



# Two Standards

TWO VALUE SYSTEMS

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# Physical Standards



- ▶ Imagine you are waging war during the fifteenth century, the time of Ignatius.
- ▶ During battle when your king calls retreat or advance, you watch his banner:
  - ▶ A piece of cloth called a Standard with the colors and family crest of the King on it.
  - ▶ Standard bearers went before the soldiers, to show them where to go

# Spiritual Standards



- ▶ Each of us is in a spiritual battle
- ▶ Two opposing armies: Jesus vs. Evil (often promoted by the culture)
- ▶ Satan is opposed to Jesus' mission of salvation
- ▶ How do we recognize the Standards that we must follow to be sure we are fighting for Christ?



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graph TD; A[Standards] --> B[Needs and Values]; B --> C[Feelings and Thoughts]; C --> D[Decisions/ Actions]
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Standards

**God** or Evil (World, Flesh, Devil)

Needs and Values

Feelings and Thoughts

Decisions/ Actions

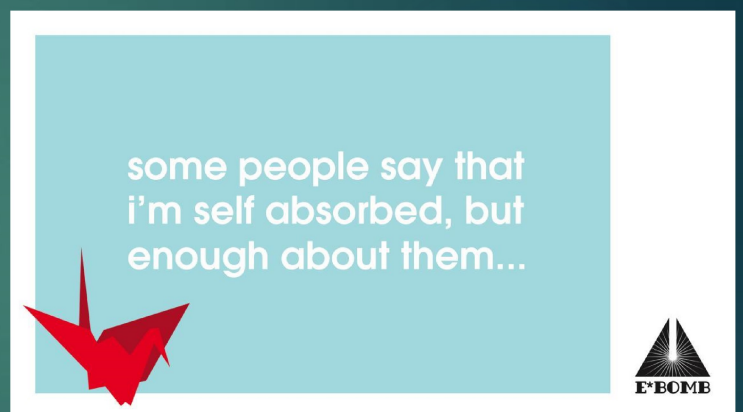


# Christ vs. Evil

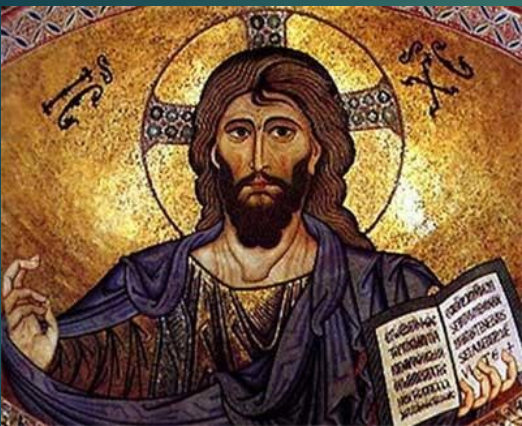
Christ's Standard	Cultural Standard
Blessed are the poor in spirit	Blessed are the rich and comfortable
Blessed are the meek	Blessed are the tough
Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness	Blessed are those whose every want is satisfied
Blessed are the merciful	Blessed are those who get even
Blessed are the peacemakers	Blessed are the war-mongers
Blessed are those who are persecuted in the cause of right	Blessed are those who protest, complain and hurt others in order to succeed
Give and it shall be given to you in good measure	Look out for yourself; no one else will
Take up your cross each day and follow Christ	Avoid pain and suffering at all costs

# Examples of Ads Promoting the Cultural Standard

- ▶ You're worth it
- ▶ Get your own bag
- ▶ We must solve every problem
- ▶ Eliminate all pain (pills rule!)
- ▶ Instant gratification, health, happiness
- ▶ Prosperity gospel



# Tactics of Christ Our King



As we pray about Jesus as our King, we deepen our understanding of the way in which Jesus works.

- ▶ Jesus' strategy focused on love.
- ▶ Jesus tries to love and save people.
  - ▶ Jesus brings freedom
  - ▶ Jesus is counter-cultural

# Tactics of Evil



- ▶ Satan's strategy is opposite of Christ.
- ▶ He tries to destroy relationships between all including individuals, families, cities, states, nations.
- ▶ He hopes to remain unnoticed.
- ▶ Satan wants to enslave us
  - ▶ The usual weapons of Satan: fraud and deceit.

## Values from Each Standard

Jesus Christ	Satan / Evil Spirit
Poverty (of spirit & sometimes financial poverty)	Coveting riches / greed
Humiliation or	Pride
Humility	Honor
Diminished self	Inflated self

# Values, Feelings, Addictions



- ▶ Following Evil's Standard take us toward values for power, fame or wealth.
- ▶ If we choose Christ's Standard, we choose poverty of spirit, humility and other-centeredness.
- ▶ My feelings and actions result from my values.

# Desire for Riches



Riches in themselves are not bad. Instead, the DESIRE for riches is the starting point of Satan's temptation.

