BIG PROBLEMS? BIGGER GOD!
Part 6: The PROBLEM of LYING

INTRO: It has already been an insightful series: fear, not fearing God, non-sinful and sinful failures—more to come... Today the problem of LYING, dishonesty, being truthful. It is a problem—societal pandemic, and believers are not exempt. How often in the last 24 hours have you failed to tell the truth?

STATS: James Patterson "The Day America Told the Truth" (1992) writes…who thinks we're better? U. Mass study…The average person lies 4x/day. Children…I'd say we have a problem telling the truth. I'll say now and repeat later: As devoted followers of Christ, we must to be people who *always* tell the truth.

ILLUS: What would you do if damaged another car backing out of Publix parking lot where there were witnesses? One man did and left the note: "I am sorry I hit your car. A number of people around me think I'm leaving you a note with my name, address, and phone number, but I'm not!"

DEFINE LYING: A lie is a falsehood, untruth, a willful deception, a knowing distortion, an intentional misrepresentation, a partial truth mixed with a known falsehood. It is when we say something that is not true in order to deceive. A failure to tell the whole story (as long as there is no intent to deceive) is not necessarily lying. Ex: When called as a witness in court you swear to tell . . . but . . .

GOD NEVER LIES! There are 3 things God can't do: change, lie, and let sinners into heaven. About 100 verses. Num. 23: 19; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18; 1 Jn. 2:21 God is truth, the author of absolute truth, and the most compellingly powerful Advocate of truth we will ever know. Lies violate His character, His law, and His will.

TEXTS: OT (Pro. 6:16-19) NT (Eph. 4:25-32)

I. PAUL'S NEGATIVE COMMAND (Eph. 4:25 "Therefore, having put away falsehood, . . .) Read context vv. 17-24 be different.

A. Lying violates the ninth commandment (Exo. 20:16)

B. Vs. 25 to "put away" is to throw off, set aside, stop doing.

C. WHY does Paul issue this warning?

1. Lying is easy to do. It comes natural to fallen people.

Funny: Boy was asked by his mother what a lie is, and he said, "A lie is an abomination to God, but a very present help in time of need." Often a lie just pops out. Ex: How often have we answered "Fine" when it simply wasn't true?

2. God hates lying (Pro. 6:17). Lying is the sin that began in the garden (Gen. 3:1-5). Mankind has been lying ever since.
3. Lying hurts others. It destroys trust (Jacob). Col. 3:9
4. Lying is associated with the worst of sins, adultery and murder (Rev. 22:15). Look at David…
5. Lying is hard to maintain. It requires an excellent memory!

D. SOURCES of Lying

1. Devil (Gen. 3:1-5; Jn. 8:44). When we tell a lie, we are speaking the devil's language!
2. Fallen, Sinful human nature (Psa. 58:3). We lie for many reasons: fear, gain, impress, avoid problems or conflict, shift blame, "Be nice," . . .
3. The World (1 John 5:19)

II. PAUL'S POSITIVE COMMAND (Eph. 4:25 "…let each one of you speak the truth to his neighbor")

A. Simple Command: Tell the truth (PERIOD!) every time.

B. Telling the truth sets us free (John 8:32) – much more enjoyable, causes less problems, etc.

C. "Speak the truth in love" (Eph. 4:15)

III. PAUL'S REASON (Eph. 4:25 "…for we are members of one another")

A. Together we are the body of Christ. We are ONE IN CHRIST (1 Cor. 12:12ff; Eph. 4:1ff). When we lie to another Christian, we are actually lying to ourselves since we are all members (parts) in the same body.

ILLUS: What if your body parts started lying to one another?

B. God will judge liars (Pro. 19:5, 9; Rev. 21:8, 27). Lying is totally contrary to God. He is truth and light (1 Jn. 1:5-10).

C. What can we do to stop lying? Very difficult.

1. Confess. Admit you tell lies. Stop lying to yourself (Psa. 116:11; Rom. 3:4)
2. Desire to obey God and always be truthful (in love)
3. Pray for the indwelling Spirit to give you victory.
4. Put on the "belt of truth" (Eph. 6:14) – holds it all together.

CONC: Lying is a real problem and a sin. Speaking truth is one way one set ourselves apart from the Devil and this world. God's people must be people of truth!