

## **What Hate is For**

Revelation 11:19-12:17

#24 in our series “The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation”

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### **Prayer**

Lord God, we ask that you would help us now to preach. And I really mean that when I say us—that it would be all of us including you, Lord God, because I can't do this. We can't comprehend your Word, but your Word can and does comprehend us. So, comprehend us, Jesus! In your name, we pray, Amen.

### **Message**

I once read about two Tibetan boys who decided to go for a walk in 1941; they wanted to see the world. They wandered over the mountains into Soviet territory where they were conscripted by the Soviet army. They were then captured by the German army and conscripted into their auxiliary service. Then they were captured by the Americans, and the Americans could not figure out who they were because they did not speak German or Russian.

The Americans called in an expert in Asiatic languages who understood what they were saying and then relayed their incredible story to the Americans. When they were finished these stunned Americans asked these two boys, “Do you have any questions?” They only had one. They asked: “Why were all those people trying to kill each other?” Isn't that great?

Do you ever feel like that?

Every week there seems to be another mass shooting.

If I were one of those Tibetan boys, I'd want to know who's to blame?

I'd blame Joseph Stalin and the Russians, and then, with them, I'd blame Adolph Hitler and the Germans.

Of course, the Germans blamed the Treaty of Versailles and the Jews. Some Christians blame the Jews for crucifying Christ, but to be a Christian is to confess that your sins crucified the Christ.

If that's true . . . who could Christ blame?

He could blame everyone, accuse everyone, even the boys in Tibet... Couldn't He?<sup>i</sup>

Maybe we're all to blame . . . or maybe blame is to blame.

My friend Mike shared a fascinating little Ted Talk with me recently. In it, a Dr. of Philosophy, Gregg Caruso, points out that recent psychological and sociological studies have correlated a belief in free will, with increased religiosity, punitiveness, and a desire to blame.

We've been talking about "free-will" and people mean different things by free-will, but I think most would agree that it's pretty hard to blame folks without some sort of belief in "free-will."

It's the belief that we know good and evil, and can choose the good in freedom . . . So, if people don't choose the good, they are to blame. Well, no one's to blame.

No one's to blame if no one has free will.

And yet if no one has free will, everyone seems to be no one...

I mean everyone seems "inhuman" and no one seems to be a person. (It's like we're not really human and more like robots.)

And yet, there are some people that we don't usually blame because we don't think they have "free-will," and those people are children. They can't freely choose the Good, for they don't yet have the knowledge of the Good or the evil. They don't have it, and yet, we expect them to get it, and so we call them people.

Jesus said we must become like little children to enter the Kingdom. Well, I was just saying, we all look for someone to blame.

Usually, when I point to Scripture that clearly states that God "makes all things new," someone will say, "What about free-will? What about Hitler?"

I understand what they're saying: "I need someone to blame<sup>ii</sup>, someone to accuse, someone to hate."

Scripture says that God hates. What is hate for?

Revelation 11:19-12:4

*Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail. And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it [katesthio: "consume by eating"].*

Two sermons ago, we preached that the Ark of God's Covenant is a picture of His Judgment, which is His Will, and His Will is absolutely free. The Ark of the Covenant is the Free Will of God.

We defined "free will," as a will that wills what it will without the restraint of any other will. And so a truly free will is the Undetermined Determiner, the Uncaused Cause, the Uncreated Creator, the Ground of All Being, I Am that I Am, the Lord God. God does what He wills and wills what He does absolutely. God is One. God is Love and the Ark of the Covenant is a revelation of Love. The Ark literally is the Law of God covered by the Mercy of God, and on top of the Ark is a Lamb standing as if it had been slain.

Jesus is the Free Will of God.  
He is the "Word of God" that creates all things.  
You can't get freer than that! He creates reality.

And now this is the Revelation of the great mystery hidden for ages and generations: At the blast of the seventh trumpet, at the opening of the seventh seal, like the dawn of the Seventh Day of creation, the Ark is seen within the Temple. And God's Temple is us.

That was two sermons ago . . .  
And one sermon ago, we preached that we are the woman crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth to the Good Free-Will of God.  
We can't make good, but we must all give birth to the Good.  
We can't create Jesus, but we will give birth to Jesus.  
Jesus said, "Whoever does the Will of God is my mother."

