

A Colorado man has reported that he was able to kick his drug habit after a photograph taken of him and his wife during a relative's anniversary celebration revealed what he believes to be a " demonic spirit " leering over his left shoulder. Joe Martinez says he always prayed to the Lord about his addiction, saying he could not be delivered from drugs by his own strength. But when Joe saw the photograph of him and his wife Patty, with what she describes as "Satan" at his left-hand side, he was determined to kick his habit. As soon as Patty saw the image she thought, *"You're really walking with Satan"* . Photographic experts have examined the image and do not believe the dog's head was spliced into the photograph or that it is a double print. In order for a dog's head to appear in the photograph, it would have to be standing on the table behind Joe and Patty.

Quote: *"The photo was taken at a family anniversary celebration several years ago. It was in an album until just months ago, but Martinez says he won't be without it now because of the reminder it provides. What appears to be a dog is looking over Joe's shoulder, in a closer view of the anniversary reception photo "There's good and evil in life. The good on the right hand side of me, and the evil on the left side of me," Martinez told the station. The photograph, on close examination, appears to include the image of a dog peering over Martinez's shoulder.*

I'm not into the paranormal in any way nor would I desire to be, but I thought this article was particularly interesting. As a Christian I believe that things like drug abuse, alcoholism, sexual addiction and perversion, and many other sinful habits all have a particular demonic spirit associated with them. To me it is no surprise then, that a particularly strong demonic spirit

could manifest itself in such a way.

Many Christians, myself included, constantly battle against sinful habits. Each person has a particular weakness to certain temptations. As Solomon prayed at the dedication of the Temple, every man knows the plague of his own heart (1st Kings 8:38). For Adam and Eve it was something as simple as a piece of fruit, for you and I it might be something else. But Satan knows our particular weaknesses, and this is where he mounts his attacks every time. Many times I lament my own failure to do right, but often the cause of much of these may be demonic oppression and temptation. As you all already know, I am a big fan of John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress . During Christian's journey through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, a spirit crept up behind him and began whispering blasphemies in his ear. Poor Christian, he did not have the wisdom to discern what was his own thoughts and what were those suggested to him by the demonic spirit.

Quote: *"One thing I would not let slip. I took notice that now poor Christian was so confounded that he did not know his own voice; and thus I perceived it. Just when he was come over against the mouth of the burning pit, one of the wicked ones got behind him, and stepped up softly to him, and whisperingly suggested many grievous blasphemies to him, which he verily thought had proceeded from his own mind. This put Christian more to it than any thing that he met with before, even to think that he should now blaspheme Him that he loved so much before. Yet if he could have helped it, he would not have done it; but he had not the discretion either to stop his ears, or to know from whence these blasphemies came. When Christian had travelled in this disconsolate condition some considerable time, he thought he heard the voice of a man, as going before him, saying, Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me. Psa. 23:4.*

Many of the stories in Pilgrim's Progress come from John Bunyan's own personal experiences. His own testimony, Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, tells us how John Bunyan was afflicted by this particular sin. Even after becoming a Christian, he was tempted by Satan to blaspheme His Lord and to bow down and worship inanimate objects, even though he knew it to be sinful. You and I might not be tempted to sin against God in this way, but as we have seen Satan will use anything he can to drive us away from God. And perhaps that is why we have this account of Christian, and the spirit whispering grievous blasphemies in his ear. John Bunyan must have realized these thoughts were not his own, and through his experience the rest of us can be better prepared to face whatever Satan will bring against us. As Christian discovered, "resist the Devil, and he shall flee from you" (James 4:7).

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