

## Parenting a Lying Child, Part 3 | how to help a liar

### I. You need to understand that your children's biggest problem is self-deception.

- Your child 100% believes — consciously or subconsciously — that lying is best. That belief is in and of itself a lie. Now, the child may know that you and the Bible say that lying is not the best, but they don't really believe it. If they believed it, they wouldn't lie. So, regardless of what they've heard you say, they still believe deception has value. Therefore, the biggest issue on the table is your child's self-deception.
- If you run right to the "5 Ways" or the "10 Methods" that all involve how you relate to your kid in regard to their forked-tongue, you're missing the most important heart issues. Without dealing with the self-deception first, the child has absolutely no good reason to stop lying.
- Long before you start addressing your child's lying, you must recognize that their biggest problem — the life-dominating bondage in which they're shackled — is their own blindness to the truths of God.

### II. You need to understand that your children lie because they're wicked.

- Matthew 15:18-20; Psalm 58:3; James 3:14; Proverbs 26:18-19, 28; Proverbs 26:28; James 1:26 ; Proverbs 6:16-19; John 8:44; Romans 6:6-18
- Every time your children lie, it's flowing from inner defilement, but that defilement starts a lot earlier than we like to think.
- David teaches that we are conceived in sin and born in bondage to self-worship.
- It really is an arrogant thing to imagine that we can re-write reality, that the person to whom we're lying is gullible enough or foolish enough to believe us, and that we won't be caught in our lie.
- Not only do we lie because we're wicked, but if we lie consistently, the Bible says our religious pretense is worthless.
- Too many people view their children as "good kids who do bad things." Not only does that run contrary to the Bible's teaching concerning the sin nature, but it will only ever undermine any attempt to help our children grow.
- Your children are born spiritually dead, completely incapable of being good. Any facade of goodness is a direct result of God's common grace. And if your liar is still not born again, their spiritual destitution is unchanged. But even if the child is born again, their lying is a result of the Old Self flexing it's wickedness.
- There is a constant battle waging in all of us between worshipping God and worshipping self. All sin is a result of self-worship, and all self-worship is a result of wickedness.
- Until we recognize and truly understand the spiritual state of our kids, our parenting will only ever deal with the behavior.

### III. You need to understand that your children cannot change without God.

- Psalm 102:2
- The author of Psalm 102 understood that his self-deceived, wicked heart does not want to submit to God. He understood that true obedience will always be Spirit-empowered. And we need to understand that we and our kids can never hope to experience any real growth or change without God's direct involvement.
- But this truth has a two-pronged application. Some parents miss both prongs, but other's miss the second.

- What is a common issue with parents who don't understand this point?
  - **They don't pray for or about their kids.**
    - These parents don't truly understand the fullness of the fact that their children will never change without God's intervention.
    - Many parents want help with their children, but they don't even recognize that their child's biggest issue is their estrangement from God.
    - These parents don't even think about the spiritual dynamic of their children's behavior, and so it's not surprising that they aren't in fervent prayer for their children.
    - In such cases the parents are nearly always equally estranged from God as their children are.
  - **When they pray, they pray only about the child.**
    - God gave you to your kids to reveal Him to them. He wants you to evangelize and disciple your children. But you're not a perfect parent. You could do your job a lot better.
    - Since you're such a vital part of God's plan for your child to put off their lying tongue and speak the truth, don't you think it would be a good idea to pray something like, "Lord, I can't do this on my own. I'm not wise enough, I'm not holy enough. I too often get distracted by how my child's lies affect me that I don't draw them to the most important truths. Instead I fixate on how they've wronged me instead of seeing their sin as being an affront to you. Lord, please work in my heart. Convict me of my sin, and help me to bring up my children in your discipline and instruction."
    - We need God's truth and empowerment to help our children put off their lying just as much as our children need God's truth and empowerment to put off their lying.
    - It will be impossible for our kids to stop lying in a valuable, Christ-honoring way without God's direct involvement. And it will be impossible for us to parent our children to that end without God's direct involvement in our lives.

#### **IV. You need to understand that speaking the truth grows from a heart that worships God.**

- You will never help a liar if you don't use God's Word and lean on His empowerment, but — ultimately — regardless of what you do, the child will never truly speak in any way that pleases the Lord unless they offer their communication as an acceptable offering to God.
- Exodus 2; Colossians 3; Ephesians 4
  - Whether it's a pagan block of stone or a modern ideology, idol worship always grows from our own self-worship. To disobey God is to believe that we know better, and so we ourselves become our false god. Your children can never honor you, not murder, not commit adultery, not steal, not lie, and not covet if they do not first and foremost revere the Creator God of the universe.
  - True heart change will always be a result of having been raised up with Christ. There is nothing more important in our homes than Evangelism Parenting. Of course, we shouldn't give our kids a good "dose of God" because that's what's necessary for them to turn out the way we want. We should introduce our kids to the Lord because He's their Creator and King and deserves their worship.
  - Christ-honoring parenting follows the same general trajectory of Ephesians. It is most consumed with our children knowing and submitting to God. Then when they do, it's highest goal is that our children mature in their conformity to Christ. Absolutely everything in our kids' lives is carefully rooted in and tied back to their relationship with the Lord.