

Weekly Newsletter: 16th January 2024

Reflection: The 7 Biggest Lies that Christians Tell, *Everyday*

By Joe Barnard

Christians are summoned by Jesus to be truthful. We are meant to celebrate the truth, pursue the truth, and to tell the truth in words and in behaviour. Too often, however, we treat the truth like a napkin to be used, sullied and disposed of with convenience and ease. Here are seven of the biggest lies that Christians tell in everyday life.

1. My feelings are justified. We all rationalise sin. We use lies to do so. However, there are certain feelings that are never justifiable. Envy, spite, lust, petty jealousy, spiritual pride, fits of rage, selfish ambition, coveting, stubborn-unforgiveness are obvious examples. Nonetheless, we convince ourselves that, given what 'he' said to me, in the light of how 'she' treats me – if you only understood what I've been through – such feelings are okay. They aren't. To say the opposite is to tell a lie.

2. I need to earn my self-worth. We live in a society that idolises achievement and that measures self-worth in the currency of accomplishment. We are repeatedly shown images of successful people who win happiness and status through dogged determination, self-sacrifice, and a bit of luck. Christians unconsciously adopt this pattern of thinking. Our natural taste for legalism mixes with the secular religion of success so that we begin to tell ourselves the hazardous lie that *I need to earn my self-worth*. This isn't true. The gospel declares that our worth is dependent upon God's love, which is given freely to us in Christ. To say the opposite is to tell a lie.

3. I need to validate my self-worth. To validate is to check or prove the validity or accuracy of something. We may accept that our worth is freely given to us in Christ, but then begin to believe that we have to maintain or demonstrate this worth through personal, individual effort. When we think this way, we forget that sanctification is every bit as dependent upon grace as justification. To be a Christian is to be 'in Christ'. This means that our worth is both given to us in Christ and validated for us by Christ. We have no 'self-existence' apart from Christ. He is our righteousness. To say the opposite is to tell a lie.

4. I can live in the darkness. In an age of authenticity, people think that actions do not matter. What matters is 'in the heart'. If I am true to my feelings, actions are of secondary importance. Christians often adopt this manner of thinking. We are content to believe in our hearts that Jesus is lord while living our lives as if Jesus was a second thought. I John 1:6 warns us against this. 'If we claim to have fellowship with him and walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.'

5. I don't have to love you. We also lie by not showing love to one another. I John 3:17 says, 'If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him?' John adds, 'Let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.' To claim to worship the one who laid down his life for his friends, and not to demonstrate practical love for one another, is to tell a lie with our actions.

6. I am not a sinner in need of grace. The modern church fosters hypocrisy. To walk into a Church is to see a middle class gathering of professional people who are put together, well-dressed, and orderly. The unspoken message is clear: we are not messy people in need of divine grace. To appear this way is to tell the unchurched a lie. The world needs to see that the church today is like the church that gathered around Jesus during his earthly ministry. We are a motley group of sinners who have no hope apart from God.

7. I don't need you. The church is plagued by consumeristic religion. We go to church to shop for our religious needs, and we only give and take according to what interests us. Therefore, we are reluctant to commit to a congregation and, more importantly, reluctant to commit to one another. To act this way is to tell the lie that I don't need you, and you don't need me. Our behaviour suggests that we can all get on fine alone. However, this is not true. If the church is the body of Christ, no member can survive on its own, let alone function. Until the church is a community of brother and sisters who acknowledge their need for one another, the church is telling a lie.

How to Volunteer for Community Week

A lot of people have been asking about how to volunteer with Community Week. Here are four simple ways to get involved.

- 1. Come to the in-person prayer meeting** on Monday January 22nd at 7pm. We need to saturate the week in prayer before the main events begin. It would be wonderful to see 50 people or more present at the prayer meeting Monday night.
- 2. Make personal invites to specific events.** No one should feel pressure to come to everything. Think about which events might appeal to friends and personally invite them to join you at these events. Even if the friends decline the invite, Community Week is a great excuse to talk about the church with family, friends, and neighbours - and even to hand out flyers.

