

## Chapter 5

# War and Bondage

I had a roommate, Rob, who loved to hunt ducks. Dressed in the most appropriate camouflage for the day, he would leave the house at 4:00 a.m. to get to his spot before the ducks would fly overhead. He took with him a huge net of decoys and a duck call or duck whistle. When he got to his spot, he would set his decoys in the best places and then hide. At the right time, he would blow his duck call to lure ducks close enough to shoot them. The ducks were unaware that they were flying into a war. They were unaware that an enemy lurked seeking to deceive them into believing that they could have safe landing. They were unaware that the ducks they were seeing were actually wood masquerading as real. Nevertheless, the ducks were at war.

When Rob did not kill any ducks, he was disappointed. After unsuccessful trips, he would work on perfecting his duck call, or would buy better decoys, or would buy more appropriate camouflage, and then go out and hunt again. With fake bird calls and decoys, Rob lured ducks to their death. When he wasn't successful, he found new ways to lure and kill. He was determined to become better at deception. In his hunting, Rob used every means he could to kill ducks. One way to summarize this is that *Rob used fake ducks to make real ducks dead ducks.*

We are going to see how the enemy we face today uses the same deception. And we are going to learn in the Way of Rest how to fight as Jesus fought. Scripture teaches us that we are born into a war between two kingdoms. The Kingdom of God is firmly set against the dominion of Satan. The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 1:13-14, "For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the Kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins." In the Old Testament the war between the kingdoms is seen mainly in the battles between God's people, Israel, and the surrounding countries. These are a shadow of the greater world in the spiritual realm and they continue to give us many valuable insights and strategies about the war.

In the Gospels, the spiritual reality of the war becomes more prevalent as Jesus engages in battles against demonic forces. The connection between the spiritual and physical forces in both kingdoms is easier to see. In the remainder of the New Testament, the disciples of Jesus continue to fight in the war, training us to do the same. Scripture ends in the book of Revelation with the details of how the final battles will be fought.

Scripture teaches that the domain of darkness is led by Satan who uses deception that is like fake ducks to deceive and destroy people. 2 Peter 5:8 states, "Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour." 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 warns us to look through disguises as Satan can enlist people into his army to fight in the war: "For such men are apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. Therefore is it not surprising that his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness, whose end will be according to their deeds." Finally, Jesus

teaches that the intent of the enemy is destruction saying in John 10:10, “The thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy.”

While the domain of darkness is led by Satan, Jesus is the Light of the world, champion of God's kingdom. He came to “destroy the works of the devil.”<sup>15</sup> He came to inaugurate the Kingdom of God. He came to set people free, “If you continue in My word, then you are disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”<sup>16</sup> Jesus is God's answer to the deceiver and his deception.

So many brothers and sisters suffer unnecessarily because they are unaware of the war. Like the ducks, they have not been awakened to the enemy, his tactics, and the availability of freedom. Nevertheless, the war rages. Casualties mount. The enemy advances. As veterans in the war, we must allow the Holy Spirit to use us to help people understand the battle, walk in freedom, and train others to do the same. Making disciples, then, is about training new people to fight. To do so we must be equipped with wisdom and confidence in our own techniques of walking in the power of Jesus.

*As for God, His way is blameless;  
The word of the Lord is tried;  
He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.  
For who is God, but the Lord?  
And who is a rock, except our God,  
The God who girds me with strength  
And makes my way blameless?  
He makes my feet like hinds' feet,  
And sets me upon my high places.  
He trains my hands for battle,  
So that my arms can bend a bow of bronze.  
You have also given me the shield of Your salvation,  
And Your right hand upholds me;  
And Your gentleness makes me great.  
You enlarge my steps under me,  
And my feet have not slipped.<sup>17</sup>*

### **THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE WAR**

An important aspect of training in the war is understanding the significance of the conflict. War is not a secondary part of life nor is it minor or accidental. Without war there is no need for Jesus. It is the context of life and the world in which we live.

