

The Evolution of Sin (Genesis 3:1-7)

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The late philosophy professor, Allan Bloom, began his best-seller, *The Closing of the American Mind*, stating on page 25, “There is one thing a professor can be absolutely certain of: almost every student entering the university believes, or says he believes, that truth is relative.” This is the kind of culture and world that we live in today. Truth is what a person makes it out to be – what they imagine it to be or feel like it should be. Truth is seen to be a flexible like a rubber band. What is right for you might not be right for someone else. In other words, the only thing you can be sure about is that you cannot be sure about anything. If we throw out the idea of absolute truth, we are also discarding absolute standards of morality.

A professor in the university stood up and said, “Students, I want to tell you, there is nothing that you can say that is absolutely true; there’s nothing that you can be absolutely sure of.” A student lifted his hand and said, “Professor, are you sure of that?” He said, “Absolutely.” So, the one thing you can be absolutely about is that there is no absolute truth.

Many today, even those who call themselves Christians will tell you that we should not be judgmental by calling homosexuality sin. Rather, we should “love” these people and accept their behavior. Now folks, truth has been abandoned today. It has been totally rejected, in some cases, watered down, and in other cases twisted and distorted. Sadly, truth can be lost in our own lives and hearts as Christians when we begin to give in to the Devil’s mind manipulation and move away from God’s unalterable standard which is the Word of God. As Christians, what we need to be doing today is wearing God’s armor, so we do not give in to the spirit of the age which rejects a basic moral code and standard of truth and follows the philosophies of relativism (there is no absolute truth) and existentialism (truth is centered in our feelings).

The Bible commands us in Ephesians 6:17 to wear the “helmet of salvation” (the mind being controlled by the truth and delivered from devilish thoughts) and the “sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.” The work of the Spirit with the Word of God is the dynamic duo for the Christian life. The Holy Spirit guides us in the truth and brings the truth before our minds so we can ward off Satan’s lies.

Genesis chapter three reveals what happens when we allow Satan to change our way of thinking by moving us away from the absolute standard of God's Word, "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." It reminds us why we need to wear "the helmet of deliverance" and not be allured away from the right standard by the Devil's lies and deception.

Jesus said in John 8:44:

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

When we abandon truth it's because we have accepted the Devil's lies. Every lie that's ever been told has in some sense been spawned by the daddy of all liars, the liar of all liars, the father of all liars, who is the Devil himself. Remember that Satan is the master liar. And because he's the master liar, his lies are very good. Satan knows how to tell lies. His lies are very clever

Genesis 3:1

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made."

Satan's lies and tricks are often "subtle" in nature. Satan himself is shrewd or crafty and his lies are designed to fool us and get us off the road marked right. In fact, the best lies sound the most like the truth, and so there is some truth in most lies. For instance, a clock that doesn't even run is still right twice a day – on the AM and PM hour where it stopped working. Of course, it may be right twice a day, but it's still wrong. What is more dangerous: a clock five hours wrong or a clock five minutes wrong? Actually, a clock five minutes wrong is far more dangerous than a clock five hours wrong. When you look at a clock that's five hours wrong, you say, "That's wrong. Somebody tell me what time it is." But a clock five minutes wrong, you miss your haircut appointment. Now there's a difference. In some cases, not all cases, Satan's lies are very close to the truth, and yet so very far from the truth.



The Devil is very “subtle” and crafty in the way he presents his lies. So, we need to know the standard of God’s truth to cut through his deceptive half-truths which are really nothing but lies. Here is what we are going to discover in our study of Genesis 3:1-7. Satan tempts us to sin against God.

The origin (evolution) of sin has a six-fold pattern.

1. It begins with dialogue - 1a – “and he said to the woman”

You will note here that Eve gave the Devil audience (“And he said unto the woman” – vs. 1). And then in verse 2, “the woman said unto the serpent.” This is dialoging with the Devil. It means she allowed him to crawl into her life and left him do all the talking. This was the problem right from the start. Instead of shutting down the Devil we open ourselves up to His dialogue (allowing him to communicate with us). Be careful about this. We listen to his temptations and open ourselves to his work in our lives. He might tempt you to read trashy novels. He might tempt you to try and find fulfillment outside the marriage relationship. He might tempt you to not fulfill your family obligations. He might tempt you to not follow your husband’s spiritual leadership or to live on an island all by yourself.

The problem is this. You let him do the talking and don’t fight back! Eve had no business getting into a conversation with the Devil. This was her first mistake. When the Devil came and confronted Eve, the very first thing she should have done was to declare the Word of God, point him to the Word of God, and leave it right there. This is what Jesus did. When the Devil came against Jesus, in the wilderness, Jesus said, "It is written. It is written. It is written." Three times Jesus confronted Satan with the sword of the Word of God, but Eve doesn't do this. No. She is carrying on a discussion with him. She's opening her mind to a discussion with the Devil. Eve did not need to dialogue with the Devil. She should have made her immediate appeal to the Word of God and left it alone.

