

A Parachute & A Lawnmower - Transcription

"OK ... is this your friend?" Tony asked Jose.

"Yeah." Jose replied.

"And you are?" Tony asked.

"I'm Danny." Danny replied.

"Alright. So should we put Danny through the paces?" Tony asked Jose.

"I gotta go." Jose said.

"You gotta go? Jose there's a thousand dollars for participating ... oh, it's a hundred, well ..." Tony said.

"What is this?" Danny asked.

"You're about to find out. It's an intelligence test." Tony said.

"Ohh." Danny said.

"How many of each animal did Moses take into the Ark? Tony asked.

"I don't know?" Danny said and laughed.

"Think about it. Remember the story about the ark?" Tony asked.

"No." Danny said.

"That makes it hard." Tony replied.

"I don't remember?" Danny reiterated.

"What's the name of the raised print that deaf people use?" Tony asked.

"I have no idea?" Danny said.

"No? Is it possible to end a sentence with the word *the*?" Tony asked.

"Umm ... no?" Danny answered.

"OK. Spell the word *shop* out loud." Tony said.

"S-H-O-P." Danny said.

"What do you do at a green light?" Tony asked.

"I don't know." Danny replied.

“OK. Spell the word *silk* out loud.” Tony said.

“S-I-L-K.” Danny answered correctly.

“What do cows drink?” Tony asked.

“Umm ... milk?” Danny answered with a laugh.

“OK, alright. Now I want you to read what’s inside of each triangle out loud.” Tony said.

“Paris in the spring. A bird in the hand. Once in a lifetime.” Danny read out loud.

“Alright. Now we know you missed a few because you couldn’t answer them. Out of the ones you did answer, how many do you think you got right?” Tony asked.

“Um, like one or two?” Danny said.

“OK, alright. Um, no you didn’t get any right.” Tony said.

“Ohh!” Danny replied.

“Now, we asked you how many animals did Moses take into the ark. Well Moses didn’t take any, it was Noah’s ark. It wasn’t Moses.” Tony explained. “Most people answer this question with the word ‘brail.’ Have you heard of brail before?”

“No.” Danny responded.

“OK, well that’s the written, raised bumps on paper that blind people read?” Tony explained.

“Umm..?” Danny said.

“OK, well, deaf people don’t need raised print. Blind people do.” Tony continues. “It is possible to end a sentence with the word *the*, we just did.”

“Oh!” Danny realized.

“Yeah, right there.” Tony says. “We asked you to spell the word *shop* out loud, which you did. We asked you what you do when you come to a green light, most people say ‘stop’ when you should actually go; but you weren’t sure either way. Spell the word *silk* out loud, which you did. We asked you what cows drink, you said ‘milk,’ they drink water. OK ... alright.”

“They give milk.” Danny commented.

“They give milk, but they don’t drink it.” Tony responds. “Alright so, let’s look again at what’s inside each triangle. Go ahead and read them again.”

“Paris in the spring. A bird in the hand. Once in a lifetime.” Danny reread.

“Yeah, yeah, you missed them all. *Paris in the the spring.*” Tony read.

"Ohhh!" Danny realized.

"*A bird in the the hand. Once in a a lifetime.*" Tony read. "Now what Jose didn't get to, and maybe you have time for, is the good person test."

"OK." Danny agreed.

"Danny, would you say that you are a good person?" Tony asked.

"Umm..." Danny deliberated.

"Knowing that nobody's perfect." Tony said.

"Yeah, nobody's perfect but I think I'm a good person." Danny confirmed.

"Why would you say that you are a good person?" Tony asked.

"Um, because I don't like to hurt people." Danny answers. "I'm nice to everyone."

"Uh huh." Tony followed.

"Um, and I'm kind." Danny finished.

"Yeah, you're kind. OK, well, you certainly seem that way. Alright, do you have any kind of religious background at all?" Tony asks. "Have you ever been to church? Do you go to church?"

"Catholic." Danny said.

"Alright, do you practice that faith or is that something you did when you were younger?" Tony asked.

"When I was younger." Danny confirmed.

