

ON CLOSING THE DEAL

Echoes of Grace

OF A LIFETIME



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ON CLOSING THE DEAL OF A LIFETIME



Once in a lifetime, a deal comes along that is so sweet that it can make those who know how to close on it truly rich. It's fair that such a deal is presented to everyone, but whether they can close on this deal depends on how they respond. Here are three tips to help you close on the deal of a lifetime.

Tip 1: Go through life with your eyes and ears open.

We need to go through life with our eyes and ears open, so that when the greatest of all deals is presented to us, we will recognize its value and worth. The greatest of all deals is the offer of eternal life from God the Father through the Lord Jesus Christ, which comes to undeserving sinners. No other transaction even comes close to it. He takes those who deserve death and hell for the things they have done, and in love and mercy He washes away their sins and makes them fit for heaven. **"The wages of sin is death; but the gift of**

God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23). Through faith in Christ, sinners can receive the incredible gift of eternal life. What an offer! It is an offer you can’t afford to pass by!

It’s quite possible to go through life with eyes and ears closed, so that a person sees neither the frightful reality of sin nor God’s tremendous love. The Lord Jesus said,

“This people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matthew 13:15). Don’t go through life with your eyes closed! Open them up wide so that you may see the wonders of God’s love and be converted to faith in Christ.

Tip 2: Be honest.

In our dealings with God, you can absolutely depend on His “honesty.” He says what He means and means what He says. Has He made a promise? Then He will surely keep it. **“Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven”** (Psalm 119:89). Not once in the history of the universe has He failed to keep a promise He has made. Nor will He ever fail to keep one in the future. You can depend on it.



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He wants us to be honest too. How quick we are to pretend to have qualities we don't really possess. We do this to impress others. Don't pretend to have a righteousness you don't really have. He knows all about you. He says that all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags. **"We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as**

a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64:6). We might deceive other men and women who are as gullible and dishonest as ourselves, but we will *never* deceive God.

Oh, have an honest heart! Leave those sins with Jesus. His blood can wash them away and make you whiter than snow. **"Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool"** (Isaiah 1:18).


Tip 3: Have confidence that the other party will keep His word.

In order to close the greatest of deals, it is neces-

sary to have faith and to put that faith in the right person. The Lord Jesus is the One you want to trust in, because He was both God and man in the same person. He lived a perfect life on earth, and then yielded up His life as an atonement for sinners. The Bible states clearly that all those who believe in Christ, no matter their past, will be saved. **“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved”** (Acts 16:31). **“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live”** (John 11:25).

Faith is a simple trust that what another person says is true. Those who believe in Christ have confidence that He will do all that He says, and that includes giving the gift of eternal life to those who believe.

People on earth may have all sorts of life: animal life, intellectual life, night life; they might be the life of a party, or by eating right and exercising they may strive to live a healthy life. But all these other types of life will vanish away and disappear in the darkness of a lost eternity *if the person does not have eternal life through the Lord Jesus*. When a person dies apart from Christ, they will be fully conscious and capable of suffering. The worst suffering of hell is that souls will fully know that **“God is love”** (1 John 4:8), but will be completely cut off from Him. What a dismal, bleak, empty future awaits those who never come to Christ. The sufferings of hell will be so intense that souls will continually grind and gnash their teeth in pain. **“And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there**



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shall
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thew 13:50).

The time to get right
with God is in this life
before it is forever too late.
Oh, that as a sinner you
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alone can save the lost and
give you eternal life!

Following the above ad-
vice will help you success-
fully close on the deal of a lifetime which will make
you rich with eternal life. Then, for all eternity, you
may glory in the presence of Him who loved you
and gave His life to save you. You will be able to
glory in these riches while those who have never
closed this deal will suffer in hell.

Don't let the Saviour pass you by, but call out to
Him who said, **"I am the way, the truth, and the life;
no man cometh to the Father but by Me"** (John 14:6).
No one ever loved you like He does.

Find out more about the destruction caused by sin
and how to escape from it in *The Hurtful Lie*. ◀



The Hurtful Lie

The Hurtful Lie



Recently a private investigator in his late 50s started a business that hired “professional liars.” Their job required them to tell any lie that a client requested. They would provide alibis for cheating spouses, excuses for a person skipping work, and more. When asked how he could live with himself because of this high level of deception, his response was, “When someone asks me how I can live with myself, I say, ‘May I ask you a question? Have you told a lie this week? Do you think you may tell a lie next week? Would you never tell a lie? Are your lies more sanctified than my lies?’” In other words, everybody does it, so I’m no worse than anybody else! There are two things that this poor man was ignoring—lying has consequences, and God takes lying very seriously.

But maybe you say, “My lies are harmless; they don’t hurt anybody!” Perhaps that’s what Scott Thompson, the former CEO of Yahoo, thought when he fabricated his resume, stating that he had a degree in computer science when he didn’t. This lie caused him to resign from his job only four months after taking the helm. David Edmondson, former CEO of Radio Shack, also resigned from his post after admitting that he had padded his resume. His claim was that he had a bachelor’s degree in theology and psychology, when he did not. Who got hurt by those lies? Behind each deception there’s usually a rationalization, such as, “Everybody does it” or “Who will ever know?” or “I deserve it.”

Even true statements can be designed to deceive.



