"Lie Detectors"

Have you ever been tricked or deceived? Maybe you got an email saying you needed to log back into your account only to find out the link you clicked was spam. When you are lied to, cheated on, or deceived it is not a good feeling. Sadly, as believers, we face this issue every single day of our lives. The devil has one main agenda and that is to deceive as many people as he can as an enemy of God. He cannot defeat God, so He goes after what God loves most…you and I. Since the very first human beings were on this earth, the devil has placed a target on our backs. The good news is that Jesus overcame the devil. You and I can disable his influence with the truth the Lord has given us.

Today I want to share a message titled "Lie Detectors." I don't mean lie detector as in a polygraph test. I mean lie detector like as smoke or carbon monoxide detector in your home. You know what I am talking about, the thing that beeps low batter only at 2am. In twenty years of marriage, we have never had a smoke detector low battery go off in daytime. I think it's a conspiracy.

There are so many passages of Scripture I could have taught from this morning, but I landed on the story of deception found in Joshua 9. If you have your Bibles or a digital version on one, please go with me to the sixth book of the Bible. Chapter 9 and we are going to begin in verse 3:

3 When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and to Ai, 4 they also acted craftily and set out as envoys, and took worn-out sacks on their donkeys, and wineskins worn-out and torn and mended, 5 and worn-out and patched sandals on their feet, and worn-out clothes on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry and had become crumbled. 6 They went to Joshua to the camp at Gilgal and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us." 7 The men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you are living within our land; how then shall we make a covenant with you?" 8 But they said to Joshua, "We are your servants." Then Joshua said to them, "Who are you and where do you come from?" 9 They said to him, "Your servants have come from a very far country because of the fame of the Lord your God; for we have heard the report of Him and all that He did in Egypt, 10 and all that He did to the two kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan, to Sihon king of Heshbon and to Og king of Bashan who was at Ashtaroth. 11 So our elders and all the inhabitants of our country spoke to us, saying, 'Take provisions in your hand for the journey, and go to meet them and say to them, "We are your servants; now then, make a covenant with us."' 12 This our bread was warm when we took it for our provisions out of our houses on the day that we left to come to you; but now behold, it is dry and has become crumbled. 13 These wineskins which we filled were new, and behold, they are torn; and these our clothes and our sandals are worn out because of the very long journey." 14 So the men of Israel took some of their provisions and did not ask for the counsel of the Lord. 15 Joshua made peace with them and made a covenant with them, to let them live; and the leaders of the congregation swore an oath to them. 16 It came about at the end of three days after they had made a covenant with them, that they heard that they were neighbors and that they were living within their land.
– Joshua 9:3-16 NASB1995

Everyone in my house (including the dogs) have been trying to lose weight. Nikki and I have both been losing a good amount as we are eating better. A couple weeks ago I was doing really dropping some weight. Sunday I was 202 then Tuesday I was 196, then Thursday I was 194. Our bathroom scale was acting a little weird and I have had the thing for over ten years. So, in my weight loss journey I decided to order a new scale to really be exact. I got one on amazon that had almost 7,000 5-star reviews. Boy that was a mistake! When I weighed myself on the new scale and I was 216! Then I weighed myself on the old scale and I was 216. Our old scale was lying to us. It was the funniest thing to see one family member after another say, "What is wrong with the new scale?!" I would laugh and say, "Why are you ten pounds heavier than you thought you were?"

I learned something very interesting in this bathroom scale crisis. I discovered that my family and I *loved living in a lie.* Something in the back of my mind said, "Wow I didn't think I was that skinny." It was too good to be true. But boy was I having a good time in the lie. Now we have a correct scale and when Nikki and I lose a pound we say, "Babe I lost a pound today…a real pound." Now when we lose weight, we feel extra good about it because we know it is true.

I have a concern that some believers today are happy in the lie. They tolerate the lie. Justify the lie. The bottom line is that truth is from God and lies are from the devil and we should never tolerate anything that comes from the devil. Titus 1:2 says that God cannot lie. John 8:44 says that the devil is the father of lies. In fact, Proverbs 6:16-19 says that lying is one of the six things God *hates.*

Why does the devil use lies as his weapon? The main answer is that it is effective. A really effective lie is an almost truth. Bank tellers don't study counterfeit money. They study the real thing. A good counterfeit is something that looks like the real thing. The bank teller's job is to find the one thing that is just slightly off to expose the lie and not get deceived. Satan uses lies because it is easy for Christian to fall for the lie and then the outcome is disastrous. The devil will use deception to bring about discouragement. When you are discouraged, you give up on hope and truth. As he wears you down, you begin to not care about everything and soon enough give in to temptation as a form of escapism.

Before we get into some application on how to guard against the lies of the enemy I want to share with you the top two lies the enemy uses.

