

Spin Doctors

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Preacher: Jason Webb

[0:00] Amen. Well, this is the last week for The Way of the Righteous and the Muck of Life by Dale Ralph Davis.!

But the more things change, they say, the more they stay the same, and it's true in this case. And so David begins Psalm 12 with a cry for help, because everywhere he looks, he sees nothing but liars.

The whole society is nothing but deceit and arrogance and flattery. And everywhere he looks, there's people lying to get their own way.

And so Psalm 12 poses the question, what do the righteous do when the spin doctors win?

When this whole world is full of liars? When the deceitful are ruling? And Psalm 12 has three parts.

The first part is where we live.

[1:19] Where we live, and that's what we'll talk about first. David lived in a lying society. He lived in a lying society, and we live in a lying society.

So this is where we live. So let's look at the first four verses. Help, Lord, for the godly are no more. The faithful have vanished from among men.

Everyone lies to his neighbor. Their flattering lips speak with deception. May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, and every boastful tongue that says, We will triumph with our tongues.

We own our lips. Who is our master? David looks around, and he sees that the godly are gone. They've vanished. We're not told why or what he means exactly by that, but the faithful have vanished.

And that word godly is the same group of people that we met in Psalm 4. If you can remember back, where David says, Know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself.

[2:22] Same group of people. These are the people that God has set his love upon, and they in turn have loved him. They're the people in covenant with God.

And David says, I look around, and I don't see any of those people around you. It's nothing but liars. And he also calls them the faithful.

They're godly and they're faithful. The faithful have vanished from among men. And I think that dual title of faithful and godly teaches us something. It teaches us that only the godly are faithful.

Only the godly are truthful. Only the ones who know God, who love God, who are loved by God, are honest. They're forthright.

They're loyal. Everyone else, at the end of the day, when all the analysis is over, when everything is boiled down, everyone else is a liar. And that might sound extreme, but I think if you think about it for a few minutes, you'll see what David is saying.

[3:26] There might be some folks out there who will tell the truth about their taxes, and they'll tell the truth on the witness stand. And, you know, those are the kind of people that you like to work with that, you know, if they say they're going to do something, they do it.

And thank the Lord that those people are out there. But when you boil all that down, when you boil them down to what they really are, they're dishonest.

They're unfaithful. And that's what David is implying. He says that the godly are the faithful.

Everyone else is a liar. So let me ask you, why do you think David says that?

Why can David say that? Why are only the godly faithful? And why are the ungodly unfaithful? What do you guys think? It's not the easiest question, I know, but let's take a few stabs at it.

Mark. Generally speaking, the godly know that they're held accountable for their words. Okay. That godly judge how faithful they are.

[4:36] Okay. And what's the implication for the ungodly? They have no regard for anybody holding their accountable. Right. So god is not their judge, at least in the back of their mind where it

controls their behavior.

What else could we say? Dale. He knows the character of God. Therefore, God is working his character in the people.

Okay. So he knows the character of God. They know the character of God. And he's working that character in them. And so, because they're like their god, they're honest as well.

Dare. Hmm. Okay. That's good. Let me ask you, at the end of the day, who is the god of the unfaithful?

At least in their own minds, their own hearts. So, at the very core of who they are, at the deepest level of who they are, they're committed to a lie.

[5:41] They're committed to a lie. If you aren't a Christian, then Jesus isn't your Lord. You are your own Lord. And that's a, it's a lie from the very beginning.

And so, right from the first step, they're lying to themselves. And so, you tell yourself, you decide for yourself, what's right and what's wrong. You know God.

His law is written on your conscience. But what does Romans say? What do they do with that truth? They suppress it. So, right from the very beginning, right from the get-go, the ungodly are suppressing the truth.

They're liars from the very beginning. And so, when push comes to shove, when there's a conflict between truth and their own delusion about who's God and who's in charge and what goes, their delusion wins.

And it's not because they don't know the truth. It's because they hate the truth. They hate that God is God. And they're in love with themselves. And so, they live a lie.

[6:45] And that's why only the godly are faithful. Only the godly are committed to this absolute truth that God exists, that He is God, and I am His creation.

And so, David looks around and he sees that the godly, they're no more. But then in verse 2, Peter David tells us what is there. Remember, we're talking about this lying society and he describes the social trend and it centers on speech.

