



THE LIES OF DARKNESS.

October 12, 2025

Glenn Garvin

BIG IDEA – The grey life is where truth fades and desires rule.

Scripture Focus – If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. **1 John 1:8**

Family Business!

Honoring our Pastors among us!

The New Testament has some words to share about honoring our Pastors.

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 NLT

Dear brothers and sisters, **honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and give you spiritual guidance.** Show them great respect and wholehearted love because of their work. And live peacefully with each other.

Hebrews 13:17 NLT

Obey your spiritual leaders, and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this with joy and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.

1 Timothy 5:17 NIV

The elders who direct the affairs of the church well **are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.**

- **Pastor Tom Brown** – Credentialed for 41 years with the Assemblies of God, ordained for the past 31 years with the Assemblies of God. He has been a part of the church for 43 years. He has been on pastoral staff in the past, and is currently serving as an elder and leads the seniors called the Harvesters.
- **Pastor Robin Garvin** – A Pastor for 44 years. Credentialed for 26 years with the Assemblies of God, ordained for the past 10 years. Robin and I have been a part of this church for a total of 23 years.
- **Pastor Janet Engler** – Credentialed for 17 years with the Assemblies of God, ordained for the past 8 years. Her and John have been a part of our church for 7 years.

- **Becky Vargas** has been an evangelist for 20 years. She's been credentialed with the Assemblies of God for 25 years, ordained for past 10 years.
- **Pastor Larry Rodriguez** – Ordained for 36 years with Assemblies of God International. He also serves on the SoCal Assemblies of God Executive Board for Men's Ministry. He and his wife Patsy have been a part of our church for 4 months.

“Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won’t have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life.” John 8:12 NLT

Jesus headlines a conversation about LIGHT and DARKNESS in the gospel of John.

When Jesus talked about light and darkness, He wasn’t describing ideas. He was exposing real spiritual realms — two fathers, two kingdoms, two voices.

**Jesus didn’t say, “Understand me.” He said, “Follow me.”
He wasn’t inviting us into a philosophy — He was calling us into relationship.**

Jesus said this...“Why can’t you understand what I am saying? It’s because you can’t even hear me! For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does.

He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.

So when I tell the truth, you just naturally don’t believe me! Which of you can truthfully accuse me of sin? And since I am telling you the truth, why don’t you believe me?

Anyone who belongs to God listens gladly to the words of God. But you don’t listen because you don’t belong to God.” John 8:43-47 NLT

So the real question is — who’s your father?

Say this to yourself — Light and Dark don’t mix.

For Jesus it is ALWAYS Personal, Not Philosophical! It’s always about moving truth from head to heart!

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In Jesus’ foundations of truth:

- You are *born into* darkness but *reborn into* light (John 3:3; 8:12).
- You either *walk with* the Father of lights (James 1:17) or *follow* the father of lies (John 8:44).

- The issue is not intellectual but relational allegiance — which father, which kingdom, which voice defines your reality.

That's why Jesus didn't invite people to *agree with His teaching*; He called them to *follow Him*. The call is not to "think differently," but to "think & live differently," *stepping out of one domain, out of one dominion into another*.

Living differently doesn't mean we don't still struggle with sin or temptation.



The Lie of "In-Between"

The "grey zone" is dangerous!

Light vs Dark

- **We do have a choice:** Light or Dark. Anything in between is dim, grey, shadowed and dangerous.
- **Denying this reality**, believing we can live in both worlds, both realms, creates confusion, frustration, and eventual delusional foolishness.
- **Living in the grey** means that we will succumb to our **Disordered Desires**.

The Lies of Darkness are subtle – perfectly customized, pretending to enlighten us, enrich us and it seduces us with flattery and false hope.

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The similarities between the deceiver tempting Eve vs tempting Christ.

This isn't a Christian/non-Christian, believer/non-believer discussion – this is the existence of all or lives as human beings.

