

## ***BREAKING THE OLD HABITS OF LYING & ANGER***

*(Ephesians 4:25-27)*

“Old habits are hard to break!” This saying is true for many people especially the unbelievers who are still enslaved to their sins. But this should no longer apply to genuine Christians who have already been redeemed by the Lord Jesus and set free from their bondage to sin. As Christians, we must no longer march around the vicious cycles of our sinful vices. Instead, we must put off our old self, be renewed in the spirit of our minds and put on the new self (Eph. 4:22-24). Our new life in Christ involves replacing sinful habits with righteous and holy virtues. As we commit to break our old sinful habits and live in righteousness and freedom in Christ, let's consider these two instructions related to the problem of lying and anger.

### ***1. Replace the sin of lying with \_\_\_\_\_.***

In becoming Christians, the believers in Ephesus have renounced falsehood and have embraced the truth. In other words, they have turned away their sinful worship of false gods, and turned in faith to Jesus who is the truth Himself. Therefore, Paul exhorts them to put away the sin of falsehood or lying (Eph. 4:25). Falsehood or lying is making an untrue statement with the intent to deceive. It is making a statement that distorts or deviates from the truth with the intent to mislead others. This sin manifests itself in offenses such as telling partial truths, fabricating or making up stories, making commitments with no intention to keep, the “I don't know” lie, slander, exaggeration, covering up past sins and silent lies. There should be no place for all forms of lying in the life of a Christian (Prov. 12:22; Rev. 21:8).

Instead of lying, God's Word commands us to make it our habit to constantly speak the truth at all times (Eph. 4:25; Rom. 9:1). Truthfulness is important to God because He is the God of truth who hates lying and deceit and who delights in honesty and integrity (Prov. 12:22). Lying is not only a serious offense against God. It is also a grievous sin against the body of Christ (Eph. 4:25).

### ***2. Resolve not to sin when \_\_\_\_\_.***

When Paul calls the Ephesian believers to be angry and not sin, he's teaching them that there is a proper place for righteous anger in the life of a Christian (Eph. 4:26; Psalm 4:4). Righteous anger is indignation for holy reasons. Righteous anger is a reaction against actual sin as God defines it in His Word (Gal. 5:21-22). Righteous anger is also driven by concern for God and His name, not concern for oneself and one's name. In his earthly life, our Lord Jesus was always angered every time His Father's name and God's glory were maligned (John 2:17; Matt. 21:13). But He was never selfishly angry at the personal offense done against Him (1 Pet. 2:21-23; Luke 23:34).

To make sure we keep our anger righteous and holy, Paul gives us these reminders. First, we must ensure that our anger is not sinful (Eph. 4:26). Our anger becomes a sin when it rises quickly or when it is out of control (Eccl. 7:9; Prov. 29:11); when it comes from wrong motives (James 4:1-2); and when it is not accompanied by forgiveness (Prov. 19:11; Psalm 103:8-10). Furthermore, Paul instructs us never to let the sun go down on our anger nor to give the devil an opportunity to exert his influence (Eph. 4:26-27; Micah 7:8).

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