



**Ephesians 5:15-20; John 6:51-58**  
**Reverend Giuseppe Mattei (August 18, 2024)**

Any idea what the biggest lie ever told might be? According to legend, honest Abe could tell no lie. Another legend tells us about George Washington's cherry tree. Is truth and honesty inspiring material for legends only?

We saw last week how St. Paul insisted that we be **truthful to one another** because when we lie, we inflict a wound to the one Body of Christ, a self-inflicted wound that displeases God.<sup>1</sup>

According to Jesus, the truth can set you free.<sup>2</sup> But for many, deceit holds the key to money, fame, revenge, or power, and these prove all too tempting. In history, this has often resulted in elaborate hoaxes, perjuries, and forgeries that had enormous ripple effects. Just think of the human catastrophe of the Nazis' propaganda: the repeated lie about Jews being Germany's enemies and the cause of all their economic problems.<sup>3</sup>

But all the lies we hear or are capable of uttering derive from one **original lie** that sits deep in the soul of human beings. This lie, which is constantly tempting us and poisoning our existence is a total **disconnect from God**: the loss of trust in the Divine Benevolence toward us, and total distrust in God's Word.

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<sup>1</sup> Ephesians 4:1-6.25 and Proverbs 12:22

<sup>2</sup> John 8:31-32

<sup>3</sup> <https://history.howstuffworks.com/history-vs-myth/10-biggest-lies-in-history.htm#pt11>;  
<https://www.saturdayeveningpost.com/2018/05/8-historyys-destructive-lies/>;

Believing the Lie, we misplace our trust and doubt that God is for us. God wants our wellbeing, and we don't believe it. The "Original Sin" is the absorbed (enfleshed?) *doubt* that we are loved, wanted, whole, and one in God. It's hard to believe that God wants a relationship of trust with us: we doubt this Truth.

God sent God's Son so that we may know Love and change our mind into the mind of Christ and learn from him who, meek and humble,<sup>4</sup> is the Way, the Truth, and the Life of God for us.<sup>5</sup>

Our thinking is that we are separated from God and one another, indeed from all of creation. When we think this way, we dig for ourselves an ever-deeper hole: we convince ourselves that we are alone and on our own; that we have no worth apart from what we do and achieve and accumulate; that we need to prove ourselves; and that we need to please others to be accepted, included, respected, and loved.

This faulty thinking generates loneliness, anxiety, and fear. We become afraid we may not be accepted, valued, or cherished. We are terrorized we may live alone and ultimately die alone.

But God is for us, and in us, and nothing can separate us from the Presence of God and the love of God.<sup>6</sup> The Breath or Spirit of God is the same in each one of us, breathing in us.<sup>7</sup>

English Medieval mystic, Julian of Norwich, explains:

The human soul is the noblest being [God] has ever created. He also wants us to be aware that he knit the beloved soul of humanity into his own when he made us. The knot that connects us to [God] is subtle and powerful and endlessly

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<sup>4</sup> Matthew 11:29

<sup>5</sup> John 14:6

<sup>6</sup> Psalm 118:6-7; Romans 8:31-39; John 14:23

<sup>7</sup> Genesis 2:7

holy. And he also wants us to realize that all souls are interconnected, united by this oneness, and made holy in this holiness.... When I look at myself as an individual, I see that I am nothing. It is only in unity with my fellow spiritual seekers that I am anything at all. It is this foundation of unity that will save humanity.... The love of God creates such a unity in us that no man or woman who understands this can possibly separate himself or herself from any other.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, St. Paul iterates: “Watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get.”<sup>9</sup>

*Carpe Diem*, often translated from Latin *Seize the Day*, with the meaning of making the most of the present time. In other words, live your life to the fullest, experience life in all its sensory communications, enjoy the moment.

*Carpe Diem* actually means "pluck the day." The original advise was: “The fruit is ripe, don’t wait until tomorrow to pluck it. The fruit may not be any good tomorrow.

In the 1989 movie, "Dead Poets Society." Robin Williams plays the role of an English professor who inspires his students with a short speech:

“Gather ye rosebuds while ye may. The Latin term for that sentiment is *Carpe Diem*. Now who knows what that means? *Carpe Diem*. That’s ‘Seize the Day.’ Gather ye rosebuds while ye may. Why does the writer use these lines? Because we are food for the worms, lads. Because believe it or not, each and every one of us in this room is one day

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<sup>8</sup> Julian of Norwich, *The Showings: Uncovering the Face of the Feminine in Revelations of Divine Love*, trans. Mirabai Starr (Charlottesville, VA: Hampton Roads, 2013, 2022), 148, 23, 180. Selections from chapters 53, 9, and 65.

<sup>9</sup> Ephesians 5:15 (Eugene Peterson’s The Message version of the Bible)

going to stop breathing, turn cold, and die... Seize the day boys, make your lives extraordinary.”<sup>10</sup>

But seizing the day can be misunderstood as an invitation to **libertine behavior**. Sometimes, there is a grabbing and hoarding attitude that people live by, afraid of missing out and not having enough time to experience it all. For the sole purpose of making the most of life, people gorge themselves on what’s available around them. No self-control, no prudence, no discipline, no clear idea where they are heading in life. A child’s behavior in old bodies.

Again, St. Paul instructed, “Don’t live carelessly, unthinkingly. Make sure you understand what the Master wants.” (Eph 5:17)

So, **let us eat and drink of Jesus’ flesh and blood**. Let us absorb that spiritual food. Let it be what we consume: Jesus’ life, his teaching, his prayer, his hope for the world. He who is already dwelling in us, wants us to make the *little* effort to get to know him, chew on him, ingest him, digest him, paying attention to what it is that we are eating and what it is we are becoming.

This we can do through disciplined prayer and consistent and intentional sacramental life.

Let us eat and drink Jesus, the sacred food that gives life and sustains it. By giving his body and blood in his life as well as in his death, he invites us, his followers to a relationship that reflects Jesus’ relationship with God. This enduring intimate relationship with Jesus should fill us with security and comfort, knowing we are always in his presence and care.

May the experience of his Love transform our life. Amen.

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<sup>10</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/carpe-diem>