

5: FAKE DUCKS AND REAL WAR

I cannot say this emphatically enough: **JESUS LIVED AT WAR!** While reading about His life, you're thrust onto the front lines of a soldier engaged in daily combat. Bombs drop and bullets fly. Jesus' Kingdom way, the Way of Rest, is lived in the midst of a universal, cosmological, spiritual, internal war—and casualties are everywhere.

Battle-training is a required part of the curriculum for anyone who wants to take Jesus' yoke upon themselves and learn from Him. He had rest, not because there was no war, but because He knew how to fight.

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 a huge net of decoys and a duck call or 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 they could have safe landings. They were unaware that the ducks they saw were actually wood masquerading as real ducks. Nevertheless, the ducks were at war.

When Rob didn't kill any ducks, he was disappointed. After unsuccessful trips, he would work on perfecting his duck call, or buy better decoys or more appropriate camouflage, and then go out and hunt again. With fake birdcalls and decoys, Rob lured ducks to their deaths. 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.

Another way to say this is that *Rob used fake ducks to make real ducks dead ducks.*

This illustrates the reality and severity of the war in which we live. 1 John 5:19 says, “We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.” Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit was going to come and convict the world concerning judgment “because the ruler of this world has been judged” (John 16:11).

THE WAY OF REST:

One God

Two Kingdoms: God vs. Satan

Three Enemies

Four Promises

Five Disciplines

Paul wrote 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.” With many other passages we are taught that we’re born into a war between **two kingdoms**. The Kingdom of God is firmly set against the dominion of Satan. Colossians 1:13–14 says, “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.”

From the time of Adam and Eve’s fall in the Garden of Eden to Jesus’ return in Revelation, war is the context and condition of life. In the Old Testament the war between the kingdoms is seen mainly in the battles between God’s people, Israel, and its surrounding countries. These are a shadow of the greater war in the spiritual realm. 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. The Bible ends in the book of Revelation with the details of how the final battle will be fought. The reality of the war helps explain so much of our life experience. War is cold. The enemies of Jesus and His people do not care. They do not fight fair. They are not just. They are calculating, deceptive, expert killers.

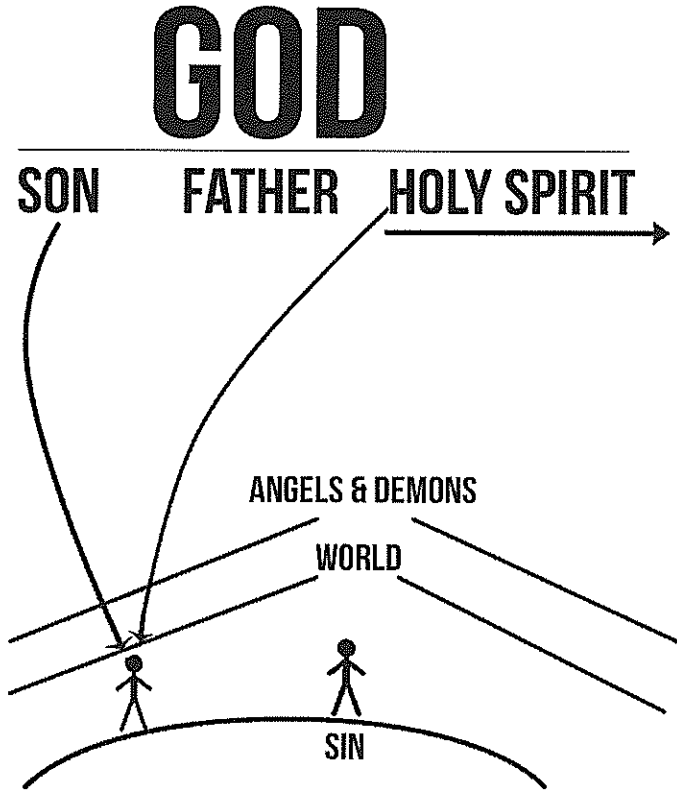
- “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy” (John 10:10a).
- “For such men are apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. No wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:13–15).
- “Submit therefore to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you” (James 4:7).
- “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (2 Peter 5:8).

