

Three Lies

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There are three lies currently in vogue in various “Christian” circles that, at first, seem to be unrelated to one another. But upon closer and deeper examination, we find they share very similar roots. These lies are:

- We are all seekers (of God);
- Absolute truth is unknowable; and
- No one person (except Jesus) has all the answers.

These lies glitter and sparkle as if they were great pieces of truth and wisdom (in part because they contain elements of truth), but the first two are only lies and the third is an oversimplification and thus becomes a lie when used wrongly.

The first lie is flatly contradicted by the words of Scripture. David wrote, “The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there are any who understand, who seek after God. They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; there is none who does good, no, not one.” (Psa. 14:2-3) Paul carried this truth forward into the New Covenant when he wrote, “There is none who understands; there is none who seeks after God.” (Rom. 3:11) In spite of this blatant contradiction, this lie is used as evidence that all men are brothers, that all men are basically good, and that all men want God but they just can’t agree on exactly who and what God is nor on which “God” all men should follow. Therefore, this slippery logic goes, no one has the right to say that another man’s “God” is a false god. After all, everyone is entitled to worship whatever “God” one wants to. This is how this lie is used. A more convoluted line of thinking would be hard to imagine.

The second lie is equally contradicted by Scripture. “In the beginning God...” (Gen. 1:1) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” (Jn. 1:1) Absolute truth – God – can be known because He made Himself available and bestowed His grace (mercy and power) upon man so that men *could* know and interact with God. In fact, God “desires all men to be saved and *to come to the knowledge of the truth*” (1 Tim. 2:14) just as surely as He is “not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” (2 Pet. 3:9) The “catch” is that we must live in the light to know Him and interact with Him. (1 Jn. 1:7) Men most often prefer darkness (Jn. 3:19) and therefore must concoct lies such as “relativism” to excuse away their inability to know truth. Jesus said, “If you abide in My word [remain knowledgeable of and obedient to what I teach], you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (Jn. 8:31-32) Because men refuse to know and obey Christ, they are not free and they must therefore conclude there is no possibility of knowing truth lest they should recognize their own moral bankruptcy and spiritual poverty and see their need for a Savior to rescue and redeem them. Again, a more convoluted line of thinking is difficult to imagine.

The third lie is built upon truth but how it is applied pushes us toward the first two lies because of it fails to recognize what the Scriptures really say. To those who abide in Christ John writes, “But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things.” (1 Jn. 2:20) Similarly Paul wrote, “But we have the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor. 2:16) This is not to say that any

one individual knows every historical, scientific and trivial fact that can be known. Rather, because we who abide in Christ are in direct connection with absolute truth – God – we can know, with diligent searching (Heb. 11:6), what God has to say on any given matter that *He* deems important enough for us to know and understand. Because God – Father, Son and Spirit – dwells within those who abide in Him (Jn. 14:23, etc.), we have access to all necessary knowledge and wisdom. (1 Cor. 2:12, etc.) Thus, while it is true that Jesus, as God, *is* the truth (Jn. 14:6) and God alone has all answers to all questions, the one who has Jesus within has access to Him who has these answers and can expect to find help in time of trouble at His *throne* of grace. (Heb. 4:16) What is required from us, again, is that we obediently live in the light as He is in the light and we must have faith that He will answer as He knows best according to our need.

This third lie is also used as one of the bases for excusing the multitude of doctrinal divisions among those who claim to follow Christ. Men who have no answers to the problems that face the people of Christ can hardly be expected to believe the same things from what unspiritual men see as such a disorganized and inconsistent conglomeration of writings such as the Bible. (see 1 Cor. 2:14) However the fault lies with those who claim to be “leaders” among the people who name the name of Christ. Men who complete a course of intellectual studies and sufficiently impress their superiors in their particular denomination (contention, dissension, heresy, sect – Gal. 5:20) are those who are given a paid, fixed position over a particular group to whom they will speak down to several times a week. These men are chosen on the basis of having pleased men and not of having pleased God. (see Lk. 16:15) Hands are laid on these men as they are “ordained” into the “ministry” and many a demonic transaction has occurred as these men step into a place reserved for Christ and His Spirit alone. Eloquence and charisma are the techniques used to gain followers and sustain the man’s “church” with all its attendant expenses of the building and professional staff. And never recognized is the simple fact that all of this is contrary to the New Testament’s teachings and insights on assembly and leadership. This is deception of a high magnitude.