"OK, alright. So did you ever go to Sunday school or catechism when you were young?" Tony asked.

"Oh yeah I did." Danny answered.

"Did they ever teach you about the 10 Commandments?" Tony asked.

"Um, yeah but I ..." Danny said.

"Do you remember a couple of them?" Tony asked.

"Um ... I think I forgot about ..." Danny stated.

"Well think about some really bad things to do and you'll probably cover one or two of them." Tony said.

"Um, respect your parents?" Danny said.

"Yeah, yep, and that's one that most people don't get." Tony says. "What else?"

"Um ... love everyone ..." Danny said.

"That's kind of like the golden rule. Here are a few of them: don't lie, don't steal, don't murder, honor your parents, and don't commit adultery. So let's go through those five, that's God's standard, those Commandments. That's what He's going to judge everybody by. OK, so let's see how you do. Have you ever told a lie?" Tony continued.

"Uh have I ever told a lie?" Danny confirmed.

"Yeah." Tony also confirmed.

"Yes I have." Danny said.

"OK. And why do people tell lies? Why do you tell lies?" Tony asked.

"Because you feel insecure." Danny responded.

"You feel insecure? Ok, yeah, actually we tell lies because we're liars by nature. Yeah. Have you ever stolen anything?" Tony continued.

"No." Danny stated.

"You sure? You just told me you're a liar, I don't know if I can believe ya'? Ah ... download music and not pay for it when you should? Ah ... an answer on a test? Borrow somethin' and not return it? Take somethin' when you were young?" Tony prodded.

"Answer on a test." Danny said.

"Ok, alright. So you took someone else's work, made it your own, and cheated on a test. That's the same as stealing. That's both lying and stealing." Tony said.

"I did it once when I was younger." Danny said.

"How many times would I have to steal your wallet, Danny, to be a thief?" Tony asked.

"One time." Danny asserted.

"Yeah, yeah. Um, have you ever taken God's name in vain? Used God's name in a way you shouldn't, O-M-G, J-C, whether you're angry or excited or somethin' you just blurt God's name out?" Tony asked.

"Like saying, *Oh my God?*" Danny asked.

"Yeah, just like that." Tony said.

"Yes I have." Danny said.

"Who's the person that you love the most in this life?" Tony asked.

"My Mother." Danny said.

“OK, let’s say you took your Mom out to dinner, brought her here to the mall, went to dinner, took her over to the theatre to see a movie. You sit down in the theatre and about five minutes into the movie, one of the main characters uses your Mom’s name as a filthy curse word.” Tony says. “And you know they’re talking about your Mom and so does she. A few minutes later, one of the characters uses your Mom’s name as the punch line to a dirty joke. And then every few minutes, one character after another throws your Mom’s name around as if it’s dirt basically. Would that offend you?” He asked.

“Um yeah it would.” Danny answered.

“Yeah, would it offend you’re Mom?” Tony asked back.

“Yeah.” Danny answered again.

“Yeah, probably so. And that’s what we do when we throw God’s name around. We take the name of the God who has given us life and we throw it around as if it’s of no value. God calls that blasphemy.”

“That’s wrong.” Danny admitted.

“Yeah, yeah. And how old are you again? Tony asked.

“Seventeen.” Danny said.

“So, Danny, at seventeen, have you ever looked at a girl in the mall or at school and thought about her in a way that would upset your Mom? Thought about her in a sexual way? Tony asked.

“Well, no not really.” Danny replied.

“No, you’ve never had that thought about a girl ever in your life?” Tony asked.

“Well, yeah but I never went that far.” Danny replied.

“No no no, I mean just thinking about it. Not doing anything, but just thinking about it.” Tony reiterated.

“No I don’t think so.” Danny said.

“No? OK, alright. How about this one: have you ever been so angry with someone that you thought in your mind, ‘you know what I think I hate that person.’” Tony asked.

“Yep.” Danny responded.

“Yeah. The Bible says that whoever hates another person is a murderer.” Tony said.

“Oh wow.” Danny said.

