

THE UNSEEN: What the Bible says about the Supernatural

Lies & Truth

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INTRO: *pic* Alexi Santana

- Orphan who raised himself in the wilderness of Utah
- Raised cattle, read philosophy, distance ran Mojave Desert
- Eventually enrolled at Palo Alto HS & ran track
- Accepted into Princeton in 1989. But three months later...

pic His real name was **James Hogue**, a con-man

- Made up his entire life story; Hogue was arrested various times for identity theft

In one interview, Hogue stated that at certain points, he was so deep into his lie, that he believed it to be true.

"It's not so much that we tell lies, it's that we live them." - David Brenner (Soulful Spirituality)

UNSEEN Series

In the first two weeks of this series, we've learned that Satan, God's enemy and our enemy, is waging war for our souls. Because of medieval art and pop-culture caricatures, many of us think that Satan's tactic is always blatantly supernatural in nature—think, the movie "The Exorcist." I believe there's some truth to that. Some of us in the room have experienced the enemy's evil expressed in supernatural ways.

GB interview on westgatechurch.org/unseen-resources

But Satan has a far more primary, far more pervasive, and far more subtle and insidious tactic: LIES.

John 8:44 NIV The devil [...] 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.

"Lies, that come in the form of deceptive ideas, are the devil's primary method of enslaving human beings and entire human societies in a vicious cycle of ruin."

- John Mark Comer (Live No Lies)

pic Live No Lies cover

This has been Satan's strategy since the very beginning...

Genesis 3:1-5 NIV Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman.⁵ "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

THREE LIES THE SATAN TELLS

LIE 1: SATAN LIES ABOUT WHAT GOD REALLY SAYS.

Genesis 3:1 NIV “Did God really say?”

EX - 2016 Oxford Dictionary’s word of the year: “**Post-Truth**”

*In the **past half century**, with the **rise of postmodernism**, academics have **pulled apart** the idea of “**truth**” and have **dispersed it into a series of “truths,”** always **plural and personalized**. The **postmodern claim** is that “**truth**” is only that which is “**true for me.**” This is where we get the phrase, “**My truth.**” In such an age, **declaring that the God of the Bible is the sole and singular arbiter of truth is an outrageous and offensive claim**. And **Satan** has used this to his **advantage**. **God and the Bible** have been **removed from public discourse** as the **source of truth**.*

*But the **Scriptures** tell us...*

Psalms 119:160 NIV All your words are true.

John 17:17 NIV Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.

2 Timothy 3:16 NIV All Scripture is God-breathed.

LIE 2: SATAN LIES ABOUT OUTCOMES.

Genesis 3:4 NIV “You will not certainly die.”

*This **lie** is **prevalent** in our **culture**. One of the ways it shows up most often is in **the Myth of Human Progress**. On a **macro-level**, we believe **the lie that human intellect, innovation, and ingenuity can lead us to a social utopia**.*

EX - 20th c. wars have killed more people than in all previous centuries combined

*On an **individual level**, we believe **the lie that achievement, affluence, and success can create lives truly worth living**.*

EX - 21st c. more affluence/success, yet loneliness, isolation, depression on the rise

*But the **Scriptures** tell us...*

Romans 11:33-36 NIV Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! ³⁴ Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? ³⁵ Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them? ³⁶ For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

LIE 3: SATAN LIES ABOUT GOD’S DESIRES AND OUR IDENTITY.

Genesis 3:5 NIV “God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God.”

Satan** puts **doubt** in the **first humans’ minds** about **God’s desire**. He depicts **God** as **an insecure control-freak, fearful that humans might “open their eyes,”** as if **God** is **hiding** something from them. But **God’s not hiding** something from the **humans**; he’s **protecting** them. **He’s protecting them because he knows best and he loves them...

Isaiah 55:8-9 NIV “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. ⁹ “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

1 John 3:1-3 NIV See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

We often believe **Satan’s lie** that **God’s not for us**, that **he’s holding out on us**, and that **we must forge our own way, define our own identities, forgetting that we are already beloved sons and daughters, heirs to the good things he has in store...**

Galatians 4:6-7 NRSV Because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave but a child, and if a child then also an heir, through God.

Romans 8:38-39 NIV I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

SET FREE BY TRUTH

So how do we combat the lies of Satan?

“Thoughts are the place where we can and must begin to change. There the light of God first begins to move upon us through the word of Christ, and there the divine Spirit begins to direct our will to more and more thoughts that can provide the basis for choosing to realign ourselves with God and his way.”

- **Dallas Willard** (The Renovation of the Heart)

Romans 12:2 NIV Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**.

*We combat Satan’s lies about what God really says by **reading and meditating on the Scriptures**.*

*We combat Satan’s lies about outcomes by **surrendering our will to God**.*

*We combat Satan’s lies about God’s desires and our identity by **receiving and giving God’s love in and through Christian community**. *Highlight Next Steps**

“When in doubt, tell the truth.” - **Mark Twain**

CLOSE: Lost in **Grand Rapids**. Phone dead. When **“I feel like it’s this way...”** failed, I asked some locals for directions, trusted their guidance, and **found my way home**.

John 8:32 NIV Then you will know the **truth**, and the **truth** will set you **free**.

John 14:6 NIV Jesus answered, “I am the way and the **truth** and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.