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The Lie
Pt. 2

If you weren't here last week, I took a diversion from our study of the book of Ephesians and talked about the lie that Adam and Eve believed in the garden. The Lord has really focused my attention on this reality, and I'd like to spend some more time there today. Part of what we cover today will be a review from last week. I'm doing that intentionally because I really feel like this is important. I really want us to get a hold of this. If we can come to a clear view of this lie, then we come to a much clearer view of ourselves and the reality of salvation and growth.

So I want to take another whack at trying to explain what I've been seeing with regard to the lie. In a lot of ways, this might end up being a re-stating and clarifying of what I attempted to share last week with regard to the lie. What was it? Why was it so powerful? What were its effects? How is it destroyed? All of these questions have been spinning around in my heart.

When you think of the natural creation, you must always keep in mind its purpose. Far more than just being a temporary residence for human beings, the natural creation, in all of its intricate detail, was a specific and very intentional testimony or declaration or reflection of God's eternal purpose in Christ. This realm, in addition to being the realm out from which God redeems man and brings them unto Himself, is created with purpose. As I mentioned last week, not one thing was created because God just thought it was pretty or interesting or astonishing. I'm not saying that the creation was not pretty or interesting or astonishing. Of course it is, because it, in every way, reflects and bears witness of Him.

What I am saying is that the natural realm was created with purpose. And that purpose is more than a nice ecosystem fitted for natural life. That purpose is a grand and complex living testimony of God's eternal purpose in Christ. In that creation you have reflected everything that God has known and predestined in Christ. In that creation you can easily see every theme of redemption and transformation and growth and darkness and light, death and life, love, increase, kind, power, wisdom, etc. And this creation is only natural! This creation is just the shadow.

And just for any visitors here, as I make reference to the New Creation in Christ, don't picture a better version of earth. Don't picture bigger trees, bluer water, and brighter suns. Its not a better version of the natural, it is entirely spiritual. **It is not a natural universe at all, but rather the universe of Christ. The universe that Christ is. The water that He is, the Light that He is, the And all of these natural testimonies speak loudly of some wonderful facet of Him, and the reality of life in Him.**

Once upon a time, Adam was part of this testimony. Once upon a time, Adam was the crown of this natural testimony. In Him you saw the greatest type and shadow, prophecy and promise, of God's purpose in Christ. Man was not the greatest type and shadow of God's purpose because of inherent goodness. We must get that out of our mind because that is part of the lie. Man was the greatest type and shadow of God's purpose simply because in this first man God had created the clearest testimony, the most distinct and prominent declaration of Him who was goodness itself – the one 1 Corinthians calls the Second Man.

And until the lie, man functioned perfectly in that role. That might have been three minutes, three days, or three months, I don't know and I don't care one bit. Here's what I do care about. Man was the crown of this testimony. Romans 5:14 – in this first man God has a type of Him who was to come. How? Well, in many ways.

Before man saw and desired and understood all things through the lens of self-obsession, man saw this realm as he was intended to see it. As he was created to see it. Man had a perfect mind and perfect senses with respect to this creation. Man did not have eternal life, because eternal life isn't a thing, it is Christ. It isn't the ability to live forever, it is the life of God in the soul of man. Adam didn't have that, but he was perfect in this sense: he had a perfect view, comprehension, apprehension of the creation over which he was lord. Oh how that has changed.

God gave him perfect awareness and understanding of this natural creation, and with it he was to function, as all natural things do, in the image of the spiritual reality that they bear witness of. Adam was created in the image and likeness of God because, in this realm, he was to be unto the first creation what Christ is to the second. You read in 1 Corinthians 15 about the first Adam and the last Adam. The first man and the Second Man. The first man, it says, was a living soul. The Second Man was the life-giving Spirit. You've all read that, I'm sure. But this living soul, though he lacked eternal Spirit, was to be to this creation what Christ becomes to the new creation.

Adam, with wisdom, truth, and understanding fully comprehended that realm. He knew the animals better than they understood themselves. In fact, he gave them each a name according to his comprehension. (now if I lose you here, I'll pick you up later, so don't zone out) He was to reign in and rule over and fully know and subdue and name and be fruitful and multiply and fill this creation with His kind. He was to fully live into his state of being. And the reason for all of this, the reason that he was created for this purpose, was that **man was going to find his true purpose in Christ as a new creation. Man would become the very creation in which the Second Man, Jesus Christ, would reign and rule, and fully know and subdue and name His creation. We would be the ones in whom Christ would be fruitful and multiply and increase His kind.**

I hope you can see how beautiful that is. It would be so easy to spend the rest of our time together looking at so many verses where Jesus and the Apostles teach with a clear view to this end. So many Scriptures.

