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**“Truth Vs Lies: Which Do You Follow?”
(Part 1)**

Intro: Have you ever fallen victim to a scam? (Share example)

We all base our lives and make decisions on the information that we receive. If the information is accurate, we hopefully make good decisions that bless our lives. If we believe and follow false information, we usually experience negative results. We get scammed!

- Everyday we are constantly making choices. Everyday, we are faced with trying to decipher whether this is truth or a lie / Reality Vs Fiction / right or wrong?
- Satan is the father of lies. Jesus is the Author of Truth. Satan’s lies will hold us in bondage. Jesus’ truth will set us free. Which do we really live? It’s a constant choice!
- For the next few weeks, I want to expose some very common lies that people tend to follow today. I also want to highlight the truth that Jesus wants us to embrace. Truth Vs Lies Series.

Lie #1: “Just do your own thing.”

Gen. 3:1-7 Serpent / Adam and Eve – Summarize.

Gen. 3:4-5 “You won’t die!” the serpent said. ‘God knows that your eyes will be opened when you eat it. You will become just like God, knowing everything, both good and evil.’ (NLT)

- When we choose to do our own thing rather than God’s, we are living Rom. 1.

Rom. 1:25 “For they exchanged the truth of God a (the) lie, and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator...” (NASB) This is the foundation of all lies. Just serve yourself! Just do your own thing! Follow your own path. Theme Song: “I Did It My Way”

When we choose to believe our way is better than God’s way, we are literally worshipping and serving ourselves (creature) rather than worshipping and serving the Creator. We’ve exchanged the Truth for a lie. The Bible calls it idolatry. (A substitute for the real God.)

I. Breaking Down The Lie

- This lie is so appealing because we believe the cluster of lies that go with it. This lie is built on 3 other lies. They are progressive.

A. Doubt what God really says

“*Did God really say...?*” Satan loves to get us to start doubting what God has plainly told us. “Are you sure?” Once we start down this road, we begin

walking in unbelief.

Ps. 106:24 "The people refused to enter the pleasant land, for they wouldn't believe his promise to care for them." (NLT)

II Kings 17:14 "But the Israelites would not listen. They were as stubborn as their ancestors who had refused to believe in the Lord their God." (NLT)

1. It just amazes me how many people who claim they are believers in Jesus actually doubt what scripture plainly teaches.
 - People doubt that God loves them unconditionally (they try to earn it)
 - People doubt that God will provide for them (Live in fear / anxiety)
 - People doubt that God forgives them completely (guilt and shame)
 - People doubt that God has a plan for their lives (feel lost)
 - People doubt that God sees and cares about our daily struggles (so they work hard at taking care of themselves.)
 - People doubt God's power is a reality in their lives (so they work twice as hard because it all up to them.)
2. How often have you come to church and heard what the pastor says / reads / and internally thought, "Yeah, right...Maybe that's true for you but it's not true for me." That's doubt!
3. How many of you are struggling believing in God's provision in your life after the past 2 Sunday's messages? Does it really matter pointing my life towards God in this economic mess?
4. Once we start to doubt what God has said, we have taken our first step towards the "slippery slope". We have now opened the door to another lie.

B. Doubt the consequences

"You won't die!" The next thing Satan went after was the consequences of disobedience. There are no consequences. God's just trying to scare you! He's trying to control you.

Ps. 10:11 "The wicked think, "God isn't watching us! He has closed his eyes and won't even see what we do!" (NLT) What I do doesn't matter!

1. How often have we heard this lie? Yes, I know what God says in His word, but it doesn't really matter. There really aren't any consequences...OR, the consequences aren't that bad.
2. How often do people do the wrong thing and think, "I can get away with it?"
 - I can cheat on my taxes...The IRS won't audit me. They'll never know.
 - I can cheat on my spouse. I deserve some happiness. They won't find out.
 - I can hang on to bitterness and unforgiveness – it doesn't effect me.
 - I know what it says in God's word, but that is so old-fashioned. It's normal to do these things now.

- Give me a break. God's not going to punish me for doing something wrong. He's a loving Father.
 - There are a 101 different versions of this lie, but they all say, there are no consequences.
3. Maybe you've been hearing this lie in some areas of your life. You've been listening to the voice that's telling you it's no big deal.
 4. Once we start doubting the consequences for wrong behavior or at least begin to minimize them, we will begin walking into the next lie.

C. Doubt the goodness of God

Gen. 3: "God knows that your eyes will be opened...You will become just like God..."

- God is trying to keep something good from you! Your way is better!!! God is not as good as He says He is.

Ps. 27:13 "Yet I am confident I will see the Lord's goodness while I am here in the land of the living." (NLT) Satan does not want us to believe this! He wants you to doubt in the goodness of God over your life.