3. Come to Warm Space. The more of a "buzz" there is in the building all week, the more interest we will attract in the community. Come to Warm Space as often as you can and help create an environment of friendship, of welcome, and of warmth.

4. Invite a friend or family member to Hope Explored. Anyone is welcome to bring someone to Hope Explored. Pray about who around you may be interested, and ask people if they would like to come with you to a three week course on the topic of hope in the modern world.

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HOLYROOD COMMUNITY WEEK '24

121 MONTGOMERY EDINBURGH, EH7 5EP

22ND-28TH JANUARY 2024

COME

JOIN

AND

IN!

Tues 23rd Pickleball and Table Tennis 7:00pm

Wed 24th Quiz Night 7:30pm

Fri 26th Family Fun Afternoon 2-4pm

Wed 24th Cream Tea 12-3pm

Thurs 25th Global Food Night 7:00pm

Fri 26th Scottish Night with Ceilidh 7:30pm

Community Week – Items Needed

By the Mission Team

In preparation for the Family Fun afternoon during the Community Week, we are looking for some items:

- Scottish Children's story books
- Craft paper/tissue paper
- Brown wool
- Tartan Paper

We have put a box in the front foyer of the church with the label of *Community Week drop off box* for the items to be put in. If you wish any of the items back particularly the books please put your name inside. Thank you!

Christmas Appeal

Our Christmas Appeal has now closed and the final amount raised came to **£14,698.70**. The amounts have been allocated as follows -

- £4409.62 (the Tranent Church Plant)
- £4409.62 (Minister in Training at Kilmallie Free Church)
- £2939.73 (Scripture Union Scotland)
- £2939.73 (Tearfund – Middle East emergency appeal)

We are so thankful for your generosity and pray that these gifts would be used for God's glory.

Cornhill Book in a Day – this week!

Come and spend the 17th and 18th January at Cornhill in Glasgow digging deep into the book of Psalms with **James Hely Hutchinson**. James is the Director of Institut Biblique de Bruxelles (IBB), in Belgium who has studied, taught and written extensively on the book of Psalms. The day will be a great opportunity to learn key Bible handling skills and to grow in your understanding of the book of Psalms whilst enjoying warm fellowship with like-minded brothers and sisters.

Please contact Liz (Liz@holyroodevangelical.org) if you would like to attend so that we can book together as group.

Book Group – Saturday 3rd February

The next Book Group will be on Saturday 3rd February at 9 Craigentenny Avenue at 3.30pm. Note the change of date due to the Community Week events. This time we are reading *Bouncing Forwards* by Patrick Regan. If you have any questions, please contact Anncris.

Scripture Union Scotland - Day of Prayer

The SU Scotland Day of Prayer is on **Thursday 18 January** with the theme *Simply Pray*. Resources to help you pray are available to download at our Day of Prayer website, www.suscotland.org.uk/dop.

As well as resources we provide opportunities to pray locally at Regional Prayer Gatherings. **Edinburgh's Day of Prayer Gatherings will be on Tuesday 16th January**. Led by Regional Workers, some are in person and some on Zoom. For more details go to www.suscotland.org.uk/events.

Thanksgiving Service for the Life and Ministry of Andy Bathgate

Thanksgiving Service for the Life and Ministry of Andy Bathgate

Saturday 27th January 2024



A Thanksgiving Service for Andy Bathgate will be held at Charlotte Chapel, 58 Shandwick Place, Edinburgh on **Saturday 27th January at 1.30pm**.

Contributions will be made by folks from the many Christian organisations who were blessed by Andy and his ministry.

Light refreshments will be provided and please register [here](#) so that the organisers have an idea of numbers.

Church Calendar

For your prayers and info:

- Monday:
 - Baby and Toddler Group from 10 – 11.30am
 - Warm Space from 12noon – 3pm
 - Mission Team Meeting at 7pm in the church
- Tuesday: Pickleball and Table Tennis at 7pm in the church
- Wednesday: Prayer Meeting at 7pm on Zoom
- Sunday:
 - Worship Service at 10.30am (and live streamed). Joe Barnard preaching.
 - Equip at 6pm (and live streamed).



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