

1. The Top 10 Lies of the Devil—Pt.1

(7/16/23)

This morning I'd like to put our study in Philippians on hold for 3 or 4 weeks to present something that God has laid on my heart—a series I'm calling, "*The Top 10 Lies of the Devil.*"

Jesus said of Satan that, "*He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.*" (John 8:44)

Paul admonished us to not be ignorant of Satan's '*devices*'—or in other words, we must not allow ourselves to be deceived, tricked or to fall for the devil's lies.

The only way we can be strong against the devil's lies is to know the truth (God's Word)—as Jesus said earlier in John 8, that if we would take the time to really know the truth it would set us free from Satan's lies.

I just watched a video about a young woman who was raised in a Christian home and grew up in church—yet she got sucked into the occult because, in her words, she didn't really know what the Bible said about these things. (Comment)

And so, let's look at some of Satan's favorite lies he constantly tries to get people to fall for—starting with number 10 and counting down to number 1:

10. Happiness will be yours when you own, achieve, or experience... (fill in the blank)

This is what some have called the "*When/then*" philosophy of life—"*When I get this—then I'll be happy.*"

Today we are living in a culture that is empty and desperately trying to fill that emptiness with:

1. *Alcohol and drugs*
2. *Pleasurable experiences* (expensive vacations, sexual encounters)
3. *Material possessions*
4. *Romance* (internet romance and adultery has become an epidemic especially among married woman)
5. *Fame, success etc.*

Remember what Jesus said to the Samaritan woman by the well in John 4—*"Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again."* (He started by referencing literal water but then turned it into a metaphor for anything in life a person is thirsting for)

That is an extremely profound statement spoken by the One who made us and knows how we work and what will satisfy us.

It is a statement that should be written over every desire and ambition you have in life.

What is it that you think will bring you satisfaction and happiness (other than Jesus)?

What is it that you are pressing towards—what are the goals that you hope to achieve?

What are you striving for in life thinking—*"O, if only I could have this or that, or him or her—I know I'd be happy, I know I wouldn't want anything else."*

But listen, Jesus, the One who made you, is telling you that whatever it is, write over the top of it, *"Drink of this ___ and you will thirst again."*

Nothing this world has to offer in the way of material possessions, accomplishments, successes or even human relationships will ever satisfy that deep longing in your soul the way a relationship with Jesus Christ will satisfy you.

As Jesus went on to say in John 4—“*Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give will never thirst again.*” (Explain)

Augustine said, “*Thou hast made us for Thyself and our hearts are restless until they rest in Thee.*”

And yet there is always going to be the “*when/then*” person—“*when I get that—then I’ll be happy, then I will be satisfied.*”

My pastor, Chuck Smith, came from a family that contained several rich relatives that didn’t know the Lord and I remember him saying—they were some of the most miserable and unhappy people he knew.

You see, rich folks have it all. They’ve done it all. They really have nothing left to experience or look forward to—they have maxed out life and nothing has satisfied them or made them happy.

Jesus is here telling us that that is one of the biggest lies Satan has deceived people into believing—it’s what Paul the apostle called, “*the deceitfulness of riches.*”

(John D. Rockefeller—‘*How much is enough? — Just a little more!*’)

If you still doubt what I’m saying, let’s look at King Solomon for a minute—the richest man in the world in his day.

Here was a man who had everything this world had to offer.

- *He had prestige and power—as well as riches and fame more than anyone who has ever lived.*
- *He dined on the finest foods, wore the finest clothes, and lived in the finest palace.*
- *He had thousands of servants to attend to his every need and hundreds of wives and concubines so that his pleasure knew no bounds.*
- *He was the wisest and most intelligent man that ever lived (apart from Jesus) so much so that people came from all over the known world just to sit and hear his wisdom—I mean Solomon had it all!*

If outward circumstances truly make a person happy—then Solomon should've been the happiest man on the face of the earth.

But instead, we see him write in the book of Ecclesiastes over and over again—*"Vanity, vanity everything in life is emptiness and vanity."*

And that is because, as Jesus said—*"A man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."* Or in other words, *"A person's life isn't measured by how much you own."*

We would do well to listen to Jesus, after all—He made us and knows what will make us happy.

And He is basically saying that it's pure foolishness to think you can fill up the void in your soul with the junk of this world—and yet how many people are feverishly trying to do that very thing?

This is exactly the lie that Satan has deceived so many with—that life does consist in the abundance of the things we possess.

So, this is lie number 10 on our list—number 9:

9. God can't exist because there is so much evil and suffering in the world.

This is the top argument of the *atheist* to prove that a good God doesn't exist—or of the *skeptic* to prove He exists but can't be a good and loving God—or if He does exist and is a good and loving God—He can't be all powerful because an all-good, all-powerful God wouldn't let evil exist in the world.

And yet, for those of us who do believe in the existence of an all-good, all-loving, and all-powerful God the inevitable question that comes to mind is—If God exists, and if He is all-loving (He really cares about people), and if He's all-powerful (He can do anything He wants to do)—then why doesn't He put a stop to all the evil and suffering in the world?

