

LIFE SHOULD BE FAIR, ECCL.7:15 ET AL

Liar Liar #4

◆Intro: Things seem unfair and turned around in this world. A young man is killed by a drunk driver who walks away without a scratch. Drug dealers and pornographers make millions and live in mansions. You're too qualified to get hired! People who don't know stuff get the job instead of you! Some folks eat nothing but sticks and gravel, maybe a carrot and they gain weight, while others eat like pigs and don't put on a pound. Most of the time when you have all the kids you don't have the space or the money, but when they're all grown and you don't need the space or the money, you have plenty of both. A really stupid, yet good looking person can make millions, while lots of hardworking, highly intelligent people scrape along. Things seem so unfair in this world. And as Bob Hope put it, "A bank is a place that will lend you money if you can prove that you don't need it." This is no news to the writers of the holy Word. Solomon reflects...

◆"In this meaningless life of mine I have seen both of these: a righteous man perishing in his righteousness, and a wicked man living long in his wickedness." Ecclesiastes 7:15, NIV.

◆"There is something else meaningless that occurs on earth: righteous men who get what the wicked deserve, and wicked men who get what the righteous deserve. This too, I say, is meaningless." Ecclesiastes 8:14, NIV.

◆"I have seen something else under the sun: The race is not to the swift or the battle to the strong, nor does food come to the wise or wealth to the brilliant or favour to the learned; but time and chance happen to them all." Ecclesiastes 9:11, NIV.

◆1. So many things seem so unfair. And you know what? They are. The trouble is that you and I have grown up believing the lie that life should be fair, and that it is reasonable to demand it. Granted, we have an innate

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sense of justice and a deep desire for it. If that's all we mean by fairness we might argue for it. **God is certainly in favor of justice and fairness.** Life should be that way. God intended life to be that way. A sense of fairness, equality, and justice is what the Bible calls righteousness. It is the nature of God to be righteous and loving to all he has made. We are in agreement with God on that.

◆ *“You must have accurate and honest weights and measures, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.”*
Deuteronomy 25:15, NIV.

◆A. But I don't think the lie is so much that there ought to be a just and fair world. This lie is actually quite complex: namely that my desire for fairness and beauty in life means I should not expect or accept unfairness or difficulty in life. That's really the lie, I think. Unfairness and difficulty are a reality in our fallen world. To expect it not to be is like a fish constantly complaining that water is wet. Or a dog being hateful because it isn't a bird. Or a person being angry or depressed all the time because bad things happen. Where is it going to get the fish to want life on the land? Where is it going to get the dog to wish he had feathers? Shall it complain that it's not fair that he is not free to fly like the birds? Shall the fish jump onto the beach and gasp, “I'm free! I'm...free...! gasp, gasp.”

◆And yet our world teaches us to demand whatever we like. Bruce Jenner wants to be a girl. The media celebrates it as a freedom! But under the makeup he is still Bruce. He did not suddenly become a female. Rachel Dolezal, wants to “identify” as a black woman, even though she is a

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daughter of two white parents. She can claim the orientation all she wants. It's doesn't change her race.

◆ Again, the insidious lie is that we should not accept unfairness, or difficulty. "Don't stand for it", the world whispers. "You should have no limitations." And, there are several other little lies tagging along with it. Maybe you've felt a few of these lies in your life. One is...

◆1) You can have it all: This lie says I should not have boundaries: Everyone should have everything as an option because that's what it means to be fair. Everybody gets and "A" to keep it all "fair". Really? The psychological term for this syndrome is pronounced "baloney". We cannot all have all the options. To make a choice *for* one thing is necessarily to make a choice *against* another. If I choose to eat a sandwich I am choosing not to eat a melon. If I choose to spend my life at the office, I am choosing not to spend quantity time at home, and I will gain the rewards that accompany my choice. No one can do or be all things, or mutually exclusive things.

◆ Yet we are constantly told by the world that we should have it all. Remember the "tastes great; less filling" commercial? We want to drink good beer that tastes great, and also be able to not be filled with good beer after we drink it, so that, presumably, we can drink more of it. It's not a reasonable possibility. It is not a reasonable, or even scientific possibility that a male can be a female. It is not a reasonable possibility that a homosexual union can be what God meant by marriage and family, a biological dad and mom, and a healthy

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reproductive building block of society. These notions need to be seen for what they are; distortions of reality. There cannot be pure “fairness” in this sense, and it is absurd to think so. But the world keeps telling us we can have it all, whatever we want, no limits, no boundaries.

◆2) Another related lie we learn is that Everything should be easy for one as it is for another. Fair, right. We assume that fairness will be the easy road. Nobody says “life should be as hard for one as it is for the other.” Because of our modern conveniences we have come to believe this lie variation. We don’t have to lift our garage doors anymore. Just push a button. We don’t have to light a fire anymore. Just put food in the microwave. We don’t have to use a key to get in the car. Just have it near the car. If we don’t want to be hot and humid, just push a button on the central air. But because many things *are* easy, doesn’t mean things *should be* easy. This is a misnomer. We properly call these blessings, not rights. For thousands of years millions of people lived without the possibility of air-conditioning. In fact, everyone did. It would be foolishness to claim, say, that it is a human right to have air-conditioning, or to demand it as a right just because it is available now to some.

