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with Pastor Jacquie

In The Beginning Genesis: Lesson Fourteen

Sunday School

September 21, 2025

Is it okay to tell a white lie?

Abraham was one of the great men of faith in the Bible but like all men, he was challenged by the frailty of doubt. When they arrived in Egypt, Abraham became concerned that someone would see how beautiful his wife was and kill him to take Sarah. His plan was for Sarah to tell everyone she was his sister which was a half-truth as Sarah was his half-sister. By concealing information that would have been customarily provided, Abram implied that he was not married to Sarai. He used the literal truth to imply an untruth.

Telling a white lie is no different than telling a lie. No matter the justification for telling a half-truth, lying remains a sin.

Truth has a pure character that men would do well to follow. If Abraham had told the truth, in the beginning, none of the harm would have come upon the house of Pharaoh and the good name of Abraham would not have been tarnished in the eyes of others. Telling a half-truth is no more than telling a whole lie. Trying to justify actions by lying remains a sin. A white lie is nothing more than a black lie with paint.

What are the consequences of telling this lie?

1. The first consequence is that it endangered Abraham's relationship with God. He feared Pharaoh more than he trusted God. When we lie, we are saying that we do not trust God. Abraham trusted in a lie rather than in God.
2. His sin endangers Sarah's life. Abram endangered Sarai by failing to protect her. Perhaps he assumed God would guard her honor for the sake of His covenant promise to provide an heir. The Bible does not record God telling Abram to conceal Sarai's marital status. Therefore, Abram was not only imprudent but presumptuous. Abraham thought he could control things as a brother but it all got out of hand and endangered his family.
3. The third consequence of Abraham's sin is that it was a bad testimony. The pagans saw Abram as a sneaky clever coward who had deceived them and put them and their nations in danger. That reputation reflected badly on God.

If Abraham would have thought the whole matter through, he would have realized he was committing great wickedness before God and that no matter how he tried; his plan was doomed to fail. In a short time, the plan of Abraham fell apart and he had to leave Egypt. His little white lie changed a lot of lives.

We should be wise enough to know when to speak and when to be quiet. What we say needs to be seasoned with salt (Colossians 4:6)—wise, edifying, and incorrupt. If we find ourselves trying to be clever enough to figure out how to avoid technically transgressing a fine line—like a technical truth to imply a big untruth—perhaps we should examine ourselves a little more carefully.

APPLICATION QUESTION:

Are you being honest with yourself? Or are you rationalizing selfish actions? Are you guarding your testimony?

QUOTE:

Truth has no degrees or shades. A half-truth is a whole lie, and a white lie is really black. *John MacArthur*

PRAYER:

Lord, I pray that You help me to know the importance of telling the truth at all times -that there is no such thing as a half-truth or a white lie. Help me to put my trust in You at all times. Amen

Read Genesis 20 & 21