This, in fact, is the single greatest obstacle for spiritual seekers to overcome in their quest to believe in the God of the Bible.

In a George Barna poll, a cross-section of adults were asked the question: *“If you could ask God only one question and you knew He would give you an answer, what would you ask?”*

The top response was, *“Why is there pain and suffering in the world?”*

And again, for the atheist and skeptic they believe that this is an airtight argument against the existence of an all-good, all-powerful God—

“If God is all-good so that He would eliminate evil; and if He is all-powerful so that He could eliminate evil, yet evil is not eliminated—therefore an all-good, all-powerful God cannot exist.”

But the problem with that argument is that it is built on a faulty assumption—that just because evil hasn't been eliminated yet—it never will be!

If the atheist was honest and phrased the argument correctly it wouldn't prove his point.

In other words, if he said, *“If there is an all-good God who would eliminate evil; and an all-powerful God who could eliminate evil and since He hasn’t yet eliminated evil—He can’t exist.”*

Our answer to that would simply be: *“Just because evil hasn’t been eliminated yet doesn’t mean it won’t be eliminated someday.”*

Look, if the atheist could say with all certainty—*“If God is all-good He would eliminate evil; if He is all-powerful He could eliminate evil, evil has not yet been eliminated and it never will be—therefore no such God exists.”*

→ Now he’s got a good argument against the existence of an all-good and all-powerful God.

But the only way anyone could make a statement like that would be if they were all-knowing and knew the future perfectly.

We do know the future because God has revealed in the Book of Revelation which tells us that one day God *will* settle all accounts and eliminate all evil—criticizing God for not doing it right now is like reading half a novel and criticizing the author for not resolving the plot.

“Yes, but evil is bad—if God is good why doesn’t He protect us from it?”

First of all, whatever evil is in the world came through man (Romans 5:12-14), and now that man has exercised his free will in rebellion against God and has brought all these negative consequences upon the human race—God is using them to break the wicked (salvation) and develop His children (sanctification).

Norm Geisler—

“This is not the best of all possible worlds, but I think it’s the best of all possible ways to get to the best of all possible worlds. A true believer is something like tea, their real strength comes out in hot water. God permits suffering to produce the greatest virtues in us. Job said, ‘When He has tested me I shall come forth as gold.’”

Romans 5:3–4 (NKJV)

³ And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; ⁴ and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

James 1:2–4 (NKJV)

² My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. ⁴ But let patience have *its* perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing.

God allows pain to bring about the greater good.

One author put it this way—

“Every athlete, especially an Olympic athlete, goes through incredible pain and suffering in training—why? For the joy of victory! If victory wasn’t greater than the suffering it takes to get there, no one would ever endure it—so every athlete endures pain to bring about the greater good.”

But secondly, for the people who can’t understand why, even if man messed up this world, God doesn’t just ‘fix it’ and make it problem free again.

They are harboring under a faulty assumption—that the absence of all suffering would be the greatest good for mankind.

Or to put it another way, they feel a God of love would never, or could never use suffering, adversity, or pain for our good.

Is it possible that God could use suffering and tragedy to teach us important lessons that help us grow as believers while drawing us to God in a way that nothing else would?

Can God use for good what Satan intended for evil?—and of course the answer is—YES!

And in fact, the ultimate example of this truth—He has already shown us.

God has already demonstrated how the very worst thing that has ever happened in the history of the world ended up resulting in the very best thing that has ever happened in the history of the world—the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. (Explain)

When it comes to suffering on account of sin—God took His own medicine by becoming one of us, took our sins upon Himself and suffered more than any of us ever would if we lived a million lifetimes.

One author said, “*How could you not love this Being Who went the extra mile, Who practiced more than He preached. Who entered into our world, Who suffered our pains, Who offers Himself to us in the midst of our sorrows? What more could He do?*”

8. There is no absolute truth—whatever a person believes is *their* truth.

First of all, we need to ask ourselves—“*What is truth?*”

Many scholars, academics, and philosophers over the centuries have relegated the concept of ‘truth’ to the realm of the *abstract* or *theoretical*.

And because so many secular intellectuals reject the concept of truth as an *absolute* reality (something that is real, tangible and knowable)—they conclude it is merely a *subjective* concept (something based on personal feelings and/or experience).

And so, they claim truth isn’t *absolute* it’s relative.

Or in other words—truth is whatever you want it to be (like if you were born a male or a female and you simply decide your truth is that you are really the opposite gender)!

But without objective, absolute truth—people can’t live, societies breakdown, and life would be impossible.

Because, without objective, absolute truth there can be no righteous standard of morality and therefore no righteous laws governing a society—both of which are based on the objective, absolute standard of right and wrong that we call *truth*.

