

Rethink 'Wink'

It was springtime during my sixth grade year. After considerable thought and planning I did it! I *winked* at the cute little dark-haired girl in my class.

Years later I learned that it was called "nonverbal communication." I had no idea that I was capable of such sophistication! The 'wink' in sixth grade meant, "I like you." The thing that was so confusing later on was that I had been *winked at* by adults and "I like you" just didn't always make sense. So, using my kid-powered deductive reasoning skills I decided that *winking* was some kind of code, but I had no idea what it meant.

As a teen, I saw the *wink* again. An uncle of mine was playing a harmless prank on one of my younger cousins. That time I understood the wink, "Don't say anything; play along."

We all had a big laugh afterward.

I finally understood: The *wink* communicates when the mouth is closed. At other times it communicates when the mouth speaks, but the wink and the mouth do not agree. As Solomon observed, the wink may tell the truth while the mouth tells a lie.

**A worthless person, a wicked man,
Is the one who walks with a false mouth,
Who winks with his eyes,
Who signals with his feet,
Who points with his fingers;
Who with perversity in his heart devises
evil continually,
Who spreads strife.**

--Proverbs 6:12-14

A person says one thing with his mouth, but he communicates a different message by nonverbal signals; a wink, shuffling of the feet, pointing

the fingers. God has an opinion about that individual:
Worthless.
Wicked.
Liar.

Solomon did not condemn nonverbal communication. The "I like you" wink is innocent. A head-nod, motion of the hand, and the "stink eye" are often effective means of nonverbal communication used by parents and teachers.

Solomon warned against using deceptive signals to cover lies. He described a subtle and evil manipulation that ultimately causes strife. Don't think this is just for kids. God hates the "one who spread strife among his brothers." (Take a look at verse 19 in the same chapter.)

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus instructed his followers to say, "Yes," if they meant "Yes," and to say, "No," if they meant "No." In other words, speak the truth or say nothing at all; no verbal manipulation; no deceit; no lying; and no *subtle silent signals*.

Tell the truth.
(No Wink.)

Tell the truth.
(No Wink.)

Mark Stinnett

