**RESPONDING to the TRUTH**

 **Denial vs. Honesty**

 ***BLESSINGS THAT COME TO THE HONEST PERSON***

Those with a pure heart who aren’t deceitful will walk closer with God **Psalms 24: 3-5** Lies are soon exposed, but truthful words stand the test of time **Prov. 12:19**  Know the truth about yourself and the world, and God will set you free **John 8: 31-32** If we don’t deceive ourselves, and if we tell the truth about our faults, we receive *not only* *forgiveness, but cleansing, healing transformation.* **I John 1: 8-9**

***THE HIGH COST OF DECEITFULNESS***

Unless you seek to see the world regularly as God and others do, your vision will be blurred, and this will hinder your efforts to help others, God, or yourself. **Matt 7: 3-5**

Today, lying would be likened to a cancer, or more likely, to a pandemic. In the Bible, the most frequent images of lying are of spreading fire, and an arrow shot to kill. The following points are taken mostly from **Proverbs 26: 18-28, Jeremiah 9: 3-9, and James 3: 2-8:**

Beware spreading false rumors, accusations, or gossip throughout the land. **Exodus 23: 1** People can delight in lies, becoming two-faced, smiling through their teeth. **Psalm 62: 4**  Lies come back to haunt us: people won’t trust us anymore, and will lie back to us. Eventually we begin to believe our own lies. We fool others, and their reactions fool us into gradually believing that my false front is the real me. **II Timothy 3:13** Deceitfully smooth talkers will not live out half their days. **Ps 55: 21, 23** We lose touch with our need for God: *Through deceit they refuse to know me.* **Jer 9: 6** God will return the favor, and say that He does not know us. **Matt 7: 21-23** When we keep doing what we know is wrong, God gives us over to it. **Rom 1: 25-28**

**SATAN** is closely linked with lying: Jesus called him the Deceiver **Matt** **27:63, John 8:33**

**FLATTERY** is just another form of deceit. It’s listed with wickedness. When we flatter and when we find fault, we’re deceiving people to make ourselves feel better. **Ps 12: 2,3 Jude 16**

**RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY** can be an excuse to avoid church. It ticked off Jesus, who went off about clean-looking cups and whitewashed tombs. **Matt 23: 25-28**

 Because so many today get all their *news filtered* for them by biased and often dishonest sources in social and traditional media, perhaps this prophesy is coming true in America now: “*For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth, and turn aside to myths.”* **2 Tim 4: 3-4, NIV**