Someone has well said:

“We cannot keep the birds from flying over our heads, but we can certainly keep them from making a nest in our hair.”

The same is true regarding Satan. We can’t stop him from coming to tempt us, but we can stop him from overtaking our life! There is victory in Jesus!

Have you been talking with the Devil? Have you allowed yourself, maybe even without knowing it (almost imperceptibly), to get close to the Devil? Have you left him in your marriage, in your home, have you left him get in your head and heart? Have you allowed him to capture your affections and desires? We must remember that when we dialogue with the Devil, when we become open to his temptations, when we listen to him, we are setting ourselves up for a fall.

2. It continues with delusion – 1b-4

After dialogue comes delusion! If we stay open to the Devil's dialogue we open ourselves up to delusion. We are going to be duped by the Devil. Here some good advice. Don't listen to him!

Genesis 3:1-4

"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die."

2 Corinthians 11:3 recounts this deception of Eden:

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled (*seduced*) Eve through his subtilty (*trickery*), so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity (*devotion*) that is in Christ."

Let me just lay it out as straight forward as I can. I'm going to lay it out on the table and here it is. Satan wants to get you away from your devotion to Jesus Christ! He wants to rob you of your relationship with Christ, your obedience to Jesus Christ, and keep you from depending upon Christ for victory and blessing in your home and marriage. Listen folks, if our thinking is wrong, then our destiny (the course and direction of our life) will be wrong. Satan comes along with his subtle, deceptive tricks and allurements, to deceive us, and take us off the path that God wants us to walk.

We should be amazed at several things. First, the Devil appears where we would least expect him. Who would be looking for the Devil in the Garden of Eden? You

see, he sometimes appears where you would least expect him. I believe that the Devil comes to church with more regularity than many Christians do and he seeks to disrupt God's work.

Second, the Devil does not always come to tempt us as roaring lion but as an angel of light. This is because he is subtle or crafty as Genesis 3:1 reveals.

2 Corinthians 11:14 also teaches this. Satan and his messengers come with deceptive allurements: "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light." Don't get the idea that when you see the Devil, he's going to be wearing a long red suit of underwear with a pitchfork and horns. If he came that way, you would clearly recognize him. He often comes in a deceptive manner to deceive us and lead us astray.

The Devil is NOT a hideous, repulsive, reptile as some pictures suggest. Instead, he is an angel of messenger of light (deceptive light). His ways appear to be light, reasonable and the right way to go but behind the light is utter darkness, vileness, and deception. I want you to know that Satan can appear as an ice-cream man or an angel of light offering you something that seems good when in reality it is not good for your spiritual growth and health.

As an angel or messenger of light many of his temptations appear as something that is godly, righteous, and even sanctified! Satan gradually gets us to make *pervorted priorities* or choices and eventually this breaks us down spiritually. He comes to us as "an angel of light" (2 Cor. 11:14) disguising himself and the sin which he wants us to imbibe. He wants us to view sin as the sanctified path to take, the right thing to do, and the choice that will benefit our lives in some way. Don't fall for the old "angel of light" routine. Don't fall for his subtlety!

Adrian Rogers says this about Satan's deceptive lies and angelic cover ups:

"Suppose he told Eve, 'Eve, I want you to take of this forbidden fruit because I want to damn your soul, because I want to ruin your family. Because I want to bring hate and war and crime and disease and heartache and pain and moan and groan and woe and devastation, not only upon you, but upon the millions and billions of unborn children. I want to curse the world through you and wreck your home and bring you sorrow.' Would she have listened? Of course not!"

The Devil comes to us with the deceptive lies to get us to sin. He comes sailing along as the “Good Ship Lollypop” and does not lay out the bleak ending and heartaches that comes when sinning against God and His will for our lives. The Devil is always out to get us, and he causes us to sin through the art of deception or delusion. He is very subtle (Gen. 3:1).

The way to deception and delusion involves:

➤ **Doubting God’s Word – “Yea hath God said”**



Does God’s Word really say that? Satan wants to put a question mark where God has put a period! But we must be careful we do not erase God’s periods! The Devil wants us to think in our minds that God did not really say anything about eating the fruit on the forbidden tree. He wants to get us to the place where we will doubt God’s standard, truth, and righteous way within the realm of our minds and hearts. Satan

wants us to become suspicious about God’s Word. Did God really mean what He says?

Someone has said:

“Our adversary is a master strategist, forever fogging up our minds with smokescreens.”

Satan comes along and tries to get us to doubt the truth. “Has God really said you can’t do this? Did God really say you cannot have fornication? Did God really say that exposing my body is forbidden? Did God really say that we should not love the way of the heathen?” Getting us to doubt the truth in our minds and hearts has always been Satan’s masterplan to get us to sin and go against God’s standard for our lives.

