

## ***I MUST BE GRAND AND CENTRAL, PROV.16:1-25***

Liar Liar: 10 Lies that Screw Up Life #2

◆Intro: Have you noticed how popular the term “my” has become? MacDonalds has used it in an add phrase “My MacDonalds”. Come on though, really? It’s not yours. It’s someone else’s who actually are getting to give away what’s yours! But it plays to our pride. Little kids start out this way. “Mine” seems to be an easily learned term by youngsters. Why isn’t “yours” so quickly learned? Why don’t toddlers walk around giving all the other toddlers all the nice toys. Popular psychology would say, “Let the kid be greedy. It’s the way he was born. It’s in his nature.” But good parents will correct the child and teach him a better way. Nevertheless, human pride is in our genes, no one can disagree. We have this deep desire to be loved and we let it distort our thinking and our behavior. *The lie we’re considering today is the lie that we are grand, and the center of our own world.* Lets look at a few deceptions that stem from this root of pride.

### **◆1. In the lie of pride, I make mountains out of mole hills.**

◆A. This is one way pride distorts reality. Anyone whose ever noticed that small, little things can light a huge internal fire in their emotions knows about this one. There’s a person with 12 items in the 10 item or less checkout lane. You’re in a hurry. You have one lousy loaf of bread! You may just start to steam a little and wonder what rock that person crawled out from under. You child runs the mower carelessly over a mounded area of the yard, shaving the grass to it’s very chlorophyll-lacking roots. Perhaps you get really hot inside because you told him to be careful and not you can’t seem to remember it’s only grass, and he’s only a kid. You buy a new car and for the first month park in the part of the lot where they use a shuttle service. But then the second month you bump it with a

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rake...! The next four days every time you look at it you get mad. Your daughter spilled red pop on the beige carpet after *you* spent 13 years instructing all inhabitants of the home that the living room was “off limits” to drinks because you “knew” this would happen. Why you foresaw it as in a vision the day you purchased that lousy, beautiful carpeting. You knew it when they were born. You knew it was coming. Deep in your subconscious you were aware of this danger before you ever got married! And now, sure enough, verily, it has come to pass! Isn't it amazing the amount of emotion we can conjure over little things? The Bible says...

◆ *“Do not be overawed when a man grows rich, when the splendour of his house increases; for he will take nothing with him when he dies, his splendour will not descend with him.” Psalms 49:16, 17, NIV.*

◆ God tells us this viewpoint because *no one is built to cope with a life that feels big all the time.*

◆ B. That our desires and our plans are the center of our world is a lie that distorts us and our reality. It's one of the lies of pride. Look at what Proverbs 16 says.

◆ First, observe that pride is a central problem way of thinking in this text:

◆ *“The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished.” Proverbs 16:5, NIV.*

◆ *“Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.” Proverbs 16:18, NIV.*

◆ Next, notice how really non-central to our existence we actually are!

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◆ “In his heart a man plans his course, but the LORD determines his steps.” Proverbs 16:9, NIV.

◆ “We may throw the dice, but the LORD determines how they fall.” Proverbs 16:33, NLT.

◆ There are more spouts from the root of the lie that we must be the center of our universe.

◆ **2. In the lie of pride, I take things personally.**

◆ A. Taking things personally is where we over estimate the extent to which an event is related to us. The lie is that it’s all about you. We interpret other people’s actions to be a reflection on us!

◆ So a husband comes home late and his wife decides that it’s because he doesn’t respect her. Or because she won’t get the car washed he concludes that she doesn’t really care about his feelings. If you dated someone but now they are dating someone else, there must not be anything good about you and the times you shared were all a charade.

◆ *“It is better to live humbly with the poor than to share plunder with the proud.” Proverbs 16:19, NLT.*

◆ B. News bulletin! You, um, are not the sun! You and I are more planets, maybe more like meteors or space dust floating around the sun. It’s been observed that at age 20 we worry about what others think of us. At age 40 we don’t care what they think of us. At 60 we realize that they haven’t been thinking about us at all. This lie that our world is all about us places a heavy burden on our souls. When we take all things personally we add resentment, and bitterness to the original difficult experience. Taking all

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things personally makes us resentful, and resentful people do mean things, and mean actions don't lead to intimacy.

◆ *“See to it that no-one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.” Hebrews 12:15, NIV.*

◆ C. Here's an idea about combating the “take it personally” lie. When someone offends you, or hurts your feelings, remind yourself that people's actions are always a reflection of who they are, not of who you are. If someone is rude to you, it's a statement about who they are, not about who you are as a human. If you politely share your different opinion with your grandmother and she pouts or somehow makes it clear that she is not hurt and depressed, it will do you well to remember that it is her choice to be hurt or depressed that you disagree with her. Other people do not chose this though you disagree with them too. In reality, she may be banking on the “take it personally” lie to manipulate you. We do it to each other all the time. But God sees right through it.

◆ **3. In pride, I believe the lie that it's all or nothing.**

◆ Ever heard this lie in your mind? The lie is that everything is black or white, one way or the other, no middle ground, no grey area permitted. It's also rooted in personal pride. My day is either great or awful. I buy the best one or I go without because for me, it's nothing but the best, so help me God!