Satan tries to convince us to value riches above everything else.

- ▶ The essential element of riches: sense of security they impart, close to independence. "A man of independent means."
- ▶ A rich person's outer security comes from money.
- ▶ He uses riches to establish dignity without God.



# Desire for Poverty

There are  
people so poor,  
that the only  
thing they have  
is **MONEY**...

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*Your one desire should be to do what will give praise and glory to God and give well-being to the soul.*

- ▶ *Not necessarily physical poverty (though it could be).*

*How to practice a desire for poverty:*

- ▶ Realize ALL is gift from God.
- ▶ Be generous like God is generous
- ▶ Help others escape poverty by sharing our wealth
- ▶ Don't let our wealth dictate who we are



# Honor

A rich person will more easily attain worldly honors. These are not bad, just empty.

- ▶ An honored person is usually not slighted.
- ▶ An honored person will be judged as wise and prudent.
- ▶ Satan knows our desire for honor and takes advantage
  - ▶ We can be tempted to become proud of honors.
  - ▶ We can develop our sense of worth based on the world's esteem and the honor
  - ▶ We become self-satisfied, proud, independent, and think we don't need God.



## More on Honor

- ▶ The independent, honored person isn't necessarily wicked, mean, or detesting God. Just ripe for temptation.
- ▶ Satan will try to lead that person to other vices.
- ▶ Ignatius says, "Evil dispositions put in their appearance, from which sin will sooner or later proceed."



# Pride vs. Humiliation



- ▶ Our culture teaches us to focus on self, and feel pride in *self*.
- ▶ I can be too proud to admit mistakes, loss, failure (especially if I lost some faculty that I used to have).
- ▶ Humiliation is the antidote to pride

# Humility



- ▶ Humility is obedience to God as Lord and Master
- ▶ Implies a desire to be like Christ who is poor, despised, and deemed foolish.
- ▶ With humility, we reject self-occupation and develop a Christ-centered thought process

# Pride



Riches

Honor

PRIDE

- ▶ Refuse to acknowledge that I need God and His gifts.
- ▶ Depend on self and refuse to depend on God.
- ▶ Self-occupation
- ▶ Blocks ability or desire to know or recognize God.
- ▶ It's all about ME!

# Humiliation

Realize that worldly honors are empty, worthless.

Humiliation happens. When it does here's how to embrace humiliation:

- ▶ Admit you are dust
- ▶ Admit you sin every day
- ▶ Admit you are only worth what God says you are worth
- ▶ Trust God to protect you. Let go of ego.



## Does it work?

- ▶ Some might think it's a crazy strategy to use poverty, insults, and contempt received by those in the Lord's camp to attract people to it.
- ▶ They aren't attractive. Jesus is.
- ▶ We embrace Jesus' strategy because we love Jesus and he chose them.
- ▶ This strategy brings salvation.
- ▶ This strategy brings positive fruits.
- ▶ Don't just endure. Embrace!



Those shackled with desire for riches, honor and power squander their wealth and waste their lives.

What a loss to the Kingdom!



# Virtues (Fruits) of Standards

Standing under Christ's Standard we grow more:	Standing under Satan's Standard we grow more:
Loving	Apathetic / hateful
Helpless	Power hungry
Generous	Selfish
Kind	Rude
Honest	Deceitful & Exaggerating
Grateful	Self-pitying
Receptive/Real	Self-doubtful / Fake
Selfless	Selfish
Encouraging	Discouraged



# Rudeness vs. Gentleness

## Satan's Standard (Pride)

- ▶ if I don't get what I want, I'm rude.
- ▶ I'm judgmental and harsh.
- ▶ I am proud and angry. "I deserve better!"
- ▶ I feel superior by putting another down.



# Kindness



## Under Jesus' Standard

- ▶ I am kind and gentle
- ▶ I stop pressuring others to conform to my will.
- ▶ I talk patiently with others, even when they mess up my order, or cause me pain, or don't comply with my needs or wants.
- ▶ I speak and act calmly when I want to yell and scream and demand "my rights."

# Exaggeration vs. Honesty

## Jesus' Standard

realize that God is the source of everything I do or have.

- ▶ Embrace humility, and tell the truth, even if it hurts, or diminishes my ego.
- ▶ This can be humiliating but I feel good about telling the truth.



