

Honest Lips

[This is from an Intertribal News article by Chets Barur, published in April 1998.]

The evil one said in Gen 3:1, “Has God really said that you shall not eat from any tree in the whole garden?” He exaggerated the truth a tiny bit to get his deceptive point across. Havah was caught off guard, and the subtle accusation of “being deprived of something” was able to take root. “No, He did not say all the trees, He said just one of the trees we should not eat of.” How many times do we subtly stretch the truth to get our own point across or our own way? Whenever we are this way we are being just like the evil one is. We are bearing his image rather than being conformed to the image of our Master. We need to be our Father’s faithful witnesses on this earth. The moon only reflects the glory of the sun — nothing more and nothing less. It has no glory or agenda of its own. This is the 1828 Noah Webster definition of exaggerate: to heighten; to enlarge beyond the truth; to amplify; to represent as greater than strict truth will warrant.

Factual: true and faithful to what really happened, nothing added, nothing taken away.

My teacher made me write these two definitions 600 times when I was in training, because I had such a problem with exaggerating.

Proverbs 16:13 says, “Righteous lips are the delight of a king, and he loves him who speaks what is right.” The king must depend on those within his kingdom to accurately speak to him about the state of his kingdom. He cannot go everywhere, seeing everything himself. So, he must see the condition of his kingdom through the eyes of those among his subjects who come to him with “concerns.” He delights to find those who will “speak what is right and righteous” accurately, telling him what things are really like. If he does not get the real story, but only a subjective account of things, mixed with exaggerations, then he is apt to make the wrong judgment, bringing chaos and unrighteousness into his kingdom.

Our Father is only going to give us power to speak the gospel to people if we are without deceit or falsehood.

Many times we are personally offended by something someone did or said, but we keep our composure and then go away and submit an “objective” concern to an elder, subtly slandering the person who offended us.

When we give an account of something someone did, slightly adding or taking away from the actual facts, then deceit and falsehood are found in our mouths, and we are using the same strategy the evil one uses to divide.