, and you need to flee to Christ. It is not inevitable for you to stay where you are. There’s no need for you to stay where you are, because the Lord does offer you freely, for the taking, everything in his gospel that I’m about to tell the believer that he already has. So come and take what is described, take it freely. God gives liberally and upbraideth not. Come and take these things and, by their strength, mortify lying.

Thirdly, the PRACTICE of this duty of putting away lying.

To help you understand how to practice it, I want to refer to another text we read which is Romans 6:6. “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed that henceforth we should not serve sin.”

Knowing this. So how does the believer mortify sin? By knowing something. *The believer mortifies sin through the truth received and rested upon by faith, which then enables him in the strength of that truth to rise up and to go make successful warfare against his lusts and sins.*

Now in those simple words of Romans 6:6, there are several things implied. One of those things is a severe judgment. When it says “crucified with,” then (italics) *him*, it’s clearly implied crucified *with Christ*. The thing that we’re being told is that Jesus Christ was crucified. If it were not for the fact that Jesus Christ were crucified, no one would have any power at all to mortify any sin. Sin was not inherent in Jesus Christ, but the guilt of sin was imputed to him. So when Romans 6:6 says, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified,” notice the preposition

doesn't say *in* him, as if the old man had been in Christ, because it was not in Christ. He is the spotless Lamb of God, the Seed of the woman, who came without the stain of original corruption. Why then was he crucified? Not because sin was *in* him, but sin was *on* him by imputation, because he stood as our covenant head and surety, liable and responsible for the penalty of the sins of his people. And so when Christ was crucified, it was together with that crucifying of Christ that the merit and virtue was provided whereby the old man should be crucified—so that when Christ was crucified with sin on him, then our old man was crucified *with* him; together with that action, the virtue and power was secured for mortifying the deeds of the body.

Now Isaiah, when he tells us in that wonderful chapter about Christ and him crucified, in the 53rd of Isaiah, you know one thing that he says about the Savior when he sums up the innocence and sinlessness of Jesus Christ—he says two things about that: “though he had done no violence, nor was there any deceit in his mouth.” Completely spotless because he had done no wronging, no violence with his hands, and because his mouth was spotless from any lie. This is the one who was crucified, and we ought to think upon that—that Jesus Christ, the innocent and sinless one was crucified, that God spared him not. So take your first look at the cross and see how much a holy God hates lying. We were singing that “God cuts off them that liars be.” That is an assured truth because even the *beloved son of God*, when sin was imputed to him, including the sins of the lies of his people, he was cut off. God was far from him, he was cut off out of the land of the living. If you want to see how contrary to the holy nature of God lying is, then take a look at the cross. The first look at the cross teaches you that.

But then there's a second look at the cross. You see now, we're understanding it's only the believer in Christ that can mortify sin—because the believer in Christ looks at the cross and he's sees that now *my* curse and *my* damnation for the lies that *my* mouth has told, is gone from me. No more can I be cut off by the curse of God, because this innocent and spotless One was crucified. The strength of sin is the law, Paul says. The law and its curse cannot cut me off from the life of God. The believer triumphs in this knowledge. The severity of the penalty upon Christ tells the believer this. So there is a severe penalty, a severe judgment—Christ was crucified. But notice Romans 6, because it says, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him.” So Christ's crucifixion is the thing that brought something else about, and what is that something else? That is that *our old man is crucified*. Now this is a mystery that we need to receive by faith. And what does that mean? Well the old man that we've been speaking of with all his members still indwelling the believer is there in the believer, but he is in a state of crucifixion. The old man is

crucified. And just as Jesus Christ died a painful and lingering death on the cross, so the old man in the believer dies, and dies, and dies a painful and lingering death. Our old man is crucified. So if we think of this, a man who is crucified begins to cry—he gasps—he asks to be relieved. "Let me come down, I don't deserve this!" He's very vigorous, he's crying with everything in him for life—he's struggling for breath, and that's what the *lusts* of the old man are like. The believer sets his face to say, "I am going to put off lying," and the old man says, "No, you can't do this to me! I've been here too long, you need to let me live." But the believer needs to reckon and say, "No. I know that you are crucified, and O lying lust, you are the tongue of the old man—but you are *crucified*. You must hang until you die. You must hang, just like my dear Savior for me did hang under the hot sun, until his strength was dried up like a potsherd, and until his innocent tongue did cleave unto his jaws. O lying lust, you must die. You are crucified. If you say, 'I thirst,' I will give you nothing but vinegar. As my dear Savior was brought to the dust of death, so I look upon you, O lust, and I pity you not. You must die. You are crucified."

And this is a protracted struggle. The old man is there in the Christian. And he needs, all the time, to be put off and put off—he's there, but he's there in a state of crucifixion. He is growing weaker. There's a protracted struggle implied. There's also an *eventual destruction* of the old man. Again Romans 6:6, "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." Christ's accomplishment at the cross must have its appointed end. And what is the appointed end of the cross of Christ? Not only pardon of sin, but also, the destruction, the absolute destruction of the body of sin. When is this accomplished? There's a protracted struggle all through the life in which the old man dies a lingering death, but there's an eventual and complete victory. This takes place partly at death, in which "the souls of believers made perfect in holiness do immediately pass into glory and their bodies still united to Christ do rest in their graves" (WSC Q.37).