Satan comes along and says, “It’s okay to live the old life just a little bit. You can still serve God and get away with some of your old ways. Indulge but do it moderately and you will be okay.” Satan appears as the angel of light and says, “It can’t be wrong if it feels so right, no one will know, God made me this way, a little bit is permissible, it won’t hurt you, a little trashy TV novels won’t make you fall, a few

lewd Internet pictures won't harm you, a little rock music or contemporary Christian rock music (*the gateway to regular rock music*) won't harm you, a little alcohol won't get you, after all, everybody is doing it. You can stretch the truth just a little. You will be okay if you are just careful."

Have you ever followed statements like this when they come racing across your mind? It's amazing how Satan lights up the path of sin and makes it appear as the acceptable path for our Christian lives. Of course, God has a different story. He declares that "All unrighteousness is sin" (1 John 5:17). God always wants us to do right. Whenever we move away from God's standard for our lives, we can be sure that Satan has won a victory. In causing us to doubt the truth (God's absolute standard), he strategically begins to tear down our wall of defense by saying, "Yea hath God said." Eventually the wall is broken down altogether and we find ourselves totally overcome.

"Thy Word is a lamp to my feet,
A light to my path always,
To guide and to save me from sin,
And show me the heav'nly way."

Satan wants to show you another way! You see, when we doubt God's truth, we are open to spiritual wreckage. "Yea hath God said." Anybody who causes us to doubt of the Word of God is doing the Devil's business! I don't care what seminary he comes from. I don't care what college he teaches in. I don't care what prefix he has before his name. He may be called Reverend or Doctor or a psychologist or psychotherapist. I don't care how many initials he has after his name. I don't care what university he went to. I want to tell you that anybody who puts a question mark after the clearly revealed statements in the Bible is doing the work of the Devil. The Devil wants to make us doubt God's eternal truth.

Again, Satan puts a question mark where God puts a period! He says, "Eve, did God really say what you think He said?" There was only one tree that they could not eat, and it was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If they did eat of this forbidden tree, then they would die both physically and spiritually. But the serpent tried to get Eve to doubt what God had originally said. He tries to manipulate her mind and take her away from what God had originally commanded.

Genesis 2:16-17 reveals:

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

There can be no doubt about it. God commanded it! Yes, the Lord God actually said this! Satan knew God said it, but he was trying to get Eve to doubt God’s Word. When God commands us to do something, it’s not a suggestion. It’s not something that is flexible. We cannot decide in our minds whether it’s right or wrong for us. God’s truth is the only and final standard. Today Satan tries to place doubts in our own minds about God’s Word. He places thoughts in our minds that would try to contradict the truth. He tries to confuse our minds about whether God meant what He said. He tries to cloud our thinking about the truth by saying, “Did God say what we originally thought He said?” The fact is, God has said it! God said it, I believe it, and that settles it for me.

“Though some may doubt that His word is true
I’ve chosen to believe it, now how about you?
God said it and I believe it
And that settles it for me.”

It’s amazing how Satan strategically hoodwinks us. He has a way of manipulating the mind and bringing ultimate deception into our mind concerning what God has said. If he can get us to cloud the issue of truth in our mind, then we are on the first step down the spiral of defeat. Without the clear revelation of God’s truth in our mind and heart, concerning the error of personal sins and the promise of personal victory in life, we will be defeated. We will be raked over the coals.

Satan slithers along our path in life and places the thought in our mind, “Yea, hath God really said that you should not worry or get angry? Has God really said that you have no right to blow off some steam?” Satan may place the thought in your mind, “Yea, hath God really said that you can never experiment with sex and lust outside of marriage?” “Yea, hath God said that drinking a few cold beers will never harm you?” Satan comes along and says in our minds, “Yea, hath God really said that using a few drugs to get a buzz and help you along in life is wrong?” “Yea, hath God really said that it’s wrong to feel proud because of who you are and what you have done?” “Yea, hath God really said that you must not look at this particular picture

on TV just because there is some nudity and swearing on the screen?” “Yea, hath God really said that you should go to church faithfully and support a local ministry?” “Yea, hath God really said that you should not listen to this kind of music?”

Dear friend, Satan has been trying to get man to doubt God’s Word since the Garden of Eden. And he is still in the doubting business today. We had better wake up to the serpent’s subtle and sly suggestions that he tries to place within our minds. Our only defense against his tactics of doubt is the “sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (Eph. 6;17). We must know the truth of the Bible and never turn to the right or to the left.

Joshua 1:7 declares:

“Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.”

Stick to the truth. Stay the course. Stand up for what is right. Don’t give in. The eternal and unchanging truth of the Scriptures is the only hope we have against deception and doubt. Battling with Satan is a truth encounter.