“Well, think about where murder begins. It begins with hatred in the heart, moves to the mind where you formulate the plan, and into the hand where you carry out the act. But the murder began the moment you hated that person. And God not only judges what we do, but He judges what comes out of

our mouth, and He judges what ever we think and feel as well. And one of them that you mentioned is to honor your parents, obey your parents. Have you been the perfect son growing up?" Tony asked.

"No. Nobody's perfect." Danny responded.

"Nobody's perfect that's right. But does the fact that nobody's perfect make any of us innocent?" Tony asked.

"Um..." Danny pondered.

"I mean if you were to stand before a judge in a courtroom, let's say you stole a car, and the judge says 'Danny, what do you have to say for yourself?' and you say 'Well you're honor, lots of people steal cars so I think you ought to just let me go.' Is he going to let you go?" Tony asked.

"Um, no. It wouldn't be right." Danny answered.

"Right. So the fact that a lot of people do these things that we're talking about doesn't make us innocent, it just makes us guilty like everybody else. OK, alright. So now everything you admitted to, I'm guilty of too. Alright, so I'm not pointing a finger at you; I mean, my youngest daughter is older than you are. So I got a lot more time to mess up than you. OK, but here's what you admitted about yourself: you admitted to being a liar, a thief, a murderer at heart who dishonors his parents. Does that sound like a good person?" Tony asked. "Does that sound like being a good person?"

"That's not being a good person." Danny responded.

"No. Alright, so here's where it gets serious Danny. If you were to die tonight and you were to stand before God and He judged you according to those Laws, those Commandments, do you think He'd find you innocent or guilty?" Tony asked.

"Um, I'm not sure?" Danny replied.

"Well: liar, thief ..." Tony exhorted.

"Well, guilty in a way." Danny confessed.

"OK." Tony said.

"But, not so bad." Danny said.

"OK, but think about this: I don't see any small kids running around, but if I were to lie to a small child, it would be wrong, but the child's not going to be able to punish me. For instance, that little baby there in that man's arms, if I were to lie to that little child, that child's not going to do anything to me. Right?" Tony said.

"No." Danny replied.

"But, if I go home and lie to my wife (who will be here soon), I could end up sleeping on the couch. Right?" Tony said.

"Yeah." Danny answered.

"If I go to work and lie to my boss, I could lose my job. Lie on a final exam in a school, you're gonna fail the class, maybe get kicked out of school. Lie to a judge in a courtroom and you're going to prison. Correct?" Tony asked.

"Yeah." Danny responded.

"What's the same is that it's still just a lie, what's changed is who the lie is against. Make sense?" Tony questioned.

"Yeah." Danny answered.

"For instance, and I'm not going to do this, but if I were to punch you in the nose, it would be a crime, I might get in some trouble, I might get arrested." Tony said.

"Yeah." Danny said.

"OK, if the president were walking through here with the secret service and I ran over and I punched the president in the nose, I may not survive. Right? I mean they may kill me for attacking the president! I did the same thing to you as I did to the president, but because the president is so much of a higher authority than you, it's that much more serious. OK. So all the things we have done to offend God in our life, even if they seem small to us it's huge in the presence of God because He is the ultimate judge. So that's why God is good, that's why God is holy, when He will punish even the smallest of sins in our mind because to an infinite God they are infinitely sinful, they are infinitely wrong." Said Tony.

"Yeah." Said Danny.

"That's why the Bible says that all liars will have their part in the lake of fire and sulfur. Hell. OK. And if you were to stand before God tonight and God found you guilty of breaking those Commandments, what should He do with you? Heaven or hell?" Tony asked.

"Hell." Danny stated.

"Yeah. Does that concern you at all?" Tony inquired.

"No." Danny answered.

"No, why not?" Tony questioned.

"Well, I've been bad but I want to go to heaven." Danny answered.

"OK, but does it concern you that that's not what ..." Tony said before Danny jumped in.

"Yeah yeah it does." Danny interjected.

“OK, OK.” Tony responded.

“That’s where I’m at.” Danny reiterated.

“Now do you have any idea what God did so that you might not have to go to hell?” Tony asked.

“Umm ... no.” Danny said.