The Good Free Will of God is Jesus.  
And the Good Free Will of God in human flesh is His Body.

We are His Bride, His Mother, and even His Body begotten from above.

The dragon stands before the Woman so he can eat the baby.  
The dragon is evil.

Saint Paul wrote, "*Hate [abhor] what is evil, and cleave to what is good.*"  
That word "cleave" is used for communion in the sacrament of the covenant of marriage.

It seems that you can eat the Good . . . Or be married to the Good and even give birth to the Good. "*God alone is good,*" said Jesus.

The dragon tempted Eve to eat from the tree of the knowledge of "the Good" to make herself Good in the image of God.

There is one realization that's helped me understand the Bible more than any other, except that everything means Jesus.

That realization is that the Garden of Eden, the Garden on Mt. Calvary where Christ was crucified, and the Garden at the end of the Revelation, are all one garden.



And in the middle of each garden, there is a tree.  
And on the tree hangs Jesus.

Jesus is the Good in flesh—like fruit. And Jesus is the Life.  
Jesus is the *Eschatos* Adam, the ultimate Adam and we are the Woman, His Bride.

The devil tempted the woman, to take the life of the Good to make herself good. But when she took the Good, she made herself evil and lost her life.

The devil tempts us to take the Good and consume the Good to make ourselves good. That's called sin.

- A thief sees the Good, so he just takes the good, hoping to make himself good, but he makes himself bad.
- An adulterer sees the Good, so he just takes the good, and makes himself bad and his heart dead.
- The Pharisees saw the Good and so took the life of the good, trying to make themselves good, but they made themselves evil and everything died. (The sun even went black and the earth shook.)
- Humanity saw the Good, consumed the Good, and we all died.
- Thieves, Harlots, Pharisees, and all humanity desire the Good, like you desire pizza.

The dragon wants to devour the baby and he tempts us all to do the same.

The devil tempts us to take the Good to make ourselves Good.  
And Jesus wants us to receive the Good, for in this way the Good makes us Himself.

What are we doing when we come to the communion table?

#1) We're confessing our sin: We took knowledge of the good to try to make ourselves good; we crucified the Christ; we attempted to devour the baby.

I can't conceive of a more heinous sin than the one we confess when we come to this table. We confess: We took the Life of Christ.

#2) We believe God's Grace: He gave the Life of Christ.

What we took, God for-gave from the foundation of the world... We'll read in the next chapter (in Rev. 13:8), "The Lamb is slain from the foundation of the world."

I can't conceive of a more heinous sin...  
And I can't conceive of a more glorious grace...

We took the life of the Good on a tree in space and time—that's evil.  
And God gave the life of the Good on a tree from the foundation of the world—that's Good, that's Life.

So, at the cross, we gain the knowledge of Good and evil,  
And at the cross, we come to choose the Good in freedom,  
    And that's Life—eternal Life.  
At the cross, we die and rise with Jesus.  
At the cross, we're made in the image of God and "*It is finished*".

It's an absolutely stunning picture, on which I hope you'll meditate forever and ever, and ever.

But for now, I hope you see that the dragon still tempts you to devour the Lamb. And the Lamb still romances you to surrender to Him.

The dragon tempts you with the knowledge of Good and evil—the law.  
And The Good romances you with the Love that is Himself—body broken and blood shed.

The dragon tempts you to justify yourself.  
And the Lamb wants you to see that you have been justified.

The dragon wants you to believe that you can choose to be chosen—that's pride.

And Jesus wants you to know that you have been chosen to choose—that's humility, gratitude, worship, love, and life.

The dragon tempts you to desecration.

And the Lord longs for you to agree with your own creation.

The dragon tempts you to devour the baby.

And the Father longs for you to receive the baby, surrender to the baby, marry the baby and give birth to the baby<sup>iii</sup>

God wills that you would Love.

Satan wills that you would devour Love.<sup>iv</sup>

Revelation 12:4-10

*...And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron [Psalm 2 (v.9)], but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days. [That's "the time of trouble" (Daniel 12:1) before "the time of the end." ] Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil [that means accuser] and Satan [that means adversary or enemy], the deceiver of the whole world [oikoumeneiv: world of human habitation]—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. (Verse 8) "He was defeated"*

Michael and his angels battle the dragon and his angels (Daniel 12:1). But the dragon and his angels are conquered and defeated by the Lamb, just as all of Scripture and the Revelation itself attest. (Remember we are watching the unrolling of the scroll because the Lamb has conquered and is standing upon the throne.