◆ A. When we procrastinate we may be living by the “all or nothing” deception. Either I clean the whole house perfectly from top to bottom today, or I put it off until there is a day when I can clean the whole house top to bottom. Either I read all the mail right now, or I

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skip the mail because I can't read it all right now. I'll just save it up for 13 days for my day off with I can sit down and read it all.

◆B. When we are overly anxious we may be living by the “all or nothing” lie. “How's your day going, Cece?” “Oooh, I'm so busy. I have 5000 things to do!” If God leaves us here until we've accomplished our assignments, I'm so far behind I'm never gonna die! I think I feel a headache coming on.” Cece may believe that her value and worth are dependent upon her being the best at everything she does.

◆C. When we can't admit hurt, we may be living by the “all or nothing” lie. Lets say Jim is one of those fellows who always says the same thing when you ask about him. “Oh, if I were any better there'd be two of me!” There's nothing wrong with feeling great. But lets say Jim always says this, when it's sunny and when it's raining. At weddings and at funerals. When watching the Hawks play, AND when watching the Cubs play!

◆D. When we are over-achieving when may be believing the “all or nothing” lie. Often we look at ourselves as either Scum, or Saint. Either we feel good about ourselves or we hate ourselves. But we can't allow ourselves to be average. Do you know what it means to be average? It means to be what most people are. But, the lie tells us, nobody admires the only ordinary. (It's pride peeking over the wall again. ) So Mark kicks himself violently when he misses a shot in the tennis match. “I can't believe I lost to him when I'm better than

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him. I should have beaten him.” Mark will probably torture himself a long time over that. He can’t believe he isn’t a tennis saint!

◆ Listen, I’d a lie that you must be above average. Everyone cannot be above average or that becomes mere average. Nobody is always good. No one can do everything well. Face reality. This lie will destroy you and rob you of joy. Did you know that those who drown are usually not weak swimmers? Weak swimmers tend to be very careful around water. They wear life vests and don’t try dangerous things. It’s the ones who overestimate their ability who more often are the ones who drown. Dr. Chris Thurman writes in his book on this subject,

◆ “Are you a great parent? I doubt it. Are you an awful parent? I doubt it. Are you a horrible tennis player? I doubt it. Are you an awesome tennis player? I doubt it. Do you always mess things up? I doubt it. Do you never mess things up? I doubt it. Are you a scum? I doubt it. Are you a saint? I doubt it. Are you some shade of grey related to these various areas of life? I don’t doubt it.”

### **◆4. In pride I can miss the forest because of the trees.**

◆ This is again a version of the lie that I must be the best, grand, and central to my world. And so then we tend to see one little part of life, or ourself, and decide it is the whole picture. We focus on one piece of reality and miss the whole reality. We need to see the bigger picture of life. That what the Proverbs writer is doing. The bigger picture is that ...

◆ “All a man’s ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD.” Proverbs 16:2, NIV.

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◆ *“The LORD works out everything for his own ends--even the wicked for a day of disaster.” Proverbs 16:4, NIV.*

◆ “How much better to get wisdom than gold, to choose understanding rather than silver!” Proverbs 16:16, NIV.

◆ “There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death.” Proverbs 16:25, NIV. *ie. doubt the your own conclusions.*

You are not the sharpest tool in the shed. Is there a higher wisdom?

◆ So, a homemaker exerts tremendous energy to tidy up her home but at the end of the day, the liar points only to what she didn't do. The basketball player makes hundreds of great shots but the lie will only let him remember the ones he missed. And the father sees his son to many coordinated things but he only comments on the his slip ups. (Did you know that this can actually lead your child to misbehavior? If the only time she gets your attention is when she messes up, even unconsciously she may chose to mess up, so deep is the human need for love and attention.) Or lets say, that for the most part, your were gracious and friendly all night. But all you can think about is the one stupid comment you made about... well lets not repeat it.

◆ This all happens because we believe the lie of hell that we are the center of our world. And if we are the center we have a great burden to bear. If we can only see or pay attention to the one of two things that go wrong, is burdens us emotionally. It wears people out. The consequence of not being able to see the forest for the trees is becoming a depressed, anxious, or hopeless person.

◆ **Conclusion:**

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- ◆ I have good news for you. You are not the sun! God is the sun!
  - ◆ “Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. The LORD works out everything for his own ends--even the wicked for a day of disaster.” Proverbs 16:3, 4, NIV.
- ◆ The Lord and the Lord alone is the Sovereign.
  - ◆ “Everything comes from God alone. Everything lives by his power. Everything is for his glory.” Romans 11:36
- ◆ Good news, you don't have to be the center of your world! Reject the lie that you must be grand and central. Believe the truth that God loves you even as a less than perfect, but more than flesh and bone being.
  - ◆ I don't have to make mountains out of mole hills.
  - ◆ I don't have to take everything personally.
  - ◆ I don't have to be a saint and I don't have to be scum.
  - ◆ I don't have to see only one scraggly tree when there's a whole forest. It's not my MacDonaldis, and it's not my world. It's my father's world and he will make all things work together for my good be it flood or famine, rain or shine, peace or adversity, times of plenty or times of want. The lie is that I am on the throne. The truth is that God is on the throne, my future is secure with him.