

3. The Top 10 Lies of the Devil—Pt.3

(7/30/23)

We have put our study in Philippians on hold for a few weeks to present a series I'm calling, "*The Top 10 Lies of the Devil.*"

For the last couple of weeks, we have been looking 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 (a home), achieve (wealth or earn a degree), or experience (success or marriage) ...

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

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

7. You're so bad God can't love you (and wants nothing to do with you!)

6. Hell isn't real

5. It's too late for you (to receive Jesus and start living for God)

4. God is an angry God who is looking for any reason to punish you

Look, it is true God hates sin and is angry with those who practice it—

Psalm 7:11–13 (NKJV)

¹¹ God *is* a just judge, And God is angry *with the wicked* every day. ¹² If he does not turn back, He will sharpen His sword; He bends His bow and makes it ready. ¹³ He also prepares for Himself instruments of death; He makes His arrows into fiery shafts. [*and yet mention John 3:16*]

I'm directing this lie primarily at Christians when they sin and feel God is angry with them and only wants to punish them—which is one of the devil's favorite lies to keep God's children alienated from Him and neutralize their effectiveness for Him.

This lie started in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit and hid themselves out of fear. (Gen. 3:8)

When we sin against God the devil tells us that God is angry with us—causing us to want to ‘hide’ ourselves from Him.

This means we want to avoid God by not going to church, praying, reading the Bible, and fellowshiping with other Christians (which means we go back to worldly friends and activities).

And yet God came looking for Adam and called to him in the garden—“*Adam where are you?*” (Genesis 3:9)

Now, I personally don’t believe the voice of God was that of a harsh ‘*arresting officer*’—I believe it was the tender voice of a heartbroken Father!

How can I be sure?—Because I know the character of God as expressed in the pages of His Word.

Psalm 103:10–14 (NLT)

¹⁰ He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve. ¹¹ For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. ¹² He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west. ¹³ The Lord is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him. ¹⁴ For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust.

→ Talk about the father to the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).

This applies to unbelievers also—if God was angry with you and only wanted to punish you—He wouldn’t be inviting you to come to Him and be His child—

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

Romans 10:13 (NKJV)

For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

Romans 5:8 (NLT)

⁸ But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

John 3:16–17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. ¹⁷ For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.

3. There is no need to hurry to get your life right with God—you have plenty of time.

This is a lie that Satan uses quite effectively with those who are younger—those who maybe grew up in church and have heard the gospel many times over the course of their lives.

And as such, they already believe in God, in Jesus, in heaven and in hell—but haven’t yet made a commitment to Jesus as their Savior.

And so, in that regard, the devil doesn’t try to take their faith from them—instead he encourages them in their faith!

He makes them feel that they’re better than the unchurched person who refuses to believe in Jesus Christ—that their faith makes them closer to God and in a better position than a rank unbeliever (“pride goes before a fall, and a haughty look before hell”).

And so again, with these people the devil doesn’t try to take their faith from them—he uses it against them!

He lets them wrap themselves in their faith thinking it's some kind of 'security blanket' that gives them special protection and/or favor with God until they're ready to get serious about Him, serious about their faith and relationship with Jesus Christ.

Little do they realize they're playing right into the devil's trap.

"How? In what way?"

Well, let me answer that question with a story—

"A minister of the gospel determined on one occasion to preach on the text, *'Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.'* While in his study thinking, he fell asleep and dreamed that he was carried into hell and sat down in the midst of a conclave of demonic spirits. They were assembled to devise means whereby they might keep people out of heaven.

One rose and said, *"I will go to the earth and tell the humans that the Bible is all a fable, that it is not divinely appointed of God."* "No, that will not do, the Bible has much evidence connected to it that proves it is the divine Word of God." Another said, *"Let me go, I will tell men that there is no God, no Savior, no heaven, and no hell."* "No, that will not do; we cannot make men believe that for they know in their hearts that these exist."

Suddenly one arose with an especially diabolical countenance and said, *"I will journey to the world of men, and tell them that there is a God, that there is a Savior, that there is a heaven—yes, and a hell, too; but I'll tell them there is NO HURRY, you have time; tomorrow will do."* Satan declared—*'You will deceive millions—go!'*

And so, this is one of the greatest lies the devil feeds people who grew up in church and yet have not yet committed their lives to Jesus as their Savior and Lord.

He has his demons whisper in their ears—*"You are young and have plenty of time to get your life right with God. Have some fun first! Sow your 'wild oats!' Then get your life right with God by receiving Jesus as your Savior. Until then there is no rush—you have plenty of time!"*

And yet the Bible warns—*"You do not know what will happen in the future...for your life is like a vapor, it's here today and gone tomorrow."* (James 4:14)

There are stories we come across every day in the news of people dying suddenly—people who got up one morning with their day planned out—but who never saw the end of that day because their life was taken from them suddenly.

