

## *Anthropology and Hamartiology 9 The Sources of Sin in the World*

a study for the Bible Institute of Gulf Coast Baptist Church Fall 2022 by Steve Thomas

### **Introduction**

As we have seen earlier in the study, Lucifer was responsible for bringing sin into the universe, and Adam was responsible for bringing sin into the world. Where does sin come from now? The book of James says that sin is brought forth when one's own lust has conceived. This word means to grasp something together. Two different entities must come together before a sin happens. One of the entities is the person responsible for the sin - the individual. But what is the other entity. Who incites the individual to sin? There are three sources of sin in this world: the Devil, the World System, and the Sin Nature of the individual himself. The Devil will Attack, the World System will Appeal, and the Flesh will use its Appetite to provoke the believer to sin.

### **Satan as a source of sin**

Satan tempted Eve by getting her to believe that God had not provided everything that was needed to live a fulfilling life. Eve believed that something had been held back by God that they needed, namely the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.<sup>1</sup> There was a benefit that Eve and Adam were missing out on according to Satan. Satan placed this desire into Eve's mind and she made it her own. The desire that was placed and Eve's will came together, and sin was conceived. The information that Satan was giving Eve was partially correct. This is what Satan will do, he will use the truth to weave a lie. Satan will allow the individual to believe many things that are true but then add some error, or leave something out that will force the individual to come to a wrong conclusion. In Satan's desire to build a kingdom like the Most High God, he will place desires into the minds of individuals. He will also work in certain individuals called the children of disobedience, by giving power to them as empowered sons.<sup>2</sup>

In the gospels, Jesus pointed out the ways of the Evil One to the Jews. In John 8 he said that they were of their father the devil, and that his lusts they would do. He was speaking specifically of lying and their desire to kill him. A desire is not necessarily evil in and of itself, there are wholesome desires that the Bible refers to. But the desires of the Evil One would provoke the believer to sin. The Evil One will place different desires in the mind of the believer. These desires can be categorized as anxiety lusts, selfish lusts, lusts against other saints, and Anti-growth lusts as seen in this excerpt from the Christian Life outline on Satan.

#### A. Selfish Lusts

1. Independence from God. Gen 3:5
2. Pride. 1 Tim 3:6, Is. 14:13
3. Lying. John 8:44, Acts 5:3
4. Stealing. Eph. 4:27-28

#### B. Anxiety Lusts

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 3:4-5

<sup>2</sup> Eph 2:1-3

1. Disappointment. Job 23:1-5
  2. Discouragement. Job 7:1-6, Col. 3:21, 2 Cor. 1:8-10
  3. Worry and Self Pity. 1 Peter 5:7-9, Phil. 4:1-7
- C. Lusts against Saints
1. Tattlers or Tale Bearers and Gossips or Busy Bodies. 1 Tim 5:13
  2. An Unforgiving Spirit. 2 Cor. 2:9-11
  3. Corrupt Communication. Eph. 4:29
- D. Anti-Growth Lusts
1. Laziness (idleness) in spiritual things. 1 Tim. 5:13-15
  2. Cowardice in spiritual things. Lk. 22:31-32
  3. Doubt concerning spiritual things. Matt. 21:21, Rom 4:20

Satan will use the World System to distract individuals. 1 John 5:19 reads *“And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness”*. Young’s literal translation does a better job of conveying the truth of the passage. *“We have known that of God we are, and the whole world in the evil doeth lie.”* A more complete translation is that the whole world “lieth in the wicked one” or is “cradled by the wicked one”. Satan uses the desires in the World System to rock the inhabitants of the world to sleep. John said earlier in the letter that there are three types of desires in the World System - the desires of the flesh, the desires of the eyes, and the pride of life. Satan lays these desires out in front of individuals to make them believe that they do not have everything they need to live a fulfilling life, just like he did to Eve. But these desires do not fulfill, they are meant to steal, kill, and destroy.<sup>3</sup>

### **The World System as a source of sin**

Paul describes to Titus the type of desires that the believer should deny, as taught by grace. Grace teaches the believer to reject the desires that are in the world system. These are the same ones that John wrote about, those that appeal to the flesh. Some things in the world system will appeal to the body. These things will provide pleasure to the body, but it will not last. John tells the believer that these things pass away, and are a quality of living in darkness. Paul tells Titus that Grace teaches the believer to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age.<sup>4</sup>

The World System was designed by Satan, and originated with Cain and his descendants. In Genesis 4, when Cain went out from the presence of the Lord, he did not follow God’s instructions to be a fugitive and a vagabond. His descendants built cities and began the basic divisions of the World System that survive even today. In verses 20-22 we see the beginnings of the livestock industry, the entertainment industry, and the beginnings of technology.