These verses do not describe some vague notion called evil. They describe an enemy of God and the people of God who are actively and intently at work to destroy life.

We have to learn how to fight from Jesus. Not training to fight is like teaching children to ride bikes but not teaching them about traffic! So many brothers and sisters suffer unnecessarily because they're 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. Let us lean into Jesus, the Light of the world, and let Him train our hands for battle!

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 (Psalm 18:30–36).



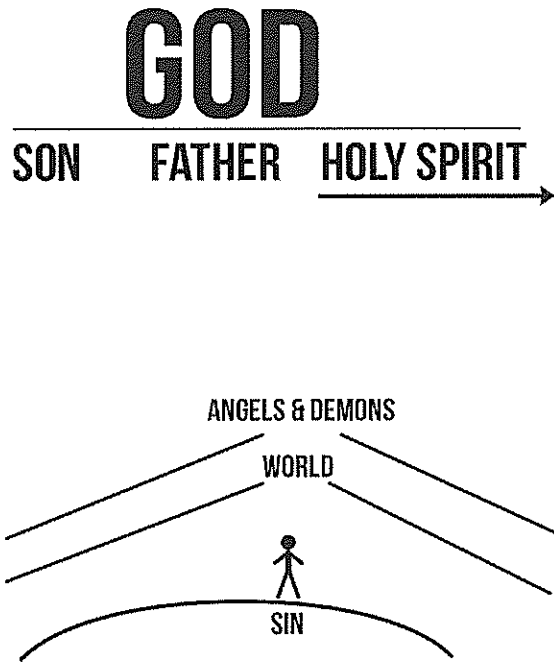
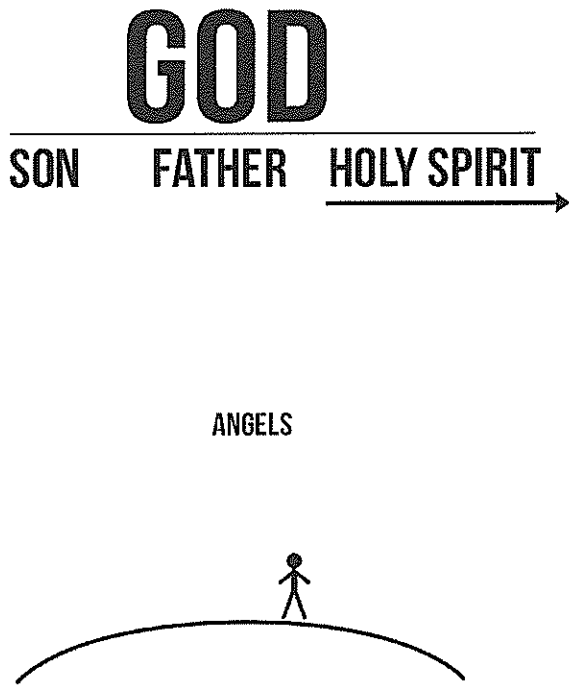
The reality of the war as seen in the Eph 1 diagram.

THE HISTORY OF THIS WAR

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?

God's Intent

War



“In the beginning God created the Heavens and the Earth” (Genesis 1:1) 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. First, He said, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it” (Genesis 1:28). 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” (Genesis 2:16–17). 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's God's perfection: angels, man and woman, and the Garden. However, when we get to Genesis 3:1, something has gone terribly wrong. We're introduced to a mysterious "serpent" that's 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?

From Isaiah 14:3–23 and Ezekiel 28:1–19, we gain some insight into what happened. When I share the background of this war, I may refer to the Scripture passages, or I may just tell the story. Circumstances in the conversation 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.

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's 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. Through curiosity about becoming something more, she was lured into dissatisfaction with the image that God had created her in. She was deceived into believing that God's restriction was constricting her life, when in fact God's restriction promoted life.

Nevertheless, God came and judged the serpent, the woman, and the man. In Genesis 3:14–19, God doles out the consequences. As a result of the Genesis 3 events, there are now **three enemies at work in creation: Satan, the world, and sin.**⁷ Each actively and aggressively wars against God, His will, and His people.

