

SLIDE 1 – FAKE VERSES

This morning, I have the honor and privilege of contributing to our ongoing discussion about fake verses. Things we Christians and the world say that we believe to be scripture that are not. Now if you haven't listened to the last two weeks' sermons, I encourage you to do so. And for those of you who may be thinking, "what kind of church focuses on statements that aren't scripture?" let me say this

SLIDE 2/3 – JOHN 8:44

John 8:44 says that Satan is the "Father of Lies," and we see from his interaction with Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 and with Jesus in Matthew 4 that his lies are calculated. He baits us not with outright lies, because those would be easy to identify. Instead, he draws us in with partial truths. And those partial truths always do two things:

SLIDE 4 – PARTIAL TRUTHS

- They give an incomplete picture of the truth (the whole truth).
- And since **John 14:6** reminds us that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life, Satan's lies also give an incomplete picture of God.

SLIDE 5 – THE GOAL OF THIS

So, then by nature of Satan's two goals in presenting partial truths, our goal in this series and in debunking these partial truths is to (1) lead you to a more complete picture of the Truth and thus (2) to lead you to a more complete picture of God. Amen?

SLIDE 6 – MY GOALS

I received my undergraduate degree in biochemistry with a minor creative writing. Needless to say, I love outlines. Truly, not many things make me happier than having a list to work from. Procedures, itineraries, agendas, they are God's gift to mankind. Can all the Type A children of God say Amen? So, here are the four things I want to accomplish in today's sermon.

- First, I want to offer you the origin of my fake verse.
- Second, I want to juxtapose our fake verse with scripture.
- Third, I want to offer you a better version of the fake verse.
- Fourth, I want to offer you a chance to respond to the entire message.

Sound good?

SLIDE 7 – BLANK

There is a Jewish work called the Book of Sirach. This book was written about 200 years before Jesus Christ was born to Mary, and it is a "book of wisdom" similar to the book of Proverbs.

Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and most Oriental Orthodox Christians consider this book to be canon and thus a doctrinal writing. We as Protestants can appreciate the wisdom that exists in such writings, but we don't include it in our canonical Bibles.

SLIDE 8 – THE WAY OF SINNERS

The following verse is from the book of Sirach. Chapter 21 verse 10: “The way of sinners is made plain with stones, but at the end thereof is the pit of hell.” **Passage of wisdom**

Now, again, this verse has existed since before Jesus, but something happened around the late 1700's and the early 1800's, Western culture became intrigued by it. And it became the talk of the town. Over the next three centuries, famous figures like Charlotte Bronte, Karl Marx, Lauryn Hill, Madonna, Ozzy Osbourne and many others would come to use the phrase in their works.

Except there was a problem. After several centuries of newspapers, sermons, songs, and movies, Sirach 21:10 no longer read the way it did originally. It had evolved into something else. Or should I say that Satan fashioned it into something else. And that something else is this:

SLIDE 9 – THE ROAD TO HELL IS PAVED

“The road to hell is paved with good intentions.” So, now we have people presenting “The road...” as if it is ancient Jewish wisdom when it's not. It's a partial truth.

SLIDE 10 – BLANK

When I was a kid, I used to love reading a kids Magazine called “Highlights.” That magazine contained stories, and cool pictures, and lots of puzzles and activities to keep a pre-teen boy busy for an hour or two. One of my favorite games in those magazines was called “Spot the difference.” The activity was simple. There were two pictures juxtaposed and the goal of the game... I see some people looking at me like what in the world is juxtaposed? Well, let me give you the definition.

SLIDE 11 – JUXTAPOSE

Definition – To place close together for comparing and contrasting

So, in these magazines, there would be two pictures juxtaposed and the goal of the activity would be to find all of the differences between the two pictures. Anybody know what I'm talking about? Well I brought an example for you today.

SLIDE 12 – SPOT THE DIFF PIC

[Stay quiet for about five seconds.] Raise your hand if you've already found one difference between these two pictures?

Now, isn't it interesting that I didn't tell any of you to play this game, but pretty much all of you did. Here's my question: If in a matter of seconds, most of you began juxtaposing these pictures, why are we so slow to juxtapose the Truth of God against the partial truths of the world?

SLIDE 13 – WHY ARE WE SO SLOW

Why don't we do the same thing with Bible? Why is it that we listen to podcasts and sit in sermons and read books and articles and never open our Bibles to compare the truths these speakers and writers are presenting with the Truth of God?

It's sobering. And please understand that I'm preaching this to you from a humbled place, because God dealt with me on this for the last two weeks. Why don't we study our Bibles more? Why don't we know scripture better than we do? It's a problem, Church! Seriously. Historians have deemed this era of humanity the age of information, because one of the major defining characteristics of our societies is having access to and control of information. Christians are included in that. **And here's the problem: we're more concerned about being informed about the things of this world than being transformed by the Word of God.**

SLIDE 14-20 – MATTHEW 4

Man must not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." ---

Deuteronomy 8:3

He will give his angels orders concerning you,
and they will support you with their hands
so that you will not strike
your foot against a stone." --- **Psalm 91:11-12**

Do not test the Lord your God." --- **Deuteronomy 6:16**

Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him." --- **1 Samuel 7:3**

Satan tried his best to attack Jesus while he was weak and tired from fasting and Satan failed. Why? Because Jesus used scripture not willpower to fight him. I don't know who needs to hear this today, but I pray it sets you free:

SLIDE 21– SPIRITUAL BATTLES REQUIRE

How do you know if a battle is spiritual?