LIE #1 – <u>Temptation</u>.

Satan's goal here is to downplay sin. Some of the lies with temptation are "just do it, it's not a big deal. Just a little lie, just a little sin." One really big lie is "This will make you happy." Remember one of the reasons believers get caught up in sin is because they are somehow dissatisfied in the Father. The devil is all butterflies and rainbows until you actually sin. Then he goes from trying to be your friend to using his second favorite lie which is:

LIE #2 – <u>Accusation.</u>

The goal with accusation is to downplay God's grace and mercy. How fast the lies of the enemy change. He goes from "this is not a big deal, just do it" to "You did that? That's a huge deal." In comes the shame. Here come the lies that you messed up and God doesn't love you anymore and nothing in your life will ever change. You will always be a failure. You will never be free from sin.

These are the oldest tricks in the world and yet we fall for them time after time. No one is immune to the influence of the devil. All of us will face trials of many kinds. It is critical that we learn how to keep our faith and guard against the devil's lies. I want to encourage you with some practical application today, so if you are talking notes, please fill out number one:

POINT #1 – Compare everything to <u>truth</u>.

I recently made a little herb garden in our backyard. I used the five-gallon bucket method where you drill hole so in the bottom of a plastic bucket and fill it with good soil. Then you plant a different herb in every bucket. I am not a big gardener or even a big fan of gardening because it involves so much time and effort. But this little herb garden is very easy to manage. My favorite part of the whole gardening experience is actually my two puppies. They are the best gardening buddies. If I am in the backyard, they are in backyard. If anything for support. My youngest dog loves to follow me outside and she will put her nose in every bucket as I am watering. She will literally go bucket to bucket as I am watering. This is a new habit of mine now. I cook dinner and then head out back to water the herbs. I have noticed something though. My backyard has turned into a lizard graveyard. My dogs are bred to hunt rodents on farms. There are no rodents but boy are their lizards. My dogs kill things all the time but never eat them (which I am grateful for). So, because they don't eat the pests, their carcasses are all over my backyard. I will spare you the picture. Bottom line, if there is a lizard in the backyard it is as good as dead. It doesn't matter how nice the lizard is or how beautiful it is, if you are a lizard and withing the backyard fence, you're dead. Likewise for the believer, if there is a lie in our lives or in our minds it should be as good as dead. As followers of Jesus, we cannot afford to tolerate a single lie that is placed in our lives or in our minds. 2 Corinthians 10:5 tells us to take *every* thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

Listen to me, the kryptonite of lies is faith. Why? Because the Biblical definition of faith is a "conviction of truth." The more truth you have hidden in your heart, the easier it will be to spot the lie. The more truth you know, the more authority you will take to rebuke and silence the enemy. One thing I have done in my personal life is take the top areas of my faith that need strength and then I memorize a minimum of five scriptures to stand upon when the temptation to believe a lie comes. As an example, if you are struggling with fear today over sickness and disease, memorize at least five Scriptures on healing and wholeness. If you are struggling with depression, memorize at least five Scriptures on joy and the future. God has given us the Word but He will not force us to hide the Word in our hearts. Take the Word with you wherever you go. If I need to buy a replacement of something that broke to Home Depot, I will often bring the broke thing with me so that I will find the correct replacement. We need to bring the Word of God everywhere with us (hide it in your heart) so that we can discern what is right and what is wrong.

POINT #2 – Rewrite the <u>narrative</u> that's leading you astray.

In a world of lying media, AI, and self-centeredness, the Word of God is the only narrative we can afford to believe. Let me give you a question to think about. What do you think are the top three lies you are either struggling with or believing? Maybe the lie you are tempted to believe is "It will always be this way; nothing will ever change." Maybe the lie you are believing is "I'll never be good enough." Whatever lie you are believing has a narrative. The devil deceived you, filled you with shame, and now you are so discouraged that you "don't. care anymore." Boy is that a dangerous place to. You can get so discouraged you don't even care to fight for truth. This is why we cannot afford to entertain anything out of the mouth of the devil. As we know, you destroy a lie by standing and declaring truth. Well, you destroy a false narrative by creating a new and holy one. Joel 3:10 says, "Let the weak say I am strong." You are not in denial; you are putting a lie on trial. You are declaring a new narrative that lines up to the heart of God.

POINT #3 – Put truth into <u>action</u> (best way to remember a lesson is to do it).

Isn't it interesting that the belt of truth is mentioned in the armor of God? A belt is not a bullet proof vest. A belt is not a weapon…it's a piece of clothing. But why was it important enough to be listed in the armor of God? Because it was the belt of truth that held everything together. For soldiers in this time, the belt didn't just hold everything in place, but it actually enabled the solider to run. You have probably heard the term "gird your loins." It comes from soldiers who take their robes and tuck them into their belts *so that they can run.*