But even in groups that have left the “church,” the tendency is still to maintain a “Diotrephes” at the head of the assembly. (3 Jn. 9) Forsaken is the simple notion that leaders are to be *examples* whom the saints are to copy or replicate. (1 Cor. 11:1, 1 Pet. 5:3, etc.) Apostles and prophets – even when these are the genuine expression of the man’s union with God – are excluded because they compete against Diotrephes’ power base, at least in Diotrephes’ opinion. As a result of a lack of any of the expressions of the Lord’s grace given to men (Eph. 4:11), the saints will not be equipped for “the work of the ministry” and the group will not attain to “the unity of the faith” or “the unity of the knowledge of the Son of God.” (Eph. 4:12-13) Because the group is not in one accord with either itself or any other groups (usually not even those within its own denomination!), the world can be excused for not recognizing that Christ has truly come from God. (Jn. 17:21) The fault is our own.

All of these lies have at least two common roots. The first root is the very human tendency to seek to be one’s own “God.” “Seeking God” is all well and good until we find that there are requirements placed upon us. To be expected, for example, to carry a cross and practice self-denial (Lk. 9:23, etc.) is simply too much to expect and a more comforting and comfortable religion is pursued. We don’t even hesitate to put Christ or God’s name on our self-defined version of “Christianity.” And we have no difficulties believing that those spiritual feel-good moments during “worship” or “prayer time” must be God touching us and demonstrating

His approval on our own carnal (or even demonic! – 1 Tim. 4:1) doctrines, religious practices or “theology.”

The second root is a dangerously deceptive philosophy the world calls relativism and the New Testament calls lawlessness. The Greek word is *anomia* [458] and it literally means “without law.” Because the follower of Christ has been set free from the Old Covenant legal requirements (Col. 2:14, etc.), lawlessness is best defined as the absence of any external, objective standards for behavior and conduct. It is quintessentially captured in the phrase “they did what was right in their own eyes” – a condition brought on because there was no king to follow or obey. (Jdgs. 21:25) Note carefully that the one who does things that he knows to be wrong is not the one who is lawless. That one is simply sinful, evil or wicked. The one who is lawless does what he believes to be *right* and *good* - not because God says it is right and good but because he, the man, the individual, thinks of it as right and good. Fruit of the wrong tree. The action, because it originates in the man’s independent (from God) flesh and not from the heart of God, is still carnal, an act of enmity against God. (Rom. 8:7) All of a man’s actions, apart from the leading and grace (power) of God, are still as filthy rags in the sight of God. (Isa. 64:6) The man’s actions may appear right, good and beneficial to the world (which is inherently incapable of making righteous judgments, and the “church” is merely a part of the world disguised to look like something spiritual) but in God’s eyes it is still carnal, sinful, wicked and abominable.

When Paul rebuked the Galatians for their attempts to return to the law for justification, he said, “You ran well [at the first]. Who hindered you from obeying the truth? This persuasion [away from the truth] does not come from Him who calls you. A little leaven leavens the whole lump.” (Gal. 5:7-9) John expressed this same idea when he wrote, “No lie is of the truth.” (1 Jn. 2:21) Jesus said that the devil is the father of all lies. (Jn. 8:44) It is the work of Satan, through one or any number of his spiritual emissaries, to deceive and thereby hinder us from obeying the truth.

Paul gave Timothy instructions so that he would know how to conduct himself among the believers. Paul called the believers “the house of God, which is the *ekklesia* [the called out people] of the living God, the pillar and mainstay of the truth.” (1 Tim. 3:15) It is the responsibility of the people of God to be the upright standard and stable fastener upon which everything truly good in this world rests. It is in seeing the vital nature of this responsibility – and the ramifications of failing to live up to this responsibility – that we can see why Satan has so targeted our idea of *ekklesia* [1577].

The *ekklesia* (which is most often mis-rendered “church” in English) is an important concept in the New Testament – and it is an important concept to learn the truth about this word. It is also true that Jesus most likely never spoke of the *ekklesia*. It is a Greek word and Jesus, in keeping with His focus (Mt. 15:24) probably did not speak Greek but instead spoke Aramaic or Hebrew. Thus when Matthew inserts *ekklesia* into Jesus’ teachings (Mt. 16:18, 18:17), he is probably translating the Hebrew or Aramaic equivalent for “temple” or “congregation” (we will never know for sure which) into koine Greek. Note well that this word is inserted into Christ’s teachings only *three* times in two verses – note also that no other gospel has this insertion at all. This does not mean that *ekklesia* has no true meaning or application but it means that it was not the focus of Jesus’ work that historical and modern churchianity transformed it into.