1. Once you start doubting whether or not God is good, you are ready to start trying your own thing. Once you start doubting God's way as the absolute best way, your way becomes a viable option.
2. I honestly believe many Christians live in doubt of God's goodness. WHY? Because so many of them won't follow His path for their lives. Some people say..."It's so hard to follow it."
3. The reason it's so hard to follow God's path for your life is because you are constantly struggling internally believing it is the absolute and only path for your life. People look at God's word as one of many options instead as the ONLY good option. It is THE BEST option.
4. How many Christians are afraid of really selling out to God because they are afraid of what He may ask them to do? If that's the case, you don't believe in God's goodness. If you really believed, you'd be running to Him not away from Him.
5. I know most believers will automatically say they believe God is good; yet their lives prove otherwise.

Once we start believing this series of lies, (unholy trinity of lies) we believe the ultimate lie. It's better for me to do my own thing...follow my own path...serve my own purposes, rather than following and serving God! I'd better take my life into my own hands and do my own thing! That's the best option. What a profound, destructive lie it is. Just like in the Garden, it ruins our lives.

- So, how do I counter these lies that are so appealing? With Truth! Jesus said that if we know (embrace) His truth, that truth will set us free.

II. Embracing The Truth

A. Embrace God's word literally

"If the literal makes sense seek no other sense or else you make it nonsense!" Great is the nonsense we have made over the years.

II Tim. 3:16-17 "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." (NLT)

1. Notice all the results of embracing the word of God in your life. When I say embrace it, I mean submitting your life under its authority. What the word of God says is the only option on the table. I embrace it literally. I don't try to manipulate what it says or reply, "What that really means is..."
2. If we embrace the word of God like this, notice the results...
 - Teaches us what is true (protection from the lies) **Illustrate:** Explain how they train people to spot counterfeit money -
 - Makes us realize what is wrong in our lives. Now I know why this part of my life isn't working. Doesn't condemn, it heals!
 - It corrects us. (Stops us and redirects us. It gets us back on God's path.)
 - Teaches us to do what is right (replaces the wrong behavior with the right behavior – direction –right thinking – right motives - attitudes
 - It prepares and equips us for every good work. Every good thing God has in store for you in this life God's word will help equip you for it. (Marriage / parenting / emotionally / spiritually / financially /
3. Have you ever just sold out to God's word like this? Something is going to control your life. It will either be truth or a lie. Can you see what amazing freedom God's truth will bring to your life?

B. Embrace the consequences literally

Rom. 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death..." (NLT)

Gal. 6:7-9 "Don't be misled—you cannot mock the justice of God. You will always harvest what you plant. Those who live only to satisfy their own sinful nature will harvest decay and death from that sinful nature. But those who live to please the Spirit will harvest everlasting life from the Spirit. So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up." (NLT)

1. Satan wants us to believe there are no consequences. The Bible tells us that we can't mock the justice of God. When we think we can live without consequences, we are mocking God's justice.
2. God has spiritual laws at work in His universe just like there are physical laws like gravity. God says that sin always brings death. The end result of

not trusting and obeying God will always be negative. They might have some short term benefit, but the ultimate result is always death / decay / negative.

3. Our sinful actions automatically set in motion negative consequences. It's not that God is up in heaven seeing our disobedience and sending down lightning bolts of judgment. We create the judgment ourselves.
4. If I jump off the roof of this building and break both legs, it would be rather silly for me to get mad at God for that. WHY? Because my choice set in motion the law of gravity. Gravity took over.
5. When we choose to disobey God, we do the same thing in the spiritual realm. God's spiritual laws take over because of the choices we have made. Then, when we experience the pain of that, we tend to blame God!
6. This principal also works in the positive. As we walk in obedience, we set in motion the spiritual laws of blessing upon our live. As we maintain a course of obedience, the more blessing we will experience.
7. This is why he tells the readers to not get tired in doing good. There is a harvest of blessing. Obedience = Blessing! I didn't make that up. It's in the word of God!
8. Therefore, what laws are you setting in motion by how you're living. Are you setting in motion death and decay or blessing and provision?

C. Embrace the goodness of God literally

Jer. 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you," says the LORD. "They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope." (NLT)

Ps. 37:4 "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." (NASB)

1. Embracing the goodness of God literally means that I believe God's goodness can be experienced as a reality in THIS life not just the next. God's goodness impacts my life now not later.
2. God's goodness is just not some abstract concept about His character. God's goodness is experiential / God relates to me out of His goodness / All of God's desires for me are good /
3. God has good plans for me to experience in this life. God actually wants to fulfill the desires of my heart. God wants to satisfy me beyond any way I could ever satisfy myself.
4. If we don't believe God cares about the desires of our hearts, we will follow our plans to have them fulfilled instead of God's!

If we will embrace God's word literally / the consequences literally / and God's goodness literally / We will be worshipping and serving the Creator not the created. We will be living in

the way God intended us to live from Creation. We will be walking on God's path that leads to freedom and blessing.

- So, what have you been believing? What have you been following? Truth or a lie? Are you “just doing your own thing”? Maybe today it's time for a change in course. Maybe today it's time to reject the lie and embrace God's truth.