In our culture today many have abandoned the idea of moral *absolutes* in favor of moral *relativism*—“*My truth is my truth and your truth is your truth—if it works for you and feels good it’s okay.*”

And because so many want to do whatever seems right in their own eyes without anyone opposing or judging them—they naturally don’t want to oppose or judge the way anyone else is living either.

And therefore, their mindset is—“*You accept me and I’ll accept you*”—which is now the general attitude of our age.

And so, we hear a lot today in our society about *tolerance, inclusiveness and love*—which the world defines as basically *accepting* whatever people want to do and how they want to live.

And if we do speak out against immorality and sin—they label us, ‘*judgmental and bigoted*’, ‘*self-righteous and narrow minded!*’—all based on their belief that “*there is no such thing as absolute truth and therefore no such thing as sin.*”

But you see, John the apostle said in 1John 1:8 that those who say “*we have no sin*” are deceiving themselves and the *truth* is not in them.

You might be thinking—“*How is it possible that anyone could believe they have never sinned?!*”

It’s possible if they change the rules or the standards by which certain behaviors are called *sin* in the first place.

And so, in our culture today many have abandoned the idea of moral *absolutes* in favor of moral *relativism*.

They believe that there are no moral absolutes (no absolute standards of right and wrong) and that ‘truth’ is whatever they say it is.

Of course, moral absolutes come from God—the Supreme Lawgiver and Righteous Judge of all the earth.

So those who want to get rid of God’s laws—have to get rid of God Himself (hence the rise of neo-atheism especially among young people).

Now, once they get rid of God, once they embrace the belief that He doesn’t exist—then neither do His commandments exist which causes them to say, *“I have not sinned, because sin doesn’t exist!”*

You see, if there is no absolute standard of right and wrong—then sin is impossible because sin is a violation of God’s laws—which don’t exist if He doesn’t exist!

Again, these people don’t believe there is such a thing as sin and they would tell you—

“I don’t sin, that’s your truth not my truth! When I have sex outside of marriage or lie to get that promotion or engage in homosexual activity or kill babies in the womb—it’s not sin because my truth says it’s perfectly right for me to do it!”

Well then, Hitler wasn’t an evil murderer—he was simply acting according to *his* ‘truth’!
(Explain)

This is why I say that without moral absolutes people can’t live, societies breakdown, and life would be impossible.

And that is why God has given us His Word to build our lives upon—which is the antidote to man’s relativistic moral insanity—

Psalm 19:8-9 (NKJV)

⁸ The statutes of the LORD *are right*, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD *is pure*, enlightening the eyes; ⁹ The...judgments of the LORD *are true and righteous* altogether.

So, in conclusion—is there such a thing as absolute truth, and why does it matter?

There is such a thing as absolute truth—it’s called the Word of God, the Bible:

John 17:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ ...[Father] Your word is truth.

But understand that God’s Word cannot be separated from God Himself.

God is truth, and truth is God who has expressed Himself in the pages of the Bible, His Holy Word!

In other words, what God calls truth is an expression and extension of Himself—as something that emanates from Him as part of His nature—even as Jesus (Who is God) said of Himself in John 14:6 “*I am the way, the truth, and the life...*”

Trying to understand *truth* without God is like trying to understand *sunlight* without the sun!

And just as trying to understand *sunlight* would be impossible without focusing on the sun as its source—so to understanding *truth* is impossible without starting with and focusing on God as its Source!

As Christians we read the Word of God to know the God of the Word!

So absolute truth exists—but why does it matter?

It matters because God's absolute truth allows us to live in a world of lies and not be deceived and destroyed by them—

John 8:31-32 (NKJV)

³¹ Then Jesus said... "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. ³² "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." [from Satan's lies]

God's truth becomes a sure foundation that we can build our lives upon—as opposed to shifting sand of man's relativistic 'truth' which is nothing more than Satan's lies.

God's absolute truth is essential for life—as Jesus said, "*The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.*"

The devil has come to '*steal, kill and destroy*' and as such he has filled this world with disinformation and flat out lies that if embraced—will steal a person's life now and destroy their soul in hell forever.

The sad reality is that many people are frantically looking for truth and yet they don't or won't come to the Bible for the answers on how to live their lives.

Again, God's Word is the only *light* in a world of darkness, the only *truth* in a world full of Satan's lies!

Believe it and you'll be saved and live a blessed life—reject it and you'll live a life of chaos and confusion resulting in the ultimate consequence—eternal separation from God in hell.

So, to recap quickly—the first 3 of Satan's top 10 lies that he constantly feeds and deceives the human race with are:

10. Happiness will be yours when you own, achieve, or experience... (fill in the blank)

Happiness will be yours when you get a new car or go on an expensive vacation or get married (or divorced) or get your degree...etc.

9. God can't exist because there is so much evil and suffering in the world.

Or if He does exist, He can't be an all-good, all-powerful God or else He would get rid of evil.

8. There is no absolute truth—whatever a person believes is their truth.

Truth is whatever you say it is (which means there is no such thing as sin because whatever I say is okay is my truth and okay for me to do).

We'll continue our study next week.