Everyone lies. The idea is that everyone's talk is empty. Sort of like a Christmas present that has a promise of something good in it, but when you open it up, there's nothing there.

And that's the way they talk. It has the appearance of truth, but when you open it up, there's no reality behind it. They're liars. They flatter.

They're smooth talkers. They know how to grease the wheels of relationships by saying just the right things at the right time. And they deceive. Verse 3 says, they boast with their tongues.

[7:51] And the real problem is that this isn't just occasional. It's just not sporadic in the society. It's pervasive. Everyone is doing it.

Now, does the same thing go on today? Yes. There's no doubt. This is the air we breathe. And it is so bad, we expect to be lied to, and we're okay that we're being lied to.

We know we're being conned, but it's gone on for so long, we expect nothing different. And isn't that the basis of advertising? You know, if you really want to start to live, then what do you need?

You need this product. And what is that? That's a lie. God is life, and things are things. And things cannot give you life, and yet they say that it can.

And so they lie by what they say. And then they lie by what they don't say. Burger King once ran an ad where this girl was complaining about her McDonald's hamburger because it was 20% smaller than Burger King's.

[9:08] And of course, she didn't say that the Burger King hamburger was 20% more expensive. And so it was all an elegant hamburger deception.

And think about how many times you hear the words, well, you deserve this. You deserve this.

Isn't this what you deserve? After a long day at work, you deserve whatever. You deserve this mattress to sleep on. You deserve a home-cooked meal fast. You deserve a big TV.

Isn't that just flattery? When you tell people that they deserve something that they don't really deserve in order to get them to do something, isn't that flattery?

Proverbs says, a flattering lips, flattering tongue, spreads a net. And that's what these advertisers are doing. They're spreading this net. They have no interest in your welfare and your good.

[10:06] They're spreading their net so that you buy their product. So you get to spend your money on their product. They don't really care about you. And it's all hidden behind the sick joke that you deserve this.

And it's a lie. And what about politics? We expect advertisers to lie to us and we expect politicians to lie to us. On Richard Nixon's last trip to France, he told the crowd that he had majored in French and he used to be able to speak it and listen to it and understand it and write it.

But now, years later, he hardly could understand it at all. It was a lie. He was a history major. He knew more about French fries than the French language.

And he just wanted to massage the French. The same guy who told the whole country, I'm not a crook, turned out to be a liar.

President Clinton lied to the American people about his affair with Monica Lewinsky. Then he parsed words and said it depends on what the meaning of the word is. And really, that's just the beginning of the deception of politicians.

[11 : 21] And I don't have to tell you that all sorts of politicians, it's not one party, will tell you whatever you want to hear. they make all kinds of promises that they have no power to deliver and they have no intention to deliver.

And they play politics and they lie to each other and they lie about each other and they lie to us and we have no idea how deep the deception goes. And the press is no different, really.

Repeatedly, you hear of news reporters making up facts. facts. So this gets past the accusation that they put spin on things to make the facts look one way.

They basically make up facts in many cases. One New York Daily news reporter admitted that he had made up facts about reporting when reporting on violence in Northern Ireland.

And when he was called to defend himself, his defense was, well, I've done this 300 times before. So his defense about lying was that I, this is the way I work.

[12 : 26] I always lie about these things. The New York Times had to acknowledge that they had published an article about a reporter who said he went into Cambodia and he did this whole report about the inside of Cambodia and what it was like.

And the fact was that he had never been in Cambodia at all. He was a liar. And this one might be a little more I don't know, edgy I guess is the word.

Just think on the grand political scale of how we do things. What's the real story behind United States and Egypt? I mean, the facts are that for 30 years we propped up a dictatorship and we sent him aid repeatedly because he was good for our interest.

And he was useful to us. And I'm not judging right and wrong on the grand political scale. I understand those things are really hard sometimes.

But it really is nothing but hypocrisy because we claim to be the home of democracy and our politicians love to talk about the rights of people to choose their own government officials and the government should be of the people and from the people and for the people and our leaders like to say things like that.

[13 : 48] But when push comes to shove, when it involves other people, their political ideals, their professed ideals are thrown out when they come in conflict with what is really important to them and that's their own skin and that's our own what's good for us.

