

# The Essence of THE Lie

## Grace and Truth—part 7

May 28, 2023

### **DAY 1: Review: THE lie.**

1. Let's briefly review last week's study.

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.*

Those who devote their lives to the HIGHEST pursuits  
of the pleasures and promises of created things are living the lie.

2. In our heart of hearts, we want what *we* want, more than what *God* wants.

3. We attach ourselves to material things, easy circumstances, people who seem to meet our needs, and endeavors that boost up our self-image, firmly grasping to what we believe to be our greatest good and the promise of happiness and satisfaction.

4. All such hopes, however, are hollow, empty, and deadly. Those who live in the lie, desperately trying to reach the high ground of happiness, are on the slippery slope that leads to disappointment, despair, and death (Rom. 1.18-32). The lie insists that God either does not exist or is not relevant to human happiness.

5. THE lie is about turning away from God as our highest hope of finding real life and meaning.

6. In our secular culture, the lie tells us that God and absolute truth are just constructs of weak men, in order to restrict people from real freedom to do what they please.

7. Why do we reject God's truth? Because God's truth goes against our desires. It does not agree with our fallen desires.

8. We will only allow truth that is convenient, useful, and immediately fulfilling.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 2: The folly of relative truth

1. The person whose bought the lie of relative truth makes truth claims for themselves that are absolute. You dare not challenge them on their version of truth or reality.
  
2. “The only absolute truth is truth is relative.” That is a nonsensical sentence, but in today’s world it does not matter if is nonsensical. It is also unlivable, but in today’s world it doesn’t matter if you think it’s unlivable. It’s livable to the person making the claim.
  
3. “Truth is whatever I want it to be. My truth is personal, pragmatic and relies on my desires as its foundation.” Ironically, this relative truth is held onto with an iron fist, as if it is absolute truth.
  
4. But this kind of truth is also “fluid,” depending on the cultural winds, and what is the newest fad in vogue. In other words, it is not truth at all. It is preference, rationalizing and reasoning for whatever meets the person’s needs.
  
5. But in today’s secular world, it is not enough for people to have their truth. Now, if you disagree with their truth, it is mandatory that you affirm and applaud “their” truth, or risk getting cut off relationally, or cancelled publicly.
  
6. We should not be surprised when the following becomes reality in those who follow relative truth...
  - a. It affects our personal lives:  
*Titus 3:3 At one time we too were foolish, disobedient, deceived and enslaved by all kinds of passions and pleasures.*
  
  - b. It also affects our relational lives:  
*We lived in malice and envy, being hated and hating one another.*
  
7. Thankfully, God sees rejection of Him, our rejection of His truth, and our desperate condition and still offers us mercy to come to Him to find forgiveness and real life.  
*4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit...*
  
8. What strikes you from today’s devotional?

### **DAY 3: Striving for meaning and purpose**

*Genesis 1:27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

1. We are made in God's image as people. Because of this we are naturally geared to live with purpose, and find meaning in what we do.

2. This is ingrained in us. It is tied to our sense of satisfaction and happiness. To just live primarily for our desires is to torpedo our sense of meaning and purpose.

3. More specifically, God has placed "eternity in our hearts." No other creature on earth has eternity set in their hearts.

*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.*

4. What does having "eternity" placed in us mean? It includes all of the following:

- a. We sense that there is more to this world than the short lives we live.
- b. We sense that there is meaning in life.
- c. We sense we were made for a purpose.
- d. We sense that what we do should matter, not just in the here and now, but forever.

5. What strikes you about having eternity set in your heart?

6. Instead, college students all over the nation are being sold materialism—only the material is real. God is not real. Spirit is not real. There is no purpose to life, no meaning, nothing beyond this life.

7. It is a devastating philosophy, destructive to one's person, life and relationships. And it is absurd. Living that way becomes a shell game, pretending we are doing fine, and denying the God-given longings in our heart for more.

8. Albert Camus' writings deal both the absurdity of life, and yet the need to persevere in life despite the absurdity of life.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## DAY 4: Finding meaning in life

*Ecclesiastes 1:1 The words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: <sup>2</sup> “**Meaningless! Meaningless!**” says the Teacher. “**Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.**” <sup>3</sup> What do people gain from all their labors at which they toil **under the sun?** <sup>4</sup> Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever.*

1. These words could have been written by a secular professor at the university, committed to a materialistic philosophy.
2. But, you don't have to be a secular materialist to observe that sometimes, life feels that way.
3. Ecclesiastes was written by King Solomon. When he was a young adult, he was wealthy beyond words, built great building projects, beautiful gardens, a large army, thousands of horses, and a very large harem.
4. The stunning conclusion of “having everything” ended up bringing nothing! None of those things reached deep enough into his soul. They didn't touch the drive to know that his life was meaningful, that it made a difference for eternity.
5. Why do you think that was true?
6. Solomon uses the phrase “*under the sun*” to describe life without reference to God. It is life devoid of God's love, power, meaning and purpose.
7. The big lesson from Ecclesiastes is this—no matter how apparently big and important we may believe our purpose and meaning to be, it can never be big enough or significant enough within ourselves. Our frame of living, frame of reference and frame of power must come from God.
8. When we seek to put together our own meaning to life, our own identity, and our own purpose to life, we will eventually run into a cul de sac. It can't be done for very long. It is not deep enough, nor large enough. It cannot satisfy the human soul.
9. What strikes you from today's devotional?

## **DAY 5: Taking and usurping God's rightful place in our hearts**

1. Jesus told a very poignant parable about human nature.

*Luke 20:9 A man planted a vineyard, rented it to some farmers and went away for a long time.*

*<sup>10</sup> At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants so they would give him some of the fruit of the vineyard. But the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. <sup>11</sup> He sent another servant, but that one also they beat and treated shamefully and sent away empty-handed. <sup>12</sup> He sent still a third, and they wounded him and threw him out.*

2. The story is built on an owner of a vineyard who rented part of it to some farmers. It was customary for the owner to receive a percentage of the harvest, since it was his land. At harvest time, the owner sent someone to receive his share of the crop. But there was biiiiiiiiig trouble.

3. When the tenant farmers were confronted with paying their fair percentage, they rebelled and beat up the messenger. Two more messengers were sent but the results were progressively worse.

4. The owner tried a new tactic, a tender and honorable one.

*<sup>13</sup> "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'*

5. Instead of kicking the tenant farmers off the vineyard and pressing both a civil case and criminal cases against the tenant farmers, the owner sent his own son! This was an olive branch.

*<sup>14</sup> "But when the tenants saw him, they talked the matter over. 'This is the heir,' they said. 'Let's kill him, and the inheritance will be ours.' <sup>15</sup> So they threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.*

6. Rather than submit to the rightful owner of the vineyard, the tenant farmers reject not only the owner but even his own son, murdering him and grabbing the vineyard for themselves.

7. The response of the listening audience was outrage. But Jesus turns the table on us, and says, this is what we've done to God. He has given us every opportunity and blessing in this life. Rather than thank Him and serve Him, we grasp it all for ourselves.

8. We take the vineyard, the life God has given us to steward, and claim it as our own. There is no owner except ourselves. We reserve the rights of the owner to:

- Define the terms of our existence,
- Exercise God's authority to prescribe how we should act,
- Determine our values and priorities,
- Possess whatever of God's creation we desire, and use it for our desires,
- Do with it what we will, not what God wills.

9. What strikes you from today's devotional?