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<sup>3</sup> John 10:10

<sup>4</sup> Titus 2:11-12

The believer's response to the World System is to deny the desires that come out from it as we have seen in Titus 2. Paul also tells the believer to "use" world system, and not abuse it, or "use it up".<sup>5</sup> The believer should be able to take or leave the things found in the world system. Paul said that all things were lawful, but not all things were expedient. Meaning that even though Paul was not under the law, and he could partake in items that the world would provide, he did not find that it always profited him. This is not discussing those things that the believer had been told to avoid (fornication, poneros evil, etc) but those things that might appeal to his appetites found in the world. The immediate context in Corinthians 6 was food that was offered to idols. James tells the believer not to take sides with the World System against God.<sup>6</sup> There are things that the believer may be fond of in the World System, but he is not to join their side against God. John tells the believer not to direct agape love towards the temporary things that will be found in the world system. Those things that are pleasing to the body, and those things that are pleasing to the eyes, and those things that will provide pride of achievement or ownership. These things can be deceiving, in that they are not wrong to possess, or to experience, but they should be experienced in the way that God intends for us to or in God's timing. To give in to the desires of the World System outside of the boundaries that God has set for the believer would be sin.

### **The Flesh as a source of sin**

Paul deals extensively with the flesh as a source for sin. In the second chapter of Ephesians, Paul tells the believer that the life of the believer before Christ was one of death. The believer walked according to the Evil One who now works in empowered sons. But these individuals ordered their lives according to the desires of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.<sup>7</sup>

In Romans 6-7 he gives the strategy of the sin nature as well as how the believer should defeat it. Over the course of these two chapters Paul gives excellent revelation.

The Christian's death to the sin nature, Rom. 6:2. The body pertaining to the sin rendered inoperative so we should not go on serving it as slaves, Rom. 6:6 Freedom from the sin as a result of death, Rom. 6:7. Christ died with reference to the sin once for all, Rom. 6:10. The Christian is to count himself dead to the sin, Rom. 6:11. The Christian is not to let the sin reign as king in his body, Rom. 6:12. The Christian is not to yield the members of his body as instruments unto the sin, Rom. 6:13. The sin will not lord it over the Christian, Rom. 6:14. Christians were slaves to death, but have been declared righteous (Grk.) from the sin, Rom. 6:17, 18, 20, 22. The wages of the sin is death, Rom. 6:23. Through a quality of law comes an experiential knowledge of the sin, Rom. 7:7. The sin nature takes occasion through negative

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<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor 7:31

<sup>6</sup> James 4:4

<sup>7</sup> Eph 2:1-3

commandments, Rom. 7:8. The commandment causes the sin to live again, Rom. 7:9. The sin nature taking occasion slays the believer, Rom. 7:11. The sin nature works out death in the believer and is exceedingly sinful, Rom. 7:13. The carnal Christian is sold under the sin nature, Rom. 7:14. The carnal Christian no longer does what he should but the indwelling sin nature is the source of his activity, Rom. 7:17. The carnal Christian can no longer do what he as a spiritual Christian would wish because of the indwelling sin nature, Rom. 7:20. There is a law principle in the carnal Christian's physical members, Rom. 7:23. With the flesh a carnal Christian will serve the law principle of the sin nature, Rom. 7:25. The Christian has been freed from the law principle of the sin nature and death, Rom. 8:2. Christ condemned the sin in the flesh, Rom. 8:3.

Paul tells the believer in Galatians about the works of the flesh, but he also tells him that if he walks in the Spirit that he will never, not even once, bring to completion these works of the flesh.<sup>8</sup> These works are listed out in verses 19-21 of the same chapter. These things happen when the flesh is in control. When the believer allows his sin nature to "reign", these things will result. Listed in this passage are some "under control" works of the flesh alongside of some "out of control" works of the flesh. Many believers are performing zealous religious works while under the flesh's control. These works are often accompanied by a desire for appreciation, a frustration when others move into our "territory", or a pride of achievement or ownership.

When one of the three sources of sin provokes or incites the believer with a desire in his mind, the believer has the opportunity to take the way of escape provided by the Spirit of God.<sup>9</sup> He can also give in to the temptation and sin will be the result. James tells us that God is not tempted nor does he tempt any man.<sup>10</sup>

## **Conclusion**

There is some overlap in how the enemies will attack the believer. Satan will often utilize the world system when he wants to distract a believer, and will then follow up with discouragement and other anxiety lusts. The Satanically-ensnared believer in 2 Tim 2:24-26 is a believer who has been taken captive, but before this happens his sin nature is out of control. This can be seen from the context of chapter 2. While not being indwelt by Satan or a demon, he is doing the will of the Evil One thinking he is doing God's will. There is repentance granted for this believer if he will acknowledge the truth.

The believer should be aware of the sources of sin, so that he can recognize the temptations when they come and defend accordingly.

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<sup>8</sup> Gal 5:16

<sup>9</sup> 1 Cor 10:13

<sup>10</sup> James 1:13