When the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia, evangelical believers were told by Lenin that he promised them that they would have complete freedom not only to observe any faith that they wanted but also to propagate any faith they wanted.

And that was really good news because as the Russian revolution happened they knew something needed to change and they were a little worried about what they were getting. Corruption was so deep something needed to happen and so Lenin's promise came as this word of assurance to the evangelical believers and it sounded so wonderful but then thousands and thousands of Christians and believers were flushed down the great Soviet toilet and never were seen again.

It was all a lie. And the point of all this is to say it doesn't matter what kind of regime it is. Totalitarian or democratic the way you rule is to lie for the most part.

And that might sound skeptical but it is of the world. And so that's where we live a lying society. And secondly we meet other words in the psalm and this is a direct contrast to everything that we've talked about before.

[15 : 35] We hear God's words. look at verses five and six. Because of the oppression of the weak and the groaning of the needy I will now arise says the Lord.

I will protect them from those who malign them and the words of the Lord are flawless like silver refined in the furnace of clay purified seven times.

verse five gives God's maligned lied about people assurance. This lying will not go on forever. I will now arise I will protect them. And so the lies of the wicked cannot go on forever. Every bad thing must end.

And so the battle between truth and falsehood won't last. God will defend the truth. And this is actually one of the great themes of the book of Revelation.

[16 : 37] The suffering martyrs are faithful. They live honest lives. They live according to the truth. They speak the truth. But those whose names are not written in the Lamb's book of life are called liars.

So two times Jesus says who are the people that are outside of the new Jerusalem who are outside of the new heavens and the new earth. He says but the cowardly the unbelieving the vile the murderers the sexually immoral those who practice magical arts the idolaters and all liars. And I think that word all liars is encompassing everyone and everything. All liars. Their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. And then again outside are the dogs those who practice magic arts the sexually immoral the murderers the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

In Revelation the dragon Satan is called a liar. The beast that comes out of the sea which is a picture of the governments of this world is called a liar.

The beast from the land which is this propaganda machine that encourages the worldly governments is called a liar. And so the battle of the ages is not a battle that's fought on the battlefields of this world.

[17 : 58] It's a battle of words. It's a battle for the truth. And Revelation shows us how these suffering faithful Christians will overcome the lying oppression of the world and it's not by strength it's by faithful endurance.

It's by keep holding on to the truth by keep speaking the truth even to the point of death and it's it's done that way but finally it's through the coming of the faithful and true one.

So Jesus in Revelation 19 is called this faithful and true one. Everyone else is a liar but Jesus establishes truth.

Revelation 19 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse whose rider is called faithful and true with justice he judges and makes war his eyes are like blazing fire and his head on his head are many crowns he has a name written on him that no one knows but himself and he is dressed in a robe dipped in blood and his name is the word of God the armies of heaven were following him riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen white and clean and out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations he will rule them with an iron scepter Revelation 19 is a commentary on Psalm 12 verse 5 I will now arise when God arises to defend the truth Jesus will come the faithful and true one will come and he will rule the nations with an iron scepter you've heard that phrase before do you know where that phrase comes from we heard it in the Sunday school class

Psalm 2 the great rebellion of God or of the nations versus God and his anointed one and so we find out that Psalm 2 it's not a battlefield on some place on earth it's a war of words the nations rebel not with swords and guns and things like that they rebel with lies and they've learned how to lie from the father of lies and they learned how to fight against God and you do that by lying about him and so Psalm 12 and Revelation tells us that how this battle is going to end when God arises then truth will forever be established all the deceit of the nations all the deceit of men all that deception that we talked about that the unbeliever is committed to in his own heart that I am God all that will be worked out and he will judge righteously and the truth will be known and it will be acknowledged even if it's on a bended broken knee and that's

[21 : 07] God's promise for his saints and his promise is good you see that in verse 6 the words of the Lord are flawless like silver refined seven times in the furnace so verse 5 gives God's people assurance and then verse 6 gives God's people assurance about their assurance he who cannot lie has said it and will he not do it he cannot lie and so we can know that at the right time God will arise and put everything right and so do you see the contrast do you feel the contrast between our lying society and ourselves and God and his word when Isaiah saw God's holiness in Isaiah 6 he said woe is me for I'm a man of unclean lips and I live among a people of unclean lips the one sin that Isaiah that rose to the top was my mouth is dirty my mouth is dirty and I live with liars and I live with people with unclean unrighteous mouths but not God but not God his words are flawless his word is honest and clean and righteous and so that makes me want to ask who are you listening to what

are you listening to where are you taking your cues from and this this goes back to

