



In It for The War

The 2nd Great Line of Defense

The importance of the 1st Five Seconds, in deciding the outcome of a trial or temptation, cannot be overstated – as said before, most **battles** are effectively won or lost in the 1st Five Seconds. But there are typically many battles in a war; and life is no exception! While winning every battle should be the objective, it isn't going to happen! What is even more important to success is that we are committed to being in and winning the war; that if we suffer a setback at the point of the 1st Five Seconds we take our stand at the 2nd Great Line of Defense.

If we claim to be without sin [say or think we do not, at some times, fail in the 1st Five Seconds], we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 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 has no place in our lives.

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin [that we thwart and overcome trials and sins in the 1st Five Seconds]. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, “I know him,” but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But if anyone obeys his word, God's love is truly made complete in him. This is how we know we are in him: Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

1 John 1:8 - 2:6

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, **because** you know that the testing of your faith [both our successes and failures in facing them] develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. James 1:2 - 6

The 1st 5 Seconds are crucial and is the opportunity to thwart and repel the (the defining discipline) of being always war and to initially react properly and temptations each of us faces.



1st Line of Defense, the 1st and best enemy– it is important to develop D² vigilant and aware we are in a life-long appropriately to the waves of trials and

Sin is [lurking and] crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it. Genesis 4:7

But above all, sin [the devil, the world and our personal nature and decline] is subtle, relentless and deceptive, masking bad as good and good as bad. We are going to lose some of the battles; maturity and the objective, however, is:

- Increasingly seeing a pattern to trials and temptations so we can use our fighting experience, in one battle, for subsequent combat.
- Shortening the time  between the onset of a trial or temptation and the time we wake up! Reducing the  time we are lost in a *M^cFly Mentality!*
- When we find the 1st line of Defense, the 1st Seconds, has been breached (we have sinned, again!) we move to and do battle at the 2nd Great Line of Defense . . .

The temptation sin uses, after breaching the 1st Line of Defense (The 1st Five Seconds), is to keep us moving “forward,” in the same direction, in an effort to extricate ourselves from the resulting problems and consequences. It is very hard to follow the advice we were taught early in life: “If you are lost, STOP!” Experience (poor though it might be) instead says: “While the outcome may not be perfect, I can **probably** get out of this without too much pain and embarrassment and, in any case, I can’t stand to admit I am wrong! A failure with a positive attitude is better than an admission I was deceived and stupid AGAIN! Maybe I can get out and through and no one will even notice.” So, all the while, we walk further and further into enemy territory.

It is time to take our stand, face and battle the enemy at the 2nd Great Line of Defense! Any loss is frustrating, but when we know there is a 2nd Great Line of Defense, another Point of Grace, we can be hopefully even in an initial loss!

Repentance – the 2nd Great Line of Defense

We have failed again! We may have even dialogued with the enemy, trying to reason and finesse ourselves out of the penalty, pain, consequences, all to no avail! We finally come to our senses and retreat to the 2nd Great Line of Defense, repentance!

If you do a *Bible* search of “gives grace” you will find this blessing is offered only 3 times – with the last 2 being a simple repetition of the 1st – there are not 3 ways to find God’s Grace, but only one:

“God opposes the proud
but gives grace to the humble.” Proverbs 3:4 James 4:6 1 Peter 5:5

The 2nd Great Line of Defense is the point at which we stop, admit we are helpless, vulnerable, dependent, foolish (dare I say stupid?) . . .  – which becomes despair if **we** are the end of hope or humility when it leads back to faith that realizes: “Hello! God can and is willing to . . . He is my hope, my only hope! His grace is right at hand!” The hope? The Grace of repentance; for repentance is a grace itself.

The 2nd Great Line of Defense is at the Intersection of Humility Way and Faith Path!

Yes, when we are lost we should stop, find Humility Way and follow it to Faith Path. I know, I know, it is easier said than done! Yes, in fact, it is a D² (Defining Discipline) that we must practice, exercise, repeat, apply over and over and over again until we die and are perfect (until then we simply have this hope to which we must look when we find ourselves in any trial or temptation). And all the while we are seeking and searching hardest for this Intersection, when we are most vulnerable, we will hear and see false signs trying their best to lead us away from finding this single point of hope and help. Practice, in working this discipline again and again, while not making us perfect, will point us in that direction and improve our probability of victory!

We need to understand, however, the two general types of repentances – one weak and ineffective while the second is strong and successful to the task:

- It is natural, not requiring grace, to be repentant about that which causes pain, being “caught.” “I need to be more careful . . .” or “I had better not do that again . . .” because the pain (physical or shame and embarrassment) is not good. Don’t expect to find grace for this. In this type repentance we are on our own. Good luck!

- The repentance of Grace is desire for change, contrary to the leadings and drives of outside influences and internal drives and passions, because we believe a change is the right thing to do; it is a willingness, in the face of urges in the opposite direction, to seek the grace (through humility and faith) of developing defining disciplines to thwart what God says is bad and wrong.

The thought that we are so attractive and necessary to God, and He so understanding and accepting of our shortcomings (“Hey, what is His alternative?” many think), that He brings His Grace to us (away from the Intersection of Humility Way and Faith Path) is another misleading, destructive, fallacy and false notion. In Grace, God will lead us to Grace, but Grace is only found by and on the way to Humility and Faith!

And the reason that we don’t “get it,” can never, on earth, achieve perfection (we can get much better, but not perfect!) is that there are many types of trials and temptations. We, through developing the Defining Disciplines of The 1st Five Seconds and Repentance, learn their patterns, and how and where to find the key Intersection of Humility and Faith (it seems to shift based on the trial or temptation) and the precise application to the particular trial or temptation we are currently facing. We can get much better at Grace, as we improve our skills of Humility and Faith.

The 1st Five Seconds in the 2nd Great Line of Defense

The 1st Five Seconds and the 2nd Great Line of Defense are synergistic because enemies may initially win in the 1st Five Seconds only to face another 1st Five Seconds in the 2nd Great Line of Defense; the most effective repentance is that which is available in the 1st Five Seconds.

A consistent attribute of success at the 2nd Great Line of Defense is another 1st Five Second opportunity; and, again, the 1st Five Seconds are critical, immediately reacting to what God tells us is right and what we are to do. Every second we delay, procrastinate and plot another strategy is an opening for defeat – act now!

Both Saul and David missed 1st Five Seconds in very critical points of their lives – the difference between the two was that Saul failed at the 2nd Great Line of Defense while David, by grace, held this ground. Everyone is faced with finding themselves behind the lines, having failed in the 1st Five Seconds either falling back to the 2nd Great Line of Defense or pushing further into and settling for enemy territory, ways and friendship.

What is vital to success is that we are committed to being in and winning the war; that if we lose at the point of the 1st Five Seconds we take our stand at the 2nd Great Line of Defense. Seek, develop, expand and extend the art and joy of repentance – it is a vital weapon in an effective and successful life!