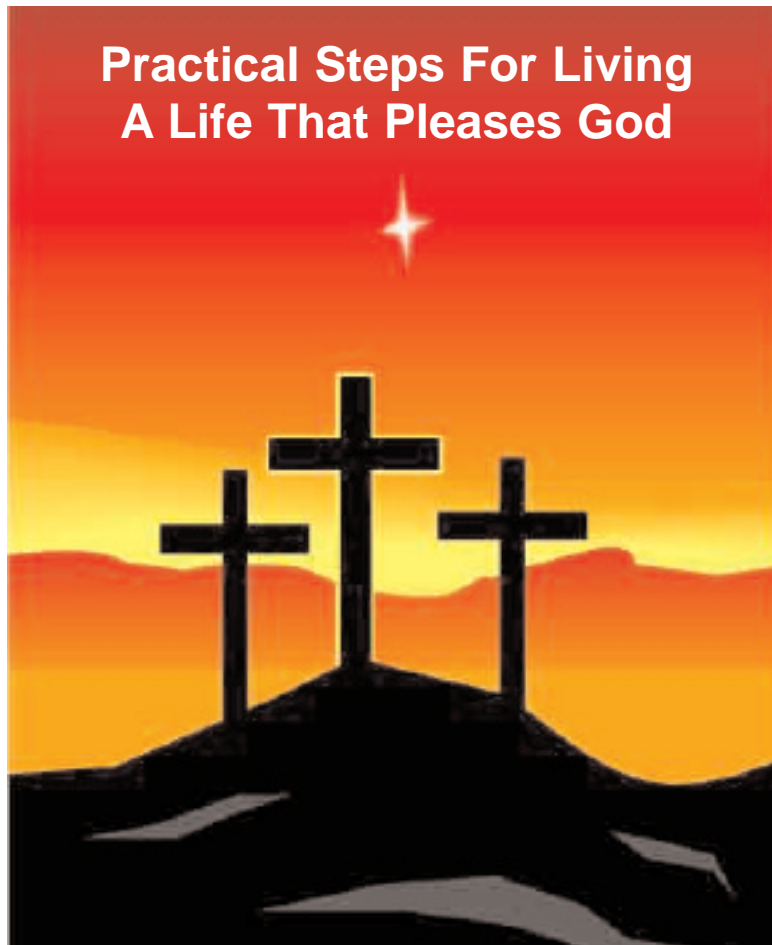


Lifebytes

20. Freedom In Jesus Video Series (Part 1)

Certain Of What We Do Not See

The Coordination Of The World, Our Sin Nature, and Satan



[For the video or audio of this series, go to our website or call 888-229-3041]



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The Coordination Of The World, Our Sin Nature and Satan

In this Lifebyte we want to summarize how the world, our sin nature and the devil work together against our ability to be wholehearted in following Jesus. Just know this: It's a well-coordinated effort in the unseen realm around you.

First, let's confirm again that Satan does operate in the world. The devil and his demonic cohorts are on a mission to steal, kill and destroy what they can on earth.

The great dragon was hurled down — that ancient serpent called the devil or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him” (Revelation 12:9).

His focus is especially on us who follow Jesus:

*He was given power to **make war against the saints and to conquer them.** And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation (Revelation 13:7).*

The demons around us have an obvious advantage in their invisibility. They can manipulate and exploit the weaknesses inherent in our sinful nature. Let's look at how Satan does this through a few examples from Scripture.

First, he provoked King David to VIO-LATE GOD'S WORD: “*Satan rose up against Israel and **incited David to take a census of Israel***” (Chronicles 21:1).

He used Judas to BETRAY Jesus: “*Then Satan **entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.** And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus” (Luke 22:3,4).*

In the earliest Church the devil enticed Ananias and his wife, Sapphira, to LIE about the funds they withheld from the apostles (Acts 5:1-3). Their sinful motivation cooperated with satanic strategy to deceive them into lying to the Holy Spirit.

The lesson for us here is that when we yield to sin, we'll get entangled with Satan. This is a reality about which we followers of Jesus are warned, “***Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires***” (Romans 6:12).

