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The Lie and the Light ~ 01

As most of you know, JW Luman was here this past weekend sharing on the eternal purpose of the Father. I never plan to do this, but I often find myself stirred by something he says, and ultimately decide to spend a week or two or three looking specifically at something that he shared with us. This time it had to do with "the lie".

There was a lot that he said, but for whatever reason, on Saturday morning when he started sharing on the lie, my heart was captivated. And I couldn't really move away from it. I still haven't moved away from it, and so I thought I would take some time and try to share with you what I believe the Lord is showing me. It does have to do with God's eternal purpose, and we're going to deal with that. I think the Lord is helping me to see more of the reality of both the lie and the light. And the two are obviously contrary to one another. They are opposites.

So I'm going to continue to suspend our study of the book of Ephesians until I work through what I'm seeing here, and I don't know how long that will be.

And I know what I'm going to start sharing here might be a bit hard to hear. But I ask you just to give it time...and try to hear with your heart this morning. Brains are good, I'm glad I have one, but hearts are the faculty into which the light of the Lord is able to shine. Brains catch up with hearts in time. But it is faith first, then understanding. Word first, then words. Try to hear the Word this morning through my words.

Saturday morning JW was talking about the effect that the lie had on mankind. More specifically, he was speaking on how the lie made it impossible for man to occupy his state of being. In other words, to know, live into, experience the fullness of what God had given him in the natural realm. We will probably talk about that in the coming weeks. I want to start by just focusing on the purpose for creation, and the effect of the lie. Then I would like to get into the specific typology involved in the first creation as it testified of the new creation in Christ. But I can't think of any way to talk about any of this unless we back way up and deal something with God's eternal purpose.

Here's a big question? Why did God create? We call Him the Creator, and that is true of Him because He created. But why did He create? Did you ever think of the fact that God didn't have to create. That was a choice on his part. He didn't find the earth and decide to do something with it. He made it according to something in His heart. He didn't stumble across man and think "This is a mess, I should probably intervene here...". He created mankind, and He created him with something in mind – some intention, some purpose. God created because He had a purpose. First there was a purpose, then there was the outworking of that purpose in a creation. There was something that He wanted. Nothing that He needed, but something that He desired.

And without going into much detail right now, what God wanted was the glorification of Himself through the life of His Son shared, formed, and expressed in a people. We are the eternal beneficiaries of this purpose, but He is the center. We are the undeserving recipients of this great love, but His is the plan, the purpose, the glory. The increase of Christ unto the glory of the God, this is the heart, the core of the plan of God.

So what did God do? He created towards this purpose. He created with THIS purpose in mind. Everything that He created was in view to this end. Not one thing was created for any other reason. Not one thing was created just because it was pretty, or neat, or entertaining, or funny. Not one thing was created as an experiment. EVERYTHING was created in the natural realm with a single purpose in mind. More than that, everything was created to bear witness of, and give created expression to, this eternal purpose.

Now I realize that man has fallen so far from this purpose, that not only is he able to look at the natural creation and fail to see this purpose in what was made, but he actually has created purposes for it of his own. Not only do we not see God's intention, we have found ways to use this creation entirely for our own intentions.

We are so perverted, in fact, that many people spend their lives believing and teaching that the perfectly constructed masterpiece of the natural creation has no purpose, no creator, and has somehow created itself. Sure, it makes perfect sense – nothingness created a big bang, the bang created a perfectly adapted planet with a local heating device, the inanimate planet created life, life decided to change from slime into an aardvark, and then into a sasquatch, and then a human. And class, that's where sunsets, and red blood cells, and families, and perfect ecosystems come from. The depths of depravity and stupidity in the mind of man is simply astounding. If it wasn't so debased, it might be considered a miracle.

Albert Einstein was known for a few clever statements about the amazing stupidity of man. He said

- "The difference between genius and stupidity is that genius has its limits."
- "Only two things are infinite, the universe and human stupidity, and I'm not sure about the former."

So regardless of our insanity, it remains that everything was created to bear witness of and give expression to God's eternal purpose. I cannot tell you exactly how, I can only tell you where I have come to understand it. But you don't have to be a genius to read the New Testament and see how Christ takes so many good natural things and demonstrates that they were only created to testify of Him. Living water. Bread of Life. Day of Rest. Light of the World. Fruit of the Vine. Sight for the eyes. The head of a body, the bridegroom with His bride, etc. Any person that has something of the mind of the Lord starts to see something of God's eternal purpose through the things that He has made. A sunrise, a butterfly, an acorn, seasons of the year. Whatever.

