

# SATAN'S GREATEST LIES

COMBATING EVIL WITH TRUTH



JEFFREY ERICKSON

© 2023 JEFFREY ERICKSON

All rights reserved.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form whatsoever, whether by graphic, visual, electronic, film, microfilm, tape recording, or any other means, without prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief passages embodied in critical reviews and articles.

This material is neither made, provided, approved, nor endorsed by Intellectual Reserve, Inc. or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Any content or opinions expressed, implied or included in or with the material are solely those of the owner and not those of Intellectual Reserve, Inc. or The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.” Permission for the use of sources, graphics, and photos is also solely the responsibility of the author.

Paperback ISBN 13: 978-1-4621-4611-6

Ebook ISBN 13: 978-1-4621-4655-0

Published by CFI, an imprint of Cedar Fort, Inc.

2373 W. 700 S., Suite 100, Springville, UT 84663

Distributed by Cedar Fort, Inc., [www.cedarfort.com](http://www.cedarfort.com)

Library of Congress Registration Number: 2023942343

Cover design by Shawnda Craig

Cover design © 2023 Cedar Fort, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed on acid-free paper

# Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Prologue](#)

[1. Nothing Wrong with Wrong](#)

[2. Just Once Won't Hurt](#)

[3. A Little Goes a Long Way](#)

[4. It's Only Wrong if You Get Caught](#)

[5. I Am What I Am](#)

[6. You Can Get to It When You Get to It](#)

[7. You May as Well Quit](#)

[8. Nothing Bad's about to Happen](#)

[9. Just Talk the Talk and Walk Wherever You Want](#)

[10. The Atonement Has an Expiration Date](#)

[11. Acceptance Requires Approval](#)

[12. God Doesn't Love Me](#)

[13. Because of God's Love We Will All Be Saved](#)

[14. Be in the World but Not of the World](#)

[15. Sinners Just Wanna Have Fun](#)

[16. Conclusion](#)

[About the Author](#)

# 1

## Nothing Wrong with Wrong

When I was serving as a bishop, I had an unforgettable conversation with a man who had returned to activity after a grievous sin. He had fully repented and was now carefully following the Savior. Grateful to be back at church and close to Christ, he shared the following thought: “I really don’t know what I was thinking when I made the poor decisions that I made.” When the adversary invites us into the darkness, we do not make wise, enlightened decisions. When we are filled with the Spirit and the Light of Christ, we make powerful choices and enlightened decisions. May we all remember that the Light of the World, who is Jesus Christ, will always be the best way and the only way to be free from the lies of the adversary.

**Lie #1: There’s no such thing as sin. Wrong is not really wrong.**

My Dear Friend,

Are you tired from the effort to continually “do what is right” in order to gain a reward later? Allow me to unburden you by revealing the truth. There’s no wrong or right, and there is no sin. Mankind has merely interpreted various perceptions of wrong and right and created beliefs in what is “good” and what is “evil.” How can you be expected to keep up with all that? Sit down and rest, and I will put your mind at ease. My method will soothe you, and you will find it much simpler.

There is no wrong, and there is no right. “Sin” is subjective. Consider changing to my clear, concise method. Do what feels good and benefits you the most. Simple, isn’t it? Rather than attempt to abide a complicated code of conduct, enjoy the here and now.

Since there is no sin, we can do what we want with no true consequences. Give it a try, and you’ll see.

Yours,  
Lou C. Pher

**Truth #1: There is right and wrong as defined by a merciful but just God. Any action contrary to the eternal laws of God is sin.**

When my son Tyler was almost eight years old, he got into trouble for some mischief. He had been preparing for his baptism, so some of the discussions we had been having were on his mind. As an unwise parent, I lectured him about his decision. He listened without saying a word, so I asked, "Tyler, what were you thinking?" He looked me in the eye and gave this wise response: "Dad, I am not even eight yet. How could I have known?"

Despite the humor of the moment, Tyler shared what so many in our day use as an excuse. How could this choice be a sin?

Anyone with a basic knowledge of organized religion is familiar with the "thou-shalt-nots." It would be easy for someone to write those off as arbitrary or made up based on the desires of a certain group, but within each human is born an intrinsic knowledge of right and wrong which correlates with God's commandments. It's not invented or made up. It's God-given and is available to us from the beginning.