There is something else that we need to be aware of today. When we start to wonder what God’s will might be for our life concerning a job change, church change, a move, or an important decision that we must make, we must first determine whose thoughts are being placed within our mind. Satan can try to get our minds going in a wrong direction when it comes to the will of God for our life. He wants to detour us from the will of God any way he can. Satan will sometimes try to disguise or veil God’s will from your life by sending the seed thoughts of change to distract your minds from really doing God’s will.

Remember, we can really stray from the will of God for our lives when we do not seek the truth of God’s Word and ask ourselves this question: “What I am thinking about doing, does it go contrary to the truth in any way?” We must also ask God for wisdom through the ministry of prayer as we seek to determine His will for our lives (James 1:5). All your thinking without searching for the truth in the Bible and without earnestly praying for God’s wisdom, may take your life in a wrong direction and give Satan a victory over your mind. I believe that many of us unknowingly fall

victim to the Devil's suggestions instead of God's suggestions. We must be very careful of the serpent's subtle (crafty) ways to detour us from doing what is right. We cannot allow Satan to get in our head!

b. Dismissing God's goodness – "every tree" – 1b

Satan comes along and says, "God must be holding out on you. He must be smothering you. You mean to tell me that you can't eat of every tree in the garden?" The Devil strategically gets us to focus on the one tree (the one thing or one sin) we cannot have instead of focusing on all the wonderful things God has already given to us.

God had given us many wholesome enjoyments in life, but Satan wants us to focus on the one thing we cannot have. You know, I sometime get so mad at the Devil that I could spit!



I always illustrate the Devil's temptation in this way. If you have a jar of jellybeans and there was only one black jellybean in the jar, the Devil wants you to focus on the one black jellybean instead of the rest of the jellybeans. I'm amazed at how he does this. God has given us so many wholesome and pure things to enjoy but the Devil tries to get our focus on the one thing we cannot have and in doing this he is basically saying, "Hey, God is not so good after all. He's holding something back which is for your benefit."

The Devil tries to get you to doubt God's goodness. He wants us to believe that God is some kind of cosmic killjoy that is holding back on us, trying to keep good things from us. The Devil says, "Why would a good and loving God allow you to suffer the way that you are – physically, emotionally, and psychologically?" The Devil knows if he can get you to think wrongly about God's nature and goodness, then he has you. The Devil wants to get you thinking negative thoughts about God. God is not so good after all. God must be a kill joy if He says you can't have this. God is not so loving after all. God is way too strict. He is a holy roller.

2 Corinthians 10:5 tells us that we are to be constantly: “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God (*those things which distort God’s character, person, and ways*), and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.”

The suspicion the Devil presented in Eden and specifically to Eve has to do with questioning God and His goodness. Again and again, the Devil tries to defame and undermine the character of God. The Devil slanders the character of God. Do you know why? It’s because if the Devil can get you thinking negatively about God, disbelieving God, and running from God, he has you right where he wants you. The Devil is the biggest liar. The biggest lies are those that defame God’s character. This is what Satan was doing to Eve and he does the same thing to each one of us. He was defaming God’s goodness.

“Did God say you cannot eat of every tree in the garden?” In essence, he was saying to Eve, “You can’t be happy following God. He is holding back on you. There is dissatisfaction in life when following God’s will. God has not given you everything, so you can’t have fun, you can’t be happy, and you will miss out on the good times of life. Don’t believe Satan’s lies!

Someone remarked:

“You sow a thought, you reap a deed, sow a deed, you reap a habit, so a habit, you reap a character, sow a character and you reap a destiny, and it all begins with a thought.”

If the thought is wrong, the destiny or way of your life will be wrong. You live how you think! Never forget this. This is why Peter reminds us in 1 Peter 1:13 to “gird up the loins of your mind.” We need to stop the thoughts from overtaking us and deceiving us and we can only do this by countering them with the Word of truth! Christian friend, don’t believe the Devil. God is good and the one thing God says you should NOT have - is for your own good!

Dwight L. Moody once shared that one of the happiest men he ever knew was a man in Dundee, Scotland, who had fallen and broken his back when a boy of fifteen. He had lain on his bed for forty years and could not be moved without a good deal of pain. Probably not a day had passed in all those years without acute suffering. But day after day the grace of God had been granted him, and when Mr. Moody

was in his room it seemed as if he was as near heaven as he could get on earth. When Mr. Moody saw him, he thought he must be beyond the reach of the tempter, and he asked him, "Doesn't Satan ever tempt you to doubt God and to think that He is a hard master?"

