

Title: LIES OF AN EARTHLY SORT, COLOSSIANS 1:1-11  
(Chatham, NJ; 08/04/13, AM) [Pt – Exegesis]

Theme: Among the many things that feed our earthly nature are the lies that we tell ourselves and others which reflect a disordered inner life.

Purpose: To heal our sinful souls by exposing us to the truth about the earthly nature and to remind everyone that setting our minds on the things of Christ is the beginning of change.

Introduction:

1. Change begins when we think differently; usually that means we have to uncover the truth about who we are and what we've done.
2. Set your minds on things above where Christ is seated. This is the shift within us.
3. Christ is seated in the place of preeminence, 1:18.
4. Colossians 3:1 – 4 becomes the foundation for personal change: elevating our minds to the things of Christ.
5. Specifics for change are given in the verses that follow.

#### I. Put Earthly Desires to Death, 5

##### A. The Cross is an instrument of death

1. We take it up to follow Christ, and we die with him
2. "Cut it off?" (World, 8/10/13, p. 71) – See quote
3. Not satisfying our carnal appetites is what many people fear the most
4. Unbelief and hatred for Christianity can be traced back to this

##### B. Impulse or identity?

1. Many people confuse identity with impulse
2. A man on the radio recently kept saying, "I identify myself as a gay man"
3. An author I read kept saying "I'm just a gossip, that's who I am"
4. How often do we say, "That's just me" to cover up bad behavior
5. In verse 11 Paul removes identity from the discussion: identity provides no excuses for sinful behavior
6. When we identify ourselves with a sinful behavior, we effectively limit our ability to change
7. This is one of the reasons Paul focuses on lies in verse 9

##### C. A list of sinful impulses

1. Jesus has already taught that sin comes from the impulses within, Mark 7:21-23
2. Humans continue to artfully dodge this whole concept
3. You must put away (to death) the things in verses 5 & 8
4. Many of these take on a life of their own when legitimized as in the politics of envying those who have what I don't have and believing we should take it from them (violating 10<sup>th</sup> commandment is idolatry, 5)

#### II. Stop lying to one another, 9 (a whole category for change)

##### A. The heart of Satan's mind

1. John 8:44 – his native tongue
2. John 9:31-34, blindness to the obvious
3. "The first thing a man will do for his ideals is lie."
4. Elevated to a social construct this becomes the politics of the 9<sup>th</sup> commandment (not bear false witness): hurl false, twisted accusations (lies) at your opponent

##### B. Prohibition against lying in Lev. 19:11

1. Includes "dealing falsely" and "swearing falsely"

2. Paul relates his prohibition (9-10) directly to our changed life
3. Just as lying is at the heart of Satan's mind, so is lying at the heart of sinful humanity; you must know the truth in order to be set free
4. Calvin Coolidge spoke of the malady of self-delusion (copy)
5. Blind Chinese dissident, Chen Guangcheng, has exposed a subtle form of it that is sometimes inherent in institutions, "Double Jeopardy" *World*, 8/10/13, 39-40.
6. Not blatant lying but hiding from the truth

### III. Conclusions

- A. The wrath of god is coming, 6
  1. Is this not a good motivation?
  2. We keep trying to neutralize this by emphasizing God's love
  3. Or we just don't talk about it
  
- B. Put off old self, put on new self
  1. We are renewed, 10
  2. The motif represented by the cross and by one's death in baptism
  3. As relevant and powerful as ever
  
- C. Repent or perish
  1. Jesus' teaching in Luke 13:1-5
  2. The Epistles establish this as an enduring command and lifestyle
  3. We must change our old, sinful, and earthly ways
  4. They can't be elevated to merely another lifestyle choice
  
- D. Repent for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand
  1. The Gospel calls people to repent
  2. To believe that Jesus is the Son of God
  3. To confess their sins and their faith
  4. To be baptized for the remission of sins
  5. To live faithfully
  6. It is the teaching we have reviewed and renewed today
  7. Live the new life this week!