My point is to highlight the reality that everything that was created was created not just as the realm out from which God would get sons. The world is not just the place

that God is trying to pull you out of when you die... if you believe in Him. The world is a beautiful and multifaceted testimony of His eternal purpose in Christ.

And when He created it, He said it was "good" for that very reason. It wasn't good because it had any intrinsic goodness. It wasn't good because he was proud of how hard it was to make, or because it was pretty, or because it turned out better than he expected. It was good because the purpose and plan that He had in mind was reflected and expressed in what was made. Everything that He made functioned and still functions as a perfect natural testimony of His eternal and spiritual purpose, **except for man and what man has perverted for himself.**

We will get into this later more deeply, but as Paul tells us in Romans 5:14, the first man was created as a type, a figure, of the second man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was to come. Adam and His creation, prior to the lie, were a wonderful natural demonstration of God's purpose to have one man ruling, and naming, and knowing, and subduing, and increasing in a creation. That is, of course, what we have come to in Christ. One Man ruling and fully knowing and naming (giving His name to) and subduing, and increasing in a new creation. That is a wonderful reality that we will look at when we talk more about the Light. But right now I want to stay with the Lie.

What I want to show you is that, though Adam did not have the life of God resident in his soul, though he needed to be born of Spirit, still, in the garden, the mind God gave him was able to comprehend natural reality according to truth. He had a perfect mind and perfect senses with regard to the creation God placed him in. I don't know the full extent of that. Some writers have speculated on just what the mind of the first man or first men were able to know and see and do. Some talk about how we have learned that we now only use 10% of our brain. Some speak of how Adam was able to name every living creature. Whatever... I do know this, that man was far greater in understanding and perspective and truth with respect to the natural realm than we are today. We have technology. But he had truth and wisdom and perspective. He had a view to things that was not clouded by the dark lens of self. And with it he saw things and named and ruled according to the truth of that realm, if only for a very short time.

How do I know that? Well, not because I'm just speculating on what things were like before the fall. I don't have any interest in teaching my opinions on things. I have opinions, but I try not to give them much weight. It's easy to get fascinated and distracted with the first man's natural potential, and that isn't helpful at all. The reason I can say something of what Adam was like prior to the fall is because of what we can clearly see that changed when he believed the lie. We see what became of him, and we can know at least something about what was lost.

Ok, so now we're getting to the lie. What changed? What was immediately different when Adam believed the lie? What was the lie? Nearly every Christian knows that there was a lie told to Eve by the serpent which Adam and Eve believed. And because they believed the lie, accepted the lie, received the lie, there was this thing that is generally referred to as the "fall of man". Incidentally, I don't believe this fall was the product of picking the forbidden fruit. It seems to me that the fruit picking was just the outward demonstration of what had already happened in the heart of man. The fall of man wasn't because they touched something with their hands, it was because they accepted something, received something into their heart. Man fell from his created purpose when he believed a lie.

But believing this lie wasn't just falling for a trick. It wasn't just mixing up the trees or getting duped by a talking lizard. No, something happened in this lie that was so much bigger than just believing something that wasn't real. It wasn't just intellectual assent to a falsehood. We know that because we watch Adam instantly go from looking at this creation, this state of being, according to the truth of it, according to God's awareness of it, the freedom and peace of God's perspective of all things...he instantly changes from that to looking entirely at himself. **Suddenly, something happened, and this first man was utterly self-aware, self-consumed, self-condemned...and that has been the story of the adamic man ever since.**

Suddenly Adam was aware of himself, his lack, his need, his shame. We can tell this by simply reading the story. Suddenly all things of this creation were seen and known and understood and lived into, not according to his created perspective, but entirely with respect to self-interest.

I don't think I have to work terribly hard to convince any of you of this reality. We are all familiar with it as the nature into which we were born. It's not foreign to any of us. It's only foreign to the Lord who created with a different purpose in His heart.

Fear came in, anger, pride, shame...why? Because man's relationship with all things ceased being the truth of his state of being, the purpose of God for the natural creation, the testimony of God's eternal purpose and plan. **Man's relationship with all things found its root and reality in the awareness of self and the all-consuming obsession of self-preservation.** (to which the cross became the only solution because only in the cross is self dealt with...but we'll leave that alone for now).