The *ekklesia* is those individuals, those *people*, who are “born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God” (1 Pet. 1:23) and summoned out of this world’s darkness to gather or assemble with the other similarly “born again” individuals in their local

area so as to attend to the affairs and issues of the kingdom of God pertinent to their local or sphere of influence. The ekklesia, following the lead of bishops like Cyprian (200-258 A.D. and Augustine (354-430 A.D.), decided that the ekklesia could not afford to be exclusive and be a gathering of saints only but would always be a “mixed multitude” – an over-simplification and error that aided in the Romish “church’s” grip for over a thousand years and that is still believed in today. (That is to say, there is nothing particularly wrong with believers meeting with non-believers, pseudo-believers and even mis-believers so long as this “mixed multitude” is not given the power to influence the work of the ekklesia in servicing the true kingdom of God.) And with the translation in 1611 of *ekklesia* into the English word “church,” a word that refers primarily to the building and clergy of the “Christian” religion, even further deceptions have been incorporated. The ekklesia has virtually ceased to recognize its responsibilities to the kingdom of God and the “church” has devolved almost entirely into the apostasy, the great falling away from the faith that occurs before Christ’s return. (2 Ths. 2:3) The devil has all but succeeded in separating the pillar and mainstay *from* the truth! Yet again, the people of God, even with the Spirit poured out upon them and resident within, have demonstrated God’s manifold wisdom in condemning sin in all its forms. (Eph. 3:10)

The only means by which we, as born again individuals seeking to be Christ’s ekklesia, can regain the truth is to be led into all truth by the Spirit of truth. (Jn. 16:13) This requires that every lie we believe and hold onto – no matter how much we cherish it or believe it to be true – must be exposed by Him and forsaken by us. For those who have invested years into false beliefs, this is a very painful process and many will divide from other believers rather than relinquish their false beliefs. But perhaps the most difficult deception to come away from is the ingrained habit of lawlessness, doing what is right and good in our own eyes. Paul wrote, “What fellowship [unity, commonality] has righteousness [what is right and good in God’s eyes] with lawlessness [what is right and good in a man’s own eyes]?” (2 Cor. 6:14) The question of whether a piece of knowledge or information is truth or not hinges on whose eyes we have used to see. Have we used spiritual eyes to see and receive from the mind of Christ or have we used our flesh-tainted or flesh-controlled intellect to reason out what we want the truth to be. These are two very different processes.

Paul also wrote, “The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. 2:14) Until we submit all our ideas and knowledge – especially our doctrines, beliefs and “theology” – back to God and allow His Spirit of truth to show us how much of our knowledge is truly righteous (that is, revealed to us by the Spirit of truth) and how much is lawlessness (merely right and true in our own opinions), we will continue to be an impure vessel putting forth a mixture of truth and error. So long as our knowledge is derived from our soulish intellect, we have not yet spiritually discerned anything and have not yet received the things of God. We have merely taken words by and about God and turned them into what is perhaps the most subtle form of deception: carnal “truth.”

Paul’s exhortation is therefore all the more pertinent to us today: “‘Come out from among [the “Christian” idolaters] and be separate says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.’ Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Cor. 6:17-7:1, also see 1 Cor. 5:10-11)

The end of the age is all about deception (Mt. 24:4, 2 Ths. 2:9) and even God will give those who do not love the truth over to strong delusion. (2 Ths. 2:11-12) Many will believe they have always had a right relationship with God and that they have a right to remain in Christ kingdom but these will be dismissed nonetheless because their “goodness and truth” were based in their own sinful intellect (lawlessness) and not in the true righteousness of God. (Mt. 7:21-23, Lk. 13:24-27) It simply is not enough to leave the “church” because we recognize the lies with which it is constructed – we must take care to purge from our lives every form of hypocrisy and deceit lest we find on that last day we preferred some form of unrighteousness, preferring most to retain our own independent right to choose what we call “truth,” more than we loved what God says is truth. On that day, there will be no place for repentance and all our opportunities to walk in the light as He is in the light will have passed us by.

Let he who has ears hear.

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