

Jesus called Satan a liar and the father of lies¹, but sometimes we forget that the most damaging lie is based on the truth. In fact, I believe that it is twisted truth that causes more problems than outright lies. The scriptures referred to it as perverting justice, and God clearly prohibits it². The results paralyze God's law and constrict the righteous, and the people end up in despair³.

Satan, the Truth-Twister, began his work by putting a twist to the words God had spoken to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden⁴. He told Eve that God would not truly cause them to die if she ate of the forbidden fruit. He twisted the definition of death⁵. It is not recorded, but I can imagine that he may have presented more details, such as, "God created you and loves you – He would never do that to you!" So Eve believed this altered version of the truth, and with Adam partaking as well, sin entered the world and God's creation was broken.

The attack continues, of course. The Psalmist wrote that the twisting of truth continues all day long⁶. We all have to deal with Truth-Twisters of various types and powers. Especially those who twist our own words⁷ to degrade our speech and meaning. I think of the Teacher when He was accused of plotting to tear down the temple, when he was actually speaking of His own body⁸. This occurred during the trial that culminated in His crucifixion, thus manifesting the power and danger involved in such twisted truth.

In thinking about how to deal with a known truth-twister, I wonder if I should even speak at all. What should I say? Will whatever I say be turned against me? Is there any safe thing to say? I wish I was like Christ when He was attacked by Satan⁹, who twisted scriptures to make Jesus respond in the hope bringing Him down. Satan worked to destroy Him, but Jesus was prepared by knowing God intimately – He was, after all, the Word¹⁰! But I am nowhere near knowledgeable enough!

Satan twists the truth to snare the Kingdom as well. Paul looked at the false magician Elymas and, filled with the truth of the Holy Spirit, told him¹¹:

"You are a child of the devil and an enemy of everything that is right! You are full of all kinds of deceit and trickery. Will you never stop perverting the right ways of the Lord?"

He works through individuals that by confusing the truth perverted the Good News¹² and deny the power of Jesus Christ our only King and Lord¹³. We have, in the words of Isaiah, turned the way of peace into a crooked road that is without peace – with justice and righteousness driven back, truth has stumbled in the streets¹⁴.

When Pilate asked his great question – "What is Truth¹⁵?", perhaps what he was really asking was, "What is the Untwisted Truth?" Jesus claimed to be that Truth¹⁶, but Pilate wasn't prepared to understand it. Are we?

The Truth is incorruptible, as God is incorruptible¹⁷. He does not pervert justice¹⁸. Everything that is twisted God will straighten out, if not now, then in the new heavens and earth¹⁹. And no one there will be twisting it out of shape.

1. John 8:44
2. Exodus 23:2; Leviticus 19:15; Deuteronomy 16:19; Proverbs 17:23
3. Habakkuk 1:4, Jeremiah 3:21

4. Genesis 3
5. Indeed, did they even understand what death meant at this point in time?
6. Psalm 56:5
7. Deuteronomy 16:19
8. Matthew 26:61
9. Matthew 4:1, Mark 1:13, Luke 4:2
10. John 1:1-18
11. Acts 13:9-10
12. Galatians 1:7b
13. Jude 1:4
14. Isaiah 59:8 and 14
15. John 8:37-38
16. John 14:6
17. Romans 1:23
18. Job 8:3, Job 34:12
19. 2 Peter 3:13

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