- New Creation: "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creation, old things have passed away, behold the new has come". 2 Cor 5:17
- Christ's increase in us: Christ's "my little children with whom I am in labor until Christ is formed in you" Gal 4:19

- Christ's subduing His New Creation: "he who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself" Phil. 3:21
- Christ conforming us to His image and kind: "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son" Romans 8:29

And besides these verses and so many like them, are the enumerable verses about the truth and light of Christ dawning and shining in our hearts, and the mind of Christ working in us, and the Truth of Christ displacing the lie, and the knowledge of God working in our soul. I can't stop to try to prove what I'm telling you about the ways that this first man and his created purpose foreshadow and testify to the Second Man. We have spent so much time on that before.

Right now I just want to reiterate the reality that man was created with purpose. And that purpose, like all created things, was not just to come into existence so that God could watch us fall and then forgive our sins. That purpose was to glorify God by all that was made. Give expression to Him, His wisdom, His purpose, His reality, His Truth. **Once upon a time, man was part of this testimony. And then he ate a lie.**

And he fell. And we speak a lot about this fall in the church, but sometimes I think we misunderstand it. Man did not fall from union with God. I don't know why we think that. God walked with man in the garden, God did not live in man. God spoke words to man, God could not reveal His living Word in man. When man fell, he didn't fall from union. He fell from purpose. He fell from any ability to bear in himself a testimony of God. In other words, he fell from glory – which is the expression of God.

How did he fall? He fell when he took upon himself a lie. I shared last week that this lie that Adam believed wasn't anything like just falling for a trick or being duped by a falsehood. It's not that kind of a lie. In fact, rather than just thinking of it as believing a lie, it might even be helpful if you think of it more like receiving, accepting, swallowing, consenting to, taking on an entirely bogus way of looking at all things. The difference is huge.

We're not talking about a simple intellectual agreement with something untrue. It's much worse than that. We're talking about something which man received as real that entirely corrupted and permanently altered the way he viewed himself, his purpose, his surroundings, his creator, his value, etc. Man could no longer see his creation according to truth. Man saw nothing according to truth because he saw all things through the darkened, perverted lens of self. He saw all things through a lie that made him the center of his own universe.

Again, what was that lie. **At the heart of it, it is the belief, the certainty, the deeply seated idea, that man has life, purpose, value, relevance, wisdom or destiny apart from God.** This is what Satan sold Adam and Eve. He didn't sell them an apple. They wanted the apple only after they believed the lie. Look at it in Genesis chapter three. First Satan speaks to Eve. And when Eve believes the lie, then the fruit takes on a whole new appearance. **First she eats the lie, then she eats the fruit. She takes the fruit because, through the lens of the lie, it suddenly appears good for food, pleasant to the eyes, and desirable to make one wise.**

I tried last week to describe something of the power of this lie. It would be impossible to state it comprehensively, the lie is just too big. It was not just one of man's thoughts, it became the foundation and source of all man's thinking. It wasn't just a wrong idea, it was the presupposition underneath all presuppositions. It was far from just untrue words, it was a perverted, distorted, deceptive lens through which all things came to be seen.

How can we tell that it was such an enormous deal? How can we be so sure? Well if you're not convinced through your own experience of slowly waking up out of the lie through the revealing of Christ, then you can at least be convinced by looking at the immediate effect that it had on mankind. Adam and Eve immediately changed from a state of seeing the creation, functioning in the creation, according to God's purpose, God's glory, God's testimony...to seeing all things according to self-awareness. Suddenly they were self aware, self-consumed, self condemned – aware of lack, need, and shame. Immediately they sought to hide from God, cover their nothingness, find blame for their guilt, seek their agenda, kill in their jealousy.

Purpose was lost. Testimony was lost. Creation, rather than being a testimony of God's ultimate intention, God's perfect end, became a means to man's end. From the standpoint of man, creation instantly stopped being a perfect foreshadowing of God's eternal purpose...and became something man could exploit and manipulate and use and abuse according to his own purposes. And that is because the lie became the imbedded perspective whereby man saw all things with respect to self-interest. Man had eaten more than a forbidden fruit. Man had contracted a virus of self-obsession.