The significance of the war is seen in Jesus' life and ministry. Our Father sent Jesus to violently overthrow the power of Satan, the world, and sin. His violence was not of this world. Jesus did not come into this world to be depicted with a robe and glowing halo. He

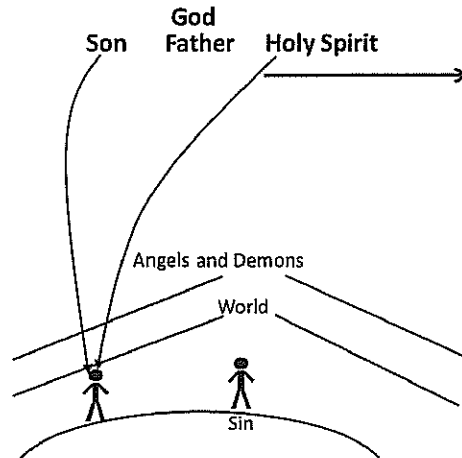
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<sup>15</sup> 1 John 3:8

<sup>16</sup> John 8:31-32

<sup>17</sup> Psalm 18:30-36

came to set people free. He came to “destroy the works of the evil one.”<sup>18</sup> He came to take back that which the enemy took from man. In His first recorded sermon, widely accepted as the message He shared traveling from city to city, Jesus declared, “The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”<sup>19</sup> This is Jesus in the face of Satan declaring that God's victory is here. Jesus is saying, “I know there are other powers and forces in this world. I know who they are and what they are doing. The time has come for their reign to end. This...ends...now.” And so it did. Jesus came with love; because of love Jesus came to fight.



*The significance of the war seen in the Eph 1 diagram.*

The significance of the war is also seen in Jesus' relationship to the Kingdom of God. When Jesus came He did not simply come by Himself in some isolated, individual way. He came in power to re-establish the Kingdom of God. Jesus declared, “The Kingdom of God is at hand.” He came as the King of a one-person empire intent on gathering to Himself His people and empowering them to continue His work of engaging the war and saving lives.

In addition to the life and ministry of Jesus and the Kingdom of God, Jesus' teachings and the teachings of His followers show us the central role of war and power in the world.

But if I (Jesus) cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you.<sup>20</sup>

It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and

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<sup>18</sup> 1 John 3:8

<sup>19</sup> Mark 1:15

<sup>20</sup> Matthew 12:28

you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.<sup>21</sup>

Now some have become arrogant, as though I were not coming to you. But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I shall find out, not the words of those who are arrogant but their power. For the kingdom of God does not consist in words but in power.<sup>22</sup>

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.<sup>23</sup>

Submit therefore to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you.<sup>24</sup>

So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.<sup>25</sup>

With many other passages we are taught that war is the context of life. Jesus came to fight the war. He inaugurated the Kingdom of God. Satan, the enemy of God and leader of his demonic army, actively wage war against God's creation. Jesus sets people free. He then equips them to live victoriously, leading others to the same salvation.

### **CULTURAL AND PERSONAL DISTORTIONS**

Fighting and training others requires us to deal with cultural conditions and personal beliefs about spiritual warfare. Talk of Satan, the demonic, and spiritual warfare is provocative. Some people will strongly push back against it. Others will have wild beliefs about it. We will need to understand the beliefs and opinions of the people with whom we will be working.

Generally, the United States is a hyper-rational/material culture. If we cannot see it or logically work through it then it is not real. When you work with people who have a default anti-spiritual perspective you will need to address that before getting into spiritual warfare. You will find safe ground in sober study of the Bible. You may need to start with Genesis 1:1 and deal with the person's overall belief in spirituality. Do they really believe in a spiritual God and a spiritual world, separate but inter-connected with the physical world? The miraculous stories of the Old Testament and the miracles of Jesus are also helpful. Does the person believe these are just good stories or truth? As they open to spirituality, we get into spiritual warfare. If the person is very reluctant you cannot do better than studying Jesus and His life. He dealt with the demonic all of the time. And He was sober-minded and beloved.

