



Psalm 12

Lies and Liars – Leaders version

For a one hour study, just do the starred * questions

Check in – with the group sitting in a semi circle go round and ask everyone, including leaders, how they are and how they're feeling about studying the Bible today.

1. What is the big picture message of Psalm 12?

The author, David, feels lost in a sea of deception and he cries out to God for help. Don't unpack in any detail – the rest of the study will do that!

What does the passage say and mean?

60 minutes

Read Psalm 12

2. What is David's problem (v1)?

The people around him are not faithful to God, and David cannot trust them.

*3. What are the people doing (v2)?

Lying, flattering and deceiving (you may need to explain some of these terms)

*4. **STICKERS** Do you think that lying is ever right? Why?

Read the stickers and co-ordinate a discussion. Is it a question of situation ethics?!

*5. **STICKERS** Why is lying a problem?

Read the stickers and co-ordinate a discussion. Focus on the consequences of lying (one lie often requires another one to back it up, loss of trust etc), rather than the morality of it.

6. Why is flattery a problem?

It's lying. It's appealing to someone's pride / selfishness in order to gain something for the flatterer. And it doesn't help the other person.

*7. What does God think of lying? (see Exodus 20:16)

Lying is wrong. God commands us not to lie. It brings no honour to God.

8. Can you think of a time when you've felt that everyone around you was lying or deceiving people? What did you do?

Questions 9-11 are **SELF-DIRECTED QUESTIONS**. You need to write them on flip-chart sheets for the group to work on in pairs.

9. **SDL** What did David do in this situation (v1)?

Turned to God for help in prayer

10. **SDL** In v4, the people ask 'who is our master?'. What do they think is the answer to their question?

That they are their own master, and thus they own their lips and can say what they like.

11. **SDL** What is the true answer?

They think that they are accountable to no-one but themselves. But they are ultimately accountable to God.

*12. What do the lies, flattery and deceit lead to (v5)?

Oppression of the weak and groaning of the needy.

*13. What is God's response to David's prayer (v5)?

God says that he will protect the weak and the needy from those who oppress them.

14. What does v6 tell us about God's words?

They are flawless – there is no mistake in God's words, they are, and they always will be, true.

*15. We usually lie in order to preserve our own honour / protect ourselves. Whose honour should Christians be concerned about and how should that affect our speech?

God's honour. We should be truthful.

*16. Read v7-8. Other people will continue to lie – how will God protect us from them?

God will protect our reputations (as long as we aren't joining in with the lies). Human authorities, eg judges, police, prison officers, can usually tell a lie from the truth – ultimately, lies will be exposed. If we are known as someone who tells the truth, people will trust us.

How can I live according to these truths in my life?

*1. How good are you at telling the truth? What makes you lie, and how do you think you could start to address this issue?

2. When you know people are lying about you, what can you do?

Pray to God for help – don't take the matter into your own hands! It maybe necessary to approach the relevant authorities.

*3. What difference will it make for you to know that you are accountable to God for everything you say?

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3. What are the people doing (v2)?

4. Do you think lying is ever right? Why?

5. Why is lying a problem?

6. Why is flattery a problem?

7. What does God think of lying? (see Exodus 20:16)

8. Can you think of a time when you've felt that everyone around you was lying or deceiving people? What did you do?

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