In Colossians Paul wrote: *"And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him"* (Colossians 2:13-15).

The devil tempts us to take knowledge of the Good, to make ourselves Good, and so we make ourselves evil and then he begins to accuse, because if he accuses and we begin to believe his accusations we run from the lover of our souls and hide in fear and shame, fig leaves, and more law.

But at the cross, we see that what we have taken has always been given, for-given; we see that where sin increased grace abounded all the more; the cross reveals that all our debts are null and void.

Therefore, all of Satan's accusations of sin become declarations of Grace. Grace is the eternal reality, and sin is a temporal stage on which God's Grace is revealed.<sup>v</sup>

In John 12:31-32, one week before He's crucified Jesus declares, "*Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth* (and he was speaking of being lifted up on his cross), *will draw all people to myself.*" "*Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.*"

The cross is the boundary of eternal truth and this temporal world of lies. And now is the point where eternity touches time. Our shame and fear can only exist in the illusion that we call space and time.<sup>vi</sup>

"Now is the day of salvation."  
"*Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come,*" says the loud voice in heaven.

Jesus is the Eternal Word the does not change . . .  
But changes all of space and time . . .  
He fills all of space and time . . .

He is the Word of God, the Logos of Love that binds all things together.  
"This is the plan for the fullness of time," wrote Paul, to fill chaos with Logos.<sup>vii</sup>

In most of the ancient cultures surrounding Israel there was a myth of a chaos monster, a sea monster, dragon or serpent that made war against everything good.

It was chaos that wanted to swallow the Logos.  
At the cross, I believe that the dragon did just that.  
I think this is my favorite depiction of what happened at the cross.

Clip from *Men in Black*

K: (Speaking to a giant ugly cockroach) *Eat me. Eat me!*  
[The giant cockroach eats K—and his gun—in one gulp.]  
J: *K! K!*  
[K is shown swimming through the inside of the cockroach. The cockroach then turns mincingly to J.]  
J: *You need to ease up outa my face 'for somethin' bad happen to you!*  
[J hears K's gun.]  
J: *Too late.*  
[K shoots the giant cockroach from the inside. The cockroach is blown up; K and J are blown to the ground covered in the intestinal juices of the cockroach.]

At the cross, the temporal lie that is the devil swallowed eternal Truth who is the Christ.  
Darkness swallowed the Light of the World.  
Death swallowed the Life, and that was the death of death.  
Chaos swallowed the Logos, and that was the desecration of desecration.  
That was creation... and in particular the creation of you.

At the cross “It is finished”—Satan can no longer accuse before God.  
Satan no longer has a leg to stand on . . . literally  
For this is the judgment of God, *“Because you have done this upon your belly you shall go (That’s how the dragon became the snake) ...on your belly you will go ...and the seed of the woman will crush the head of the snake.”*

So the dragon has been defeated and yet we still battle, don’t we?

Revelation 12:10-17

*And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “**Now** the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they **have conquered** him [We’re already “seated in the heavenly places,” wrote Paul] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives [psyches] even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! [Do you dwell in heaven or on the earth?] But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that **his time is short!**” [The devil’s time is short. He does not rule over some endless kingdom called Hell.]*

*And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to [into] the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. [literally “the man.” In Hebrew, “*ha adam*”] But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle [“They that wait on the Lord, will mount up with wings like eagles,” Prophesied Isaiah] so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. [We preached a whole sermon on that. You can get it here: <http://relentless-love.org/sermons/take-a-hike/>] The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea. He’s going to call up the principalities and powers, the world rulers of this present darkness to help him do that.*

About twenty years ago, I prayed a crazy prayer. I remember it very clearly. I prayed, *“Jesus, I just want you to be more real to me. I’d even pray for people with demons if you’d just be more real to me.”*

Ten years before that, I'd seen a man delivered of a demon, at a Presbyterian church, and it utterly terrified me, not just the demon, but the power of Jesus.

Well, I prayed the prayer, and soon after, God answered my prayer. I was introduced to a woman, who became a close friend, who, it turns out had been raised in a coven horrifically abused and ritually wed to Satan. For about seven years we dealt with a host of demons—I suspect that many are fallen angels—those stars that fall from the sky with the swipe of the dragon's tale.