◆But this is exactly what we are told from the socialist point of view: “everyone has a right to healthcare so the government should provide it for them.” (This is vastly different from saying that healthcare is a good thing and we want to help people. What is healthcare? Other people rescuing you when you get hurt.) “Everyone has a right to a

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certain wage so we have to give it to everyone.” It’s not *really* true, is it. If we really want pure fairness, why are we paying the person lounging on government funds while the rest of us work. Why are we paying adults millions to play games for us while our teachers and doctors we pay far less. But my point here is that while things like good wages and healthcare are certainly a blessing, they are not rights. The Bible says,

◆ *“For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: ‘If a man will not work, he shall not eat.’” 2 Thessalonians 3:10, NIV.*

◆ The “life should be easy” lie is another variation on the “I should not accept unfairness” lie.

◆3) Here’s another: Gratification should be immediate: This is the “I don’t have to wait” lie. I don’t have to wait until I can pay for it. Use a credit card. The bank says I can!! I needn’t wait until I get married to be sexually active. Use pills, or get an abortion. I shouldn’t have to wait until you’re finished speaking before I do, if I think I have a good point to make. I’ll just talk over you. I shouldn’t have to wait to turn right, or to merge. I’ll just gun it and honk. I shouldn’t have to wait to drive as nice a car as dad and mom, or have as big a house as dad and mom. Why, I should be able to have what they worked their whole life for, right now. “It’s my right to have all the same opportunities, circumstances, gifts, talents, and benefits that everyone else has, right now.” or so go the lies, anyway. As though that’s fairness. But what about the fairness of putting the same hours and years and sweat? We don’t want to talk about that.

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What about the fairness of having the same sufferings as everyone else? No. Not interested. On top of the unreasonable nature of the “fairness lies” there's also the consequences, what they lead to.

◆**2. Where do these “fairness” lies lead?** Some obvious results are such things as unwanted children, mental struggles, road rage, traffic accidents, and lots and lots of debt as demand to live like everyone else. But as one writer put it, “Millions of people are being boiled to death everyday by some of the most incredibly stupid and destructive lies ever to hit the planet and the cost in terms of emotional health, intimacy with others, and spiritual maturity is incalculable.” (Thurman, p.29) The end result of the lie that I should demand fairness and ease is tremendous dissatisfaction, ungratefulness, and repeated disappointment. These qualities often manifest as anger and rage. We become people who fly off the handle at the unfairness of the world, or who trudge through the world bitter and angry at the government, or cynical and slow to generosity.

◆**3. Solutions:** What can we do to keep from being fooled by the lie that we may legitimately demand fairness and ease in life?

◆**A.** Accept your lot, and the “haves” that you cannot. Acceptance is not denial. God does not encourage us to pretend things aren't bad or unfair. Recognize it. Hurt over it. Grieve it when necessary. If you can creatively and helpfully correct the unfairness, work toward that. But accepting unfairness in a broken world is deciding not to stomp and yell and be angry when we suffer because we trust in God to right the wrongs if not now, in the end. Accepting the life allotted us is trusting that God knows what he's doing.

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◆“If you see the poor oppressed in a district, and justice and rights denied, do not be surprised at such things.” Ecclesiastes 5:8, NIV.

◆“*Then I realized that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink, and to find satisfaction in his toilsome labour under the sun during the few days of life God has given him--for this is his lot. Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work--this is a gift of God.*” Ecclesiastes 5:18, 19, NIV.

◆And we’ve already hinted at this, but do you know why the God-follower can accept difficulty and unfairness? Because we...

◆B. Hope in the one who can and will. This is really the key to the Christian world view. We do not pretend that life is a bowl of cherries. But neither do we trudge through the pits in misery. We know there is justice coming. We know the tears will come to an end. We know that wrong and unfairness, and evil will be destroyed, and peace and provision will flourish.

◆“And I saw something else under the sun: In the place of judgment--wickedness was there, in the place of justice--wickedness was there. I thought in my heart, “God will bring to judgment both the righteous and the wicked, for there will be a time for every activity, a time for every deed.”” Ecclesiastes 3:16, 17, NIV.

◆Solomon is telling us that there is hope for that sense of fairness and justice inside you. There is a God who is fair and just. But more than that, he is merciful and loving. He will right all wrongs, yes. But be careful what you wish for. If you have been unfair and made life difficult, his holiness

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demands your eternal punishment. Yet he has made a way for you not to get pure fairness, but mercy and grace. That way is Christ, who suffered your death so you can have heaven. Psalm 103 says of God that he does not treat us as our sins deserve. Not fair, but so much better than mere fair.

◆“Although a wicked man commits a hundred crimes and still lives a long time, I know that it will go better with God-fearing men, who are reverent before God.” Ecclesiastes 8:12, NIV.

◆“For God will bring every deed into judgment, including every hidden thing, whether it is good or evil.” Ecclesiastes 12:14, NIV.

◆“*For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead.*” Acts 17:31 (see also Romans 2:16, NIV.)

◆“He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.” He who was seated on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true.” Revelation 21:4, 5, NIV.

◆ Is there anything else we can do to face the truth of an unfair and difficult world? Yes.

◆C. Practice limiting yourself: that is, to work, to wait, and to do without.

Try going to the store and leaving without buying anything, even though you can. Try staying in the lane you're in instead of weaving around to get ahead of that red car that will probably pass you in two miles anyway.

Avoid using credit. Don't upgrade every time it's possible. In other words,

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live is such a way that you do not *teach* yourself that you must have everyone else's everything.

◆**Conclusion:** Friends, the fact is that life is difficult in this fallen world. Life is unfair. Good people do very bad things. To expect to trot through life without experiencing this is to invite lots of emotional and spiritual trouble. In turn, the trouble that comes from this lie will also prove to limit our ability to enjoy the good that is here in spite of the bad. The fact that life is unfair and difficult does not mean that it's all bad, or that there are not some wonderful beauties in it. Jesus gives us the reason to be balanced. He said

◆ *“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”* John 16:33, NIV.