- We'll get there! For now let's put a pin in it and get back to the road paved with good intentions.

SLIDE 22 – THE ROAD TO HELL IS PAVED

Now, I've told you it's wrong. But I'm wrong, but I haven't yet told you why. Well, let's look at it.

- Any takers, why is this verse not true?

It's hard to answer. But the reason it's hard to answer is because we are trying to determine the truth of this statement without juxtaposing it to scripture to determine if it

- With that being said, let's spot the difference! Here is Matthew 7:13

SLIDE 23 – MATTHEW 7:13

Now, this is something I encourage everyone to start doing. Put them side by side. Juxtapose them.

SLIDE 24 – WORLD vs GOD

Let's get our bearings. First, do they have anything in common?

They both state that there is a pathway that leads to Hell.

- Quick plug for BlueLetterBible.

SLIDE 25-28

Discuss the interlinear concordance found on BlueLetterBible.com

- *Destruction = Hell*

SLIDE 29 – GOD / WORLD

What truths do these two share?

- The truth found in both statements is hell is not the consequence of a single moment but a series of moments. It is not a single moment of disobedience that leads us to hell but instead a lifestyle of disobedience. Or as Galatians 5 says, a practice of disobedience. It's one step of lusting followed by one step of sexual immorality followed by another step of lusting followed by unrepentance followed by lying followed by adultery followed by more lying followed by more unrepentance. Amen? The road that leads to hell is a pathway not a moment.

What's different about them?

- And the correct answer is not "One is a longer sentence!"

SLIDE 30 – 1. THE WORLD EMPHASIZES ...

Here's the reality. No one goes to sleep a righteous man and then wakes up wicked.

- Wickedness is a pathway. BUT that pathway had a gate at the entrance.
- A single moment usually that feels innocent, that feels harmless. But the world is wrong.

I've always given this example to the Students who have asked me how to beat temptation. See, I was a high schooler once. I wasn't always bald! And why back when I would sit in my room with a head full of hair and watch one of my favorite shows at the time: **Family Guy**.

- **Family Guy was my gate to Hell. What's yours?**

SLIDE 31 – THE WORLD SPOTLIGHTS ...

Take a look. It's subtle. But's there.

- The road to hell is paved with good intentions. VS For the gate is wide and the road broad that **leads** to hell...
- The world wants you to think that you are in control of yourself. Jesus knows and is telling us that once we're on the road to hell, we are being **led** to your demise.

SLIDE 32-35 – EPHESIANS 2:1-3

Now, I used BlueLetterBible here and where it says "according to" that word in the Greek is katah, and it means to work toward or along with. So, again, scripture shows that as we walk in disobedience, we are not just walking aimlessly, we are walking along with or following Satan.

SLIDE 36 – THE WORLD SPOTLIGHTS...

SLIDE 37 – THE WORLD OFFERS...

This is my last point, but I've saved the best for last, because you see, this is where our hope lies!

SLIDE 38 – MATTHEW 7:13-14

Jesus doesn't just leave you with a path to Hell. He offers a path to Heaven. But while the path to Hell is broad, the path to Heaven/life is narrow, the gate is small, and only a few find it. But what is that path?

- **John 14:6 says "Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." The WAY**

There is an ideology that is rapidly taking over modern culture. It's titled religious pluralism or perennialism. It looks like this.

SLIDE 39 – MOUNTAIN EXAMPLE

God is at the top of the mountain. Heaven is at the top of the mountain. And there are several paths that lead up the mountain to Heaven. One path is called Buddha. One path is called Mohammed. One path is Vishna. One path is called Moral Goodness. One path is Jesus. The world says it doesn't matter which path you take so long as you be a good person with good intentions.

I know it's silly, but this is real. And of course, we don't believe that. Jesus is the way, truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Him. Which means our mountain looks more like this

SLIDE 40 – GOD/ JESUS

Amen?

Now, we've covered the historical origin of our fake verse, we've juxtaposed it with scripture, and our fake verse, and now we need a better version. Something to say to those who may need a little wisdom.

- Make a scenario of an interaction.
- "I believe everyone goes to Heaven."
- Jesus is the way, truth, and life. No one comes to God except through Him.
- "I just think that that's very closeminded. As long as you strive to be a good person and life with good intentions."
 - o What would you say? To this person.
- NOT The road to Hell is paved with good intentions. You need an alternative and here it is.
 - o Matthew 7:13-14
 - o And for those of you who think that's too much for me to remember or say on the spot.
 - o Here is another app for you. It's called the Bible Memory App, and it is meant to help you memorize scripta more easily.

Spiritual Battles require Scriptural Weapons.