Man looked at all created things, and as Romans chapter one speaks of in some detail, he exchanged the glory of God for his own darkened understanding, exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and became the center of his own story. The lie had this effect on Adam, he saw all things in relation to himself. And so no sooner did he accept the lie than he immediately hid, and he blamed and he feared, and shortly thereafter he killed. That shouldn't surprise us, it's just the next natural step on the road of self-obsession. Self-preservation.

Gen 6:5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every intent of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually. **6** And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. **7** So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them."

Gen 6:11 The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. **12** So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. **13** And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."

Why? Truth was lost, perspective was lost...eternal purpose was lost. And a lie began to not only be what they believed, but what they were, what they saw, and what they lived out from.

Well, what is this lie. That is what really got my attention. I saw the effects of the lie. I saw the power of the lie. But I really wanted to see the reality of what exactly the lie was. How could a lie be so pervasive, so insidious? How could a lie change the very lens through which man sees everything. I knew some of the elements of it, but as I looked at it, and read the verses, and thought of the eternal purpose of God, it started coming more and more in focus.

The lie had to do with the fundamental, foundational, deepest presuppositions of the human heart. It has to do with what we are, who we are. What God is, who God is? And I can summarize like this. **The lie is an entire perspective, or view of reality, wherein man is or has purpose, value, wisdom, destiny, and life apart from God. That is the heart of the lie.** And all of this is stated or clearly implied in Satan's attack in the Garden of Eden. You can be like God. You can know good and evil. You can have your eyes opened. You can be wise. Did God really say?...you can know better.

It's bigger than a belief, it's a world-view that Adam received. It's not just a tricky idea, it's a view of reality that has been accepted where man becomes the center of his universe. Man becomes the lens through which he sees all things and measures all things and values all things and appreciates all things. All things are relevant to the extent that I am benefited by them. All things are true to the extent that I want them to be real. All things are good to the measure that I gain from them. I believe that, independent of God, I have purpose.

That is like a hammer finding purpose apart from the carpenter. A pitcher finding value without any water. A computer finding relevance without any programming. A flower finding destiny even though winter is coming. It's worse than all of that, it is a human soul thinking it has anything apart from eternal Spirit. **The lie is the great forfeiting of the eternal purpose of God, and the age-old attempt to establish purpose from something in ourselves.** You can be like God. You can discern good and evil. You can have your eyes open. Did God really say...

I wish I had a stronger way of saying it. Again, we're not talking about a tricky fib here. We're talking about receiving a lens through which all things are seen. We're talking about accepting a point of view through which we understand ourselves. That we have intrinsic value apart from God's eternal purpose in Christ that is good and useful. Man can use it. Even God can use it.

Sure, this lie is not just in the world. This lie is the foundation for so much of what we teach in the church. It's easy to see how the unbelievers are certain that they have value and life and purpose apart from God. They find their purpose in what they do and not what they are. They find their purpose in what they feel and not what is real. That makes sense. They don't even pretend to see things another way.

The greatest confusion is with us – people who claim to know the truth. **Because if the truth that we know has not displaced the lie that we have become, then we haven't really known the truth. We've simply added facts on top of a foundation of the lie.**

I'm not trying to sound clever. We can see this in the natural world, but we don't see it in ourselves. We can quickly look to science, for instance, and see that though scientists stack fact upon fact and observation upon observation, they never come to the knowledge of the truth because it is all founded upon a lie. They start with godless presuppositions and end with godless conclusions, and steer all the facts to support what they believed before they started their studies. Anybody can see that. If you stack facts on a lie, your facts end up supporting that lie.

But the lie is worse than that. I started to see it so much more clearly this last week. The lie is that same view, that same idea, that same perspective in all things. And of course it is in the church as well. It is what is behind so many of our doctrines and lessons that teach us that the cross is God's program to get a better version of me. We have a gospel that somehow lets self continue to live for God. A purpose that grants me all of His eternal blessings...and the cost?...just a sinner's prayer and some behavioral modification.

Do we see how we've dragged the lie into Christ and found place for it there? That's what started to come into such focus this week. We bring the lie – that man has purpose, value, wisdom, destiny, life – right into Christ. We try to serve Him with that wisdom. We try to please him with OUR life. We ask him to coach us in or purpose.

And I don't need to spend a lot of time on that. I'm not trying to pick on the church, or highlight the garbage, but just to expose the reality that its not like the lie just vanishes into thin air the moment you join a church. **It's not like the lie is put off without putting off the man who is the lie.** You see, right there is exactly the problem. You can't put off the lie, until you put off the man who is defined by the lie. The lie doesn't end until the adamic man progressively finds his end in the cross.

