

# The Lie

## Grace and Truth—part 6

May 21, 2023

### DAY 1: The Continental Divide of truth and the lie

1. The Continental Divide runs north to south through the Rocky Mountains. All of the snow and rain that falls on the eastern side of the Continental Divide makes its way east. All of the snow and rain that falls on the western side of the Continental Divide makes its way west.
2. In the same way, people live on one side or the other side of another divide—the Truth Divide.

*Romans 1.24, 25* Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

3. Metaphysics is the thinking that explores the original nature of all reality. It focuses on the connection between matter, mind and spirit, form and essence, appearance, and substance.
4. Epistemology is the study of how we can know anything. Can we know truth? How can we know?

5. The bible clearly reveals that everyone lives their life on one side or the other of the metaphysical and epistemological divide, whether or not they even know it.

6. On one side of that divide is the truth of God, which is in Christ Jesus. The bible is truth. We are able to see reality as it is, to see life, God, and ourselves from God's point of view.

*John 17.17* Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

*Ecclesiastes. 3.11* He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the human heart yet no one can fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

7. Jesus Christ is truth incarnate, truth in living form. All of what we most need is found in the treasure house of knowing Him.

*John 14.6* I am the way, and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father but by me.

*Colossians 2.2* My goal is that they may be encouraged in heart and united in love, so that they may have the full riches of complete understanding, in order that they may know the mystery of God, namely, Christ, <sup>3</sup> in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. <sup>4</sup> I tell you this so that no one may deceive you by fine-sounding arguments.

8. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 2: Two sides of the Truth Divide

1. On the truth side of the divide, God's Kingdom moves forward. He is engaged in reconciling people to God. It is a re-building of our human nature and relationships.

*2 Corinthians 5.18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: <sup>19</sup> that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.*

2. Upon coming to God through Christ, He uses God's truth to slowly free us from our self-centered nature, our sins, and our guilt and shame.

*John 8.31 If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

4. Everyone who has genuinely come to Christ in repentance and faith begins to discover very different kinds of joys and pleasures. These have a way of reaching down deeper into the heart and lasting longer than fleshly pleasures.

*Psalms 16.11 You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.*

*Hebrews 13.5 Keep your life free from love of money, and be content with what you have, for he has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." <sup>6</sup> So we can confidently say, "The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?"*

### The lie: Living on the other side of the Truth Divide

*Romans 1.24, 25 Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who **exchanged the truth of God for the lie**, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.*

5. When we do not give our ultimate hopes, allegiance and faith in God, the Creator, we automatically exchange the truth of God for *THE* lie.

6. It is this turning away from God as our real source of truth, reality, and satisfaction to anything else as *THE* lie. We now embrace a perversion of God's truth, and a misrepresentation of reality and life that sends us to a long downhill slide.

7. We end up creating our own Bizarro world where what used to be obvious and plain to see becomes murky, clouded, and a world of your own making, with your interests and needs centerstage. No one thrives that way.

8. We were made to connect with God, and enjoy His wisdom and power for our lives.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

### DAY 3: Living THE lie

1. If people will not put God as the center pole of their lives, to what do they turn? Any created thing. It can be a person (spouse, kids), a cause (global warming, socialism, religion), an enterprise (career, becoming wealthy), experiences (sexuality, partying, travel), etc.

2. Whatever we pursue most becomes our default road to satisfaction, meaning, purpose, etc.

3. In reality, we each make ourselves our own god. We crown ourselves as the true and final arbiters of what is true, right, and good. Without knowing it we are pursuing the path of folly.

#### *Folly, empty, deadly hopes*

4. Whenever we turn to any created thing as our topmost hope for pleasure and satisfaction we are living THE lie.

5. My mentor said, “People do what makes sense to them. It may not make sense to you, but it makes sense to them.” We want what we want more than what God wants. We attach ourselves to all kinds of hopes for “the good life,” believing that we know how to get the good life. We can see the happiness to come, like the proverbial donkey that is always chasing the carrot, yet never getting there.

6. We cling with a tight-fisted grip to our presumed autonomy, the rightness and justification of what we’re doing, and the conviction that happiness will be ours!

7. But we are living THE lie. Instead we have placed ourselves on a long, steady downhill slope that ultimately leads to disappointment, discouragement, broken dreams, personal and relational pain. (See Romans 1:18-32).

*Psalm 12:1 Help, LORD, for no one is faithful anymore; those who are loyal have vanished from the human race. <sup>2</sup> Everyone lies to their neighbor; they flatter with their lips but **harbor deception in their hearts**. <sup>3</sup> May the LORD silence all flattering lips and **every boastful tongue**—<sup>4</sup> those who say, “By our tongues we will prevail; our own lips will defend us—who is lord over us?”*

8. We believe THE lie that “God is not relevant to our happiness. Only weak people use God for a crutch, but I do not need a crutch. I know what to do!” In the words of William Ernest Henley, (*Invictus*), “I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul!”

9. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

#### **DAY 4: THE lie produces stress and pressure—on you and others**

*Proverbs 14:12 There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.*

1. When we set out to be the arbiters of truth, and the driver of our coming happiness, we find a world, others, and even our self that doesn't cooperate with our agenda.

2. "It SEEMS like my plan should work. Why wouldn't it? Surely, the people in my life will make me happy. Surely, my career, my sexuality, my marriage, my humor, my success, my coming wealth ... why wouldn't all of that just naturally fall into place for my happiness?"

3. We may turn away from trusting God for our happiness, but we cannot keep from trusting someone(s) or something(s) for our happiness. And when we are the ones to make it happen, we have placed a gigantic burden of pressure and stress on our shoulders.

4. Whenever we experience:

a. Anxiety, worry or fear, we should be alerted that we have misplaced trust and faith.

b. Whenever we experience annoyance, anger, conflict with another person upon which our happiness depends we have misplaced trust and faith.

c. Whenever we hit failure, discouragement, defeat and depression, we should realize our problem is misplaced trust and faith.

5. But, no matter how feeble our happiness may sometimes feel, or our unhappiness may spiral down to misery, we still hold on with an iron fist our determination to make our happiness happen. We are living THE lie.

6. What resonates with you as you read today's devotional?

7. On what have you placed your real faith and trust to find happiness and satisfaction?

8. How is that working for you?

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 5: Becoming fools

1. In the following passage, Paul uses a heavy dose of sarcasm to awaken those who believe they are “wise,” to see the folly of their supposed “wisdom”.

2. The message is a simple one. When humans naturally believe they are wise, and they believe they know what to do, they are fools. When humans realize they are naturally foolish, and then turn to God and His wisdom, we begin the path of real wisdom.

*1 Corinthians 1:18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. <sup>19</sup> For it is written:*

*“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.” <sup>1</sup>*

*<sup>20</sup> Where is the wise person? Where is the teacher of the law? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? <sup>21</sup> For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.*

*<sup>22</sup> Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, <sup>23</sup> but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, <sup>24</sup> but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.*

*<sup>25</sup> For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.*

3. We naturally are living upside down lives. We naturally live our lives as foolish people. We foolishly believe we know what to do, and we foolishly believe that God is largely or entirely irrelevant to our daily lives.

4. Does this passage resonate with you?

a. Do you remember when you thought you were wise, only to discover that you were a fool and lived foolishly?

b. What woke you up from your foolishness?

c. How have you seen the “power of God and the wisdom of God” (v. 25) in your life?

5. THE lie is to believe we don’t need God, that we can play the role of God for our own life. We cut ourselves off from God’s power and wisdom.

6. What strikes you from today’s devotional?