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<sup>21</sup> Acts 1:7-8

<sup>22</sup> 1 Corinthians 4:18-20

<sup>23</sup> Ephesians 6:12

<sup>24</sup> James 4:7

<sup>25</sup> Revelation 12:17

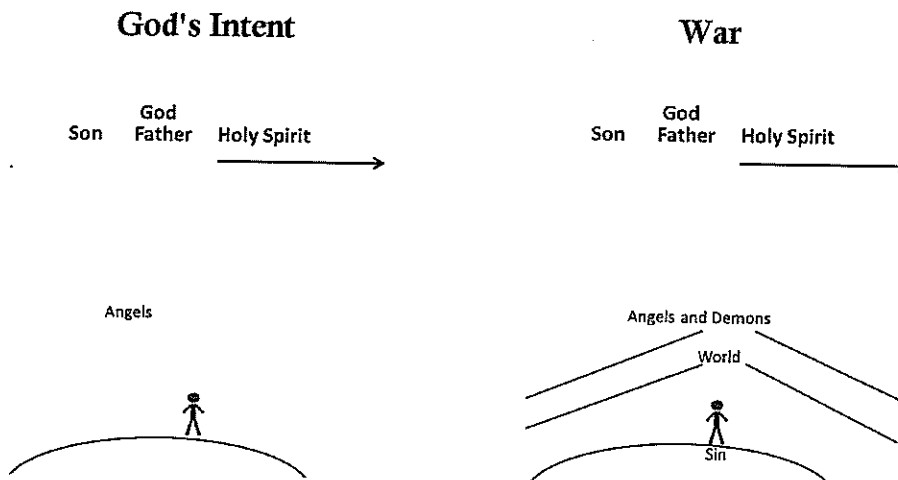
Unfortunately, people have been exposed to many bad examples of spiritual warfare. The topic will conjure up many bizarre images they have seen on TV or in person. They may have many different crazy beliefs. In working with people with these backgrounds we must approach them with a sober and conservative understanding of Scripture. Again, Jesus becomes the starting place for us in having a grounded view of spiritual warfare.

In warfare we will see the significant role played by power and authority. Everything is about power. You will help your disciples look through their issues to the power present in them. The issues are always going to change - the power is always the same. The power of lust is the same as the power of anger is the same as the power of pride. We train our people in power so that no matter the issue they are equipped to deal with it. So I will ask them if they can see below their issues. If the issue is fear can they see below their fear to the power of their fear? Can they feel that power? That is where we are going. That is where the enemy is working. That is the meat of the matter. And that is where the Holy Spirit wants to go, wants to be released, and will do devastating work!

It will be helpful for you and for those you disciple to know how we got where we are, two kingdoms, and the reality of powers. Base your own discipleship and teaching on spiritual warfare in Jesus. Accepting spiritual warfare will be a part of a person's journey in Christ. Hopefully sooner rather than later they will be open to it. Furthermore, seeing spiritual warfare in Jesus' life will keep your people sober-minded. There is quite a bit of "off-the-wall" information available on spiritual warfare. Point them to Jesus.

### THE BACKGROUND

Using the duck hunter analogy, where did the duck hunter come from? Why is he here? How does he work? Why are we so prone to follow his call? Are there other forces at work? How did we get where we are?



“In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth.”<sup>26</sup> On the sixth day He created man and woman in His image and after His likeness. They were the unique image-bearers of God. After He completed His sixth day of work God saw all that He made and it was very good. Everything was as God intended. There was no sin, no sickness, and no injustice. There was God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the angels; man and woman; and the Garden of Eden.

In that divine perfection, God gave man a mandate. He said two things. First, He said, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it.”<sup>27</sup> Second, He said, “From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you will surely die.”<sup>28</sup> Our Father gave Adam and Eve the perfection of the garden to enjoy. He created them to be His people and for Him to be their God. That relationship was to be built on love, trust, and obedience.

One of many questions about the garden is why would God even put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil there? Why not just leave it out? Then there is no temptation, no fall, and no need for Jesus. Why put it there? The answer comes from the nature of love. God made man to be in a love relationship with Him. How was man to demonstrate his love for God? God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are perfect - their love comes from the nature of their perfection. However, man is not God. There had to be a way, something, for man to show his love for God. God gave them the tree. The tree gave Adam and Eve a way to demonstrate their love for God by trusting Him and obeying His words regarding the tree. Their love would be demonstrated through obedience.

Jesus regularly teaches us that obedience is the natural product of love. He says in John 14:15 “If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” And again in John 14:21, “He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” And finally in John 15:10, Jesus says again, “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.” Obedience is the mark of love. (Notice in John 15:10 that Jesus' own love for His Father is demonstrated by His obedience. Jesus, who lived a perfect life, enjoyed obedience. We will get into our disdain for obedience later in this section.)

God did not put the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden to tempt Adam and Eve but to give them an opportunity to show their love for God. He was their God and they were going to live life trusting Him with their lives.

So there is God's perfection - angels, man/woman, and the Garden. However, when we get to Genesis 3:1, something has gone terribly wrong. We are introduced to a mysterious “serpent” that is more crafty than all of the animals. Of course this is Satan who has come to usurp God's plan for His image-bearers. But where did he come from and what authority does he have today?