“OK, let’s go back to the courtroom okay? You’re standing before the judge and the judge has found you guilty, and because you admitted to breaking the law, just like you admitted to breaking God’s Law, and the judge says ‘Danny because I find you guilty, it’s going to be a million dollar fine, or the rest of your life in prison. Could you pay the fine?’” Tony asked.

“I would find a way to pay the fine.” Danny said.

“You gotta pay it right then and there.” Tony said back.

“I couldn’t pay the fine.” Danny admitted.

“Yeah, me neither.” Tony agreed. “So the judge is going to do what’s right since you couldn’t fulfill the requirements of the law, God’s gonna do what’s right, or the judge’s gonna do what’s right and he’s gonna send you to prison forever, OK? But just as he’s about to do that, somebody walks into the courtroom, someone you’ve never met, they walk up to the judge’s bench, they put a million dollars on the judge’s bench and says ‘Your honor, I’ve sold everything, I’ve sacrificed everything, and because I love Danny I wanna pay his fine for him.’ Now the judge turns to you and says, ‘Danny, I would be just to send you to prison because you couldn’t pay the fine; but I’m gonna let you go. Not because you’re good, not because you’re sorry, not because you could pay the fine because you couldn’t. I’m gonna let you go because of what this other person stepped in to do for you. They paid your fine, the requirements of the law have been satisfied, so I’m gonna let you go. Would that be good news?’” Tony asked.

“Yeah that’d be really good.” Danny responded enthusiastically.

“What would you think of the person who came in and did that for you?” Tony continued.

“Uh I would be grateful to that person, I would be very happy like ‘Thank you.’” Danny expressed.

“OK, well that’s a picture of what God actually did. Two thousand years ago God the Father sent His Son to earth in the Person of Jesus Christ: fully God and fully Man, and unlike us, without sin. He never once broke God’s Law in thought, word, or deed, because He was God in the flesh. He couldn’t. He lived the perfect life that we can’t live. And about thirty-three years into that earthly existence He voluntarily went to the Cross. He suffered and died a horrible death He did not deserve, 'cause He committed no crime. But He suffered and died a horrible death He did not deserve to take upon Himself the punishment you and I do deserve for all the times we sinned against God. In a sense, Jesus Christ went to the Cross to pay the fine we could never pay for our sins against God through the shedding of His blood. And then three days later He forever defeated sin and death when He rose from the grave.

“Now Danny, In light of that, here’s what God commands of you, me, and everybody everywhere: and that’s that we repent, that we turn away from our sin, and by faith put all of our trust in Jesus Christ to save us. ‘Cause Jesus said, ‘I am the Way and the Truth and the Life, and no one comes to the Father but through Me.’

“Going to church every Sunday won’t make you right with God (I’m not saying that’s a bad thing to do); but, millions of people go to church on Sunday and then they live like hell Monday through Saturday. Right? They’re religious, but they’re not people of faith.

“Have you ever been on a plane before?” Tony asked.

“Yeah I have.” Danny replied.

“Where’d you fly to?” Tony asked.

“Europe.” Danny said.

“Europe! When’d you go to Europe?” Tony asked

“Um, last year.” Danny responded.

“Was that a school trip or something?” Tony inquired.

“No ...” Danny said.

“Vacation?” Tony asked.

“My parent’s live over there.” Danny replied.

“Oh where abouts?” Tony asked.

“Oh Italy.” Danny said.

“Oh really! So you’re Italian?” The Italian Tony asked enthusiastically.

“Yeah.” Danny said.

“What part of Italy?” Tony questioned.

“Milan.” Danny said.

“Oh Milan! Wow, OK, very cool. OK, so let’s say we’re all flying to Italy. I just happened to be on the same flight as you. OK? We’re over the Atlantic Ocean. Nothing but blue water underneath us. We feel the plane shudder. It doesn’t feel like turbulence, it just didn’t seem right. The pilot comes over the loud speaker and he says, ‘Folks we’ve lost the engine and the plane’s gonna go down. There’s nothing we can do about it.’ And then the pilot tells us there’s a parachute under our seat. So you and I look under our seats and we see parachutes there. We believe the parachutes are there. OK? We’re scared. The plane gets a little lower. The doors open up and the pilot orders everybody to jump for their lives. I

put my parachute on and I jump out of the plane. You don't put your parachute on and you jump out of the plane. Which one of us survives?" Tony asked.

