

The Main Characteristics of a Liar

The main characteristics of a liar are found in Rev 21:8 and 22:15. A LIAR (Jn 8:44) IS ALWAYS READY TO BELIEVE A LIE ABOUT SOMEONE BETTER THAN HE. Pr 17:4 says that an evildoer gives heed to false lips. A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful, malicious tongue. His is a tongue desiring the ruin of someone better than he is. The evildoer and the liar are a parody of the wise person: As the righteous or just person listens with care to the instruction of the teacher, so *the* wicked person, or the unjust and filthy person, listens with care to the ruinous speech of those who are like him.

We are shaped and molded by that which we love. An unjust or filthy person has become like those whom he has associated with, as Paul said, “Bad company corrupts good morals” (1 Cor 15:33). The company we keep feeds our tongue. We will communicate to others what we listen to. We become what we hear. *Become* indicates a transition.

Malicious tongue is how the NIV renders Pr 17:4. *Malicious* means to desire to see another suffer who is better than he is, of whom he is jealous or envious. A *malicious* person intends to commit an unlawful slander to cause harm without legal justification or excuse. He is a person given over to abusive speech and the persecution of a person of another group arising from malice. He does wanton or reckless damage to destroy another person’s reputation. These things are proof of the *murder* in his heart. He wants to malign, by uttering or publishing injurious, misleading, or false reports about others he is speaking evil of. He has and shows intense and vicious ill will – by passing on malevolent, sinister reports. These result in ignominy and distress to the victim by their continued attack on his reputation, attempting to destroy his reputation by open and direct abuse. To *defame* is to slander, to bring about the loss of one’s good name.

Pr 17:4 anticipates the eternal destiny of the liar (Rev 22:11,12, 15).