THE WAY OF REST:

One God

Two Kingdoms

Three Enemies: Sin, the World, and Satan

Four Promises

Five Disciplines

This is a brief summation of how we got where we are in life today. Now we're going to look at each enemy individually.

SATAN

The duck hunter considers every detail in his preparation for the hunt. He will choose appropriate clothing, the right location, and the best time. He will spend hours learning to make the best-sounding duck call he can make. He will put out the choicest of decoys. 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's been at it a long time. It's always sobering for me to consider that somehow Satan convinced a third of the angels to leave the manifest presence of God. The degree of deception he had to have used is tough to describe. That is the effectiveness of his work. He is intense, extremely subtle, and 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.

So how can one know when Satan is at work in their lives?⁸ There are at least seven ways to determine when Satan is attacking. The primary way is through the Holy Spirit. As you are walking in Him, He will show you an area of your life where the enemy is attacking. The role of the Holy Spirit is to guide you into all truth. Part of that truth includes alerting you to deception.

More often, however, the Holy Spirit will work through one of these remaining ways. A second way is by knowing Satan's intent. No matter what his specific attack looks like, Satan always wants to do two things: take glory from God and separate His people from Him. Job 1-3 describes a scene where God, Satan, and Job are the main participants. Satan claims that the only reason Job is faithful to God and intimate with Him is because God has protected Job. God gives Satan permission to attack Job. Satan's goal is to separate Job from God by getting Job angry at God because of trials he must endure.

In the Garden of Eden, Satan tempts Adam and Eve to sin. The effect of their sin is separation from God. They moved from a place of faithfully trusting God to a place of hiding in shame and guilt. When we understand that Satan always works to rob God of His glory and separate His people from His love, seeing satanic attacks becomes easier. If a person feels like no one cares, no one will listen, and no one can understand what they're going through, then it is more than likely that Satan is at work.

A third way to determine Satan's involvement is by knowing his names. The names of Satan reveal his character and his tactics. 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, discouragement, 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 names 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's 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 to never pursue truth at all. Notice that in the wilderness with Jesus, Satan tried three different ways to tempt Him. Like lying, Satan tried to get in one way and it didn't 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, knowing Satan's past works helps to determine his present attacks. Scripture shows us many different works of Satan in peoples' lives:

- 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)

In all of these, it's critical to see the supernatural causes of suffering. As followers of Jesus walking in the way of Jesus, we must believe in the presence of supernatural causes. Any type of illness can be purely physical. But, according to Jesus, it can also be purely spiritual. Depression can be a result of hormonal imbalance, spiritual attack, or a combination of both.) To not con-

sider demonic causes for the suffering we endure is to miss the war and the teachings of Jesus. A fifth way of determining a satanic attack is by knowing truth—God’s word. Satan works to lie, to pervert truth. The more we know truth the easier it will be to hear the lie. Adam and Eve were given God’s word in Genesis 2:15–17. Instead of engaging in conversation with Satan in Genesis 3:1–7, they should have used the word to discern the attack and flee!

I have also found it helpful in determining a satanic attack to rule out other solutions. If quoting Scripture, prayer, serving, and other works are not effective, then that is a good indicator of demonic activity. Scripture and prayer are obviously powerful, but if they are not pointed at the root cause then they become ineffective. When Satan attacks, he attacks specifically. If he is attacking in the area of fear, and a person is praying for God’s blessings and memorizing Scripture about spiritual gifts, then those activities will do nothing for their condition. If he is attacking and a person seeks a chemical solution or seeks to modify their own behavior, it will not work. Satanic attacks require spiritual warfare solutions. When other solutions do not work, that can be a good indicator that Satan is responsible.

A final method of determining satanic attack is through the counsel of others. Many times we just cannot see what is happening to us. We need the counsel of brothers and sisters who understand the war. At one point in the relationship between Jesus and Peter, Jesus had to point out that Satan was working in Peter’s life. (See Matthew 16:21–23.)

From the beginning, Scripture teaches us about the reality of spiritual causes. You cannot walk with Jesus and disavow spiritual causes in life. You will not be able to effectively disciple people unless you are well versed in spiritual warfare. As you minister to people, you must consider spiritual causes as contributors to their conditions. They may be dealing with something emotional or physical, yet the problem may be spiritual. You must be prepared, or at the very least offer a resource that can help. 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.⁹

WHAT ABOUT 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 demons. 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.

