

Category:

Dowlan Road Church—Benjamin Lee

Introduction:

1. “LOL”, “SALTS”, “SMH” “182”. At first glance these abbreviations may not mean anything. But for those of us who are tech savvy, these abbreviations make up the language of text messages. For those of you who may not be familiar with these abbreviations, let me explain what they mean. So many young people are texting. In fact, there are now competitions for it. Young people will spend countless hours sending, reading, and resending text messages.
2. Yet there are many text messages that some young people are not receiving. They were sent more than 2,000 years ago, but still have not been read. Some have read them, but then they quickly dismiss them. I’m referring to the text messages that are found in God’s word. These texts are to be read carefully, and listened to. You can’t delete these texts. And you shouldn’t ignore them, because they are designed to help you live right, Psalm 119:9-11. His word is what you need, Matthew 4:4. They will keep you out of trouble, and help you get to heaven. Tonight, I want to share with you some text messages from God that will help you to avoid problems and to make good decisions.

The Lesson:

I. Text #1: Don’t Lie

- A. This is a message that God wants you to read and follow.
 1. Notice this text message from God, Colossians 3:9. We are not to lie! But why should we not lie? One reason is that Paul said it’s evil to do so. But that’s not all.
 - a. Proverbs 12:22: We shouldn’t lie because God hates it.
 - b. John 8:44: We shouldn’t lie because when we do we act like the devil.
 2. These reasons should be sufficient. But I want you to see what happens when a person lies. There’s a cycle that takes place. This is seen when we look at a man named Gehazi, 2 Kings 5:20-27. Gehazi lied at least two or three times. He lied for dishonest gain.
 3. He got away with it for a while, but would then end up in a worse position. This is the vicious cycle that takes place.
- B. If you fail to listen to God’s text messages about lying, you too will pay the price.
 1. The problem of lying that Gehazi had is still seen in people today, like Lance Armstrong.
 - a. He lied for decades. His lies and deceit made him a fortune.
 - b. He felt that he would get away with it. He was bold and very convincing.
 - c. But he eventually was caught. Now he is paying the price.
 2. He has lost his titles, his Olympic medal, his sponsors, and his chance to participate in other events. But he has lost something more valuable: His reputation, Proverbs 22:1.
 3. God warns us to avoid lying because there’s a price to pay. As young people, you will be pressured to lie to mom and dad about your whereabouts, or who you are with. You will be pressured to cheat on an exam.

4. When these situations happen don't lie, do what's right! Be honest at all times. You would be better off failing a test instead of cheating. You will be better off telling mom and dad the truth instead of lying. Here's why.
 - a. Proverbs 12:19: Because you will eventually get caught.
 - b. Proverbs 19: 5, 9: Because you will be punished. Even worse, you will damage your reputation and trust that others have given you. And if you're not careful, you may lose your soul, Revelation 21:8.
5. Listen to God's text messages when it comes to lying. Don't do it!

II. Text #2: Be careful who your friends are

- A. This is a message that is found in God's text.
 1. Notice this text messages from God.
 - a. Proverbs 22:24-25: Friends that are bad will lead you down the same path.
 - b. Proverbs 23:20-21: People unwise with their friends will often end up like them.
 2. These warnings should be sufficient to help you to stay away from bad friends. But how can you identify if a person will make a bad friend? Look at what they do, and what they want you to do. Are those things drawing you closer to God, or away from God? A great example of this is found in 2 Samuel 13:1-6 with Amnon and Jonadeb. Everything that Jonadeb thought, suggested, and encouraged was bad. Amnon was a fool to listen. He paid the price. If you find your friends suggesting, and encouraging you to do things that are not right, are deceitful, and sinful, like having sex, dressing immodestly, missing church, drinking alcohol, you need to stay away from them.
- B. If you fail to listen to God's warnings about your friends, the same may happen to you.
 1. Stories like Amnon are still happening today. While it may not be the same situation, we see countless examples of people who were negatively influenced by their friends. Take for example Vince Young. He had a great college career. He went to the NFL. But now he has nothing. These are the types of people to avoid.
 2. So what type of friends should you have? You need friends that will push you to Jesus, not away from Him, Mark 2:3-5. The man who was a paralytic had friends like this. These were friends who influenced this man in a positive way. They were interested in what was right, not what was wrong. They were interested in helping this man's situation, not hurting him. These are the types of friends you should have. This may mean that you don't have a lot of friends. But it's not about how many friends you have. It's about the type of friends you have. You can have many friends if you're willing to disregard your faith and do evil. But God has sent you a text message about that too, Proverbs 24:1.

Conclusion:

1. These text messages from God are simple to understand. They are young and old people.
2. While we know these pretty well, it's all about follow through, James 1:22.