

5 Lies About Your Identity in Satan's Treacherous Bag of Tricks

In the long-running play *Les Misérables*, the protagonist, Jean Valjean, asks an important question: "Who am I?" Have you really thought about that singular question? And I don't mean in any particularly existential way. I just mean, have you thought about what truly makes up all that you are—experiences, beliefs, attitudes, life choices?

I would have said that I had done that over the course of my life, but it wasn't until recently that I really looked at the answer to that question. I believed that every decision I had made, every step I'd taken in the course of my life was the result of other things I had done or other things that had been done to me. As Christians, we know that our identity lies somewhere else, and therefore our lives have the ability to reflect something far greater than just the things of this world. Understanding who you are will determine how you live and whether that life is one characterized by joy and peace or by pain and misery.

Satan knows how important it is that we know who we are, and he has made it his business ever since man first breathed to confuse us and lie to us about who we are. Convincing us that our identities are in the things that happen to us or in the things that we do is the devil's favorite deception when it comes to toying with the bride of Christ.

Unfortunately what often happens is that we become bound by the devil's lies, lies about who we are and who God is, and lies about what that means in our lives. The lies aren't about our choices or even about the things that are done to us. Those are real. The lies are used to tie *who we are* to those

things. The following list reflects the top five lies the devil doesn't want you to see, lies that he uses to keep you in bondage so that you don't see who you really are—the adored and treasured bride of Jesus Christ.

Lie No. 1: You Are Worthless

As with all of Satan's identity lies, they begin in our youth. It might be something that happens to you or something someone says, but somewhere something will take place that is interpreted in your young mind as, "You don't matter. You have no value. You aren't loved. They don't care. You are worthless."

This is the No. 2 lie used by the enemy, and it is the most insidious, because we can build our entire lives on it without even knowing it. And it is in direct contradiction to what our Father proclaims about His children the moment we become His:

"In this way the love of God was revealed to us, that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:9-10).

We are not worthless. We are the royal bride of the Savior of the world. And yet, Satan most often begins with this one, typically in our youth, when we don't even see it coming.

Lie No. 2: Image Is Everything

Following closely on the heels of worthlessness is the lie of image. Once we believe that we have no worth, we are ripe to believe the lie that we need to find out how to get that elusive value that everyone else seems to find without effort. This lie tells us that we need to figure out how to *feel* love or acceptance or belonging or whatever else we may label it as.

The tabloids and news media offer an immediate solution to our problem—image. Build an image. Maintain an image. Find an image. But one image seldom suffices. We will find that we need many images, and the exhaustion of being everything to everyone is the life-long merry-go-round that results from the second lie in Satan's bag of tricks.

Lie No. 3: Be Strong

This lie looks so positive from a worldly perspective. After all, who doesn't love a strong man or woman? However, do you know what is true of every person who has built a tower of strength and resolve that protects their heart, their mind, and everything around them? That person is the only one behind that wall. There they are, all alone, lauded as a paragon of strength and dignity by a world that stands thousands of miles away, pointing from a safe, yet respectful distance.

The problem is that these identity lies have a natural cascading effect. Worthlessness naturally gives way to image-building, which naturally gives way to strength-wielding, all of which yield bitter, lonely people. And that's exactly the way Satan wants us.

Lie No. 4: You Deserve This

Once we come face to face with the mess we've made of our lives, wouldn't it be nice if the devil would just leave us alone? It would, but he doesn't, and there's a reason for that. The reason is because that's the point at which we are about to become really useful in God's kingdom. That's the point at which our story becomes a *testimony* and we are about to become our Father's instruments unto righteousness. Satan's next best tool, then, is to convince us of his fourth favorite lie, and this one is one of condemnation.

You see, Satan loves to use half-truths, because a half-truth when used a certain way becomes a devastating whole lie. He likes to use Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death,"

because that's a truth. Satan likes to stop there, because when he stops there, he can add condemnation. "You deserve every awful, horrible thing that comes your way, he likes to whisper, Because you are awful, and God says you deserve death."

That's a truth, but we have to know *all* of the truth. All of Romans 6:23 says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord."

We have to know all of Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

That's how we do battle with the half-truths of the Liar who tells us we deserve that which Jesus already paid on our behalf.

Lie No. 5: It's Too Late

The final of the top five lies Satan likes to use to confuse God's children about their identities is that it's simply too late for them to receive forgiveness, that they've simply sinned too much or too often or too grievously. It's truly a horrible place to be in life when you feel that you've just gone too far for too long.

I've counseled so many people in this place. I've been in this place myself, and this lie can be the most devastating of the five because it can seem the most insurmountable. Where do we go when we see God's Word, and we feel we have simply broken it too many times? Romans 5:8 reminds us that while we were still in the midst of our sinning, Jesus willingly went to the cross so that we might live. Jesus didn't come for the righteous but for the unrighteous. He came because we need Him, and there's no such thing as too far gone.

The bondage of these five lies is so heartbreaking, but it is also unnecessary. I lived captive to them for many years, but

once the truth of who I had been all along finally broke through, the light of Jesus shown in me a light that is far brighter and far stronger than the darkness of Satan and his feeble lies. This is the light that is available for all of God's children, and this is the truth that the devil doesn't want you to see.

But we can see. We just have to look. We just have to expose the lies, and we do that by replacing the lies with the truth.
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