"You survive." Danny stated plainly.

"Why?" Tony asked.

"Because you have a parachute on." Danny stated.

"But we both believed in it?" Tony said questioningly. "But it wasn't enough for us to look at the parachute and say, 'I believe that's a parachute.' We had to have enough faith and trust in that parachute to actually put it on and trust that it would open when we jump out of the plane to save our lives. You see, religion says 'I believe in the parachute,' saving faith says 'I believe in that parachute enough to put it on and trust that it's going to save my life. And that's the only way you could receive God's Salvation. That's the only way you could receive the gift of eternal life. The gift of heaven isn't by being religious and simply believing in your mind, but believing in your heart to the point that you want to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, trust Him with your life, trust Him to forgive your sins, and follow Him everyday of your life.

"Does that make sense?" Tony asked.

"Yeah." Danny replied.

"Yeah? So big question (I appreciate your time): is there any reason, Danny, why you wouldn't turn from your sin and put your trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior?" Tony asked.

"No." Danny said plainly.

"No? What would keep you from doing that right now?" Tony asked.

"Um, having faith?" Danny said.

"OK, and that faith is a gift from God, right?" Tony asked.

"Yeah." Danny replied.

"Yeah. Do you believe what I'm telling you is true?" Tony asked.

"Yeah I do." Danny answered.

"Then what I encourage you to do Danny is to repent, to turn from your sins and by faith alone receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and your Savior. And you don't have to confess your sin to any man, because that's why Jesus died on the Cross. So that we can go straight to God through faith in Jesus Christ. And if you cry out to Him in repentance and faith, ask Him to be your Lord and your Savior, He will, not because your good, not because you deserve it, but because of His love and His mercy and His grace and because of what He did on the Cross. Salvation's a free gift. There's nothing you could do to earn it, there's nothing you could do to work for it. The Bible says that the wages of sin, the crimes we've

committed against God, what we deserve for that, the wages of sin is death. But the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. So I would encourage you, if you believe what I'm telling you, to get right with God. Right away. Not because I asked you to, 'cause if you do anything simply because I asked you to then you're just being religious all over again. This is a matter of the heart." Tony compassionately explained.

"It should be because I want to, right?" Danny said back.

"You want to, yeah." Tony said.

"Well maybe God's even doing that work in you now? But if God is doing that work in you, if God is giving you that new heart, a heart that can trust Him and follow Him, then Danny you will repent. You will turn from your sin and you will put all of your faith and your trust in Jesus Christ. And that'll be the evidence that it's not just things you're thinking in your head, but that God has actually changed your heart. Caused you to be born-again and saved you." Tony explained thoroughly.

"Yep." Danny said.

"Do you have a Bible?" Tony asked.

"No I don't." Danny answered.

"This is the New Testament. I'm gonna put my ..." Tony said.

"Yeah. Is that Catholic?" Danny questioned.

"Ah it's not a Catholic Bible but it is the Bible. The only difference ... the New Testament in both the Christian Bible and the Catholic Bible are the same." Tony answered.

"Oh." Danny stated.

"They have all the same books. And I had ... oh here it is ..." Tony said.

"What is that?" Danny said.

"It's a Christian New Testament?" Tony reiterated.

"Oh it's Christian." Danny said back.

"And ... yeah ... this is a great place to start. And again, if you were to look in a Catholic New Testament you would find this book, the Gospel of John. OK?" Tony said.

"OK." Danny said.

"I encourage you to read it. You could read it in one sitting. Um, let's see. Do we have a ... I want something with our church on it ... oh hear we go. Our church website's here. Where do you live in Santa Clarita?" Tony asked.

"Um, by the high school." Danny answered.

"Alright, are you familiar with the New Hall area? Have you lived here very long?" Tony asked.

"Yeah." Danny answered.

"OK. If you're going down New Hall Avenue towards the fourteen freeway, you'll pass Valley de Horo, which is a light, and then the next street after that is Meadow Ridge. There's an apartment complex right there." Tony explained.

