

Step 12 on Lying.

by St. John Climacus

St. John Climacus emphasizes the grave spiritual consequences of lying and the necessity of truthfulness in the Christian life.

Scripture: Psalm 101:7, Proverbs 6:16, Proverbs 12:22, Colossians 3:9

Topics: "Honesty And Integrity", "Spiritual Deception"

Description

St. John Climacus emphasizes the destructive nature of lying, highlighting how it leads to the destruction of love, denial of God, and the severe judgment pronounced against it by the All-Holy Spirit. He warns against the habit of lying, especially when intertwined with perjury or hypocrisy, as it can lead to the loss of the fear of the Lord and corrupt one's conscience. Climacus also addresses the various motivations behind lying, such as wantonness, amusement, or causing harm to others, and stresses the importance of being truthful and transparent, ultimately leading to the cleansing of the soul.

Transcript

1. The offspring of flint and steel is fire; and the offspring of chatter and joking is lying.

2. A lie is the destruction of love, and perjury is a denial of God.

3. Let no one with right principles suppose that the sin of lying is a small matter, for the All-Holy

Spirit pronounced the most awful sentence of all against it above all sins. If Thou wilt destroy all who tell lies, as David says to God, what will they suffer who stitch an oath on to a lie?

4. I have seen some who, priding themselves on their skill in lying, and exciting laughter by their jests and twaddle, have pitiably destroyed in their hearers the habit of mourning.

5. When the demons see that in the very beginning we intend to keep aloof from the witty lecture of a coarse leader, as from an infectious disease, then they try to catch us by two thoughts, suggesting to us: 'Do not offend the story-teller,' or: 'Do not appear to love God more than they do.' Be off! Do not dally, otherwise at the time of your prayer the jokes will recur to your mind. And not only run, but even piously disconcert the bad company by offering for their general attention the thought of death and judgment. For perhaps it is better for you to be sprinkled with a few drops of vainglory, if only you can become a channel of profit for many.

6. Hypocrisy is the mother of lying and often its purpose. For some define hypocrisy as no other than meditation on falsehood, and an inventor of falsehood which has a reprehensible oath twisted up with it.

7. He who has obtained the fear of the Lord has forsaken lying, having within himself an incorruptible judge--his own conscience.

8. We notice various degrees of harm in all the passions, and this is certainly the case with lying. There is one judgment for him who lies through fear of punishment, and another for him who lies when no danger is at hand.

9. One lies for sheer wantonness, another for amusement; one, to make the bystanders laugh; and another, to trap his brother and do him injury.

10. Lying is wiped out by the tortures of superiors; but it is finally destroyed by an abundance of tears.

11. He who gives way to lying does so under the pretext of care for others and often regards the destruction of his soul as an act of charity. The inventor of lies makes out that he is an imitator of Rahab,¹ and says that by his own destruction he is effecting the salvation of others.

12. When we are completely cleansed of lying, then we can resort to it, but only with fear and as occasion demands.

13. A babe knows nothing of lying; neither does a soul that is stripped of evil.

¹ Joshua ii, 1 ff.

14. He who has become merry with wine involuntarily speaks the truth on all subjects, and he who is drunk with compunction cannot lie.

The twelfth step. He who has mounted it has obtained the root of all blessings.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/st-john-climacus/step-12-on-lying/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net