It's no wonder that immediately after this story you read of the world being filled with violence and corruption. You read of God grieved in his heart, mourning over the state of this world, and desiring to destroy both man and the earth. Why destroy the earth? Because it was polluted by Adam's fall. Why preserve the earth when the centerpiece of God's testimony had distorted and spoiled the purpose. The earth was the increase of Adam.

Man had become the center of his own story. Man is still the center of his own story, and seeks to use God to bless **our** purpose and guide **our** life. But I'll leave that for now.

What we need to see together is that this lie is at the center of all that we naturally think and know and want and feel. Please don't refuse to hear this. If there was a more Adam-friendly version of this, I would tell it. There isn't. The lie isn't just one of our thoughts, it is the fountain-head of all of our thinking, all of our desiring, our planning, our hoping, our understanding. This lie, that man has life, purpose, value, wisdom, ANYTHING...apart from God is at the heart of all that we think and do.

Somebody might say, "you're right Jason, we really need God to show us our purpose". Wrong. That's part of the lie. God will never show you **your** purpose. God will be purpose working in you. Somebody might say "you're right Jason, God really needs to steer our lives or we're in trouble". No. That's part of the lie. God does not want to guide, or maneuver our life. God wants us to lose our life and find His. Hate our life and be found in His. Turn from the lie, and be filled with the truth. Do you see? Its much sneakier than we think. The lie has permeated everything.

To borrow from my analogy from last week, that's like a hammer saying "teach me how I can be a good hammer. Tell me what I need to do". Does that hammer even have independent purpose? The second that you can envision any purpose, relevance, identity, value, understanding, or destiny as an entity unto yourself, right then you are manifesting the lie.

It's bigger than a belief that can be corrected with another belief. It's a view of reality where man becomes the lens through which he sees all things and measures all things and values all things and appreciates all things. How do we see all things from the day that we are born? All things are relevant to the extent that I am bettered 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.

So, can you see how pervasive and powerful and deeply seated this lie really is? If you were to compare it to the natural realm, the lie wouldn't just be something you are looking at, it would be the sunshine by which you look at all things. You walk around looking at things and saying, which one of these is the lie? No, its not just any one of those things, it is the light by which you see all of those things. That's how the lie works. It is like the light by which you see all things. You can't just decide to turn it off. And "if the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness"

Can you see that man's thoughts are doomed to fail before they begin? They come out from a lie, and there is no alternative except that they support what they are built on. They come out from the lie and so they affirm the lie. The only hope there is, the one single thing that can be done to escape the lie, is to gain another light, come to another lens, see all things out from another Man. A Man who has called Himself the Truth. A Man who said "I am the light of the world".

And that is what coming to Christ is supposed to be. Not just the pardoning of the offenses, but a new lens through which to understand, a new light in which we walk, a new Life by which we live. It is the cross. The cross exists as the instrument of God for the destruction of the lie. It is not just where Jesus died for you, **it is where you are crucified to the lie.** It is where the lie is crucified to you, and you become children of light. Once again I could spend so much time, and I have, quoting all of the pertinent verses. The verses that describe the cross as our end, our death, His increase, His dawning. I won't do that this morning because all you have to do is open your Bible and there they will be.

What I do want to show you this morning is more of how we bring the lie into the church and we don't even recognize what we're doing.

It seems to me that Adam never really stopped naming things, even though He completely lost God's perspective. He continues to name things according to his comprehension. He gives things names based on his view, his understanding. And he does that not only in the natural arena, where he once had perspective, but also in the spiritual realm, where he has never seen a thing.

But, you see, man cannot even accurately name anything in the created realm, let alone the realm of life in Christ, because he names all things through the darkness of the lie. He sees things and gives them a name according to the value he places upon them. Nevertheless, man not only continues naming all things of the first

creation, he also tries to give name, identity, understanding, to the things of God as well. And here we go in the church giving out our names.

