

Lies the Food of Man.

by Horatius Bonar

The sermon emphasizes the destructive nature of lies and the importance of believing the truth, as revealed in God's Word and exemplified in the life and death of Jesus Christ.

Scripture: Matthew 21:33, John 15:1, 2 Timothy 2:6, 2 Timothy 2:15, James 5:7

Topics: "Spiritual Discipline", "Faithful Ministry"

Description

The preacher delves into the concept of the hardworking farmer as described in the Bible, emphasizing the patience, diligence, and discipline required in spiritual work, drawing parallels between the farmer's labor and the Christian life. The sermon highlights the importance of preparation, endurance, and faithfulness in the ministry, using the metaphor of the farmer to illustrate the daily discipline and perseverance needed in serving God and reaping spiritual rewards.

Transcript

"But you have cultivated wickedness and raised a thriving crop of sins. You have eaten the fruit of lies; trusting in your military might, believing that great armies could make your nation safe!" Hosea 10:13

The subject suggested by these words is, "lies, their fruit, and man's eating it;" or simply, "lies and their fruit." The word 'lie' is used in a twofold sense- a lie as to fact, and a lie as to doctrine; untrue reports and unsound teaching, false testimony and false knowledge (or theology). This falsity may be negative or positive, as "You shall not surely die," and "You shall be as gods."

The lie comes sometimes from man, sometimes from Satan, but never from God, for God is not a man that he should lie; never from the works of God when rightly interpreted and understood. By two great lies man was led away from God. By the same two lies has the estrangement been kept up. On these two lies the world has been feeding ever since the fall. Their fruit has been woe and death. These lies are those referred to above- the one a denial of Godhead perfection; the other, an assertion of creature-perfection; the one saying, there is no such thing as sin and punishment, the other, that there is no such thing as creature-hood limitation and dependency. "You shall not die," "You shall be as gods."

For these two lies, God has written his Bible to contradict, for the whole divine word is a confutation of them. But the special confutation is to be seen in the life and death of the Christ of God. His death, as the sinbearer, said, 'You shall surely die'; and His life, as the dependent Son of Man, showed, that no circumstances, no progress, no knowledge could ever make man God, the creature the Creator. But the

human, however blessed, and holy, and wise, must ever be the human, and the divine the divine.

Israel's history, to which our passage refers, is the history of the fruit of lies. "They believed not God," is the accusation brought against them. They rejected the truth, they received the lie, and the fruit of this was judgment. Every sorrow that came on them was the fruit of a lie. Their last great sorrow, the ruin of Jerusalem, and the slaughter of its citizens, was the fruit of a lie. And are they not now, in their dispersion, eating the fruit of lies?

The world's history is the same. Our race has been eating the fruit of lies; not simply of sin, but of lies. The sorrows, sighs, tears, pains of our race are the fruit of lies- the original lie of Paradise, and a thousand such since then. The sweating-toils of man, the travail-pangs of woman, the cries of suffering infancy- what are they but the fruit of a lie? Yon tossing sick-bed, yon weary death-bed, yon swelling churchyard, yon shroud, yon coffin, yon funeral, yon open grave, what are they? The fruit of a lie. It is bitter, poisonous, long-lasting fruit.

And the world's last days are no improvement upon its first, for in them comes "the strong delusion that they should believe a lie." What is every false religion but the belief of a lie, and the judgments with which God has visited its professors, the eating the fruit of a lie. Anti-Christianity is the special and pre-eminent exhibition of the belief of a lie, and the doom of Antichrist will be the especial and awful exhibition of "eating the fruit of lies."

Each soul's history resembles the above. It is the history of the belief of lies- of a thousand lies. We begin to believe lies as soon as we can believe anything at all, and we act daily upon believed lies. The two original Satanic lies are continually coming up, and along with them myriads of others, all leading us astray. Each day brings forth the lie, the fruit, the eating thereof. Satan, or the world, or the flesh, or a friend, or a book, or a scene whispers the lie; it is fair and specious, we believe it; it brings forth fruit, we eat of it, and the end is bitterness and disappointment. We "feed on lies."

What is pleasure, or lust, or revelry? It is the belief of a lie, the feeding on a lie. What is worldliness, the love of gaiety, the absorption of the heart in business? The belief of a lie, and the feeding on a lie. We persuade ourselves that this world is good, and pleasant, and excellent, and so we pursue it in preference to the world to come. But the belief of the lie is quickly followed up by disappointment, the sense of hollowness and dissatisfaction. God makes us thus eat of the fruit of lies, that we may be torn from them and betake ourselves to the truth.

What keeps us from Christ? A lie, or lies! What makes us choose the broad way? A lie, or lies! What is unbelief but the belief of a lie? Where do our doubts and fears but from come? The belief of lies in preference to the truth; no, from our making God a liar, in not believing the record which he has given of his Son? Where comes backsliding, or the loss of first love, but from our returning to the lie which we had rejected?

God, in his gospel, meets the lie, and all the lies which have sprung up on earth. He sends us the truth; He sends us the true One. And while He meets the lie, He does it in His own divine way. He says, Yes, you shall not surely die- but that deliverance shall not be in the way you think. Death is the wages of sin, yet I bring life to the sinner, everlasting life, life through the belief of the truth, even as death came through the belief of a lie. He says, "Yes, you shall be as gods, but not in your way. I will make you partakers of the divine nature, not by eating the forbidden tree, but by eating of Him whose flesh is food indeed and whose blood is drink indeed."

What stress God lays on truth, and on our believing it! What sin He declares to be in a lie and in our believing it! All untruth, all error, all false doctrine, as well as false statement, has in it the nature of a lie. Men in our day think man is not responsible for the truth, and that there is no sin in the reception of error. God protests against this, and calls on men to receive truth, his truth, as expounded in his one revelation! Gloriously yet awfully shall all this be manifested, when He who is the Truth shall come the second time to vindicate both truth and righteousness!

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