The temptations in your life are **no different from what others experience**. And God is faithful. **He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted**, he will show you a way out so that you can endure. **1 Corinthians 10:13 NLT.**

John took Jesus' theme of LIGHT and DARKNESS and illuminated it brilliantly in his sermons and letters to the Church. However, in the middle John bluntly talks about sin. It's deceptive power of rationalization.

1 John 1 is a sermon highlighting a major Biblical theme that Jesus spoke of often.

John masterfully uses the word "IF."

We like to think there's a safe middle — a “grey zone.”

But John says, “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves.”

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8

**The truth is — the grey zone is where truth fades and desires rule.
We tell ourselves, “I can manage both.”**

If you keep one foot in the light and one in the dark, you're just standing in a shadow.

Say this to yourself, “Step out of the shadows.”



The Lie of “Finding another truth”

“Self-deception keeps us in the dark.”

It's not God that deceives us — it is us lying to ourselves and covering ourselves with shame.

Confession isn't shameful — it's light.

We try to hide and deny – ditch and dodge God!

Confession exposes truth.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us. 1 John 1:8-10 NIV

ILLUSTRATION:

Ever walk into a room at night and bump your shin on a table?

Pain is the body's reminder: turn on the light.

Confession works the same way.

Say this to yourself, “Confession is the light switch.”



The Lie of “Follow Your Heart”

How are we deceived into believing we don't have sin?

We believe we should follow our heart! The world believes following your heart = following truth!

TRUTH:

"The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?" Jeremiah 17:9 NLT

TRUTH: We have "Real needs, wrong choices."

Remember Woody Allen's line, "The heart wants what it wants" when he was interviewed about his affair with his adopted stepdaughter, Soon-Yi, in 1992?

That's darkness disguised as desire.

Completely giving permission to follow whatever urges or desires our heart fancies – Selena Gomez made a hit song about it!

God gave us RATIONAL minds that have questions, curiosities and conversations in our head without anyone but God knowing what's going on up there.

Those "rational" wanderings don't always kick out the best solutions to our issues, or choices in our behaviors.

The war that goes on is in our head, but God wants us to yield our heart to Him!

Jesus said, "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin." (John 8:34)

One of the devil's favorite lie's is that freedom means doing whatever we want.

TRUTH: "Real freedom is choosing what's right."

Our desires may not be evil — but when they're disordered, they'll drag you into darkness.

Sin is taking the shortcut to getting what we want, when we want it, and not listening to anyone that tells us different.

Say this to yourself, "Real needs, wrong choices."



The Light That Leads to Life

Jesus is our Advocate

When we step into God's light, we don't become perfect — we become honest.

My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. **But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father.** He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world. **John 2:1-2.**

Jesus doesn't just forgive — He represents us.

Jesus stands between darkness and us and says, "This one's mine. He is our court appointed attorney"

"Temptation isn't merely about winning or losing a battle. It's about discovering who you truly are. And what matters most." Tim Chaddick, [The Truth about Lies: The Unlikely Role of Temptation in Who You Will Become](#).

The light doesn't just expose our sin — it reveals our Savior.

Say this to yourself, "Always step toward the light." Which is Jesus!

The two primary ways the enemy distracts and deceives is through unchecked curiosity and wounds from our past.

Application.

How to Turn on the Light

When darkness lies...

"Flip the switch. Walk in the light."

- **Name the disordered desire.**
- **Confess honestly. God already knows — He's waiting for you to agree.**
- **Choose Jesus daily. Stop flirting with darkness.**
- **Replace lies with truth from God's Word. Which means you've got to have it in you to use it effectively!**

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32)

SCRIPTURES

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 NLT

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John 8:12 NLT

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Jeremiah 17:9 NLT

"The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"

John 8:34

Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave of sin.

John 2:1-2

My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. **But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father.** He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous. He himself is the sacrifice that atones for our sins—and not only our sins but the sins of all the world.

DIG DEEPER NOTES



Bible Verses on Honoring Pastors

Importance of Respect and Honor

VERSE REFERENCE KEY MESSAGE

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13	Acknowledge and respect those who work hard among you, holding them in high regard for their work.
Hebrews 13:17	Obey your spiritual leaders and submit to them, as they keep watch over your souls.