And so at death, the believer gets a complete victory over the lying lust and every other lust. He goes perfect into the immediate presence of God in his soul. And his body—yes, his sin-defiled body—yes, his unclean lips—yes, his tongue, that had by the grace of God began in this life to speak truth (he got victories over lying, praise the Lord), yet that tongue that he did defile by telling lies, goes into the grave. It needs to consume in the grave, indeed rot in the grave. The vile body shall pass away into dust until no more trace or resemblance of the old man be found upon it anymore. And then there's another stage of the destruction of the body of sin, which is at the resurrection. Then, our Savior comes from heaven and raises up his own. As surely as Christ is already risen from the grave, as his public

vindication from every charge that was laid upon him—he was publicly cleared from every charge of the guilt of sin in his resurrection from the death—so surely shall the believer arise in his likeness, now clear from the inherent corruption of sin. The tongue of the believer shall surely be his glory to all eternity. His tongue shall resound with the high praises of God. He shall praise God as freely and fully as if he had never spoken a falsehood. Think of that—a clean-mouthed choir singing the high praises of God with all abandon, yes, using the very tongues that the Lord shall raise up and renew and glorify! There will be no more poison of asps, not even a hint shall be under the lips of the Christian anymore in that day. This hope, it purifies the Christian. The Christian says, I know that my old man is crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that the crucifying of the old man shall have its end. My lusts within the old man shall be destroyed one day, and in that hope the believer presses on.

But there's more isn't there? In Romans 6:6 there's something that is now present —“the body of sin might be destroyed, that *henceforth we should not serve sin.*” Here is the position of the believer presently. The believer has the old man still within, constantly needing to be put off. The old man is in a state of crucifixion, dying a lingering death, and he has the hope that it will one day be utterly destroyed. As he waits for that hope to be accomplished, how then does he live? God forbid that he should say, because such a thing will happen in the future, that I'll be free from corruption of sin, let me give the reins to sin, to live now in sin—God forbid! The Christian does not think that way. That is a falsehood. He is living a lie who thinks that. No, the Christian thinks this, he says, “Presently and now I am not the servant of sin. Christ is the Redeemer of my tongue and the Lord of my tongue. Sin at times may overtake me and beguile me, and I may be overtaken in a fault, even such a grievous fault—David as a believer was—of lying. Yet with all my heart I do hate and abhor lying.” The believer hates lying with all his heart. The unbeliever would do it if he could, but he is restrained by shame and the stings of conscience. But the believer says, “I am Christ's freeman,” and the more clearly he sees this the better. “I am not under any debt or obligation to go back to my old ways. I am not the slave of my lying lust. I will walk at liberty because I belong to the Lord. However much there may be old habits, long established, I am Christ's freeman.”

And then the Christian uses the *means of liberty* from this lying lust. Chiefly, God has given his *Word of truth* as a means of mortifying and putting off lying. So we can recognize a Christian that way. How do we know if someone is intent in putting off lying? Because he is intent upon the Word of truth—devouring it, understanding it, meditating upon it, bringing it forth upon his lips. We can tell,

because he is going forward and speaking the truth. What is the Christian man's attitude toward the Word of truth? That's the means whereby he puts off lying. The Christian exercises himself in reading the Word of God. At some basic level, he decides that he is going to fill his head with the Word of God, and he fears, "Lest my head be filled with vanity and emptiness, I end up by the vanity of my mind speaking idle words and wandering into lying. Because I'm determined that I will not do that, therefore I fill my mind with the Word of God and the truth of God. Because I am determined that I'm in danger, if left to myself, of speaking out of the errors of my mind, therefore I am determined I will immerse and saturate myself in the Word of God, asking him to rout out and destroy my errors so that my mind might be filled with truth in hearing the Word of God." The believer comes under the preaching of the Word of God as that sharp two-edged sword, knowing that this is the thing that is appointed by God to be the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, and divide between soul and spirit. He comes to the Word of God and wants to be searched. He says, "Search me O God, and see if there be any wicked way in me." He wants the preaching of the Word to touch him as close to the quick as possible, because he wants to spew out the lying lust when it is exposed by the Word of God. He sings the Word of God, like the Apostle tells us to, in this very epistle in chapter 5, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs." He saturates himself, he's thankful God has given him a book of songs that is true in every part, entirely inspired—it is the production of the Holy Spirit, and therefore he has it upon his lips, singing it so that he might not be betrayed into lying. The believer meditates upon the Word lets it soak into his bones. He watches against temptation by using the Word of truth. "By what means shall a young man learn his way to purify? If he according to thy Word thereto attentive be." The believer says, "I am determined that I won't be caught off my watch, I am determined that I won't be betrayed into speaking untruth and so I will think upon, use the word of God to help me discern, what are the ways that temptation has overtaken me in the past, what are my vulnerable places," and he watches over his ways using the Word of God. And in this way he puts off lying by a preventive watching against temptation.

We've seen the explanation of this duty, the difficulty, the practice by drawing all from Christ and him crucified, and we've seen something of how that works out in the means. Let me briefly say, **the IMPORTANT CONNECTION of this duty of putting away lying**, and we'll come back next week.

"Speak every man truth to this neighbor for we are members one of another." And so this whole matter of putting away lying is a preparative unto speaking the truth. We can readily recognize, for instance, in a marriage, if even one lie were to be

spoken from husband to wife or vice versa, how much that would damage the truth and the unity of the marriage. It's like that in the church. We're members one of another—we're supposed to be bound together by love, so as to be able to edify each other by speaking the truth. If we speak *untruth*, we are severing the members. How can we mutually trust and edify each other? Therefore this is a reason to put away lying, for we are members one of another. The Lord has given us, I trust, something each one to practice, and may He cause his word to bear fruit in us. Amen.

Prayer

O Lord our God, and Father in heaven, we confess that even when we lift up our voice to Thee to pray, we dare not trust our own heart or that slippery member the tongue. When we hear the sound of our own voice, O Lord, we pray, help us to search ourselves. Keep us even in our acts of devotion from being false and from putting on a front. O deliver us, by the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. We ask that the Word would bear fruit. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.