This is evident from the fact that children have the ability to distinguish sin, even if they don't have the words to fully describe it. They are nearer to God, and their given sense of right and wrong hasn't been overwritten by the world.

An old television program, *Kids Say the Darndest Things*, interviewed children about a variety of topics. The honest and unfiltered answers provided entertainment and often wisdom. In one of the episodes, the host asked the children to explain sin, and the results were telling:

Rhonda Marshall, age seven: "Well, kicking your brother is a little mistake, but kicking a dog is a sin."

Tonya Entrekin, age six: "A sin is what gets you into more trouble than you know what to do with."

Beth Kummerlen, age six: "A sin is what you do before your mother spans you."

Mike Miller, age seven: "A sin is a really bad mistake. When you make a little mistake, your parents punish you. But when you make a sin, God punishes you. And I bet He can really spank."

Lesley Wilson, age six: "Well, a sin is a bad mistake. Like when I pick a fight with my brother. He's older and bigger than me, so If I pick a fight with him, that's a sin, 'cause I've made a bad mistake."

Molly Weldon, age nine: "A sin is when you disrespect the law of God. There are big sins and little sins. Like when you beat up on your sisters . . . that's a middle-sized one."

David Galbreath, age six: "Well, there's these two kids down our street, Steven and Nathan, and they're bullies, and they're bad all the time. If you want to know about sin, you ought to ask them."<sup>19</sup>

When reading these examples, one can see a mixture of what the children have learned from their upbringing and that which they know intuitively. Like the distinction between kicking a sibling or kicking a dog, a child can discern between levels of sin because of the

natural feeling of guilt that comes from sin. This difference is evident when observing human behavior, even observing our own feelings. If there were no sin, there would be no guilt or remorse, at least not of a true nature. This discernment comes from the Light of Christ.

Every person born into the world receives the Light of Christ, which helps us see and feel what's right and what's wrong. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, we can recognize what He would have us do and what He forbids. We see it when we need to choose good, better, or best, but that ability can be dulled if we ignore it often enough. The adversary has made progress in his lie that there's no sin by leading souls to no longer recognize sin as sin.

The doctrine of "no such thing as sin" is not new. Korihor himself introduced it more than two thousand years ago in the Americas. He made these faulty arguments:

O ye that are bound down under a foolish and a vain hope, why do ye yoke yourselves with such foolish things? Why do ye look for a Christ? For no man can know of anything which is to come.

Behold, these things which ye call prophecies, which ye say are handed down by holy prophets, behold, they are foolish traditions of your fathers.

How do ye know of their surety? Behold, ye cannot know of things which ye do not see; therefore ye cannot know that there shall be a Christ.

Ye look forward and say that ye see a remission of your sins. But behold, it is the effect of a frenzied mind; and this derangement of your minds comes because of the traditions of your fathers, which lead you away into a belief of things which are not so.

And many more such things did he say unto them, telling them that there could be no atonement made for the sins of men, but every man fared in this life according to the management of the creature; therefore every man prospered according to his genius, and that every man conquered according to his strength; and *whatsoever a man did was no crime*.

And thus he did preach unto them, leading away the hearts of many, causing them to lift up their heads in their wickedness, yea, leading away many women, and also men, to commit whoredoms.<sup>20</sup>

Korihor is just one example of a mouthpiece for Satan who rallies people into the belief that there is no true law, therefore there is no true crime, and this equals no sin. Today people commit sin without realizing they are crimes against their Heavenly Father.

As surely as there is a God, there is sin, for the Lord has told us so. Not only do sins exist, but we will be judged for them. The Lord has said, "That every man may act in doctrine and principle pertaining to futurity, according to the moral agency which I have given unto him, that every man may be accountable for his own sins in the day of judgment."<sup>21</sup> He also said, "Every man shall be made accountable unto me."<sup>22</sup>

Though we have access to this knowledge of sin, we are lured and drawn in by the crafty plan of the adversary. He's much like a skilled fisherman who knows just how to tempt, catch, and lure us in with his falsehoods. Elder M. Russell Ballard compared a fly fisherman luring a trout to Satan luring a person:

The goal of the fly fisherman is to catch trout through skillful deception. The adept fisherman studies trout behavior, weather, the water current, and the types of insects trout eat and when those insects hatch. He will often craft by hand the lures he uses. He knows these artificial insects embedded with tiny hooks need to be a perfect deception because the trout will identify even the slightest flaw and reject the fly.