Supporting Your Pastor

VERSE REFERENCE KEY MESSAGE

1 Timothy 5:17	Elders who rule well should be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who teach.
Galatians 6:6	Those taught the word should share all good things with their teacher.

Encouragement and Empathy

VERSE REFERENCE KEY MESSAGE

1 Peter 5:1-4	Pastors are called to shepherd their flock willingly and serve as examples to the congregation.
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Honoring pastors is essential for fostering a supportive church environment. These verses emphasize the importance of respect, support, and understanding in the relationship between congregations and their leaders.



Similarities between the deceiver tempting Eve and tempting Christ?

Both temptations follow the same pattern—

- distortion of truth,
- appeal to desire,
- and challenge to identity.

1. Both start with doubting God's Word.

Eve: “**Did God really say...?**” ([Genesis 3:1](#))

Christ: “**If you are the Son of God...**” ([Matthew 4:3](#))

The serpent and Satan both question divine authority to plant uncertainty.

2. Both twist Scripture and spin “truth.”

Eve: **Satan contradicts God’s warning, implying she misunderstood.**

Christ: **Satan quotes Psalm 91 but omits its meaning to push presumption.**

In both cases, deception is subtle — truth mixed with a lie.

3. Both target desire.

Eve: “**Good for food... pleasing to the eye... desirable for gaining wisdom.**”

Christ: **Bread for hunger, kingdoms for glory, proof for pride.**

Each temptation hits **physical need, emotional want, and spiritual ambition**. In other words, plays to disordered desires.

4. Both test obedience and trust.

Eve **acts independently**— trusts her rationalization over God’s command.

Jesus **submits completely**— trusts God’s Word over appetite or pride.

5. Both center on authority and identity.

Eve tries to “**be like God.**”

Satan challenges Jesus **to prove He is God’s Son.**

Summary:

Eve believed the lie and reached for more.

Jesus faced the lie and stood firm in truth.

Same deceiver. Same method. Different outcome—**Eve fell; Christ conquered.**



Jesus using the word “devil.”

Passages Using Σατανᾶς (Satanas - adversary) — “Satan”

Reference	Phrase	Context	Greek Word
Matthew 12:26	“If Satan drives out Satan, he is divided...”	Jesus defends Himself from Pharisees’ accusation	Σατανᾶς
Matthew 16:23	“Get behind Me, Satan”	To Peter after his rebuke	Σατανᾶς

Reference	Phrase	Context	Greek Word
Mark 1:13	"He was in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan"	Parallel to temptation story	Σατανᾶς
Mark 3:23–26	"How can Satan cast out Satan?"	Same teaching as Matthew 12	Σατανᾶς
Luke 10:18	"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven"	Report of the seventy disciples	Σατανᾶς
Luke 11:18	"If Satan is divided against himself..."	Parallel to Matthew 12	Σατανᾶς
Luke 13:16	"...whom Satan has bound for eighteen years..."	Healing of crippled woman	Σατανᾶς
Luke 22:3	"Then Satan entered into Judas..."	Judas's betrayal (narrative but likely from Jesus' knowledge)	Σατανᾶς
Luke 22:31	"Satan has demanded to sift you like wheat"	Warning to Peter	Σατανᾶς

Total uses of Σατανᾶς (accuser) by Jesus: 9 times.

Summary Totals

Term	Meaning	Count	Sample Verse
διάβολος (diabolos)	slanderer, accuser	7	John 8:44
Σατανᾶς (Satanas)	adversary	9	Luke 10:18
Total Mentions by Jesus (either term)		16 total references	

Observations

- διάβολος (the devil) describes the *nature* of the enemy — one who deceives and slanders.
- Σατανᾶς (Satan) describes the *identity* — the adversary opposing God and His people.
- Jesus speaks of the devil/Satan as a real, personal being, not an abstract force.
- His tone and teaching consistently reveal both awareness of the devil's influence and authority over him.



Talking Back: A Monastic Handbook for Combating Demons.

