Live No Lies

I am passionate about the intersection of leader development and spiritual formation. Why? Because a spiritual leader (vs. an everyday leader) leads from the inside out—out of the overflow of a life that is constantly being transformed by Christ.

That said, over the past few years, one of the books that has been most instrumental in my own spiritual formation has been Live No Lies: Recognize and Resist the Three Enemies That Sabotage Your Peace by John Mark Comer. A few years ago, I did a set of Book Notes of the quotes I found most helpful. In this blog, I have narrowed it down to a dozen or so with the intent to encourage you to read the whole book, but most of all, to contribute to your own formation as a Kingdom leader.

> *I find it an apt metaphor to capture the thesis of this short book. I know your time is precious, so let me get to the point. We are at war. Not with aliens from Mars, but with an enemy far more dangerous: lies. But unlike The War of the Worlds, our enemy isn't the figment of an overactive imagination. In this case, there's no hoax. Our enemy is real.*
> *LOCATION: 192*

> *For centuries, teachers of the Way of Jesus used a paradigm that's been lost in the modern era, that of "the three enemies of the soul." The world. The flesh. And the devil. They saw the three enemies of the soul as alien invaders from hell and a kind of counter-trinity to God himself.*
> *LOCATION: 213*

> *My point is this: lies distort our souls and drive us into ruin.*
> *LOCATION: 786*

> *Disinformation—or in the language of Scripture, deception—is at the root of almost every single problem we face in our society and our souls.*
> *LOCATION: 1028*

> *And now we're getting to the core thesis of this book. Here it is again: the devil's primary stratagem to drive the soul and society into ruin is deceptive ideas that play to disordered desires, which are normalized in a sinful society. LOCATION: 1078*

> *Synopsis: what we give our attention to will shape the persons we become. What we think about we become.*
> *LOCATION: 1544*

> *Working theory of how we fight the devil: We practice the spiritual disciplines laid down by Jesus, such as silence and solitude, prayer, fasting, and Scripture—and continually set our minds before the Spirit and truth of God. When tempted, we stand in quiet trust in God's love and wisdom and bring our minds back to Scripture.*
> *LOCATION: 1626*

This is the power of our choices, decisions, and habits. For good or for evil. To index us toward freedom or slavery. We make our decisions, and then our decisions make us. In the beginning we have a choice, but eventually, we have a character.
LOCATION: 2327

Every time you practice a habit of Jesus, your spirit (one way to think of your spirit is as your inner willpower muscle) gets a little stronger and your flesh (your inner animal) gets a little weaker.
LOCATION: 2570

Therefore, we must run every habit, every thought, every relationship—everything—through this simple grid: Does this sow to my flesh or my spirit? Will this make me more enslaved or more free? More beastly or more human? LOCATION: 2707

Remember, the key to spiritual formation is to change what we can control (our habits) to influence what we can't control (our flesh).
LOCATION: 2710

Everything starts with deceptive ideas, or lies we believe (put our trust in and live by) about reality—mental maps that come from the devil, not Jesus, and lead to death, not life. But deceptive ideas get as far as they do because they appeal to our disordered desires, or our flesh. And then the world comes in to complete the three enemies' circular loop. Our disordered desires are normalized in a sinful society, which functions as a kind of echo chamber for the flesh. A self-validating feedback loop where we're all telling each other what we want (or what our flesh wants) to hear.
LOCATION: 3252

This is why it is absolutely crucial for us to recapture the idea of spiritual war; because as long as we deny the reality of demonic evil, we will demonize people—the very people we are called to love and serve. Instead of fighting Satan, we will turn people or even entire groups of people into Satan. As a result, instead of fighting back the hate and violence and darkness of the three enemies, we will just add even more hate and violence and darkness to a culture in desperate need of healing.
LOCATION: 3490

Meaning, it's true it will cost us to follow Jesus, but it will cost us even more to not follow him. Jesus is just trying to get you to run a simple cost-benefit analysis: your soul versus your self.
LOCATION: 3565

In closing, here is my prayer—the cry of my heart:

Father, we live in a world desperate for leaders.
Real leaders. Leaders who seek You, not position or platform.
Leaders who understand the reality of the unseen world
and the strategies of the enemy.
Sound the alarm. Alert us to be leaders
who discern lies and grip tightly to truth—Your truth.
In the name of Jesus.

Chuck Olson

Founder | Lead With Your Life