What a thrill it is to watch a trout break the surface of the water, inhale the fly, and resist until it is finally exhausted and reeled in. The test is the pitting of the fisherman's knowledge and skill against the noble trout.

The use of artificial lures to fool and catch a fish is an example of the way Lucifer often tempts, deceives, and tries to ensnare us.

Like the fly fisherman who knows that trout are driven by hunger, Lucifer knows our "hunger," or weaknesses, and tempts us with counterfeit lures which, if taken, can cause us to be yanked from the stream of life into his unmerciful influence. And unlike a fly fisherman who catches and releases the fish unharmed back into the water, Lucifer will not voluntarily let go. His goal is to make his victims as miserable as he is.<sup>23</sup>

Ancient and modern prophets have warned us about the temptations that cause us to break the commandments. We have been clearly taught what Heavenly Father expects of us. But even with that knowledge, we are faced with the adversary who frolics in a world that tries to obscure, disguise, or distract from sin. It's often easy for sin to go unnoticed because the ramifications are not always visible or immediate.

For those who are in tune with the Light of Christ, God makes it attractive to choose the right by letting us feel the positive effects of our choices. If we choose the right, we'll find happiness. If we choose evil, there comes sorrow and regret. Those effects are sure, but tangible blessings or consequences, the "proof" that so many look for, are not always received on man's preferred timeline.

The waiting for blessings or sorrow which comes after a choice can bring with it frustration, yet they are often delayed for a purpose. If the blessings were immediate, choosing the right would not build faith. And since sorrow is also sometimes greatly delayed, it takes faith to feel the need to seek forgiveness for sin early rather than after we feel its painful effects.<sup>24</sup> The delay of blessings or sorrow feeds the false belief that there is no right or wrong.

Elder Marvin J. Ashton said, "There are some who would have us believe there is no right or wrong—that everything is relative. We must never allow ourselves to think proper conduct and decision making are found in a convenient path somewhere between right and wrong. . . . We should ever bear in mind that a wrong isn't right just because many people do it. A wrong deed isn't right just because it hasn't become visible."<sup>25</sup>

A few years ago in Turkey some shepherders observed this type of foolish thinking firsthand. While they were at breakfast, their grazing sheep wandered, and one decided to jump off a cliff. After the first one jumped, all the sheep decided to jump. Literally one by one the sheep barreled over the edge of the cliff. Finally, all 1,500—yes 1,500 sheep—jumped off the cliff. Unfortunately, the cliff was steep enough that the first few hundred died, but by the time about 450 sheep had died, the other sheep were landing on sheep

who had plummeted to their deaths. The final 1,050 sheep lived, saved by the cushioning of the first 450 sheep. It was a two-fold lesson—a lesson in visibility and a lesson in blindly following others making unwise choices.<sup>26</sup> Just like these poor sheep, mankind often leaps into the dangers of sin for no other reason than they saw someone else do so. One should always pause and consider before making choices, especially before nearing a cliff's edge.

We must not live as undiscerning sheep when it comes to recognizing sin and evaluating right and wrong. As Mormon urged, we must constantly “search diligently in the light of Christ that [we] may know good from evil.”<sup>27</sup> Searching diligently creates awareness and discernment of what is pure and what is impure. It also reveals what sin is and gives us the spiritual ability to “lay hold upon every good thing.”<sup>28</sup>

Satan has used the lack of visible proof as a tool to lull earth's inhabitants into sin for generations. Those who lack faith seek evidence before they will believe. Fueled by the whisperings of the adversary, people point at sin and say it isn't so, and many are happy to accept this fallacy because it provides temporary satisfaction. The truth of the matter is no amount of mislabeling changes the fact that sin is sin.

President Abraham Lincoln once demonstrated this very point. He said, “If you take that cow over there, and let's say it has three legs. How many legs does it have?” The response was three. Lincoln then said, “No. No matter what we call it, it still is what it is—a four-legged cow.”<sup>29</sup>

Public opinion and belief have always been fickle during this time of mortality. There are those who know the truth and deny it anyway, and there are those who lack understanding and are preyed upon by the adversary and his followers. In this world, we are inundated with information, and it is easy for truth to be obscured. In these circumstances, “truth” is determined by popularity contests rather than fact.