## Satan's Standard

To make myself feel better or look better to others and self I:

- Exaggerate
- Brag
- Denigrate someone else to lift my ego

# Self-Pity vs. Gratefulness

## Jesus' Standard

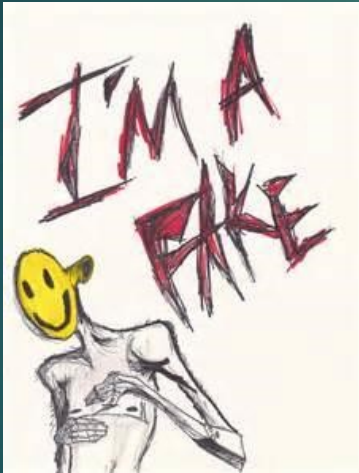
- ▶ Gratefulness comes with practice
- ▶ I appreciate what I have been given and see all as gift including pain, poverty, the heartaches, the struggles.
- ▶ I am gentle, genuine.
- ▶ This brings gratefulness.



## Satan's Standard

- I expect to have all the things I want
- Focus on what I don't have and feel sorry for myself
- Without the beauty, honor, riches or self-importance that I expect, I am encouraged to focus on the "woe is me" syndrome.

# Be Fake



## Satan's Standard Says:

- ▶ Judge body, mind, spirit, psyche by what society says is good (ads, social media, peers)
- ▶ Hide any part of self that doesn't fit the norm - too fat, thin, tall, short, intelligent, stupid, religious, industrious, kind, generous, etc.
- ▶ Make up a new, better self that fits the norm, and be THAT persona.

# Be Genuine



## Under Christ's Standard

- ▶ I receive what God gives, even if its a:
  - ▶ Bad back
  - ▶ Poor memory
  - ▶ Tendency toward depression
  - ▶ Low income
- ▶ When I can follow Christ more fully, I can begin to accept and receive all that God gives me as gift.
- ▶ This develops humility and thankfulness.



# Discourage vs. Encourage

## Following Satan's Standard:

- ▶ We get discouraged and feel sorry for self when things go badly.



## Following Christ's Standard:

- ▶ Allow Jesus to energize and encourage us, (fill us with courage)
- ▶ Have faith through difficult circumstances
- ▶ Encourage others

# How to Choose Between Good and Evil

Ignatius provided 26 rules for discernment. We'll discuss two today (and the rest next month). How do we KNOW which standard we are following?

- ▶ Apply these two rules when choosing between good and evil - Between Christ's Standard and Satan's Standard.





# Choosing To Follow Christ's Standard - Choosing **Good** over Evil

God gently comforts, encourages, holds you lovingly, makes things clear. You feel peaceful, cheerful, simple, or humbled.

The evil spirit will do anything to discourage or confuse you.



So if you've chosen to do good over evil and you feel discouraged – or peaceful or encouraged - **Rejoice!** You've followed Christ's Standard.

# Choosing to Follow Satan's Standard

## (Choosing **Evil** Over Christ - aka Sinning)

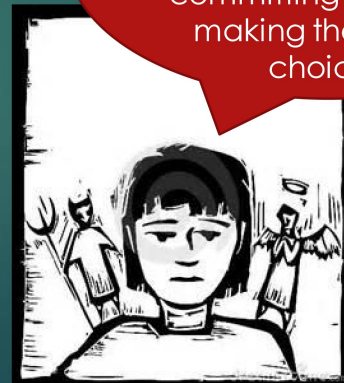
If you choose to sin: continue a bad habit or engage in sinful thoughts or deeds:

### Satan

- reminds us of the sin's sensual pleasures
- Tries to attach us to that sin more tightly.
- Encourages us to *increase vices.*

### God

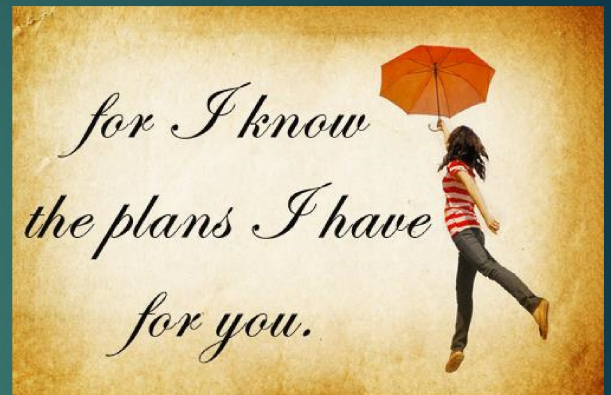
- ▶ pricks the conscience through reason.



So if you feel overly attached to a sinful act or sensual pleasure or you feel guilty for committing sin, you're making the wrong choice.

## Summary

- ▶ Jesus is a different kind of King: one who cares about us deeply, and walks with us in our trials.
- ▶ He lives his Standards of poverty, humility, and humiliation as a model for us.
- ▶ Jesus asks us to trust him and follow him, and assures us of the benefits.



# More Summary

If you seek Christ's Standard - (poverty, humility, humiliation) while making decisions, discernment will be easier.

- ▶ Fruits – or virtues - come from living under Christ's standard. They are signs you are on the right path.
- ▶ Love, powerlessness, generosity, gentleness, honesty, gratefulness, receptivity, selflessness, and encouragement.