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<sup>26</sup> Genesis 1:1

<sup>27</sup> Genesis 1:28

<sup>28</sup> Genesis 2:16-17

From Isaiah 14:3-23 and Ezekiel 28:1-19 we get some insight into what happened. As I am sharing with a person the background of the war, I may refer to the Scripture passages or I may just tell the story. Circumstances in the conversation will determine the course of action. According to these passages, Satan was once an angel named Lucifer. He became jealous of the glory of God and wanted more for himself. He rebelled against God. God judged his rebellion and kicked him out of the Divine Assembly. (Divine Assembly is another way of saying free access to the regular presence of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.) Somehow, and we are not told how, Satan convinced one-third of the angels to follow him in rebellion against God. From this treason the demonic army began.

You will have to find the right terminology to use in describing this, as "demonic army" may be too much or just right for the one(s) with whom you are speaking. Similarly, "kingdom of darkness" may also be too much. However you communicate this you need to convey that this is not just Satan and a few ragtag spirits. His work is systematic, organized, and effective.

What began in the heavens came to earth. Satan went after the object of God's affection: man. Satan tempted Eve to rebel against God and His word for their lives. Adam did not stand against his wife's disobedience but joined her. And man was now guilty of the same rebellion.

It is worth noting that Satan attacked Eve in the place of her image. Satan challenged how she saw herself, how God saw her, and how she saw God. She was lured into dissatisfaction with the image God created her in through curiosity about becoming something more. She was deceived into believing that God's restriction was constricting her life, when in fact God's restriction was promoting life.

Nevertheless, God came and judged the serpent, the woman, and the man. In Genesis 3:14-19, God doles out the consequences. You need to be intimately familiar with these verses. You will be able to track the majority of dissatisfaction, fear, anxiety, and exhaustion to these verses. As a result of the Genesis 3 events, there are now three sources of bondage - Satan, the world, and sin.<sup>29</sup> Each actively and aggressively wars against God, His will, and His people.

This is a brief summation of how we got where we are in life today. Now we are going to look at each source of bondage. Afterward we will discuss Jesus, His Kingdom, and how He brings deliverance, freedom, and healing.

## **SATAN**

The duck hunter considers every detail in his preparation for the hunt. He will choose the appropriate clothing and right location and time. He will spend hours working on his ability to make the best sounding duck call he can make. He will put out the choicest of decoys.

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<sup>29</sup> We see these listed right next to each other in Ephesians 2:1-2, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience."

He knows the game in duck hunting is deception. He labors to be a master deceiver. If the real ducks get any sense of the hunter they will not come near.

Satan is a master hunter. He has been at it a long time. It is always sobering for me to consider that somehow Satan was able to convince a third of the angels to leave the manifest presence of God. The degree of deception that he had to have used is tough to describe. That is the effectiveness of his work. He is intense. He is extremely subtle. He works in toeholds. He will use Scripture, pain, dreams, religion, love, pride, food, drugs, sex and anything else he can to succeed. He is real. He is alive. He is working. And he is devouring people. This is no game. It is not cute. He does not fight fair. This is real and destructive. He is masterful at deceiving people from the love, grace, and truth of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

The war was established by God in Genesis 3. He curses Satan, declaring that war will exist between Satan and his seed and a mysterious woman and her seed. Satan has a seed - sons and daughters on his "side." They will wage war against a woman and her seed. We understand this to be Mary and her seed to be Jesus. There will be war. In this war God says the serpent shall bruise the seed of the woman on the heel but he will bruise the serpent on the head. While the serpent will inflict a wound on the woman-seed he will not destroy him. The woman-seed, however, will get in a lethal blow to the serpent. The woman-seed was later revealed as Jesus. Jesus will have final victory over Satan and his army.

Paul says in Ephesians 2:2 that while in sin we were actually living according to Satan himself - "the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience." Therefore, the Genesis 3:14 seed of Satan are those who live in rebellion to God and His word. There are only two sides in this war - only two. Rebellion does not require a person to consciously, actively, or intentionally serve Satan. Nevertheless, that is what rebellion is. A person either gives glory to God or to Satan.

Identifying the work of Satan in the war is important. As you walk with Jesus and as you spend more time discipling people you will increase in your ability to discern Satan's work. One way to understand how he works is by studying his different names. In Scripture he is called:

*Satan* (Matthew 4:10, Job 1:6) - this name means adversary. Satan works against God's will in people's lives. He may use fear or discouragement or distraction or a number of other weapons. Here he stands opposed to the direction of God for His people's lives.

*Devil* (Matthew 4:1, 13:39; Revelation 12:9) - this name means slanderer or false accuser. Satan works to call people names, remind them of things past, and confuse them about the faithfulness of God.

*Serpent* (Genesis 3:1, 14; 2 Corinthians 11:3) - this name is used to highlight Satan's deceptive nature. He can take different forms and speak through different people. He does not just come straight forward or through one person.