"Oh, yes," he said, "he does try to tempt me. I lie here and see my old schoolmates driving along, and Satan says, 'If God is so good, why has He kept you here all these years? You might have been a rich man, riding in your carriage.' Then I see a man, who was young when I was, walk by in perfect health, and Satan whispers, 'If God loved you, couldn't He have kept you from breaking your back?' "And what do you do when Satan tempts you?" "Ah, I just take him to Calvary, and I show him Christ, and I point out those wounds in His hands and feet and side, and say, I know that Christ loves me!"

c. Distorting God's statement – "Neither shall ye touch it" – 2-3

Genesis 3:2-3 goes on to say:

"And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

When the Devil gets into our head, when he deceives us about God's goodness, we sooner or later end up saying things that are not true. This is what Eve did at this point. God never said that she could not touch the tree. At this point, without even realizing it, Eve was distorting God's statement. She was twisting God's statement or Word and arriving at a different meaning and conclusion.

If we are not careful, this is what happens to us. We begin to twist and distort God's Word in order to approve of our sinful actions and departures in life. The Devil was setting up Eve and she was taking the bait at this point. Once he got her to dismiss the truth about God's goodness, she then distorts God's statement (what God actually said) which results in reforming and reshaping God's Word to fit her own way of life and thinking. Many times, Christians will distort the teaching about "Christian liberty" and in distorting this truth they find a way to escape from God's will (His standard of Bible separation), so they can do what they want, and get away with their sin. Whenever we distort God's absolute standard or truth, we are

setting ourselves up for deception and departure from God's righteous path for our lives.

Martin Luther wrote:
"For still our ancient foe
Doth seek to work us woe;
His craft and power are great,
And, armed with cruel hate,
On earth is not his equal."

Has the Devil been clouding up the truth in your mind and trying to get you to follow a rabbit trail in your personal life? O, what a tangled web we weave when first we practice to deceive! If you are in a tangled web today, it may be because you have opened yourself to the Devil in some way and followed his delusion and deception.

d. Denying God's truth – "Ye shall not surely die"- 4



Of course, this was a bold-faced lie and denial of the actual statement of God. The doubting of God's Word, dismissing of God's goodness, and distorting God's statement ultimately leads to the denying of God's truth.

Genesis 2:17, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."

Once the Devil has us raked over the coals with his dialogue, doubts and distorted ideas about God's Word, we are just one step away from denying what God says! At this point, the Devil categorically denies that God is going to punish sin. The Devil's gospel is that you can sin without receiving punishment. You can sin and get away with it. This has been the same bill of goods that he has fed the human race since the days of Eden. There will be no repercussions if you go against God's will. "Ye shall not die. You will be okay." But God says, "You will die."

To the unsaved, the Devil says, "You will not die. Everything will be alright." But the Bible says, "The wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23). And yet many believe the Devil's lie and sin away their lives somehow believing they will never really die and experience God's wrath and judgment. Instead, they believe they will be reincarnated, or they will go to the Happy Hunting ground. Others believe that God is too loving to send anyone to hell except Hitler and people like him.

People are deceived by the Devil! The Devil has sold you a bill of goods if you think there are no repercussions for your sin! You will have a rude awakening someday when you die if you believe the Devil's lie that sin does not have consequences. There is a hell and sinners without the forgiveness of Jesus Christ end up in hell despite what the Devil says. Hebrews 9:27 declares, "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment."

To those who are saved (God's children), the Devil comes along and says, "You don't have to worry about sinning a little bit for surely a little sin won't hurt you. You will be okay. Don't be such a killjoy and have some fun. But God says something altogether different. Sin always brings "death" even to the Christian. Sin brings hardship and even death to our spiritual growth, our love and commitment to Jesus Christ, our relationships, to our service and work for the Lord, and our marriage and homes. Sin gets in the way of God's true blessing. Another way God expresses the repercussions of sin in relation to the Christian life is this: "Be sure, your sin will find you out" (Numb. 32:23) and "the way of the transgressors is hard" (Prov. 13:15).

The Devil wants us to believe that sin has no consequences. We can go against God's will and everything will be okay. In fact, it will be better the Devil says. But it's never better and sin causes great heartaches and headaches in our Christian life. The Evil One denies the Word of God and if all the scholars, all of the politicians, all of the preachers together, with the Devil, were to deny the fact that God's Word is true, God's Word will still stand.

e. Deterring from God's rule – "become as gods" (rule over God)

Genesis 3:5

"For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."

God wants to rule your life, but the Devil comes along and says, “You can rule your own life.” You can have it your way! This is called “Burger King” Christianity – have it your way! He wants to deter us from God’s will. Truthfully, this is the underlying philosophy of the New Age Movement. We are our own god. We can do what we want. We can become our own god, live our own way, and dethrone God from our lives. Satan brings this same lie before us time and time again. In other words, if you take the fruit you can become your own god and live the way you want to live. You can write your own ticket, do as you please and get God off your back. In fact, you can “know good and evil” from your own personal perspective (relativism), what is right for you, instead of viewing good and evil from God’s perspective.

