

Joshua 9:1-18
Living with Liars
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Discussion Questions:

1. How do you feel about deceptive people? Do you ever wonder why they lie?
2. Are you trusting, naive, or neither? Why is that?
3. How does it feel to be deceived? How does it help to know “their why”? How does it feel to know you can trust someone?
4. Why do you think God allows us to make mistakes?
5. From Psalm 15:4, what do we learn about God and relationships? Is this challenging to follow?

How do you feel about deceptive people? Why?

Have you ever wondered, why they lie?

Today Joshua will encounter a bunch of liars...
...the truth is, we have probably been on both sides of this coin.
...We have lied and been lied to.

Today we are going to learn a few things about...

...“**Living with Liars**”.

Big idea: Be wise as a serpent and gentle as a dove.

Word is getting out about Joshua and the Israelites.

Forward movement often creates opposition.

9:1 And it came to pass when all the kings who were on this side of the Jordan, in the hills and in the lowland and in all the coasts of the Great Sea toward Lebanon—the Hittite, the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite—heard about it, 2 that they gathered together to fight with Joshua and Israel with one accord.

This is normally not a group that would gather together...

...**But a common enemy can unite divided people.**

When you think of fight, flight or freeze...they are choosing fight.

3 But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, 4 they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors. And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, 5 old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry and moldy. 6 And they went to Joshua, to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to

the men of Israel, “We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us.”

There is fight, flight, or freeze...

...but Gibeon chooses Bob Barker...Let's make a deal!

It says, “they worked craftily” KJV “wilyly”

They acted like something they were not.

What is put out there, doesn't match what is really in here.

People often pretend to be something they aren't.

1. Don't believe everything you see

Satan is a liar. He is a deceiver.

If He is speaking, he is lying or setting you up for a lie.

This is his world. Jesus called him the ruler of this world.

But I don't think they were lying so they could attack them.

Most people don't lie or deceive out of malice...

...I think most lies are from fear.

Liars are afraid of what people will think or do knowing the truth.

They are afraid to really be known.

They put on a display, create a facade, keep their distance.

Like these Gibeonites, maybe **they pretend to be important.**

They create complicated or tragic or heroic stories.

- The **fisherman** who exaggerates the “one that got away” because he is afraid of what you will say after he caught nothing
- This is the **businessman** who makes up a fanciful backstory to protect himself from the fact that he failed.
- This is the **parent** that posts nearly perfect pictures online to hide the fact they feel like they are not a good enough parent.
- This is the **Christian** who keeps everyone at arm's distance with “being busy” because they don't want to really be known.

...We could go on and on and sometimes we do.

Deception is one of our most common cultural sins.

From students to lawyers to doctors to public officials...

...people you think you can trust, you may find you can't.

...And many times, it is about fear.

We are afraid...
of being found out...so we fake it.
of being seen...so we hide it.
of the consequences...so we manipulate it.
of the future...so we try to control it.

To have real & right relationships we need to be real & right.

...We can't let fear limit our ability to be authentic and honest.

2. Seek to understand their why.

People have their reasons, and it usually is not even about you.

They are afraid of being the next of Israel's conquered foes...

...and they would have been.

I am not saying what they did is right...

...I am saying they have a reason

7 Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you dwell among us; so how can we make a covenant with you?"

8 But they said to Joshua, "We *are* your servants." And Joshua said to them, "Who *are* you, and where do you come from?"

Joshua and the leaders question them.

They are supposed to destroy the inhabitants of Canaan.

They are not to make treaties with those in Canaan.

But the Gibeonite response is interesting...

They don't argue or confront...they humble themselves.

"We are your servants."

They continue the deception, and add a little flattery.

3. Be wary of flattery.

If they are giving something, they usually want something.

9 So they said to him: "From a very far country your servants have come, because of the name of the Lord your God; for we have heard of His fame, and all that He did in Egypt, **10** and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan—to Sihon king of Heshbon, and Og king of Bashan, who was at Ashtaroth. **11** Therefore our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, 'Take provisions with you for the journey, and go to meet them, and say to them, "We *are* your servants; now therefore, make a covenant with us." '

They knew about Jericho and Ai, but they don't mention that.

They knew about the earlier victories and focus on that.

What they are saying is not all true...

...but what they believe seems to be.

They believe the Lord is powerful.

They believe Joshua and Israel has His power.

They believe they could be next under judgment.

Gibeon is going about it the wrong way...

...and they do want something...

...but they don't seem to want to harm them.

Like Rahab lied to save herself and her family...

...these men lie to protect themselves and their people...

...It is more about self protection than malicious deception.

But they say 3 interesting things that are about relationship:

They want to live,

they are willing to serve,

they want a covenant.

These 3 things are also how many of us come to Christ.

...Maybe you were not totally honest with God or yourself at first.

First, you wanted to live, you wanted life.

Maybe you were afraid of death or the future or judgment.

Second, you understand the weakness of your position.

You know you really don't have much to offer God...

...so you come humbly, you are willing to serve. (3 times)

And lastly, you wanted a covenant...

...even if you didn't know what it was...

You want a relationship with God you can trust...

...You want peace and hope and a future.

Come to the Lord with humility...

...and you will receive life and a relationship you can trust...

...and He will work out the details of your honesty and integrity.

Skip down a couple verses as they went on to make their case...

14 Then the men of Israel took some of their provisions; but they did not ask counsel of the Lord.

The Jews looked at the facts they could see...

...and they made the best call they could.

But as people with a relationship with God...

...That is not how we should do it.

Proverbs 3 Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and LEAN NOT on your own understanding. In all of your ways acknowledge Him and He shall direct your paths.

As a Christian, we use our brains.

We think through options.

We consider situations and circumstances.

But we always seek the Lord.

4. The Lord is our final authority.

We don't seek the Lord because we don't know what to do.

We don't seek the Lord because we can't make a decision.

We seek the Lord because, He is THE Lord, we belong to Him

The real question is never what is the best choice...

...The real question is always, Lord, what do you want us to do?

This is how godly men and women live...

Young **Samuel**, Speak for your servant is listening.

David the warrior, Shall I go and smite the Philistines?

Mary the mother of Jesus, I am the Lord's servant.

Those who belong to the Lord seek counsel from the Lord.

15 So Joshua made peace with them, and made a covenant with them to let them live; and the rulers of the congregation swore to them.

This was a mistake...but it was a mistake the Lord allowed.

God doesn't make mistakes, but He allows us to make them.

We live and learn and God even works through our mistakes.

16 And it happened at the end of three days, after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they *were* their neighbors who dwelt near them. 17 Then the children of Israel journeyed and came to their cities on the third day. Now their cities *were* Gibeon, Chephirah, Beeroth, and Kirjath Jearim.

So a few days later they found out and they found their cities.

18 But the children of Israel did not attack them, because the rulers of the congregation had sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel...

We are going to stop right here...and pick up the rest next week.

5. Be trustworthy.

Don't let your fear push you into deception or make you a liar.

Don't fear what people will say or do or think.

Fear the Lord who you belong to.

Be someone people can trust, even if it hurts or it is hard.

Psalm 15:4 But he honors those who fear the Lord; he who swears to his own hurt and does not change.

- Speak the truth and keep your word
- Don't make up big stories
- Don't try to control or create unrealistic situations.
- Don't hide and lie about who you really are.

Take off the mask and be who you really are.

That is the way God works best.

And that is the way relationships work best.

Come humbly and honestly, willing to serve...

...to the Lord and to others...

...and you will find life and relationships you can trust.