*Be-elzebul, Ruler of this world, Prince of the power of the air* (Matthew 10:25, 12:24; Luke 11:15, John 12:31, Ephesians 2:2) - Be-elzebul means lord of the house. All three have the same connotation. Satan is lord over the world. He exercises his authority from what Paul calls the air. We will see in the next section how Satan uses his authority. But it is important to understand he does have real authority.

*Evil one* (Matthew 13:19, 1 John 2:13) - It is pretty clear what this means. But here we pick up the nature of his intent. The being of Satan is evil. His works are evil. Evil is the enemy of God's goodness. Satan's intent is to bring desolation, destruction, and division.

*Father of lies* (John 8:44) - This is clear as well. He is the master liar. If he cannot get in with one lie he will get in with another. And if neither works he will lay in wait until an opportune time to return.

*The Tempter* (Genesis 3:1-3, Luke 4:1-13, Matthew 16:23) - Satan works through tempting. He lies, tempting people to question what they believe or never pursue truth at all. Notice in the wilderness with Jesus, Satan tried three different ways to tempt Jesus. Like lying, Satan tried to get in one way and it did not work so he tried two others. When those failed he waited again until that opportune time.

Understanding these names will help us identify where Satan is working in a person's life. The longer you fight in the war the more apparent Satan and his schemes will be. While he is a master liar there is only so much he can do.

In addition to his names, we also see specific works Satan does in the Scripture. These will further help us identify when he is the source of the issues with which we are dealing.

Today he is actively working by:

- Stealing the effectiveness of the word in people's lives (Mark 4:15)
- Physical illness (Luke 13:10-17)
- Possession (Matthew 8:28, Mark 1:32, Luke 8:27)
- Blinding people in unbelief (2 Corinthians 2:11)
- False religions (John 8)
- Discord in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 4:18-20)
- Extreme bodily harm (Luke 8:30)
- Subverting the will of God (Matthew 16:23)
- Keeping believers in bondage (James 4:7)

He is certainly doing more than this but these are some key areas where he operates.<sup>30</sup> If you identify these in your people you need to discern the source and properly deal with it.

I will also apply a simple test to determine if Satan is working. I have always found that if he is present then the person will feel like no one cares, no one listens, and no one

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<sup>30</sup> For an excellent study on the enemy's use of psychological warfare see 2 Kings 18:13-19:37 and 2 Chronicles 32. Additionally, *The Strategy of Satan*, by Warren Wiersbe, is one of many great books on the subject.

understands. They are increasingly isolating themselves. This makes sense because Satan always works to separate and isolate.

To be sure, when I say Satan, I mean more than the angel formerly called Lucifer. Satan himself is not personally doing all of these things. He has an army that orderly, systematically, and deliberately carrying out his works. Paul makes Satan's army known to us by saying in Ephesians 6:12, "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places." Satan's effectiveness happens through the combined forces of his spiritual army.

From the beginning the Scripture teaches us about the reality of spiritual causes. You cannot walk with Jesus and disavow that there are spiritual causes in life. You will not be able to effectively disciple people unless you are versed in spiritual warfare. As you minister to people you must consider spiritual causes as contributors to their condition. They may be dealing with something emotional or physical, yet the problem may be spiritual. You must be prepared. Or, at the very least, have a resource that can. Then you need to be trained in how to deal with it yourself. We will briefly cover this in the freedom section of the next chapter.<sup>31</sup>

### **Satan and Christians**

There are many questions and opinions about the effect Satan and demons can have on Christians. One often-used line says that while demons cannot possess, they can oppress Christians. Christians have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and, therefore, cannot be possessed by them. What attack they can bring is minimal. I offer this to you based on my understanding of Scripture and my experience working with people. Demons cannot possess Christians but they can do a lot more than just oppress. A middle ground sometimes called "attachment" is used to explain the more-than-oppression position.

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Possession

Attachment

Oppression

The demonic have the ability to exert influence in areas where Christians have not addressed their issues. The demonic have not "taken over" in the classic sense of possession. But they are also not merely on the outside pointing fingers. They might not have total control, but they exercise substantial influence. It doesn't matter how you label it, "attachment" or something else, just know that it is real.

One of many places this can be seen in the Bible is James 4:7. Here James writes, "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." This is the normal pattern that Jesus walks in and that is taught by Paul and Peter. Submission to God empowers a person to resist the devil. You cannot resist without first submitting.