Many were young people who had their whole lives ahead of them but were suddenly taken in the prime of life without warning, without time to repent and receive Jesus as their Savior—even though they had heard the gospel many times and some of them fully intended to become committed Christians at some point in the future.

→ Talk about the family Arlington Heights, a father, mother and daughter that were going to her soccer game that were ‘t-boned’ by a man going a hundred miles an hour in a stolen car and died instantly.

How many young people have died in the last few years from fentanyl poisoning thinking they bought a drug off the internet that would help them sleep or cope with the stress of school—only to die suddenly and without time to repent?

I wonder how many people will wind up in hell that did believe in Jesus and yet hadn’t made a commitment to Him thinking they had lots of time to do that?

That’s why the Bible cries out to us—*“Today is the day of salvation—tomorrow isn’t promised to anyone. If you hear Him speaking to your heart about Jesus—respond immediately and receive Him as your Savior!”* (2Cor.6:2)

Lie number 2 on Satan’s top ten list of favorite lies—

2. There are many roads that lead to heaven

This lie is one of Satan’s most effective and deadly in his arsenal.

It’s a lie that has been embraced by many, many people over the centuries resulting in the eternal destruction of untold millions in hell.

And that is why it is one of the devil's absolute favorite lies—because it is so effective.

The big reason this lie is so effective is because it plays into the pride of fallen man—pride that says, “*No one is going to tell me what to believe, what ‘road’ to take to get to heaven (if their belief system believes in heaven)—I’m going to choose my way!*”

Here’s the problem with that—

Jeremiah 10:23 (NKJV)

²³ O Lord, I know the way of man *is* not in himself; *It is* not in man who walks to direct his own steps.

Why? Because—

Jeremiah 17:9 (NKJV)

⁹ “The heart *is* deceitful above all *things*, And desperately wicked...

The devil knows all of this only too well and uses it against unsaved men and women whose hearts are deceived by pride into believing that people of all religious persuasions and belief systems will get into heaven.

And why do they so fervently believe this? They believe it because they believe in *tolerance* as a sacred virtue—and God as the ultimate example of ‘*wokeness*’ and *inclusiveness*.

And therefore, they believe that there *must* be many roads, many ways that will get a person into heaven—because to not believe that is to be narrow minded and bigoted!

And so, they believe that as long as a person is sincere in whatever they believe no matter how bizarre and unbiblical—God will honor their faith and accept whatever way a person chooses to get to heaven (He has to or else He is narrow minded and bigoted!).

And so, in that regard this belief on their part is a form of ‘*virtue signaling*’ (i.e., ‘*the expression of an opinion that demonstrates a person’s good character and moral correctness and superiority on a particular issue*’).

However, they are either completely *oblivious* or defiantly *rebellious* to the warning of God:

Proverbs 14:12 (NKJV)

¹² There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.

Listen, God has told us in His Word that all roads (all belief systems) do not lead to heaven—that there is a right way and a wrong way and no matter how sincere a person is, their faith will not save them if it’s rooted in Satan’s lies rather than in the truth of God’s Word.

At this point I’ll have you turn to Matthew 7 so we can read the clear warning of the Lord Jesus given in the Sermon on the Mount on this subject:

Matthew 7:13–14 (NLT)

¹³ “You can enter God’s Kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. ¹⁴ But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it.

Matthew 7:13-14 are two of the most quoted verses in the Sermon of the Mount—and probably in the entire Bible.

Jesus is telling us that every person has to decide for themselves which way they will go, which gate they will enter into and which path they will walk in life—either the ‘*broad way*’ or the ‘*narrow way*.’

The important thing to understand in what Jesus is saying is that—both ways are marked “*This way to God and heaven.*”

The broad way isn’t marked “*This way to hell*” or else no one would be tempted to go down that road!

So then, what is the broad way—what does it represent?

The broad way is *religion*—but not just any religion—it’s what some have called “*easy believeism*”—in modern 21st century American culture it would represent ‘woke’, liberal Christianity.

One well known pastor put it this way—

“The way that is broad is the easy, attractive, inclusive, indulgent, permissive, and self-oriented way of the world. There are few rules, few restrictions, and few requirements. All you need do is profess Jesus, or at least be religious, and you are readily accepted in that large and diverse group. Sin is tolerated, truth is moderated, and humility is ignored. God’s Word is praised but not studied, and His standards are admired but not followed.

This way requires no spiritual maturity, no moral character, no commitment, and no sacrifice. It is the easy way of floating downstream, in “the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.” (Eph. 2:2).

So, what is the ‘narrow gate’—what does it represent?

The narrow gate very simply represents Jesus—the only way into heaven.

John 10:9 (NKJV)

⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved...

John 14:6 (NKJV)

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Acts 4:12 (NKJV)

¹² neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Once again, Jesus in contrasting the narrow way with the broad way isn’t contrasting religion with *atheism, materialism, hedonism or secularism*.

