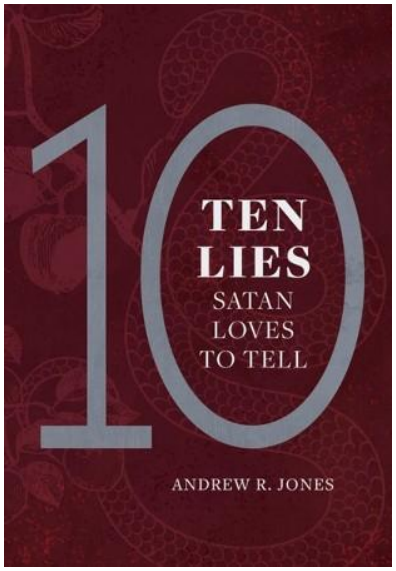
TEN LIES SATAN LOVES TO TELL
ANDREW R. JONES



LIE 6: YOU SHOULD COVER UP YOUR SINS (PP. 112-124)

SATAN IN THE GARDEN

When Satan succeeds in tempting Adam and Eve into sin in Genesis 3, the first thing they realize is that they are naked. They were naked prior to the fall and unashamed. But now, the fall into sin has caused them to view themselves differently. They feel exposed. They feel unfit to stand naked anymore, even before each other. So they put fig leaves together and cover themselves. They cover the result of their sinful actions....

Adam tries to cover up this first sin four times: with fig leaves, by hiding, by blaming Eve, and by blaming God. This reaction, this impulse of covering our sin, still happens. When we try to sort out our sin on our own, our only choice is to try to hide it. (112-113)

SATAN'S DESIRED OUTCOME

When people cover up their sin, when people hide their mistakes, the problems and consequences of their sin do not magically go away. Sin festers. Sin grows. If we pretend like sin is not there, if we hide it, things will only become worse and worse...

Satan knows the power of sin. Satan knows that hiding sin makes it blossom and flourish. Satan knows that when sin is confessed and repented of, it is forgiven. He does not want that. Satan's desire is to keep people trapped and hidden in any and every sin he can so that the effects of those sins will keep festering and multiplying. (113-114)

This lie is particularly useful to Satan because he knows the only way to keep sin covered in secrecy is to lie. If we believe the lie that we need to hide sin, we will lie and lie and lie in order to keep the sin hidden. Here Satan achieves another desired outcome: we become more and more like Satan, the father of lies. This is why Satan glories in this particular lie; it makes God's people less like God and more like Satan. This lie builds its own scaffolding of lies that all keep pulling people further and further away from Jesus, which is Satan's ultimate goal. (114)

Part of the reason Satan loves this lie is because sometimes we humans seem to succeed at keeping things hidden... Even when we think such hiddenness has been successful, Satan loves to bring those instances of shame back to the forefront of our minds and make us feel like garbage. (115)

THE FEAR BEHIND THE LIE

On the surface, this lie often looks like a fear of conflict... Conflict is dangerous because it raises uncertainty about the relationship. Conflict introduces a deeper fear—the fear of being separated or abandoned, of damaging a relationship beyond repair. (115).

Other fears lurk in the background of this lie: The fear of being shamed and made to feel worthless. The fear of being invaded and overwhelmed by other people's reactions. The fear that conflict will arise if people ever find out what we have done or has been done to us. The fear of relationships being damaged and ended. Secrecy, we think, will protect us from all these fears. (116)

THE LIE REPEATED IN THE BIBLE

- Cain and Abel: Satan incites Cain three times. Satan incites Cain to be downcast and angry. Satan incites Cain to murder Abel. And Satan lurks in the background, telling Cain, "You must cover up your sin." Cain has the audacity, the nerve, to lie to God's face: "I do not know." Abel's lifeless body lies in the field where Cain left it. Abel's blood seeps into the cursed ground that Cain has gardened and tended. And Cain lies to cover up what he has done. (117-118)
- Joseph's Brothers

THE LIE REPEATED IN OUR WORLD

[This} is what makes Satan so dangerous with this lie. "You must cover up your sin" leads to "You must cover up the truth" leads to "You must hide, isolate, and never trust anyone." ... Covering up our sins means shrouding our sins in darkness, hiding them from others. Perhaps we wish we could hide our sin from ourselves too. The apostle John writes, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). ... We must repent, confess, and apologize or the sin will fester and the friendship will start to unravel. But John also assures us of this: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (v. 9). (120-121)

THE TRUTH

Concealing the truth means placing the truth in darkness, where we think no one can see it. It means hiding the truth from the light. Jesus comes as light. He shines in our darkness. He illuminates what we wish to keep hidden. He says, "Come here. Let Me see that. Ah, let Me get rid of that for you. Don't you feel better now?"...

The truth is, we have been clothed by Christ. In Baptism, we were clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness. And that righteousness is not just an outer covering that hides all the garbage and sin underneath. It is not as if sin is who we truly are and Jesus is merely hiding our sin. Rather, Jesus Christ and His righteousness transform us, re-create us into new people. (121-122)

GOD'S DESIRED OUTCOME

God's desired outcome is that we receive forgiveness. As Jesus says to Zacchaeus, "For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10). Jesus wants all our sins to come to light, to be forgiven, to be covered in His righteousness rather than by a shroud of secrecy and darkness...

God desires that we receive forgiveness and live in His light. And God does not just desire this outcome. God makes it happen. When Adam and Eve fall into sin and then cover and hide themselves, God comes looking for them. God brings them back into the light, hears their confession, and promises that Satan's head will be crushed. And when it comes time for Satan's head to be crushed, God sends His own Son to

do the crushing. God sends His own Son to be crushed. As He goes to the cross for us, Jesus is stripped and uncovered to bear our sin and shame so that we might be covered and clothed in His righteousness. (122-123)

THE LOVE THAT CASTS OUT FEAR

The love Jesus shows us draws near to us when we are hiding. It is no accident that the first words out of God's mouth after the fall are "Where are you?" (Genesis 3:9). God seeks us because He loves us. He loves us and takes action to save us, to restore and reconcile our relationship when we are still sinners, when we are still weak, when we are still hiding and cowering in the shadows. Paul writes, "But God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). (123)