Demons 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, whether "attachment" or something else, just know that it is real.

POSSESSION

ATTACHMENT

OPPRESSION

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.

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, have served in many different capacities, have gone to counseling, have used prescription drugs, have given more money, and have done whatever they could to get free of something, and still experience no victory. At the heart of their condition has been a refusal to acknowledge spiritual warfare and deal with their root issues. Once they're aware of demonic causes and bondage then the Spirit works to free them. The change is dramatic and the results are trajectory-changing.

Another example comes from Ephesians 6.¹⁰ 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 lives?

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? The enemy shoots fiery arrows at specific targets.

When a fiery arrow lands it burns and 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 else 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.

Satan and his demonic army are actively and effectually at work in the world and in people. Spiritual causes are very real. There is power and authority in the darkness. They are working to rob our Father of His glory and destroy His work in people. Jesus battled Satan and his demonic army throughout His life, death, and resurrection, and He trains us through the Holy Spirit to do the same.

THE WORLD

In addition to Satan, the world is the second enemy in the war. Returning to our duck analogy, the messages of the world are all of 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:

- “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” (Colossians 2:8).
- “Do not love the world or 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” (1 John 2:15–17).
- “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” (2 Peter 1:4).

- “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” (John 15:18–19).

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 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.

What are the cultural messages and family history you have believed? For example, we’re taught in the United States that “you can do anything you set your mind to.” That is a worldly, cultural message. Another cultural message is, “If you do not take care of yourself, no one else is going to.” In our culture, women are taught that to be beautiful they need to maintain a certain weight and look a certain way. Men are told that to be successful they must work seventy to eighty hours per week. In general, these are all examples of cultural messages coming from the United States in general.

Worldly messages come in many different ways:

- | | | |
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| • Gender | • Education | • Race |
| • Religion | • Age | • Finances |
| • Shape | • Politics | • Appearance |
| • Family | • Region | • Country |

While the manifestations of the messages of the world will be different, 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).
- They deny that the way of God is the way of life (Romans 12:2).

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's important to remember is the enemy's subtlety. Some will rail against 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 or 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 (1 John 2:15–17).

The world is a powerful weapon aimed to separate God and His people. Generally speaking, if everyone is believing it or doing it, we better be real careful with it. Jesus came and fought against the lies and deceits of the world. Walking with Jesus requires walking away from the world.

SIN

Why do ducks continually fall prey to the call of the hunter? Why do people continually chase fake ducks? Why isn't there a generational awakening to the lies and deceit of the enemy?

Sin. Sin. Sin.

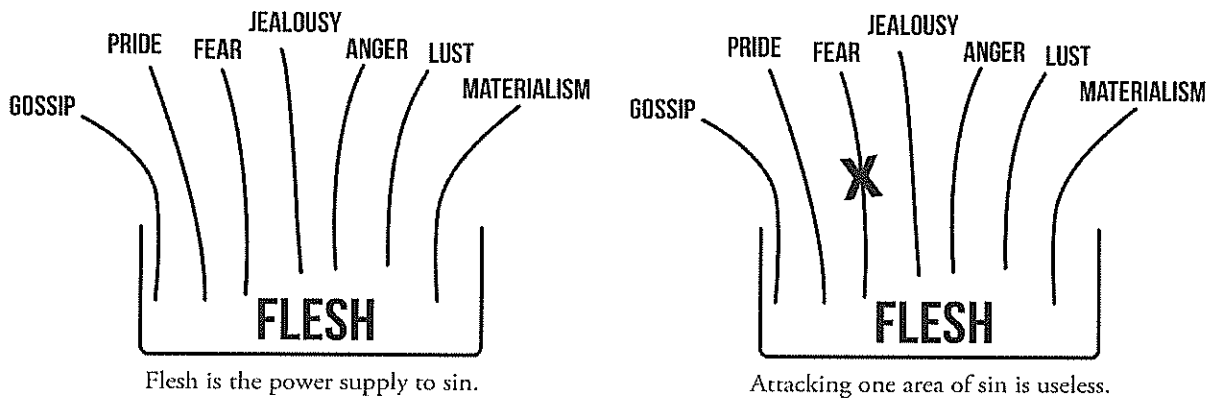
Sin is everywhere and in everyone. Sin is brutal, raw selfishness. It is self-centered, self-seeking, powerful, and destructive. It is the internal, destabilizing force of *every* person's life. But by far the worst reality of sin is that it separates the sinner from the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who loves him or her. 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 chooses 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.

