Biblical Families, Part 5 | the Enemy

I. Your Family's Enemies | John 2:15-25

- **Demonic Forces** This includes the Devil and his fallen angels. (I Peter 5:8)
- **The World**
  - When biblical writers refer to the World in passages like this, they're not talking about the globe on which we all live. They're talking about the World System and anyone following that system.
  - The World System is anything and everything that stands against God. Everyone who is in darkness or is living sinfully, is following the path laid by the World. Now, Satan is encouraging all of this. He wants people in the world to be living worldly. He and his demonic forces are at work to convince people to continue following this world system.
  - But Satan cannot make believers do anything. Demonic powers can possess unbelievers and cause them to do things that would otherwise be against their will, but they can't do that to people who are filled with the Holy Spirit.
- **Your Flesh**
  - When the Bible is talking about our flesh in a spiritual sense, it's referring to our sin natures —that part of us that still wants to disobey God and do whatever we want to do.
  - It's our flesh that loves the world and the things in the world. It's our flesh that lusts after things it shouldn't. It's our flesh that believes things about Jesus that are untrue. It's our flesh that rejects faith in God. (Genesis 3:6)
  - John identifies three kinds of lusts—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The word "lust" refers generally to a desire, but more specifically to a wrong desire. All of our sins fall into one or more of these categories. We want something that God says we shouldn't have or do, but we want to do it anyway. That's a lust.
  - Therefore, it is your own flesh that is your biggest enemy. (James 1:13-15)
    - God doesn't tempt us to sin. In fact, we talked earlier about I Corinthians 10:13 and the truth that God always provides us a way to escape temptation.
    - Satan isn't our biggest enemy because he can't make us do anything.
    - We are our biggest enemy because we are tempted when we are carried away and enticed by our own lusts. It is those lusts of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life that gives birth to sin.
    - This is why I John 2:15 starts with a command to us. "*Do not love the world nor the things in the world.*" If Satan or God tempted us and made us sin, this command is impossible. How could we choose to not love the world if someone else were just going to force us? John says this because it's our choice. By the power of God, we can—and must —choose to not love the world.

II. Your Family's Defense

- If I am my greatest enemy, my greatest defense against my sinful flesh is truly a righteous offense. As I live righteously in the light by the power and grace of God, I will not be a friend of the world. It's our choice.
- God will provide us a way to escape every temptation that grows from our lusts, but we need to use the escape hatch. He won't pull us from it against our will. We must consciously and intentionally rush through it. (I John 1:7, 2:1-6, 10, 14)

- We have a responsibility to live in the light, to live righteously as God has called and created us to live. We have the responsibility to please the Lord by glorifying Him in all we say and do.
- **Biblical families are family discipleship families**.
  - We have been called to follow God as we build each other up into Christ. Parents are to rear their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Born again children can speak biblical truth into their parents lives.
- **Biblical families are church discipleship families**.
  - If you attend a biblical church, then there should be mature believers there who want to help you and your family members be more like Christ.
  - Now, there is no guarantee that people like this will be in your church. It's also no guarantee that they will be wise enough to be as precise and specific as they should.
  - This is a problem, but it's systemic and has been around since the beginning of the church because we're all sinners.
- **Biblical families pursue discipleship anywhere they can**.
  - If we're born again, God has left us here to grow in our discipleship and make new disciples who are to grow in their discipleship and make new disciples.
  - This means that we need to pursue this at all costs.
  - Therefore, as you learn how important your growth in righteousness is, hopefully you will seek out those who can help you take the next step in your discipleship. That should start at home, but God has also put other people into your lives or at least into your grasp who can help you better worship Him.
  - Your greatest enemy is your own sinful heart that doesn't want to do right and only wants to please itself. The same is true for me and everyone in my family. But we need to fight those lusts by relying on the Holy Spirit's power to do the things God commands in His Word. And we all need help growing in righteousness. We can't do it by ourselves. We absolutely need the Holy Spirit, but God also would have us leaning on other believers to speak truth in love to each other so that we can become more like Jesus. Therefore, we all need to seek out and lean into those relationships.

LifeWork

1. **Read I John 2:26-29 two times this week**.
2. **Ask God to give you disciplers**.Hopefully, they're already in your family and church. But ask God to help you start an intentional and purposeful discipleship relationship with them.
3. **Commit to family discipleship**. It's true that your family may not feel ready for this, but discipleship isn't something we wait to do until we're perfect. It's something we start now and grow in. We won't do it perfectly, but—Lord willing—we will mature in it. So, your family needs to commit to each other to be an active part of your family's discipleship. Of course, if anyone in your family is still not born again, they can't really participate in this process. They aren't a disciple of Christ themselves. If you fall into that category, the best way to participate in your family discipleship is to submit to God and become His disciple yourself.
4. **Find help**. If your family is in a bad place or there are individuals who need careful, specific biblical help, please reach out to us at Counselor@TruthLoveParent.com. Of course, you may also pursue biblically trained help from people in your church or from an organization like the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors. If you have a cancerous tumor, you don't ignore it. You get help to remove it. We all have a sinful heart, and we all need to learn to deny the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. So, let's not wait any longer.