



Stand Against April 8: The Enemy is a Liar

Series Summary: Throughout scripture, we see that as followers of Jesus Christ, we have an enemy, his name is Satan. The question is, do we know our enemy? It is easy to make critical mistakes in how we go about standing against the enemy's plans and tactics of the enemy.

Big Idea: Our enemy is a liar, and a really good one at that. It's not just that he's a compulsive liar, but that he's good at HOW he lies- how he takes advantage of our gullibility to believe in his tricks and deceptions.

Schedule:

- Live teaching
- Small group

VIDEO TEACHING

Lead in: Our enemy is a liar, and a really good one at that. It's not just that he's a compulsive liar, but that he's good at HOW he lies- how he takes advantage of our gullibility to believe in his tricks and deceptions.

SATAN'S GREATEST TRICK

(Question of Salvation)

Background of the passage: Earlier in the chapter, we see Jesus entering the Temple Courts at dawn to teach. But the Pharisees interrupted by bringing in a woman caught in adultery, asking if Jesus thought she should be stoned for her crime. Jesus defeated their trap by pointing out their hypocrisy when he said, "Let

any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” This interaction started a chapter-long teaching/confrontation involving Jesus, the Pharisees, and the crowds that had gathered to learn from Jesus. Through this teaching, Jesus challenged the crowds to choose who they would follow: Jesus, the source of ultimate Truth and righteousness, or the Enemy. There was no middle ground.

John 8:42-45 Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me. **43** Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say. **44** You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies. **45** Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!

Satan is a great liar! I am not paying him a compliment, far from it. But we must understand that Satan is good at lying. If someone is called the Father of _____, that means they are synonymous with it. Satan, in this passage, is called the Father of lies. Lying is what he does, so much so that it is his native language. In the field of lying, Satan has long since reached his 10,000 hours to become a professional at lying.

Therefore, we should do a couple of things

- We should learn how Satan lies
- We should learn what lies he has told that have led others astray

John 8:31-33 To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. **32** Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” **33** They answered him, “We are Abraham’s descendants and have never been slaves of anyone. How can you say that we shall be set free?”

The lie they believed: They believed that they had no need of a savior, as they were not slaves to anyone or anything. As they saw it, they were free, independent, faithful Jews who had never been slaves to anyone. Sadly, they had missed the fundamental truth that all men, Jews and Gentiles, are slaves to sin (Romans 6:16-22).

That is why Jesus pointed them to the truth that everyone desperately needs a savior.

John 8:34-36 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. **35** Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. **36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

The lie we are fed: One of the lies that Satan feeds us is that we have no need for God or for a savior. We are good people. We pay our taxes, love our friends, we attend church weekly, and support ourselves. Who do we need? **The lie of self-sufficiency is deadly because by default it makes us rely on ourselves and not Jesus (God)**

John 8:39 "Abraham is our father," they answered.

The lie they believed: They were rightly pointing out that they were descendants of Abraham. They were Jews by birth. But what they were failing to see was that their callousness to Jesus was making them more like their forefather who complained in the wilderness, fearful at the Jordan River, and had rejected the warning of the prophets. They were not spiritual offspring (Romans 9:6-8 and Galatians 3).

John 8:40-41 "If you were Abraham's children," said Jesus, "then you would do what Abraham did. **40** As it is, you are looking for a way to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things. **41** You are doing the works of your own father." "We are not illegitimate children," they protested. "The only Father we have is God himself."

The lie we are fed: Plenty of people today also believe that something other than faith in Christ can save them. Whether that be Church attendance or even the faith of their parents or family members. Our closeness to Christians does not save us, only faith in Christ can do that.

I am sure now you can see why Jesus made the bold claim that he did about the crowds being deceived by Satan's lies.

The lie they believed: The greatest lie that the Enemy ever convinces people of is that they are following God when they are really following Satan all along.

Clarifying: I do not say that to make you question your salvation. There is no need for that. We are saved by grace through faith the moment we believe in Jesus. Do you believe in Christ as Jesus asked in vs 46? If so, you are His.

The lie that we are fed: But we do have to make sure that we do not fall for the lie of the enemy when he feeds us a corrupted and twisted view of Jesus that are so common today.

- The Jesus who is just a good teacher
- The Jesus who ignores or affirms sin
- Just "believe in God" (there are over 4,000 world religions...99% believe in a God).
- There are many ways to God (Pope Francis quote)

HOW DO WE LISTEN TO THE DAY-TO-DAY LIES

Even as Christians, we are still prone to believing lies, whether from the spiritual enemy or us being our own worst enemy.

- Remember that the enemy is an opportunist.

In your teenage years, you're going to be tempted by a lot of lies:

1. If you don't have 10+ friends then something is wrong with you. If you have 2-3 friends who love Jesus then you're rich.
2. If you're not dating someone then you're a loser and unlovable.
3. For the upperclassmen: if you don't know what to do post-high school then you're failing at life. If you're not leaving town after high school then you're doing nothing with yourself and you're a deadbeat. This couldn't be farther from the truth.
4. Sure, you're a believer, but you're a kid so therefore you don't need to share the gospel. Surely someone else will do it instead. (This might be the most demonic message imaginable.)