Overview of "Talking Back: A Monastic Handbook for Combating Demons"

"Talking Back" is a spiritual guide written by Evagrius of Pontus, a prominent figure in early monasticism. The book addresses how monks in the Egyptian desert resisted temptations and spiritual challenges, particularly from what Evagrius termed "demons."

Key Themes

- **Spiritual Combat:** The book emphasizes the importance of responding to negative thoughts and temptations with scripture.
- **Demons and Thoughts:** Evagrius identifies eight primary demons that represent various vices, including gluttony, fornication, and pride.

Structure of the Book

The book is divided into several sections, each focusing on a specific vice:

Book	Focus
First	Against the Thoughts of Gluttony
Second	Against the Thoughts of Fornication
Third	Concerning Love of Money
Fourth	Concerning the Thoughts of Sadness
Fifth	Against the Demon of Anger
Sixth	Against the Thoughts of Listlessness
Seventh	Against the Thoughts of Vainglory
Eighth	Against the Cursed Thoughts of Pride

Author Background

[Evagrius of Pontus](#) (345–399) was a significant spiritual director whose teachings influenced Christian monastic practices. The book has been popular among ascetics throughout history, providing insights into early Christian spirituality and the struggle against inner demons.

This handbook serves as a resource for those seeking to understand and combat spiritual challenges through the lens of early Christian teachings.

Introduction:

Sometime in the final decade of the fourth century, a monk named Loukios wrote to Evagrius of Pontus, one of the leading spiritual guides among the monks of the Egyptian desert. Calling him "honored father," Loukios asked Evagrius to compose for him a treatise that would explain the tactics of the demons that try to

undermine the monastic life; Loukios hoped that such a work would help him and others to resist more successfully the evil suggestions that the demons made. In response, Evagrius sent Loukios a letter, now known as his fourth, and a copy of the work translated here: Antirrhetikos, or Talking Back. Among the monks of late antiquity and early Byzantium, it became one of the most popular of Evagrius's books: ancient authors regularly mentioned it in their discussions of Evagrius, and it was eventually translated from the original Greek into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, and even Sogdian.

Talking Back has not enjoyed the same level of popularity among modern students of early Christian monasticism. One reason for this neglect is linguistic: both the Greek original and the Latin translation are lost; complete texts survive only in Armenian and Syriac manuscripts that are either not fully edited or difficult to access. But also Talking Back concerns itself exclusively with the monk's combat with demons, a topic that has not interested many modern historians and theologians, most of whom have directed their attention to social and cultural features of early monasticism or to aspects of monastic spirituality that appear more directly relevant to contemporary persons, such as prayer or spiritual direction. Intense conflict with demons, however, especially in the form of thoughts, lay at the heart of the early Egyptian monk's struggle for virtue, purity of heart, and thus for salvation. **Opposition from demons, whether they tempted the monk to sin or tried to frighten him into abandoning the ascetic life, provided the resistance that the monk needed to form himself into a person of integrity.**

In Talking Back, we find the thoughts, circumstances, and anxieties with which the demons assailed the monk, and we observe a primary strategy in the struggle to overcome such assaults: antirrhesis (A discrediting or rejection of an authority), the speaking of relevant passages from the Bible that would contradict or, as Evagrius puts it, cut off the demonic suggestions.

Evagrius of Pontus crafted the most sophisticated demonology to emerge from early Christian monasticism and perhaps from ancient Christianity as a whole.

Born around 345 to a country bishop in the region of Pontus in Asia Minor, Evagrius showed religious and intellectual promise even as a teenager and was ordained a reader by Bishop Basil.

The Theory and Practice of Antirrhesis.

Just as Evagrius's Praktikos concerns praktike, the practice of the ascetic life, so too Antirrhētikos concerns antirrhesis, the practice of talking back. In an excellent study of the Psalms and prayer in Evagrius's spirituality, Luke Dysinger provides a Copyrighted mater description of the diverse aspects of monastic antirrhesis, which means "refutation" or "contradiction":

In the practice of antirrhesis select biblical verses are employed to counteract the particular logismos [thought] against which the monk is struggling.