To those who believe anything or everything could be true, the declaration of objective, fixed, and universal truth feels like coercion. They may say, “I shouldn't be forced to believe something is true that I don't like.” But that doesn't change reality. Resenting the law of gravity won't keep a person from falling if he steps off a cliff. The same is true for eternal law and justice. Freedom comes not from resisting them but from applying them. That is fundamental to God's own power. If it were not for the reality of fixed and immutable truths, the gift of agency would be meaningless since we would never be able to foresee and intend the consequences of our actions.

To refute the lie that there is no such thing as sin, we must simply believe the prophet Lehi, who said, “If ye shall say there is no law, ye shall also say there is no sin. If ye shall say there is no sin, ye shall also say there is no righteousness. And if there be no righteousness there be no happiness. And if there be no righteousness nor happiness there be no punishment nor misery. And if these things are not there is no God. And if there is no God we are not, neither the earth; for there could have been no creation of things, neither to act nor to be acted upon; wherefore, all things must have vanished away.”<sup>30</sup> There are expectations for which we will all be held accountable. As much as the carnal world may wish otherwise, there is law and there is sin.

I have recently begun a late life career in mental health counseling, preceded by a long dental career. I now meet with people of a variety of faiths and some without any form of faith in God. It has been remarkable to me to see how people realize their life is amiss when they are deep in sin. They may not even consider calling it sin, but they are

unhappy because they are not living eternal principles or personal values. They suffer from addiction to drugs, pornography, amphetamines, and other substances and behaviors. They recognize that peace leaves them and contentment cannot be found in these substitutes for a healthy lifestyle. They recognize that lying, cheating, unkindness, and deception leave them feeling empty in relationships. They realize that delivering harm instead of love distances them from those they care about. They see anger for what it is, and they experience longing for love when they have disconnected from those they once cared about. As a counselor, I teach these individuals to recognize these truths and facts and to adjust their choices rather than try to change their thinking about eternal laws and principles.

My experience has echoed the words of Elder M. Russell Ballard:

There is no peace in sin. There may be ease, popularity, fame, and even prosperity, but there is no peace. “Wickedness never was happiness” (Alma 41:10). One cannot be at peace if one is living a life out of harmony with revealed truth. There is no peace in being mean-spirited or contentious. There is no peace in vulgarity, promiscuity, or permissiveness. There is no peace in addiction to drugs, alcohol, or pornography. There is no peace in being abusive to others in any way, whether it be emotionally, physically, or sexually, for those who are abusive will remain in mental and spiritual turmoil until they come to Christ in all humility and seek forgiveness through complete repentance.<sup>31</sup>

Sin is always revealed through its emotional and mental consequences. I see its effects daily in the counseling office. Though many consistently try to claim there is not sin, our conscious mind screams out that there must be sin because something is amiss. Even our own nervous system reveals the pains of sin to our bodies and spirits. Why, then, would we want to change the commandments which are eternal principles of God, carve them up, reshape them, soften them, or even dispose of them, when they are such a blessing to those who love God and even to those who in some instances know not God? We shouldn't.

Today there is a strong clamor to make sinful practices legal by passing legislation. Some would legislate to legalize prostitution. Abortion has been championed, marijuana has been accepted, and even theft is not punished when it is below a certain dollar amount. Even when sin is legislated to be acceptable, God still condemns its behavior. Although legislators have sought to remove the stigma of sin by making things legal, these actions will never change the consequences of sin.

Pretending there is no sin is never a solution to a sinful problem. On a number of occasions, one of my sons would get in trouble for an unacceptable behavior. The simple discipline would be five or ten minutes in their room in time-out. While sitting in the kitchen, we would sometimes see the child escaping the room and running to a closer room while hiding their eyes from us. They hoped that if they couldn't see Mom and Dad, then we couldn't see them.

In many instances we approach sin the same way. Some think that if they attempt to hide from or deny its existence, they will be able to simply push away its effects. A loving God has given us too many tools for that to be able to happen. We have the Light of Christ, the Holy Ghost, and a nervous system to remind us that sin does not feel right.