Satan is a liar when he says to you, “You can run your own life.” In the case of Adam and Eve, instead of becoming a god, they realized the awful nature of their sin before God, and they were deeply convicted and realized they had been separated from God. Their sin became a heavy weight in their life and broke their fellowship with God. Satan says, “Go ahead and indulge, live and let live – become your own god and ruler,” but the Devil sends the bill later! And the bill we must pay is heartache, misery, remorse, and shame. Once again, “The way of the transgressor is hard.”

I was talking to a man about Jesus when I was at a fuel station. He said that he told his son-in-law that “the bill of sin always comes due” and the boy laughed in his face. Later on, after sin’s bill came due, the boy came to him in repentance and said how sorry he was for laughing at him. Folks, sin is a hard thing to bear. It destroys our fellowship with God and spiritual life and makes us miserable. Why would anyone sin? Many times, it’s because we have been deceived by the Devil. The old snake is still crawling around, and we had better stop him in his tracks with the absolute standard of the Word of God! Don’t fall for Satan’s tricks. We need to get wiser and understand how the Devil seeks to take us down. The “rule your own life” routine (be your own god trick), deterring you from God’s rule over your life, has been in Satan’s arsenal since the days of Eden.

Do you know what Satan was doing with all of his deception and delusion? He was casting suspicion upon God’s will. He was saying, “You should be able to run your own life because true satisfaction and enrichment in life is found outside the boundaries of God’s will. You can move outside the realm of God’s prescribed plan and find greater fulfillment in life and still be okay in doing it! You can be

disobedient and still be right.” This is a lie! Don’t fall for it. As an independent god, you try to run your own life; but you will ruin your life. You will hurt your life.

Satan comes along and says, “You can rule your own life and you need something better. You need a new husband that will really meet your needs. You need to change your manner of dress to draw more attention from men. You need to start using tobacco again to help calm your nerves. You need to drink sociably to feel accepted and find some relief from life’s pressures. You need to get involved with some of the old worldly friends to help you lighten the load. You need to listen to some of the old rock music CDs to give you an escape from life’s demands.” How about his one. “You need to stay away from church and find more rest, relaxation, and down time.” Do I make a good Devil?

It goes on and on. Satan slithers into our life and says to us, “You have a need that God cannot meet; therefore, you must become your own god and meet this need.” You see what he is doing? Satan is continually trying to create *false needs* in your heart so that you will act upon them and leave the parameters and safety of God’s will. We all need to be on guard. Let us not be ignorant of his devices (2 Cor. 2:11). Satan wants to create *felt needs* in our hearts. He then wants us to react to these false needs, follow them, and stray outside God’s boundaries, trying to get us to run our own life. Don’t take Satan’s bait.

Warren Wiersbe comments in this way:

“Christian living is a matter of the will, not the feelings. I often hear believers say, ‘I don’t feel like reading the Bible.’ Or, ‘I don’t feel like attending prayer meeting.’ Children operate on the basis of feeling, but adults operate on the basis of will. They act because it is right, no matter how they feel. This explains why immature Christians easily fall into temptation: they let their feelings make the decisions. The more you exercise your will in saying a decisive no to temptation, the more God will take control of your life. ‘For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure’ (Phil. 2:13).”

Satan tempts us to sin against God. The origin (evolution) of sin follows a six-fold pattern. It begins with dialogue. It continues with delusion. Next ...

3. It moves to desire

Genesis 3:6

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

1 John 2:16 parallels with this original temptation and looks back to Satan’s key tactic in taking us down. It says, “For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.” In other words, Satan uses these three methods to tempt us. In a broad way, this is how we define worldliness – the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. This is how Satan created evil passions and desires in our hearts.

There is a threefold desire in Genesis 3:6.

a. Desire of the eyes (what we see) – “saw” and “pleasant to the eyes”

This is the lust of the eyes! The eyes are the vehicle that can cause our hearts to lust or crave after evil desires. In other words, what we visually see can inspire lust in our minds and hearts. This is why we must be very careful what we view, where we go, and what we do. Our surroundings can fuel or trigger lust through the eye gate. We need to be aware of this especially with modern technologies (media sources) such as the Internet which we can access through computers and iPhones. There is a world of darkness out there! Don’t go there! Lust is generated through the eyes. What we see (material things, indecent things, perverse things) can be visually seen through the eye gate and this in return can generate lust in our heart when we fix our eyes upon these things.

b. Desire of the flesh (what we crave) – “good for food”

This is the lust of the flesh. It’s the evil cravings that are generated from the old sin nature. These cravings can overtake our lives and control us. Satan makes sin appear “good” and something that is desirable outside the parameters of God’s will. This is why we take the bait. He makes sin look like the colors of the rainbow, like an ice-cream sundae with whipped cream and a cherry on the top. He makes sin look appealing and wonderful, so much so, that we follow the temptation and find ourselves falling into sin.

c. Desire for recognition (what we become) – “make one wise”

This is the pride of life. And yes, we can very easily become filled with pride through the Devil’s temptation. Pride fuels the decisions and lives of many Christians. We are proud of our accomplishments, our position, and our popularity and Satan uses pride against us, to defeat our spiritual lives. Instead of giving God the glory, we become caught in the web of prideful living and our own glory which ultimately takes us down.