Antirrhetis entails the deployment of biblical texts not only against the demons and their logismoi [thoughts], but also against sinful tendencies within the self, and even more broadly as "refutations" of particular groups of people and forms of behaviour. Furthermore, antirrhetic biblical texts may console the tempted soul and remind it of virtues opposed to the logismoi. **Finally, antirrhetis also includes the offering to God of successful biblical prayers.**

Whether the monk uses biblical passages negatively, to refute a demon or thought, or positively, to petition God or console a fellow monk, warfare with the demons remains the context for antirrhetis.

Thus, its basic character is oppositional as well as verbal—the monk speaks the biblical text in the context of warfare with the demonic—as the English phrase "talking back" seeks to capture.

The following statistics concerning the addresses of the biblical excerpts in Talking Back illustrate both the diversity of antirrhetis and its primarily adversarial character:

1. **Excerpts directed against demons or the thoughts they suggest: 315 (63.3%)**
 - a. Against thoughts: 278 (55.8%)
 - b. Against demons: 37 (7.4%)²⁹
2. Excerpts directed against a human soul or intellect captive to or at risk from the demons and their thoughts: 134 (26.9%)
 - a. Against the soul: 114 (22.9%)
 - b. Against the intellect: 20 (4.0%)
3. Excerpts directed to the Lord or the angels: 48 (9.6%)
 - a. To the Lord: 46 (9.2%)
 - b. To the angel(s): 2 (0.4%)
4. Excerpt concerning a topic: 1 (0.2%)³⁰



Jesus' talks about slavery.

Jesus words to the Pharisees confused them because they could only think in positional terms.

Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. **And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.**" **John 8:31-32 NLT**

The Pharisees believed that Jesus was talking about their socioeconomic slavery – and they had been freed from Egypt, so they misunderstood what Jesus was talking about.

"But we are descendants of Abraham," they said. "**We have never been slaves to anyone.** What do you mean, 'You will be set free'?" **John 8:33 NLT**

The Pharisees were living in the great river of DENIAL! Of course, they **had been slaves** many times and were **still slaves under Roman occupation** while they were debating Jesus about freedom!

Historical Background

- **Jewish History:** The Pharisees' claim is historically inaccurate, as the Jewish people had experienced slavery in Egypt and other nations throughout their history.
- **Roman Occupation:** At the time of Jesus, the Jews were under Roman rule, which further complicates their assertion of never being enslaved.

But Jesus wasn't addressing physical slavery, he was talking about spiritual slavery to sin.

Knowledge of their ancestry, history and past standing with God did not help them understand sin and its powerful deception on a human.



The heart wants what the heart wants.

Emily Dickinson's line "**the heart wants what it wants**"—though often paraphrased, does not appear verbatim in her work. It encapsulates her broader themes regarding love, longing, and the complexities of human emotion.

In the **1862** context, Dickinson explored the idea that feelings are deeply personal and often beyond one's control. This concept reflects the tension between rationality and emotion, suggesting that the heart may lead individuals to pursue desires that may not align with societal expectations or logic.

Key Themes:

- **Inevitability of Emotion:** The line emphasizes that emotions are powerful and unavoidable.
- **Individual Experience:** It acknowledges the subjective nature of desire, highlighting that what one person feels may not be understood or accepted by others.
- **Resilience of Love:** It suggests a persistent, sometimes tumultuous nature of love that can exist despite circumstances.

Overall, Dickinson's sentiments resonate with the universal struggle to navigate the heart's desires in a world where rationality often reigns.

When Woody Allen quoted Emily Dickinson by saying, "[the heart wants what the heart wants](#)," he was expressing the idea that emotions and desires can be overpowering and often defy rationality or societal norms. This phrase suggests that feelings are complex and may lead individuals to pursue what they truly desire, regardless of external judgments or consequences.

In the context of his relationship with Soon-Yi Previn, it can be interpreted as **his justification for pursuing a relationship with someone significantly younger and related to his long-time partner, Mia Farrow**. It reflects a sentiment that love and attraction are instinctual and **cannot always be controlled by logic or morality**.