Now, Paul gives us wise insight about sin 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.¹¹ Satan is fine with disciples who want to work on a particular sin issue. He knows there is no power in that because it doesn't address the power source.

In the diagram below you can see the power source of the flesh driving different manifestations of sin. 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 a person's sin was the direct work of the demonic or the world doesn't matter. Every person is responsible for their own 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" (Genesis 3:12).

We all attempt to 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."

James gives us a vivid description of the process 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.

Do you see the process of sin? We must be careful to not underestimate the power of sin. A man and a woman walk into a room where other women are. The man is tempted to lust while the woman is tempted to judge. The feeling is intense and “feels” debilitating. It seems to come out of nowhere. If they do not know how to identify and combat their temptations, then, as James says, temptation will give birth to sin, which will bring forth death.

Thankfully, Jesus knows the reality and power of sin and equips us in the fight. “For He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted” (Hebrews 2:18). “For we do not have a High Priest (Jesus) who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). Jesus is intimately familiar with the pull of sin and stands as our champion against it.

SOURCES OF SIN

There are four sources of sin in our lives. As you familiarize yourselves with these you will be equipped to deal with them throughout your day.

The first source of sin is **original sin**. Original sin refers to the consequences given to Adam and Eve when they rebelled against God in the Garden of Eden. As a result of their actions, all men and women bear the marks of Adam and Eve’s sin. What is remarkable is that original sin manifests itself differently in women and men according to Genesis 3:16–19.

When God cursed Eve, he cursed her in her roles as wife and mother. Therefore, today and all days until Jesus returns, women suffer the sin of Eve in insecurity as wives and mothers. These are two deep places of instability in all women. Consequently, women have a difficult time surrendering these areas of their lives to God and trusting in His provision. Acknowledging that these are areas of vulnerability to sin will position a woman to fight against them and rest in the love and faithfulness of her Father.

Men experience sin in the workplace and in their legacies. These are his greatest places of insecurity. In God's curse on man He says man's work will produce "thorns and thistles." Man will never get out of his work what he puts into it. This creates insecurity in his ability to provide and in his sense of accomplishment. God also says that man will return to dust, "For you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19). This is not good for men who want to make a name for themselves and leave a legacy. Understanding that the instability in these areas is sin passed on from Adam equips men to stand against these attacks and live in the way of Christ.

A second source of sin is **generational sin**, which is sin passed from one generation to the next. Like original sin, generational sin is a pre-existing condition. It is something someone is born into. One great example of generational sin is found in the lineage of King David. There's 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're dealing with is generational.

A third source of sin is **personal sin**. Personal sins are those we have done all on our own. While we are absolutely responsible for every sin we commit, personal sins describe sin that is not directly connected to original or generational sin. A man who has no family history of anxiety develops an anxiety issue because he cannot trust the Lord with a specific area of his

life. This is an example of a sin not directly related to the garden or to generations. 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.

There are certainly many other areas of sin. Scripture has lists.¹² These are the ones I come across most often in those that I have spent time with.

CONCLUSION

It does not take much time reading the life of Jesus to see that He lived at war. Sin, the world, and Satan have aligned themselves against the love and faithfulness of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus came to fight. He came to win. He came to overcome every enemy of God. And He came to train His disciples to continue His fight in the power of the Holy Spirit. The war is pervasive, affecting every part and person of creation. There are no exceptions. Understanding the brutality of two kingdoms in conflict should give you greater insight into the experiences of your life and those of others. Life at war is completely different than life not at war. This world is broken. To walk in Jesus' Way of Rest is to embrace the reality of war, reject the world, and learn how to stand in the faith.

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.