

If God is the Need Meeter, then Satan can accurately be described as the Need Cheater. That is not to say that Satan is the anti-theses of God in every way. He is a created being, and therefore subject to God's authority and supreme rule; he is inferior. He is not omnipotent, not completely eternal (more like us, with a beginning but no end), he is not omnipresent. However, as far as character, Satan is the complete antitheses of God. Whereas God is good, loving, caring, kind, compassionate, gentle, just, righteous and more,¹ Satan is evil, a liar (The Father of Lies²), wants to steal, kill, and destroy,³ prideful, blasphemous, murderer, everything that God is not in character, is found in the person of Satan.⁴

The sad part for us is that Satan is out to bring us down and does not generally come to us as the ugliness that the Bible describes him as. It would then be very easy to turn him down, or to head the other way. Instead, he will often come in a much more attractive form.⁵ We saw evidence of this recently when through our travels we came to Las Vegas, NV. Las Vegas is known as sin city, and that is so fitting in some ways. When we first saw it, it was so appealing! The flashy bright lights everywhere, enticing you to come check out the fun, fun, fun! As you get a little closer, if you're looking, you can see a bit of the more ugly enticing, but even those ads are still "enticing" (if it weren't for my knowledge from God that those are bad for me). The attractive ladies (and men, as well) dressed in next to nothing, inviting you to come in for a fun time... it all is very appealing to us. Well, we went in to one of the casinos for a "famous" Las Vegas buffet! That part was great. The revealing part was what actually goes on inside the casino. Yes, it was still attractive in everyway inside the casino, but once you saw the faces of the people doing what promised to be fun and exciting, you saw the true nature of sin. At first enticing, promising to be all that we need, and the return? Absolutely nothing. A fleeting fancy. Passing quickly and creating more hunger. More hunger for nothing. There were lots of lonely, sad, empty looking people looking for the fun, fulfillment and satisfaction that the flashy lights promised.

That is sin. Sin is the counterfeit of what God created to be good. It promises to meet a need, a real need that we have, and can not do that. It attempts to cheat the way God wants to meet the need. Stealing is trying to have God's abundant blessing before it is time, or on our own effort. Lying is much the same, putting up a different image than the one God has given us. Lust is taking the good that God made (the sexual relationship between a husband and wife) and trying to have it in many different ways outside of that full commitment relationship. Sin cheats our needs rather than meets them.

And that is Satan. Satan is out to entice us in everyway to get stuck in some trap that only cheats our needs. Alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, lying, stealing, all ways that Satan can get us trapped in a life of needing more. And he does. You can see people addicted to all of those things listed above, and more. Perhaps you are caught in the destructive loop of one or more of those. I have been, and understand the power of that, the draw of that. But I also know the complete lack of fulfillment found in those things. They are an attempt at a substitute for the good thing God has given us. They only lead to a hunger for more, where the real deal from God satisfies. Jesus called himself the living water, and that whoever drinks it will not ever be thirsty again.⁶ That is the way with God. We said it before, He created us, knows how we work, what we need, and can and wants to meet those needs. Satan knows what we need as well, and has a counterfeit for every

¹ An impressive list of God's attributes can be found at Exodus 34:6-7.

² He is a liar, and the father of lies - John 8:44.

³ Jesus said I came to give you life, life to the full, in the same breath he said the thief (Satan) comes only to steal and kill and destroy. (John 10:10)

⁴ It is not our purpose here to list all of those characteristics, but might be an interesting study sometime to see that indeed every aspect of God's character that we know can be matched in the opposite way in Satan's character spelled out in Scripture.

⁵ 2Cor 11:14 - for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

⁶ John 4:13-14.

need that we have, and is actively pushing those (along with help from us who think that our way, satan's way, is better... faster...).

We keep using the word counterfeit... what comes to mind when you read that word? Counterfeit... the way your kitchen fits so nicely together? No... :-) Counterfeit... money. That's the most common counterfeit thing that we speak of usually. What is counterfeit money? A copy of the real thing. How much is the counterfeit worth? ABSOLUTELY NOTHING. The counterfeit though it usually looks exactly like the real thing, and can even pass as the real thing for a while, fooling some innocent cashiers... it is in the end worth absolutely nothing. That is like Satan's offers for us. They are counterfeits. They appear as exact copies of the real thing, but they have no value. They are worthless. Satan offers us thousands of counterfeits to God's good things.

This includes counterfeit ideas for the way we should do relationships.

We're going to look at some of those counterfeits in the next couple chapters. Several different ways Satan has tried to offer an alternative to the God-designed relationship intended from Creation. From shopping for the right partner, to placing conditions on love (whether intentionally or un-intentionally), to a study on the Greek word (Porneia), exploring all its meanings and understanding the different ways that we can commit what the NIV translates most often as "sexual immorality".

Just like God wants to meet our needs, and can, and does, Satan wants to cheat them. And he can, and he does.