Proverbs 16:18

“Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.”

1 Timothy 3:6 says that a bishop or pastor was not to be a novice “lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.” Many people are also proud of their good deeds and accomplishments and throw them in the face of God, like Cain did of his works, and they say, “There, God, take them for that’s good enough to get me to Heaven.” And on and on it goes. Satan temps us with the sin of pride, the very sin that took him down from his angelic position in Heaven.

Mark Antony was known as the "silver-throated orator of Rome." He was a brilliant statesman magnificent in battle, courageous, and strong. And he was handsome. As far as personal qualities are concerned, he could have become a world ruler. But he had a very vulnerable and fatal flaw of moral weakness, so much so that on one occasion his personal tutor shouted to his own face, "Oh, Marcus, oh colossal child! Able to conquer the world, but unable to resist temptation."

4. It comes to a decision

Eventually, everything comes to a head. The Bible says, “she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat” (Gen. 3:6). This is when sin actually takes place. It occurs when you take the bait Satan is offering. Joshua 7:21 is similar: “When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they *are* hid in the earth in the



midst of my tent, and the silver under it." Eve took it. Achan took it. This is when sin is birthed in our lives.

After we have been deceived we then decide to follow Satan's allurements and lie. James 1:14-15 puts it like this: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James teaches that a man is "drawn away of his own lust" which speaks of our own free will, our own choosing. In other words, we take the bait and decide to sin. No, the Devil does not make us do it! We do it! We choose to sin. The conception and birth of sin can only happen with man's cooperation. And when sin is birthed we have been defeated and experience a spiritual downfall in our lives.

A little girl hit her brother with a broomstick, called him a bad name, and spit on him. Her mother got after her and said, "Sweetheart, you shouldn't have done that, the Devil made you do that." The little girl said, "Well, the Devil made me hit him with the broomstick and call him a bad name but spitting on him was my idea." Here is the point. We can't blame the Devil for our own sin. He tempts us but the Devil does not sin for us. We take the bait.

A mother told her son not to go swimming. However, when he came into the house his mother noticed that his hair and bathing suit were wet. "Johnnie," his mother scolded, "I told you not to go swimming." "I couldn't help it mom," he defended himself. "The water looked so good." "But why did you take your bathing suit with you?" "Just in case I was tempted."

Similarly, a 4-year-old was caught by her mom standing in a chair, eating cookies, after she had been told not to. Here is how she explained the situation, "Mom it's not my fault, I just climbed up to smell them, and my tooth got caught."

These stories remind us that it's ultimately and always an individual choice to sin. And when sin is in the back of our minds, it's easy to step over the threshold and commit sin. This is why we must not allow the Devil to deceive or trick us.

The origin of sin moves a step further.

5. It lives on through dissemination - 6

Genesis 3:6

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.”

Eve gave the fruit to her husband, and you know the rest of the story. Eve’s sin affected Adam and Adam’s sin effected the world (Rom. 5:12). In fact, it was the sin that changed the world! Here is the lesson. Our sin affects others; it impacts other people – not just us. We can very easily disseminate or pass on our sins to others (our bad attitudes, our faithlessness, unfaithfulness, disobedience, our anger, etc.) by deceiving them and even including them in our own sins. Don’t miss this. The Bible says that she “gave also unto her husband with her and he did eat” (vs. 6). In passing on our sin to others, we become the Devil’s tool. This is dissemination.

The sinful and rebellious patterns that we develop rub off on our family and children. As a mother and wife, we need to realize this. As a husband and dad, we can never forget that the way we live can have either a positive or negative impact upon our families. Your sin affects others.

This is true if you are not saved. If you are an unsaved dad, you can actually bring death to others. Think of this. if you reject Christ as your Savior, your own sin of unbelief can take your family members to hell! I want to warn you, if you don't get saved, you're going to die and go to Hell, but even worse, you may take some of your loved ones with you who follow in your own unbelieving footsteps. Perhaps they will be your own children!

I heard of a man who was in his home one day. He was a cultured, educated, outwardly kind man. And an old soul winner came and knocked on the man's door, a visitor from the church. The man, being gracious, went to the door and opened the door and invited this man in. This earnest old soul winner took his Bible and sat down by this man and told him of the love of God and the grace of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The unsaved man sat there and listened. He listened courteously, he smiled, he nodded his head, he thanked the man for coming,

refused to receive Jesus, graciously showed him to the door and sat down and unfolded his newspaper again with a smug look upon his face.