"OK." Danny followed.

"And then up the hill behind the apartment complex is our church. And the church website's right there, you can get information about the church. And then there's an email address where you can get a hold of me if you have any questions of any kind. OK?" Tony shared.

"OK." Danny responded.

"And don't think this weird, would it be alright if I prayed for you?" Tony asked.

"Um, yeah that's OK." Danny agreed.

"Yeah? Father I thank You for this conversation with Danny. I thank you Lord that he gave me his time to allow me to talk to him. Father I pray that You would help Danny to understand everything he's heard tonight, and that Father You would save him. That you would give him a new heart with new desires. Lord that he would desire to repent and to put his trust in You and to follow You all the days of his life. I pray Father that as he reads the Gospel of John You would open his eyes and his heart and his mind to be able to understand the Truth it contains. And Lord if it be Your will, and if Danny desires, I pray that we would be able to have more contact through email if he has questions. And Lord that he might even come and visit the church if he wants to do that. But ultimately Father I pray that this night You would make Danny right with You for Your Glory. In Jesus' name, amen." Tony finished.

"Thank you." Danny expressed.

"Thank you very much for your time it's been really good talking to ya'. And don't hesitate to email. And, uh, this is Peter and Tie and Lisa." Tony introduced.

"Nice to meet you." Danny said happily.

"Do you have any questions? In anything that you heard or anything that wasn't clear or anything that comes to mind at all?" Tony thoughtfully inquired.

"I should stop lying to people." Danny stated.

"Yeah, but you understand though, that trying to dean up your act and make yourself good, that's not what makes you right with God. Alright let me explain it this way: if you and I were neighbors and you knocked on my door and you said, 'Hey Tony, I'm gonna go mow your lawn so that I could be your son.'

I'm gonna look at ya' and I'm gonna say a couple of things: I'll say 'Well Danny I really appreciate you wanna get me out of doing yard work and I think it's pretty cool that you want me to be your Dad, but mowing my lawn isn't going to make you my son.' But what if you were my son? And you came to me and you said 'Dad I'm gonna go outside and mow the lawn, not because I want anything from ya', not because I want the car or a raise in my allowance, not because I've got a bomb to drop on ya' and I want to stay out of trouble. Dad I'm gonna just go mow the lawn because I love you, because you're my Dad. Would that make more sense?' Tony explained and asked.

"Yeah." Danny answered.

"Yeah. And the same is true with God. We could do all the good works in the world and our good works will never make us God's son. But if we turn to Him by faith and put all of our trust in Jesus Christ alone for our Salvation, God will adopt us as His sons. Then we'll want to do those things that please God, not because we're trying to earn heaven, but because we're so thankful for the gift the gift of Heaven that He gave us. Do you see the difference?" Tony compassionately asked.

"Uh huh." Danny uttered.

"See a lot of people, even in the Catholic (I grew up Catholic too) religion and most of the other religions of the world, they say that you have to do X,Y,Z, you have to do certain good things and believe a certain way, and then maybe you'll be right with God. The Bible says that there's nothing you can do to save yourself, that's why you need a Savior. And God has only provided One and that's Jesus Christ. And if He saves you, if you put your faith and your trust in Him alone for your Salvation, He promises to save you. And if He saves you, you will want to stop lying, not because you're trying to work to Heaven, you'll want to stop lying because you know that's an offense to your Heavenly Father. See the difference?" Tony asked.

"Yeah, I do. Thank you." Danny gratefully exclaimed.

"Yeah, any others?" Tony asked.

"Um ... no." Danny said.

"No? OK, well Danny, very good talking to ya' and I'm gonna be praying for ya', and please, no pressure, but if you would like ta' come visit the church, you're welcome. Or if you would just like to email me with your questions, that'd be great. And if you do repent and put your trust in Christ, if you wouldn't mind just shootin' me an email and just lettin' me know so I could rejoice with you." Tony said.

"Alright I will." Danny said.

"Alright, God bless you buddy! You have a good day." Tony said lovingly.

"Alright, you too." Danny finished.