For seven years, we dealt with a host of demons...  
And after that Susan and I met the dragon.

Since then, I've prayed for many people struggling with demons or fallen angels. In some, at times, the evil spirit will take over the person's body, such that they're not aware of what's happening, and the spirit will use the body to speak their lies to me and whoever's with me praying.

- It's disconcerting for when it happens you realize that the lies they speak are lies that enter your thoughts every day.  
They almost always convey the message that God doesn't want to save or that God isn't able to save—that "God is not Salvation" ("God is not *Yehashua*, *Yeshua*").
- When you hear the lies from demons, you realize that you also hear them from people and that they didn't simply come from those people.
- Worst of all, you realize that you are sometimes one of those people.

Paul wrote, "*We battle not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities and powers, the world rulers of this present darkness.*"

On several occasions, I've prayed for people that have manifested evil spirits, and through a couple of those people, I met the dragon.

It's so very hard to talk about because many people have never witnessed such things, and many people fake such things.

It's so very hard to talk about because the evil is just so profoundly evil, and we all try to deny evil . . . and the evil one (By that, I mean we pretend that nothing's there, and yet, in an amazing way there's nothing there; we'll get to that in a minute).

It's so very hard to talk about, for the evil is so evil, and yet the people it infects can be so very good. Let's not forget that it was to Saint Peter that Jesus said, "Get behind me, Satan."

It's so very hard to talk about because I don't really know what evil is, or who the evil one is, but I have a pretty good idea of what he is not.

It's so very hard to talk about because like John says in verse 9, He is the deceiver of the whole world.

He *is* defeated, and yet, "*The whole world is under the power of the evil one,*" wrote John in 1 John 5:19... "*We know that we are from God, but the whole world lies under the power of the evil one.*"

It's really so very hard to talk about, and yet once I encountered the dragon, I must tell you that I found it much harder to accuse or blame people for their sins. And, I felt as if I had discovered what hatred is for.

This is a bit surprising to me, but I couldn't find a verse in Scripture where it says—in a good translation—that God will blame or accuse anyone.

He *will* judge everyone, cutting the evil from the Good.

He'll *judge* everyone, but it never says that He *accuses* or *blames* anyone.

Remember what Jesus said on the tree as He hung in the Garden on Calvary? He cried, "*Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*"

If they don't know what they do, you can't blame them for choosing to do what they do.

And, who is they?

Well... It's you and me and, for sure, some Roman Centurions and some Pharisees. They knew they crucified a man, but they didn't know that this man was the Good in flesh and the Life Himself who flows through all of creation.

They didn't know... but then, they began to know, saying, "*Surely this man was the son of God...*"

You could say Jesus blamed them—if by that you mean that He said that they did what they did; they sinned. But He didn't blame them, as if they could've done differently . . . as if they had what we so loosely call "free will."

You could say the Lord blamed Eve and all her children—if by that you mean that He acknowledges that we did what we did; we sinned.

But He doesn't blame us, as if we could've done any differently, for we couldn't freely choose the Good if we didn't know the Good, or that the Word of God is Good. We didn't know the Good.

But now we do... or we are beginning to . . . we are beginning to see that God is Good. It was God we crucified. And . . . check this out:

God didn't accuse, but there is one that does accuse. He is the accuser.

He convinces us that we are free to choose . . . And then, we do choose...  
And then he accuses us, and blames us, for having chosen . . . until we hide in fig leaves  
and shame from the lover of our souls...  
That is our choice, but it's no longer free...  
And in that state we are no longer free; we are slaves to sin and to the dragon.

*"He is the deceiver of all humanity,"* wrote John.  
And *"the whole world lies under the power of the evil one."*  
That means that they are hostages

You don't blame the hostages; you don't compete with hostages; you aren't jealous of  
hostages, prisoners, and slaves.  
You don't blame the hostages... and if you're free, you long to set them free.

In my experience, most "Christians" don't feel sorry for sinners, they actually accuse  
sinners, and are secretly jealous of sinners, which make them the worst of sinners . . .  
almost like the accuser himself in human flesh . . .

And so, we better long to set them free or we are not free; we too have become the flesh  
of the dragon.

"Beware when fighting the dragon, lest you become the dragon," wrote Nietzsche.