Take, for instance, the story of the sea captain who did not like one of his sailors. Frequently, he would enter into his log, “Jack was not drunk today.” This very effectively gave the impression that there were days when Jack was drunk, when, in fact, Jack never drank at all!

Lying is a sin that we don’t have to learn. Because of our fallen, sinful natures, it just comes naturally to us. Some of us are better at it than others—some people have honed this sin to such a point that it is nearly impossible to tell when they are lying. This is why it is so important to learn to always tell the truth from a very young age. Otherwise, we can become hardened and calloused to lying so that we think that it really doesn’t matter. If we are not careful, it can even become a way of life!

How God Views Dishonesty

This is exactly what happened to a whole group of people. It so permeated their culture that they became known for lying. Scripture records, **“One of themselves, even a prophet of their own, said, The Cretians are always liars, evil beasts, slow bellies. This witness is true”** (Titus 1:12-13). I believe the same could be said about the culture that we live in today. It is a fact that people have been admired for how well they could lie. Don’t be deceived into thinking that it really doesn’t matter. There is no such thing as a “white lie.” Little lies often become bigger lies; a

habit of lying can become a lifetime of lies.

Do you know what some of the consequences of lying are? It gives you a bad conscience, that God-given voice inside of you that tells you whether something is right or wrong. Lies can make you sick physically, by giving you headaches, sore throats, anxiety and depression. It destroys trust and can ruin relationships. Lies

can destroy your character and reputation, as well. Most importantly, did you know that just “one little, tiny lie” will bar you from heaven forever? This is why God says, **“The wages of sin [lying is sin] is death [followed by hell]; but the gift of God is eternal life”** (Romans 6:23). Because God loves us, He gives faithful warning about the end of those who love to make a lie. **“Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie”** (Revelation 22:15). “Without” means eternal separation from God’s presence, outside of heaven, cast into the lake of fire where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, forever and ever. **“The fearful, and unbelieving...and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the**

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second death"
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God sees lying as
a serious sin and
gives us faithful
warning of its con-
sequences if we do

not come to Him in repentance. **"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy"** (Proverbs 28:13).

What would it mean to live a life without lying? We have the perfect example in the One who never told a single lie. He lived a perfect, sinless life while here on earth. The Lord Jesus said, **"I am the way, the truth and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me"** (John 14:6). If we put our trust in Him as our Lord and Saviour, we can ask Him for help to tell the truth on a daily, hourly basis. When the Lord Jesus first met Nathanael, he said, **"Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile [dishonesty]!"** (John 1:47). What a beautiful commendation! Because we think of the lie before we tell the lie, we need to ask the Lord to help us to guard our thoughts and the intentions of our hearts. Here is a good way to pray every morning: **"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my Redeemer"** (Psalm 19:14). He is willing and able to help us if we ask Him in dependence.

Find out how God shows His heart's affection to people who have the ruin of sin in their lives in *Rescued From the Rubble*.

A gold bar is shown in the top left corner, tilted diagonally. It has a jeweler's stamp that includes the word 'FINE', the number '999.9', and a serial number '1007'.

Rescued From the **RUBBLE**

The rubble, dust and dirt were products of the renovation project in the bathroom. But staring out from underneath it all was a small glistening object. Turns out the plumber in Calgary, Alberta, had uncovered a heavy \$50,000 gold bar the size of a cell phone. It had the jeweler's stamp on it as well as its serial number. The owners were thrilled, of course.

The news brought to mind Jesus' story about the woman who lost a coin and who swept and searched the house until she found it. It says she also rejoiced. See Luke 15.

Through neglect or carelessness, your life may be like the lost gold bar. Maybe life is mostly an environment of dusty rubble, of mislaid plans, broken promises and disappointing results. Maybe, as in the case in Calgary, there is a personal renovation job going on, an attempt to reform and restart, to turn a new page. But you're finding it difficult to get out of the rubble.

Remember this: In our ruin we still show the stamp of our Creator's work—and retain our value to Him. And you have your own serial number in your personal DNA. In your darkness and loneliness, you still have the same value that God put upon you. That has never changed, and that's why God never stops looking for you.

"It is God's hand that can pick you up and restore you to the usefulness He intended for you..."

In fact, it is God who has initiated the search in the debris of our sinful world. It is God who sent Jesus here to sweep, to search, to turn the light on, and to pursue the lost sinner. He came here and lived among sinners, among the filth and debris, yet He was without sin. In rich grace, He went as far as the death of the cross where God's wrath

fell on Him, because of my sin.

How could humans ever invent a God like this, a God who seeks and saves unworthy sinners, because they have an undiminished value in His heart of love? Where else is there a God like this who seeks out His enemies and makes them His friends?

It is God's hand that can pick you up and restore you to the usefulness He intended for you when He made you. You are the object of His search. In the story Jesus told, the woman searched until she found her precious coin. God is not quitting either.

There is a verse in John 3 in the Bible that sums up these thoughts, that speaks of the worth you have to Him and the cost of His search. It says that God loved this evil world so much that He gave us Jesus, and everyone who believes in Him will not stay lost forever, but will have eternal life, right now.

The exact words are: **"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16).

“HE THAT
COVERETH
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PROVERBS 28:13



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“Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” (Romans 10:13).

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