Elder D. Todd Christofferson taught, “Pretending there is no sin does not lessen its burden and pain. Suffering for sin does not by itself change anything for the better. Only repentance leads to the sunlit uplands of a better life. And, of course, only through repentance do we gain access to the atoning grace of Jesus Christ and salvation. Repentance is a divine gift, and there should be a smile on our faces when we speak of it. It points us to freedom, confidence, and peace. Rather than interrupting the celebration, the gift of repentance is the cause for true celebration.”<sup>32</sup>

A memorable sermon was taught recently by an eighteen-year-old young man in a local ward. He had gone on a mission for just a few weeks and then returned home. He had been in the MTC, pretending his prior sins were not that big of a deal. He planned to continue missionary service until the Holy Ghost and Light of Christ would no longer allow him to. They taught him that sin was real and that without repentance those sins would weigh on him the rest of his life. He went to the mission president and confessed what he had done prior to his call. He was sent home.

He did not care what consequences were to come to him; he only cared to be forgiven and cleansed through Christ by repentance. He stood up in sacrament meeting and said, “I am sure many of you are surprised to see me here today. This is why I am here.” He then shared his experience. Although he did not share all of the details, he explained that he had committed some wrongs that he needed to repent of. He then stated his goal was to repent and be clean so that he could faithfully serve Jesus Christ as a full-time missionary. Tears filled the eyes of nearly everyone in the congregation.

It was an unforgettable lesson in his confession that sin is real, in his recognizing the need for true repentance, in the power of the Holy Ghost speaking to him, and in his willingness to do anything to be free from the effects of sin. Everyone present that day will always remember a young man standing at the pulpit willing to do anything to be free from the effects of sin.

When we need to repent, the Holy Ghost will show us what to do, and the scriptures will tell us what to do.<sup>33</sup> These guides, along with the Light of Christ, help us distinguish and recognize the multitude of lies that come from the adversary. Acting on these inspired words, promptings, and impressions will deliver us from the captivity of the deceit.

Along with being born with the Light of Christ, which allows us to discern good and evil, comes the desire to be reunited with our Heavenly Father after this life. We are sure to sin, for sin does exist, but we must recognize and acknowledge those sins in order to have hope to avoid or overcome them. Only by and through the guidance of a loving Heavenly Father and the Atonement of Jesus Christ can we obtain the peace we seek. As Elder Marvin J. Ashton said, “Most men yearn for peace, cry for peace, pray for peace, and work for peace, but there will not be lasting peace until all mankind follow the path pointed out and walked by the living Christ. There can be no peace in sin and disobedience.”<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>19.</sup> Art Linkletter, *Kids Say the Darndest Things*.

<sup>20.</sup> Alma 30:12–18; emphasis added.

<sup>21.</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 101:78.

<sup>22.</sup> Doctrine and Covenants 42:32.

<sup>23.</sup> M. Russell Ballard, “O That Cunning Plan of the Evil One,” *Ensign* or *Liabona*, November 2010, 108.

24. Henry B. Eyring, "A Priceless Heritage of Hope," *Ensign or Liabona*, May 2014, 22.
25. Marvin J. Ashton, "This Is No Harm," *Ensign or Liabona*, May 1982, 9.
26. "In 2005 in Turkey, a suicide sheep jumped off a cliff and 1500 sheep followed the first one," Factual Facts, February 11, 2013, <https://factualfacts.com/in-2005-in-turkey-a-suicide-sheep-jumped-off-a-cliff-and-1500-sheep-followed-the-first-one/>.
27. Moroni 7:19.
28. Ibid.
29. Burton Stevenson, Burton, ed., *The Home Book of Quotations* (Dodd, Mead, & Co, 1935), 1726.
30. 2 Nephi 2:13.
31. M. Russell Ballard, 2002. "The Peaceable Things of the Kingdom," *Ensign or Liabona*, May, 87
32. D. Todd Christofferson, "The Divine Gift of Repentance," *Ensign or Liabona*, November 2011, 38.
33. See 2 Nephi 32:3, 5.
34. Marvin J. Ashton, "Peace—A Triumph of Principles," *Ensign or Liabona*, November 1985, 69.

**You've Just Finished your Free Sample**

**Enjoyed the preview?**

**Buy: <http://www.ebooks2go.com>**