Psalm 1 Psalm 1 said blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked blessed is the man who doesn't listen to what wicked people are saying and one of the reasons they're so blessed is because those wicked men are liars they're not telling the truth and so the truth is not in them but blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night where are you taking your cues from where are you taking your cues from are you taking your cues from this world from the talking heads the politicians the talk show hosts the media the advertisers your worldly friends or are you meditating day and night on the word of God that is flawless that thought struck me as

I was preparing this lesson I wonder this is an accusation this is a real something I want you to think about and ask yourself do the people of grace fellowship spend more time listening to bill o'reilly and cnn and fox or just maybe watching tv and all the commercials and the godless living that goes on there or do they spend more time quantitatively more time meditating on the word of god i wonder how it is for you who has your ear who has your ear are you spending more time listening to lies are you spending more time listening to the word of god with your ear to the word of god your heart pressed to it saying teach me lord open my eyes that i can see wonderful things in your law so brothers and sisters the word of god is perfect and you've heard those words but come to him again with a fresh sense of everything out there is a it's a delusion it's a lie but the word of god is perfect so meditate on it read it memorize it how will we know the truth from a lie how will we how will we be able to see a lie for what it is unless we know the truth and so how will we make it to the end unless we are holding to the truth well we've seen where we are we're in the middle of a lying society and we've heard a word from god he says i will now arise and now we meet a present paradox and you know a paradox is something where it appears that two things are contradictory but they're really not and so there's a present paradox and you see that in verses 7 and 8 oh lord you will keep us safe and protect us from such people forever and then verse 8 the wicked freely strut about when what is vile is honored among men here's two things that are true the lord will protect his people and the wicked will strut about when what is vile when it is honored among men when you live in a lying society the wicked are going to strut about but verse and so the question is how do these two verses work together because they seem to in a way contradict themselves

I mean the wicked are apparently strutting about they're getting their own way but the lord is protecting his people and it seems verse 7 seems to be saying that until that decisive time that decisive now when the lord says now I will arise until that time happens he still protects his people he's still going to protect you from the liars and the people who are maligning you it doesn't mean that he will protect you from all earthly harm the wicked will freely strut about and that's going to mean some very bad things for God's people they will malign the godly and they will hurt the godly they will murder the godly and yet the promise is still there that god will protect them and so even in those situations where the wicked have lied and they have lied so wickedly against the godly that the godly are taken away and killed even in that situation god is ultimately protecting us he's guarding our faith peter i've prayed for you your faith would not fail and that's the prayer that the lord is still praying for his people and it's god is guarding our hearts they may kill the body but god will guard our hearts and our souls and bring us into his kingdom and so god is preserving his people in the midst of this battle for the truth and that's what it is and in every battle there's casualties but the lord's protection says ultimately you will not be a casualty you will not be lost they can kill the body but they can't kill the soul and so do you see this paradox the lord preserves us and yet here we are we're in the muck still we're there and that's where the psalm leaves us we don't know exactly how severe our troubles are going to be we only know that in spite of it all god is the lord is going to keep us and with that hope we can keep pressing on until the time when the lord says now i will arise and then he sends his son he'll send the faithful and true one he will send the lord jesus and then the tension that we saw in psalm one between liars and the truth tellers between deceit and the word of god that tension will be taken care of in psalm two that conflict between the nations and god that will be taken care of and then the enemies that we saw in psalm three and psalm four and psalm five and psalm six and seven and nine and ten and eleven and twelve will all be taken care of and so what will be left well the lord jesus will be on the throne and then there'll be psalm eight lord our lord how majestic is your name in all the earth and so all the lies and the conflict the battle between the messiah and his enemies between lies and the truth the nations and the lord it will all be over and everything will be swallowed up in praise so even now we're waiting patiently and as we wait

patiently we pray

persistently because isn't that what psalm one through twelve has taught us there's been lots and lots of lessons about how to pray so we pray persistently and then we keep looking forward to the lord and his coming when all these things will be ironed out and taken care of and the lord is forever worthy of praise and that's what we'll be giving to him away