You might say...“oh Jason, I used to believe that lie, but now I don't. I know that I'm nothing apart from God”. No, you don't. You can't say that to me. Don't say that. This lie isn't just something that you give mental assent to, and as soon as you learn that it is false you can just stop believing it. It's not that kind of a lie. You can't say you've put off the fullness of this lie until you've put off the fullness of that man. You can't ever say that you've learned the fullness of the truth any more than you can say you've grown up into the fullness of Christ. **This lie isn't something you stop believing. This lie is someone who must stop living.** This lie is you.

Jesus, in John chapter 8, didn't tell the Pharisees that they needed to stop believing false things. He told them that they were of their father, the devil...who was a liar from the beginning, and the father of lies. When he speaks, he speaks of his own nature. And he is your father. Your desires are in accordance with his.

And then he didn't just tell them that if they believed his words they would know the truth. No, he said “if you abide in my word, then you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free”.

What I'm saying is that the lie is so much more than a concept that we think. **It is the darkness of the fallen adamic mind that is eaten alive by self-awareness and felt need. It is not just one of our thoughts, it is the foundation for all of our thinking. It's the starting point of all that we perceive...a world where man is center stage. A world where man has purpose, value, life, wisdom, and destiny independent of God's eternal purpose. A darkened**

world-view where man has actually imagined a purpose, a life, a goal that has nothing to do with truth.

And this problem cannot be defeated by hearing that there is such a lie. This problem isn't removed by learning true things. This problem is only dealt when the man who is the lie is destroyed by the cross. When the nature of darkness is destroyed by light.

Yes, every act of the Spirit of God is unto this end. The greatest thing that the Holy Spirit is always trying to do is expose something that we couldn't believe unless he show us. We would never believe it, but those who have seen Him who is Truth know it. Know what? What does the Spirit show the heart who will turn? **He shows them that their problem is not with lying, their problem is that they are the lie. They have become the lie.**

And this is precisely what happens when Christ begins to be revealed in you. When you are born of Spirit and then taught by Spirit. You see that it not just that you need some more light, you realize that even your light is darkness. Even your righteousness is filthy rags. Even your facts were not the truth. You don't just need to love some more, you understand even your love to be impure. You are not struggling with darkness, you ARE the darkness that you struggle with. By nature we are the darkness into which Christ comes and must shine unto our displacement. The truth shows you to be the lie, and deals with you only by death.

Spiritual growth is the displacement of the lie by the putting off of that man. I want to close by looking at two verses from Paul's letters. Ephesians 4:20 – 25, and Colossians 3:9. And, as is often the case, they read so much better in the Greek...so I'll give a couple literal word translations. What you will see in both of these Scriptures is that the lie is only put off through the putting off of the old man.

Eph 4:20 But you have not so learned Christ, **21** if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus: **22** that you put off, concerning your former manner of life, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, **23** and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, **24** and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. **25** Therefore, putting away lying, "LET EACH ONE OF YOU SPEAK TRUTH WITH HIS NEIGHBOR," for we are members of one another.

A literal translation of verse 25 would read – "through this" or "consequently, putting off the lie" or "putting off the false". There is no way that Paul is just singling out the specific sin of bearing false witness and telling people to stop it. What he says here has to relate to what he has just described. What has he just described? He just described learning Christ, being taught in Him, by Him, as the truth is in Jesus. And in so doing, putting off, casting off the old man and being renewed in the spirit of your mind. Consequently casting off the false. Through this putting off the false, and coming to speak truth.

There is no doubt in my mind that Paul is talking about far more than just exaggerating how big of a fish you caught, or lying about getting a prom date when really she turned you down. Its much bigger than that. It is a putting off of the lie because the person of truth is shining as Light in your soul and displacing darkness. It is speaking the truth as it is in Christ, as it comes out from Christ, one to another,

because we are members of one another, being members of Him. It is breaking from the lie that has defined our view of all things, and awakening us to His view – which is the truth of all things.

It says the same thing, in the same exact context, in Colossians 3:9.

Col 3:9 Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds, **10** and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,

Cease declaring, living, believing, seeing the lie. Why? Because you have put off that man, and have put on the new who is renewed in true knowledge in order to accord with the image of Him who created us anew in Christ Jesus. We'll pick up next week.