We name righteousness. In other words, we assign our definition to it. We attach our comprehension to it. We call it, identify, classify it, recognize it according to what it means to us. It is named by passing through the lens of self. We name love. Sure, what is love? How does the church, in general, understand love? It is when somebody does something that we perceive to be towards our good. Forget about whether there is any truth represented in it. Forget about whether it is truly towards any good. If it meets a felt need, it is love. What is righteousness? Well there are different definitions but man is right smack in the middle of every one. One group says it's something I do. Another group says it's something I wear, for another it's something I don't do, and another it's a collection of disciplines I do. **The point is that we give it our name. We name it out from the lie.**

And then we wonder why, first of all, no two church groups see anything the same way. Well, there are as many names as there are people naming. And then, for those who start to see anew in the Light of Christ, we wonder why every single thing has to be redefined. We wonder why every definition, every understanding, of every single spiritual term needs to be redefined in the face of Jesus Christ. Well, the answer, obviously, is that we've already named all things with the lie. We've named fellowship, church, worship, ministry, love, faith, glory, sin, salvation, grace, redemption. There's nothing we haven't named, and there's nothing that we have named that doesn't have man at its center because that is what the lie does. All of these things have been named OUT from the lie.

The question certainly isn't whether these things exist, it's what we've named them. It's not a question of whether we believe in love, or righteousness or faith. The question is whether we comprehend these things out from the lie, or in the person of Truth.

Unless He names it, it is part of the lie. And the very first thing, and the most essential thing that we must let Him name, is ourselves. He must name **us** according to the truth before we will ever see anything apart from the lie. And when he names you, he names you "dead". He names you "blind". You have to reckon with this. Before he ever names you son, or redeemed, or wife, or kingdom...He first names you "wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked." That is our name by nature. That is what we must first face. And in facing it, he can name us by a new nature. Now I'm speaking metaphorically here, so I hope you are following me. There are no real time gaps here. It's not like 3 months you'll be called "dead", and then you graduate to being called "son". But He names you dead before you can understand the name "risen in Christ". Do you see? He names you by your nature before you can see that you have been named by His. If He doesn't show you the lie, you will always try to drag it into the truth and there it will be. There YOU will be with all of your names that came out of the lie.

And He will name whatever we are willing to present to Him. He gives His name to it. Can you hear what I mean. **I don't just mean that He gives His definition of it. I mean He is the definition of it.** He gives His name to love. He becomes the reality of Love. God is love. HE becomes the reality of righteousness. He becomes the church – the corporate body of His Son. He names whatever we will present to Him. But we present so little. Amazingly, we hold on to the lie in so many areas where we have grown fond of our own names.

For instance, we're quite fond of our definition of prayer. We don't even think it needs a new name. For Pete's sake, I've been doing it all of my life. If there is anything I understand it's prayer. So there we are, holding on to our understanding. We like our definition of ministry. We're quite fond of our definition of spiritual gifts. Sure, I've seen God do this and that...why would it need a new name? Only because you've comprehended it, appreciated it, understood it, and defined it out from the lie. Jason, don't you believe in prayer? Of course I believe in it, I just no longer believe in the name that I've given it. It must be renamed in the face of Jesus Christ.

I'm about to close, but there's just one more thing I want to say while we're on the subject of holding on to our "names" of things. I can promise you something. It's a sad thing to promise, but I've seen it now too many times not to talk about it. Whatever you hold onto...whatever definition, understanding, value, or view of anything that has not been utterly renamed in the Light of Christ...whatever so-called Christian thing or concept or reality that you hold onto, before long it will swing back around and be center stage. You may put it on the shelf for a while, while you investigate or look into something new or interesting or true. But, before long, whatever you don't let go of will be back to claim your allegiance. It will be slowly become the thing that you insist on being right and real and worth fighting for. And, sooner or later, it will cause you to lose your view of truth.

Somebody sees the Lord, and is thrilled with a new view of the cross, thrilled with a new view of salvation. Light has shone in the heart. A greater view of the Lord. But, they don't surrender all of their names. They don't allow Him to rename everything. There is this one thing, or these ten things, that they are just certain have the correct name. There are the things that have been the most important to us. The things that I have given my life to, my heart to, my tears to. The things I have studied, pursued, taught. Those things were named by the lie, as all things are...but for whatever reason, we are SO convinced that God has named them. Well...it doesn't take too long. Three days, three months, three years....whatever. Sooner or later those names stand opposed to the truth. And you stand with them, opposed to the truth.

Two weeks ago I was riding in the car with JW Luman and I was asking him about this. I was telling him how many times I had seen this happen. I was telling him how sad it made me and how powerless I felt when I watched it. I remember exactly what he said. He said "Jason, if the truth wasn't a person, it wouldn't have to be that way. If we weren't dealing with a person, it could just be a doctrine that you got wrong. It could just be a point of theology. But its not a doctrine that your missing, but a person that you're resisting. It is a Person, the living Christ, the Person of Truth, that you are not allowing to work in you." Sooner or later in resisting Him, you lose your view of Him.