And yet, once I got a good look at the dragon, I found it much harder to accuse and  
blame people and I think I discovered what hatred is for . . .

In one of his novels, CS Lewis describes this strange exhilaration that overcame one of  
his characters when he found himself battling the un-man, which was his name for the  
devil.<sup>viii</sup>

Paul wrote, "Hate what is evil..."  
And John refers to the dragon as the evil one.

In John 8, Jesus says, "There is no truth in him... (and Jesus is the truth). When he lies  
he speaks of his own nature... He is the father of lies," says Jesus.

If there is no Truth in him. There is no Way, Truth or Life in Him; there is no breath of  
God in Him and it's the breath of God that makes us persons—people.

If that's the case, it's not like he was made good, and then chose to be bad.  
Once I had my friend ask Jesus in a vision, "Is satan a somebody?"  
She heard the Lord answer, "No he's not a somebody, he's a nobody."

Recently, he manifested in another friend and I said, "In the name of Jesus I send you to

the void,” and I heard him mutter, “I am the void.” In prayer, Jesus had us take him back to “in the beginning” before there was space for him and time for him before God created the void, before God created the nothing in the midst of the something that is Himself.

In John 8, Jesus says, “The devil was a murderer from the beginning,” which seems to mean that he was evil in the beginning.

So did God create evil?

That’s like asking, “Did the Light create the dark?”

Light cannot make dark . . . unless the Light makes something other than itself. And then by shining on what it has made the Light casts a shadow.

Evil is the absence of the Good, like . . .

A shadow is the absence of Light, like . . .

A lie is the absence of the Truth, like . . .

Death is the absence of the Life, like . . .

I Am not is the absence of I Am, like . . .

Chaos is the absence of Logos, who is the Word of I am, through whom all things are created.

The dragon is the chaos monster—the presence of an absence of the will of God. The Early Church Fathers spoke of the ontological non-subsistence of evil. So, if the devil is nothing but evil... (a snake, dragon, or fallen angel is a creation of God, infected with evil)

...But, if the devil is nothing but evil, then ultimately, he is nothing at all.

So how does a nothing become such a horrifying something?

Many years ago praying for a friend, satan manifested to Susan and my friend in an absolutely terrifying form screaming threats of great violence. But as we prayed, he began to shrink and shrink and shrink... until he was a little man standing on the coffee table talking jibberish like a cartoon. At that Jesus entered the room, picked him up, put him in his pocket, turned, smiled and said, “With fear, you put flesh on the evil one.”

Fear is faith in the devil.

But faith in God casts out fear until there is no space and time for the devil.

The devil is the presence of the absence of the Will of God—The Will of God, which creates all things. Evil is that which God does not will. And yet, God *does* will that you would encounter evil, so you might forever hate the evil and choose the Good—in freedom.

In other words, God is using the devil, in time, to create us in His Image for all eternity. That’s the image of Love. God is Love, and Free Will is Love. You are a child predestined for freedom—the freedom of your Father, who as Karl Barth defines Him is

“The One who loves in freedom.” He is the One who does what He is and is what He does—Love.

You will Love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength and you will crush the head of the ancient dragon in the process.  
That’s what hate is for...

The Good is everything, and the evil is nothing.  
You will cleave to the Good, and abhor the nothing.<sup>ix</sup>  
You will hate desecration and be forever grateful for all creation, in particular—your true self.

And so, what is hate for? Nothing. You are to hate the nothing and fall in love with the Something—I am that I am, God. You hate the nothing by discounting it. You hate a lie by not believing it. You hate the nothing by loving the Something.

At the end of the Revelation, the voice from the throne says, “Behold I make all things new... All things!” You are a thing, but I doubt that satan is a thing...

I suspect he’s more of a no thing . . . and so there’s nothing to make new.  
And if he is a thing, he will no longer be the accuser, for in eternity everything is filled with God, and God is Love, and Love is Free. God is Grace. God is Reality.

God is Light and the devil is shadow.  
Sometimes I wonder if he’s the shadow cast by the creation of Adam.  
For God is Light and when we stand before him, we each must cast a shadow.

Well anyway, how do we battle the dragon?