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<sup>31</sup> I have found Karl Payne's book, *Spiritual Warfare*, to be the best and most sober book available on the topic.

What happens then when a Christian has an area of their lives they are unwilling to submit to The Lord? The person has been baptized and is born again. However, they have experienced a trauma in their life that they do not want to revisit, yet that trauma is the source of their fear. The person reads their Bible faithfully, goes to church, serves, and even receives from the Spirit, but they are unwilling to submit this trauma to The Lord.

How are they able to resist the devil? Resistance requires submission. I have seen people who have memorized all sorts of Scripture, served in many different capacities, gone to counseling, used prescription drugs, given more money, done whatever they could to get free of something, and still had no victory. At the heart of their condition has been a refusal to acknowledge spiritual warfare and deal with the root issues. Once they are aware of demonic causes and bondage then the Spirit works to free them. The change is dramatic. The results are trajectory-changing.

The same pattern can be found in Matthew 16:21-23, Ephesians 4:26-27, 6:10-17, and 1 Peter 5:6-11. Another example comes from Ephesians 6. Paul charges Christians to be “strong in The Lord and in the strength of His might.” So what happens when Christians are weak in The Lord or in a particular area in their life? Paul trains his people to take up the shield of faith “with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.” What happens when a Christian does not take the shield up fast enough? Fiery arrows are shot by someone at specific targets. When a fiery arrow lands it does two things - it burns and it spreads. One can picture a movie scene where archers light their arrows with fire and shoot them over castle walls. The fiery arrows land on hay or wood and the fire quickly spreads, consuming people and everything it touches. These arrows can be more severe than demonic oppression. One of Satan's demons has found a way in and is causing damage in a Christian. It may be through fear, approval, anger, pride, guilt, shame, or a host of other things. Nevertheless, the source of the issue is demonic.

There are additional markers you can look for to help determine whether there is demonic activity. One is the ineffectiveness of other solutions. If quoting Scripture, memorizing Scripture, prayer, and the like are not effective, then that is a good indicator there is demonic activity. Another marker is the feeling that the battle is not a “fair fight.” It feels overwhelming. A person feels hopeless. Ineffective solutions and hopelessness combined with others mentioned will be useful in determining whether there is demonic activity. Of course, the best indicator is revelation given by the Holy Spirit.

Satan and his demonic army are actively and effectually at work in the world and in people. There is power and authority in the darkness. They are working to rob our Father of His glory and destroy His work in people. As the ruler of this world, Satan controls our next source of bondage - the world.

## **THE WORLD**

Returning to our duck analogy, the messages of the world are all the different fake ducks set out by the hunter to deceive and trap. The goal of the hunter is to create the most realistic fake ducks possible. Attention is given to every quality - shape, size, contours, and colors -

in an attempt to lure real ducks into the hunter's net. Hence 'the world' can be seen in Scripture as any of the following examples.

Paul warns in Colossians 2:8, "See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ."

John writes in 1 John 2:15-17, "Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. The world is passing away, and also its lusts; but the one who does the will of God lives forever."

2 Peter 1:4 says, "For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust."

John 15:18-19 says, "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you."

On the one hand God so loved the world that He gave His Son Jesus. On the other hand the world is aggressively against God and His work. It is hard to define 'the world' because it is comprehensive and it changes according to time, culture, gender, and other factors. So the world for a single woman in Nicaragua will have different attributes than a Muslim man in Iran. In the broadest sense 'the world' is the collective systems, philosophies, governments, and religions that deny the truth of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

As you disciple, you will need to discern what the world is to those you are discipling. What are the cultural messages and family history they have believed? For example, we are taught in the United States that "you can do anything you set your mind to." That is a worldly, cultural message. And it is one of the primary lies we deal with in our disciples. Another cultural message is "if you do not take care of yourself no one else is going to." Women, in our culture, are taught that to be beautiful they need to maintain a certain weight and look a certain way. Men are told to be successful they must work 70-80 hours a week. In general, these are all examples of cultural messages coming from the United States in general. However, there are other messages that are geographically and ethnically motivated.

The manifestations of the messages of the world will be different. However, they have some similar features that make them easier to discern.

- They deny that Jesus is the sufficient sacrifice of God for life. (Colossians 2:8-15)
- They pull people away from faithfully following the will of God for their lives. (1 John 2:15-17)
- They choke out maturity in the believer. (Mark 4:1-20)

As the ruler of the world, Satan is actively at work creating, using, and manipulating the messages of the world as part of his arsenal. This does not mean that there is a demon literally in every pornographic magazine, but it does mean that the enemy is behind the porn industry.