So many Christians fail to realize that when they willfully choose to sin and fail to repent, they're being led into slavery to Satan. Paul speaks to ALL of us today when he warns,

*Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are **slaves to the one whom you obey**—whether you are **slaves to sin**, which leads to death, or to **obedience**, which leads to righteousness? (Romans 6:16).*

And the apostle John certainly seals the connection between our sin nature and Satan's strategy:

*He who **does what is sinful is of the devil**, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to **destroy the devil's work** (1 John 3:8).*

Picture your decision to walk in sin and your failure to repent as volunteering to be on Satan's side.

So many Christians fail to realize that, when they willfully choose to sin and fail to repent, they're being led into slavery to Satan.

In part 2 of our ***Freedom In Jesus*** series, we'll deal with the influence of demonic strongholds within your soul. These prisons of unclean spirits in your soul provide a foothold for demonic influence.

People under that influence may not realize how much they're cooperating with demonic strategies. They're vulnerable because they haven't **TURNED AWAY** from their sin and **TURNED TO** God for restoration.

Paul urges us to deal with our sin quickly so that we **DON'T** give the unseen enemy a place of operation in our soul. He warns us, "...do not give the devil a foothold" (Ephesians 4:27).

There's a coordinated conspiracy between the **WORLD**, the **FLESH**, and the **DEVIL** in the spiritual war being waged against you. Most of this alliance is unseen **UNTIL** you decide to sin.

In other words, Satan and the world are like explosives, but it's your **WILLINGNESS TO SIN** that ignites them.



(See: Newsletter 2002-06, "The Battle For Your Thought Life")

At the root of the problem is the fact that we **DO** have a sinful nature. A dark, unseen force within each of us has been passed along all the way from Adam. Our human frailty makes it difficult to not only fight our proclivity to sin, but

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also to resist the allure of the world's ways, and the devil as well.

But as bad as that trio of temptation sounds, we're certainly not helpless. Paul reminds us that as followers of Jesus, we **AREN'T** prisoners to sin. Our Father has given us the power to turn away from the world's pattern and be transformed into the character of Jesus:

*Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the **renewing of your mind**. Then you will be able to **test and approve** what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).*

You **WILL** face temptation! That's a given because of the reality of our sin nature, the ways of the world, and the schemes of Satan. But Paul encourages us to stand firm in Jesus and flee those tempting thoughts **BEFORE** they arouse emotions and become actions (see 1 Corinthians 10:13).

Continuing to **WALK IN INTIMACY** with our Lord and following through with **OBEDIENT TRUST** is powerful against enemy tactics. When he sees the Holy Spirit in you rising up to resist him, Satan flees! (James 4:7).

It's not just the weak the enemy looks for. It's **ANY** of Jesus' followers who wander away from righteous living and allow their vigilance against the unseen spirit realm to grow dull. "**Be self-controlled and alert**. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour" (1 Peter 5:8)

Part of our motivation in resisting the enemy is because of our love for Jesus. Do you see: Your willingness to **RESIST TEMPTATION** reveals that your love for Jesus is stronger than your love for your flesh.

Each victory when you resist Satan reminds you that we're ALL part of one body in Jesus.

*Resist [Satan], standing firm in the faith, because you know that your **brothers throughout the world** are undergoing the same kind of sufferings (1 Peter 5:9).*

Your willingness to RESIST temptation reveals that your love for Jesus is stronger than your love for your flesh.

Each of us has to resist our propensity to sin. It's your responsibility to take your thoughts captive and bring them into obedience to Jesus BEFORE they become sinful actions.

*We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we **take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ** (2 Corinthians 10:5).*

No one else can do this for you.

Remember, as a follower of Jesus, you have a mission here on earth:

To fulfill our Father's purposes for you so that you may bring Him glory.

But you won't be available to serve His purposes if you're bogged down with

sinful longings and entangling alliances. Your sin breaks fellowship with your Lord. That's why we're so strongly encouraged:

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, **throw off everything that hinders** and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us **run with perseverance** the race marked out for us (Hebrews 12:1).*

We realize that as you're reading about the weapons arrayed against you, your life journey may seem overwhelming and even hopeless.

But we serve a God of HOPE!

(See *God's Instruments For War*, Chapter 3: "Steps For Warfare Readiness")

As you continue through this series, especially when you've completed **Demolishing Strongholds** in Part 2, you'll be encouraged with steadfast devotion and appreciation for what our Lord Jesus has accomplished on your behalf.

Your grateful devotion to Jesus is crucial. It's only the LACK of whole-hearted love and obedient trust that leaves so many vulnerable to the world, the flesh, and the devil. Don't be one of these people.