When we are fueled by lies we tend to:

- Throw wise decision making and discernment out the window.
- Choose happiness over holiness
- Listen to the lies of our doubts, worries, and insecurities over the voice of Truth and love found in God's Word.

Segway to small group: So what is the enemy's tactic? It is lying. But let's be clear: they are convincing lies. They are lies that lead people astray.

How do we stand against such lies? First, we need to understand a bit more about how Satan lies. Second, in our small group, we will learn from Jesus how to stand against those lies.

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What is a lie, or lies, of the enemy that are commonly believed today?

Leader Note: The reality is that Satan uses the same lies today as he did then. They are dressed up differently, but at their core, they are the same. For example, in the message we saw that the Pharisees relied on their lineage as "Abraham's descendants" to prove their standing with God. Today, we can just as easily rely on things such as morality, church attendance, "I believe in a god", and so many other things to make us feel "okay" with God.

2. (Lead-In) Satan is referred to as the "Father of Lies," meaning lying is what he does. Therefore, it is not a matter of if, but when, Satan lies to us.

So what are some main characteristics of Satan's lies?

Leader Note: Satan's lies are convincing. What makes them convincing? They are mixed with just enough truth to make them convincing. For example, in Genesis 3, Satan lied to Eve when he said,

- "You will not certainly die." The reality was that Eve would die if she disobeyed. In fact, her and Adam's disobedience would invite death into the world. This was an outright lie.
- "Your eyes will be opened," and "You will be like God, knowing good and evil." This was partially true, but not in the way Satan promised. The knowledge brought shame, separation, and death, not blessing. Instead, Eve and her husband became aware of evil.

3. Jesus told the Jews they were slaves to sin, but they claimed they had "never been slaves to anyone" (v. 33 from the message upstairs). Why is the lie of "I'm doing just fine on my own" one of Satan's most effective tools?

Leader's Note: Self-sufficiency is a "virtue" in our culture, but in the Kingdom, it is a barrier. If we don't believe we are lost, we won't look for a Savior. This lie keeps people from the freedom of God's grace that saves us.

READ: MATTHEW 4:1-11 AS A GROUP

4. Vs 3 & 6 - Satan repeatedly said to Jesus, "If you are the Son of God?", then do this. How was Satan trying to tempt Jesus?

Leader Note: Some believe that Satan was trying to get Jesus to tempt his status as the Messiah, but that seems to be missing the mark. Instead, it is more likely that

Satan's goal was for Jesus to "use his power as God's Son for his own means. Jesus clearly rejected such a view of his messianic role since it would indicate a lack of trust on his part in the provision and care of his Heavenly Father."¹

5. **(Lead-in)** Vs 4 - First, Satan took advantage of Jesus's hunger. Jesus, after forty days of fasting, was spiritually strong but physically weak. Satan took advantage of this opportunity by offering Jesus what he desired so badly, bread. This is a pattern for Satan; he takes advantage of whatever opportunity is given to him.

What other opportunities may Satan take advantage of in our lives?

Leader Note: We have to remember that Satan is an opportunist. He will take advantage of whatever emotion, thought, or situation we have in that moment. Practical ones that we need to be aware of:

- When we feel the need to compare ourselves with others
- When we feel angry towards someone else or if we have conflict with others
- When we feel insecure about what we don't have in our lives
- When we start feeling apathetic/lazy in our faith
- When we feel like we "deserve" something from God (entitlement)

6. (Lead-In) Vs 5-7 Satan quotes scripture word-for-word towards Jesus, but twists it to try and make it say something different. Jesus rebuttals back with correct use of scripture.

Why is discernment so important when fending off Satan's lies?

7. **Vs 5-7 - In the second temptation, both Satan and Jesus use scripture. What does this teach us about the role of scripture in standing against the enemy's plan?**

Leader Note: One of the easiest things for us to be tricked by is scripture taken out of context. It's a perversion of God's Word. It's deadly to us because our guard is typically down when hearing the bible. This is where we can be spiritually taken advantage of- by believing a misuse of scripture or an incorrect interpretation.

- Satan quoted words from Psalm 91:11-12: "If you are the Son of God, jump off! For the Scriptures say, 'He orders his angels to protect you. And they will hold you with their hands to keep you from striking your foot on a stone.'" Satan wanted Jesus to test his relationship with God to see if God's promise of protection would prove true. Satan was quoting Scripture out of context, making it sound as though God protects anyone, even if they attempt to defy natural law. In context, the psalm promises God's protection for those who, while being in his will and serving him, find themselves in danger. It does not promise protection for artificially created crises in which Christians call to God

¹ Robert H. Stein, Luke, vol. 24, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 146.

in order to test his love and care."² Jesus on the other hand quoted scripture in context. He did not, as Satan had, twist scripture to make it mean what he wanted it to. This should serve as a warning to us to submit to scripture and understand it in context, as Jesus did, rather than twist it to suit our own desires, as Satan did.

² Bruce Barton et al., *Life Application New Testament Commentary* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale, 2001), 20.