Clip from the deleted scenes of *Lord of the Rings*

[An elf lord, Galadriel confronts Sauron, servant of Morgoth]  
Galadriel: *You have no power here . . .*  
Galadriel: *Servant of Morgoth.*  
Galadriel: *You are nameless, faceless, darkness. Go back to the void from whence you came.*

Sometimes in my experience, it actually does look something like that. But in reality, from the perspective of eternity, I suspect it always looks something more like this:

[Video with children’s fearful responses to their shadows or the shadows of others]

The serpent battles the woman with a river that issues from his mouth. He is the father of lies and the river is a river of lies. And all the lies are based on His original lie: “You can take knowledge of the Good, and freely choose the Good, and thus make yourself Good. You can make yourself the Uncaused Cause, the Uncreated Creator, the Lord God.” That’s a lie.

In John 8, Jesus tells the Pharisees that they are of their father the devil. Well, the devil can’t father children (not human children), he can only father false children—that is lies . . . He is the father of lies...

He is the father of self-righteousness, that is, your ego...

- It’s your ego in which you are imprisoned in fear and shame...
- It’s your ego that causes you to compete with your neighbor, blame and accuse your neighbor, and then accuse yourself...
- It’s your ego that keeps you in bondage to the fear of death; for you think you have to create the Life . . . when Jesus is the Life.
- It’s your ego that thinks it creates the Good, who is God.

Satan will tell you that your ego is free will, when in fact it’s the bondage of the will . . . and you have been enslaved.

Little children can’t create themselves; they can only create a shadow of themselves . . . We can’t create ourselves only a shadow of ourselves, but the dragon tells us that this shadow is our selves. When you will what God does not will, you create a false self. And then the accuser tells you that false self is your real self. And terrified of that false self, you try to save your self, which is only more self—more false self—the product of the dragon.

Like Jesus told us, “With fear you put flesh on the evil one.”

I think that maybe our own flesh... my own flesh and your own flesh become dragon flesh. And then we have to become “undragoned.”

Why are all these people (Russians, Germans, Americans, and Jews) running around trying to kill each other? They’re all scared of the shadow— especially their own shadow. They are beings, scared of non-being, for they think they must create themselves, save themselves, and justify themselves.

Little children can’t create themselves; they can only create a shadow of themselves. In order to truly see themselves, they must turn around and look into the light. God is Light.

Our Father is Light and Scripture says we are the apple of His eye. In Hebrew, the *ishown* of his eye, literally the little man reflected in His eye. It’s where we get the word pupil. You are the pupil, the little man in His eye. To know who you truly are, you must look into the eyes of your Father. “*If you’ve seen me, you’ve seen the Father,*” said Jesus.

And He prayed, *“Father the love you’ve given me, you’ve given to them.”*  
The Father looks at you in the very same way He looks at Jesus.

Jesus is God’s Judgment of you.  
And so whatever is not true of Jesus is not true of you—it’s a lie; it’s sin; it’s your shadow.

So how do you battle a lie? You simply see it for what it is . . . or should I say, what it isn’t!? How do you battle sin? *“Reckon yourself dead to sin and alive in Christ Jesus.”*

And how do you battle the shadow? You believe the Judgment of God.  
You take God seriously and stop taking the dragon so seriously.  
You expose the shadow to the light.

And how do we conquer the shadow? We become the light.  
We believe what we truly are.

God is Light. Jesus is the Light of the World. And we are His Temple.  
It’s what John saw at the start of his vision; we are lampstands that shine the light. If you shine the light, you no longer cast a shadow.

And it’s what John sees at the end of his vision. He sees the New Jerusalem that is the temple and the Bride. She is coming down from God. She’s literally radiant. The Glory of God is her radiance; her light is the Lamb.

You were once darkness, wrote Paul (Eph. 5:8).  
But now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of Light.  
You were once darkness. Now you are light.

For on the night the Lamb was betrayed in old Jerusalem. The Light of the World took the bread and broke it saying, *“This is my body, take and eat.”*  
And He took the cup saying, *“This is my blood of the covenant, take and drink.”*

This is how He conquers the dragon: He says, *“Eat me.”*  
In the morning, the dragon tempted humanity to take Christ’s life.  
And yet, the night before, Christ had *already given* His life to us.  
We consumed the Life into our body of death.  
We ingested the Truth into our body of lies.  
We swallowed the Light into our darkness.  
And Christ rose from the dead destroying the dragon and setting us free.

