

:: summary

We invest in home security systems, we keep our money in banks, we guard our social security numbers and we even create passwords for our wifi. We take so many precautions to create an external sense of security, yet so often we care less or are even careless with our souls. Satan, the devil, your real and present spiritual adversary, will use every opportunity against you and do whatever it takes to separate you from God, so don't help him by leaving any room in your life for satan to drive a wedge between you and your heavenly Father.

:: discussion

Though it is a less common phrase in an increasingly post-Christian culture, most of us are familiar with the classic blame-shifting phrase, "The devil made me do it." A Christian worldview acknowledges the reality of satan at work in the world, and recognizes God has given each person free will to live and act as we choose.

Do you believe satan influences decision making? If so, how?

Read Ephesians 4:17-27

In this passage, when Paul refers to the behaviors of "the Gentiles," he is referring to people engaged in rebellious behavior called sin that goes against God and His purposes. Sin creates a relational wedge between us and God that grows with our rebellion. Satan is an opportunistic enemy, and one of his tools of choice is a wedge, which, like a crowbar, only requires the smallest amount of wiggle room created by sin in any part of your life to pry, and satan uses any sin in your life to create distance between you and God.

As you consider this reality, can you identify an aspect of your life in the past or present when your sin gave satan a foothold to create a wedge between you and God? What was your experience like?

Read Genesis 3:1-6

This passage describes the introduction of what is sometimes called "Original Sin" or the first rebellious act of people against God in human history, which resulted in "The Fall," where God's good creation was corrupted by evil, peace gave way to chaos and the world was changed for the worst as sin drove a wedge between God and His people.

Based on this passage, what do you observe about satan's approach and the tools he uses to influencing us?

Read James 4:7

In this short verse, James gives us a simple pair of commands that will help you defend against and even win your battles against satan, your spiritual adversary: Submit yourself to God and resist the devil. Basically, this means to live in a way that honors God as you pursue relationship with Him, and to simultaneously be aware of any signs of satan's activity or influence in your life and respond with active opposition.

Are there any signs of the devil's work that you have learned to recognize? What do you do when you see those signs?

If you are seeking relationship with God and you are trying to serve Him with your life, you have a real adversary who opposes God in every way and hates what you are doing. He will do whatever it takes to create distance between you and God, so stay connected with God, stand firm in prayer and actively guard against any temptation in your life that might lead to sin your opportunistic enemy could use against you.