What is important to remember here is the subtlety of the enemy. There are those who will rail against something like Harry Potter but have no problem living in their materialism or gluttony. Materialism and gluttony are far more effective weapons today in the United States than Harry Potter. Laziness and entitlement are effective weapons just like pornography. The messages of the world are everywhere. This is why Jesus and the apostles were so forceful in their condemnation of the world. Instead of going after each individual message, they grouped them into one admonition. "Do not love the world nor the things in the world."<sup>32</sup>

The world is a powerful weapon aimed to separate God and His people. The enemy uses the world to incite man in the third area of bondage - sin.

## **SIN**

Why do ducks continually fall prey to the call of the hunter? Why do we continually chase fake ducks? Why isn't there a generational awakening to the lies and deceit of the enemy? Sin. Sin. Sin. Sin is everywhere and in everyone. Sin is brutal, raw selfishness. It is self-centered, self-seeking, powerful, and destructive. But by far the worst reality of sin is that it separates the sinner from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who love them. Made in the image of God, man was created to be in wonderful relationship with God. God's intent was that man would eternally choose to trust Him, be faithful to Him, and enjoy life with Him as the Father, Son, and Spirit do with each other. Man's desire for more ripped that apart and still rips it apart today.

While Satan and the world operate outside of man (in general), sin works inside of man. Sin is an internal condition of rebellion against God. Sin is personal. Sin is choosing the fake ducks of Satan over the love of God. By choosing to eat of the tree, Adam and Eve disobeyed God. They chose to break relationship with Him. Sin is no victimless crime. Every sin is a choice to rebel against the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is a denial of His way of life. It is personal.

James gives us a vivid description of sin and how it works in us. He writes in James 1:13-15:

Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God"; for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He Himself does not tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. Then, when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death.

Temptation comes in customized ways. Satan creates a unique fake duck to entice us. We are carried away by our lust for the bait. This is selfishness. This selfishness gives birth to

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<sup>32</sup> 1 John 2:15

sin. Sin leads to death. Every one of us knows this. Every one of us lives this. Sin is strong. In discipleship we train people to identify their sin and swiftly deal with it.

When we get to setting people free from their bondage we work on slowing down their lives so that they can feel the progression of their own sin. It may begin in different places, but I have found the progression to feel the same in every person. We will work through this in the next chapter on freedom.

In this section I am going to work through a list of four areas of sin. Then I will get to how the power of sin works. Then, in the next chapter, I will move to getting set free from all of this baggage.

There are four sources of sin in our lives. As you disciple it will be helpful to identify the source of the sin.

1. The curse of the Garden - sin manifests itself differently in man and woman according to Genesis 3:16-19. The woman experiences sin in the home and the family. It is her greatest place of insecurity. The man experiences sin in the work place. It is his greatest place of insecurity. Observe in your people how the curse of the Garden is affecting them. Take them through this passage and offer them freedom.
2. Generational sin - sin is passed from one generation to the next. Track the generational sin of sex and idolatry from King David to King Asa. There is no indication from David's father, Jesse, that sex and idolatry were generational issues. But track how sex entered David's line and was passed to Solomon. See how Solomon added idolatry. Watch how that spread and the damage it did. Generational sin is powerful. You will need to know if what you are dealing with is generational.
3. Strongholds - these are specific areas where the messages of the world have taken hold in a person's life. All of the passages discussed in the section on the world apply here.
4. Personal sins - these are actively operating sins. These are sins that a person is living in which are not directly caused by the other three areas. From what I have experienced, the most dominant, controlling sins in this area are:
  - Alcohol/drugs
  - Sex
  - Money
  - The occult
  - Unforgiveness - this is one of the major issues we encounter. Victimization is everywhere. We work to differentiate between being victimized and being a victim.
  - Others<sup>33</sup>

It is normal for people's sin to be layered. Money issues will be on top of a stronghold that sits on top of generational sin. People are messy and life can be complicated. We cannot work with people thinking that all they need is a Bible verse and everything is going to be okay. At the same time we do not need advanced degrees in psychology to be effective in