His little boy, who was not yet even old enough to go to school, had been watching the whole thing. He was sitting on the floor playing with the toy. When the earnest soul winner had left the house, the little boy dropped his toys, went and snuggled up in his daddy's lap, put his arms around his daddy's neck, that he'd admired so much and shook his head back and forth and said, "We don't want to be an old Christian, do we daddy?"

You see what this father was teaching? He was not aware of course, that there was a child that was listening. There was a child watching. Friend, there's something about sin; it corrupts those around us. None of us die unto ourselves, and I believe the worst Hell for some men and women will be that not only did they go there, but they drug their loved ones with them. You see, there was the dissemination of that sin. Passing our sin and unbelief on to others.

Christians must also be on guard. We must remember that our sins have a direct effect on others. Don't allow the Devil to deceive you and adversely affect the lives of others because of your own sin and failures. You might just pass on your own sin to others who are watching you. As Christians, we need to be a light bearer before our families and others – not a sin bearer.

Born in Italy in 1820, Florence Nightingale felt called by God to pursue nursing at a time when women of society were expected to marry a man of means rather than pursue such a menial profession. During the Crimean War, Nightingale tended British soldiers. By documenting case studies, she proved that seven times more men died from disease than from injuries. Soldiers called her the "Lady with the Lamp" because she checked on patients by lantern light. After the war, she founded the Nightingale Home for Nurses in England, incorporating methods of sanitation that changed the face of nursing. Nightingale died in 1920. She serves as an example of the difference one woman can make.

God wants all of us to be like this "lady with the Lamp" in our daily living and home life. We are to be shining forth Jesus Christ and His virtues before our husband, wife, children, friends, and coworkers. We can change the atmosphere of our

home, marriage, and raise godly and faithful children. Don't let the Devil put out your light.

6. It results in death – 7

Genesis 3:7 gives us the sad conclusion of the origin or evolution of sin:

“And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.”

This is the description of Adam and Eve's death sentence. They died spiritually and would one day die physically. The awareness of their physical nakedness became a reminder of their own spiritual nakedness (separation and death) before God. We've talked about this already. God said in Genesis 2:17 that sin would bring forth death and that is exactly what happened to Adam and Eve. The death sentence came upon them because of their sin.

James 1:15 says the same thing: “sin, when it is finished, brings forth death.” James is probably looking back to the Genesis account and what happened after Adam and Eve sinned. They experienced death (Gen. 2:17). For the unbeliever physical death results in the final punishment for their sins in hell as they experience eternal spiritual death. However, this is not the case for the believer in Christ. Believers only share in the physical aspect of death. This is because Christ's death paid the necessary fine that God required to remedy spiritual death for the Gospel believer.

Nevertheless, as previously mentioned, our sin also brings death to our spiritual growth, our relationships with others, our service and commitment to God, and most of all to our relationship and fellowship with God. Therefore, we need to confess our sins to God (1 John 1:9). You need to remember that your perverted priorities, bad attitudes, bitterness, and lack of spiritual living can bring death to your own spiritual life and to others within your household.

Proverbs 2:18

“For her house inclineth unto death, and her paths unto the dead.”

Proverbs 7:27

“Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”

Often we are the most vulnerable when we believe we are the strongest. Friend, Satan is a destructive force but thank God he is a defeated foe.

1 John 4:4

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.”

In March 1989, an asteroid a half mile in diameter, moving at the speed of 44,000 miles per hour, shot across the very path that the earth travels, missing us by only six hours. Most people do not worry about dangers such as these. Did you know that every day twenty tons of material from space enters our atmosphere? Most of the space debris is the size of grains of sand but some is as large as golf balls.

Once again most people do not worry about dangers like these. In a similar way many Christians are not alarmed with the Devil’s temptations that come before their personal lives. They live as though there is no real danger lurking around them. But the Bible tells us that we face daily temptations and spiritual danger because of the work and wiles of the Devil. Ignoring the danger does not make the danger go away. Instead, it opens us up to more temptation and brings us to a place of defeat and despair, as we allow the Devil and his emissaries to capture our hearts and ruin our lives in sin.

As a Christian, you may need a new beginning. Maybe you realize that you have been raked over the coals by the Devil. You have been deceived. Today you need to get back on the straight and narrow road! Maybe you need to just stop doubting God’s Word, disobeying it, and disseminating your rebellious life on others. Maybe you need to be saved since you have never placed your faith in Jesus Christ alone to be your Savior. Perhaps you are too proud of your good deeds to humbly bow in repentance and faith and ask Jesus to save you. Don’t allow Satan to deceive you any longer. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved” (Acts 16:31).

In conclusion, the battle against Satan and winning the victory over temptation is not easy. It’s a real battle with real results – good or bad. We need to put on the “helmet of salvation” (deliverance) and take up “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Eph. 6:17) or else we will become careless, conned by Satan, and contaminated with worldliness.