In other words, He isn’t contrasting religion with non-religion—He’s contrasting *false* religion with *true* religion.

And if you don't understand that, you won't get the correct interpretation of what Jesus is saying—that *both* of these roads claim to lead to God.

And that is why Jesus is warning us to beware—because even though both are marked “*This way to heaven*”—only one road leads there—and that is the narrow way.

You see Satan is a master at religious deception—even disguising himself as an ‘*angel of light*’ to deceive. (2Corinthians 11:12-15)

He knows most people will never be atheists and therefore he accommodates them with *religious* lies and deceptions.

And as such he's the one who paints “*This Way to God and Heaven*” over his broad gate—and as Jesus said, “*there are many who choose to go in through that gate*”.

And so, to say again—here in these verses, Jesus isn't contrasting atheism with religion—He is contrasting *true* faith with *false* faith.

The narrow gate represents Jesus and the gospel—whereas the broad gate represents the false religion of the Scribes and Pharisees who were preaching a system of outward rituals, ceremonies and good works as the way to God and heaven.

And therefore, the broad way is the path of ‘*human achievement*’—and the narrow way is the path of ‘*divine accomplishment*’. (Explain)

When Jesus talked about the narrow gate being the only way that leads to eternal life many commentators say the best modern translation of ‘narrow gate’ would be that of a *turnstile*—which means only one person can pass through at a time!

You see no one gets to heaven as part of a *group*—they have to come to Jesus one at a time!

Salvation is a personal decision that every person must make for themselves—a decision that no one can make for you.

Look, entering the narrow gate is easy—walking its path is difficult.

Entering into Jesus for salvation is easy—believe in Him and receive Him as your Lord and Savior—that’s the easy part.

Living for Jesus in a world that is hostile towards Him and those who represent Him—that’s the hard part!

It’s not easy to live for and represent Jesus in a fallen world—in fact it’s very difficult and getting more difficult with each passing day.

Matthew 7:13-14 (NKJV)

¹³ "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide *is* the gate and broad *is* the way that leads to destruction... narrow *is* the gate and difficult *is* the way which leads to life...

We are not all taking different roads that lead to the same place—there are actually two destinations where people will spend eternity.

The word ‘*destruction*’ in Matthew 7:13 refers to hell—

As one author said,

“It is the destination of all religions except the way of Jesus Christ, and it is the destiny of all those who follow any way but His. It is the destination and destiny of perdition, hell, and everlasting torment. ‘The way of the wicked will perish’ (Ps. 1:6)”.

A person can choose which gate they enter—but they can't choose the destination that gate will lead to.

Finally, there are two groups of people traveling on these two roads.

Jesus said concerning the wide gate, "*Many are those who enter by it*". As for the narrow gate He said, "*Few are those who find it*".

The reason so few find the narrow gate is because—they're not looking for it!

It's not because it's hidden from them (the gospel is well known in our country)—it's just that the broad gate looks so much more appealing and inviting than does the narrow gate so much so that—it isn't even paid attention to or taken seriously as an option!

The sad reality is that most religious people are headed for hell not heaven.

Jesus called His true disciples a "little flock". The word 'little' is a word we get the English word 'micro' from meaning something very small.

True believers have always been a small group in a world full of religious people.

There is a familiar saying, "*The majority can't be wrong*"—well when it comes to getting to heaven the majority is absolutely wrong!

And the reason is that the broad way is the natural choice from a human point of view—because by nature we prefer sin to righteousness—Jesus said that, "*Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil*".

And yet the pride in the human heart blinds people into thinking they *can* be good enough—and often are good enough to make it into heaven—and any talk of sin and judgment angers them.

A letter written to a daily newspaper in Melbourne, Australia expresses clearly the attitude of a person on the broad road to destruction—

“After hearing Dr. Billy Graham on the air, viewing him on television and reading reports and letters concerning him and his mission, I am heartily sick of the type of religion that insists my soul (and everyone else’s) needs saving-whatever that means. I have never felt that I was lost. Nor do I feel that I daily wallow in the mire of sin, although repetitive preaching insists that I do. Give me a practical religion that teaches gentleness and tolerance, that acknowledges no barriers of color or creed that remembers the aged and teaches children of goodness and not sin. If in order to save my soul I must accept such a philosophy as I have recently heard preached, I prefer to remain forever damned.”

A sad letter, but the truth is that man understood the choices—he just made the wrong one!

The tragedy is that multitudes are on the same road with him—and even more tragic they think they’re headed for heaven. (Matt. 7:21-23)

Instead, they’re the victims of satanic deception—a lie if not recognized and repented of will end up leading them into eternal destruction.

That leaves us with one more lie we need to look at—the number one lie that Satan deceives the people of this world with.

We will look at it next time!