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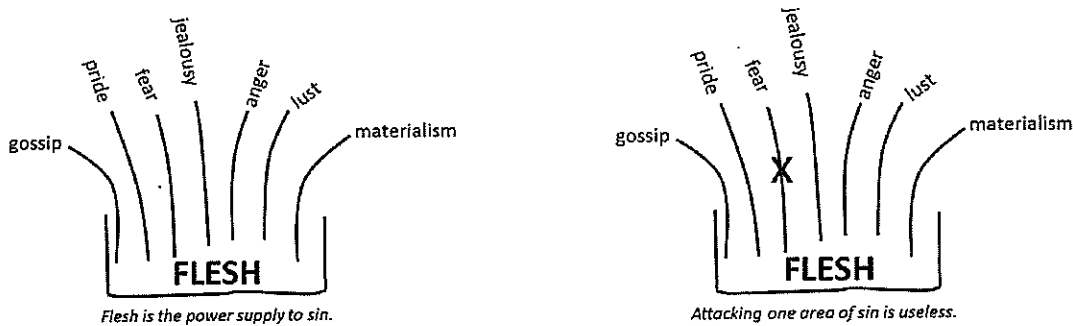
<sup>33</sup> Other lists of sins are given in Galatians 5:19-21, and other Scriptures.

healing people that deal with heavy issues. While there are certainly people who will need more than you can offer, most of them will not.

It is important to see that regardless of the specific manifestation, the power of sin is the same. To deal with sin is to walk in power. Remember from the Eph 1 diagram that Satan, the world, and sin all exercise power. The specific fake duck(s) used will be different but the power at work is the same. The specific manifestation will certainly be different in one person than another, but the power will be the same. I empathize with the power working against my wife to feel confident at home because I battle the same power working against me to feel confident at work. The lazy person can relate to the over-achiever because the power behind their sin is the same. Sin is all about selfish power.

The power source of sin is called the flesh. Paul writes in Galatians 5:16-17, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things you please." The flesh has power. Paul then writes that the flesh manifests itself in all of the specific sins we battle, so that the specific sin is not really the issue. The greater issue is the flesh, often called the sinful nature, which empowers the sin.<sup>34</sup> Satan is fine with disciples who want to work on a particular sin issue. He knows there is no power in that because it is not addressing the power source.

In the diagram below you can see the power source of the flesh driving the different manifestations. Can you now see how the one with fear can relate to the one with pride? The power is all the same. Can you see that simply dealing with fear is a waste of time? How much more powerful to crucify the flesh! When the flesh is crucified then the power of sin is broken. In dealing with the bondage of sin we work in the power of the Spirit to destroy the power of the flesh.



Whether the person's sin was the direct work of the demonic or the world does not matter, every person is responsible for their sin. Everyone is accountable. One of the great effects of sin is deflection. From the beginning, Adam tried to deflect his responsibility, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate."<sup>35</sup> We all attempt to

<sup>34</sup> The NIV translates Paul's flesh as the "sinful nature." The Apostle John uses light/dark imagery to convey the same message. Darkness can be from Satan, the world, or a reference to the flesh/sinful nature of man.

<sup>35</sup> Genesis 3:12

pass responsibility to others. God our Father will have none of that. We are responsible. We will see that being restored to full and personal responsibility is one of the great places of freedom and joy in life. No one is able to say, "The devil made me do it."

## **CONCLUSION**

You can see from the duck hunter analogy and the Eph 1 diagram how all three sources of bondage can work together. Satan controls the messages of the world. Those messages appeal to every kind of person. In one place the message is greed, so a man dresses in a fancy suit, works 70 hours a week away from his family, and engages in unethical and illegal business practices. In another place the message is rebellion and a girl dresses in all black, listens to crazy depressive music, and wallows in her self-pity. In another place the message is hopelessness so a family prostitutes their daughter to make money. In one family the message is male dominance so a man beats his wife and has affairs. In another family the message is pride so men and women cut each other down and gossip. In one region the message is physical attractiveness so women spend money on "improving" their bodies and even starving themselves. In another region the message is religion so men and women dedicate themselves to religious works and moral lives all the while separated from intimacy with the God of their creation. The geographies and ethnicities are different, the messages are different, but the intent of the enemy is the same.

Satan is working in all of these to capture and hold the image-bearers of God. And like ducks going after fake ducks we blindly fall. I certainly do not need Satan's direct involvement to sin in my own life. I do just fine sinning on my own. But he is absolutely and diabolically at work easily manipulating the world and people. At the heart of all of this is keeping people away from God. People are separated from the One who made them and loves them. They deny, doubt, or actively rebel against Him who sent His Son.

Thankfully, in His grace and mercy, our Almighty Father faithfully sent His Son to be *the* Light for man. In the midst of the war there is Hope. God *promises* us deliverance and victory in this life. He has not left us. He does not leave us. In the next chapter we will work through the hope of God anchored in His faithfulness and the brilliant sufficiency of Jesus.