Another way to say that is that we overcome by the blood of the Lamb,  
The word of our testimony, loving not our lives even unto death.

There will be more on that in the next message.  
But for now, come to the table, hate what is evil and cleave to the Good.  
Bride of Christ, in Jesus' name, believe the Gospel! Amen.

### Prayer

“And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, loving not their lives (their “psyche” even unto death). You see? I think your psyche—the thing you call your “life” is your shadow, your ego. So, if you’ve been staring at your shadow, you’ve probably been thinking things like this: “Just look at myself. Wow! I’m pretty great! I’m better than Vince or Ted. I’m really something!” Then it will switch and you’ll think: “No! I’m a piece of crap. Can’t do this. I ought to just quit. So, if you’ve been staring at your shadow, turn around and look at the face of your Father. See your reflection. You are the righteousness of Christ, and I think this is what He is saying, “Don’t you understand? I forgive you! In fact, I have forgiven you from the moment I thought of you, for you are my beloved son, you are my beloved daughter. I bled for you. Do you see that my blood fills you. Let it be a testimony to you and the whole world that I love you! Walk in my Light; that’s how you overcome the shadow. In Jesus’ name, believe the Gospel!

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*

### Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> In 1960 Adolph Eichman was captured in Argentina, then tried in Jerusalem. A small haggard man named Yehiel Dinur, who had escaped death in Auschwitz was called to testify.

When he made eye contact with Eichman, he began to shout and sob, until he collapsed unconscious on the floor.

Later he was asked what horrifying thought had caused such a reaction.

Was he horrified at the sight of such a monster?

Dinur answered: “I was afraid about myself . . . I saw that I am capable to do this . . . exactly like he.”

He wasn’t afraid of monsters. He was afraid that he was a monster—a dragon.

<sup>ii</sup> Even Dr Carusso, who doesn’t believe in free-will says we “shouldn’t believe in free-will,” which just sounds like blaming blamers which is just more blame...

After 9-11, or WWII, or Auschwitz, don’t you long for someone to blame?

<sup>iii</sup> His will in this world, which is you in His own image, the image of Love—many persons in one substance the communion of Love.

<sup>iv</sup> CS Lewis wrote: “It is for this that Satan desires all his own followers and all the sons of Eve and all the host of Heaven. His dream is of the day when all shall be inside him and all that says “I” can say it only through him. This, I surmise, is the bloated-spider parody, the only imitation he can understand, of the unfathomed bounty whereby God turns tools into servants and servants into sons, so that they may be at last reunited to Him in the perfect freedom of love offered from the height of the utter individualities which he has liberated them to be.”

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v In Luke 10:18, when the seventy-two disciples come back thrilled that they have authority over demons, Jesus says, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

vi Grace is the eternal reality that transforms space and time when we come to believe.

vii In 395 A.D. Gregory of Nyssa said that "Christ's divinity was hidden under His humanity like a fish hook under bait, (The Light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot comprehend it," wrote John). "Christ's divinity was hidden under His humanity like a fish hook under bait, and Satan, like a ravenous fish, gulped it down."

viii Then an experience that perhaps no good man can ever have in our world came over him--a torrent of perfectly unmixed and lawful hatred. The energy of hating, never before felt without some guilt, without some dim knowledge that he was failing fully to distinguish the sinner from the sin, rose into his arms and legs til he felt that they were pillars of burning blood. What was before him appeared no longer a creature of corrupted will. It was corruption itself to which will was attached only as an instrument... It is perhaps difficult to understand why this filled Ransom not with horror but with a kind of joy. The joy came from finding at last what hatred was made for. As a boy with an axe rejoices on finding a tree, or a boy with a box of coloured chalks rejoices on finding a pile of perfectly white paper, so he rejoiced in the perfect congruity between his emotion and its object.

ix On this shadow side the creature is contiguous to nothingness, for this "not" is at once the expression and frontier of the positive will, election and activity of God. When the creature crosses the frontier from the one side, and it is invaded from the other, nothingness achieves actuality in the creaturely world. . . .

Nothingness is that which God does not will. . . .

This being which is alien and adverse to grace and therefore without it, is that of nothingness. . . . And this is evil in the Christian sense, namely, what is alien and adverse to grace, and therefore with it. . . . The grace of God is the basis and norm of all being, the source and criterion of all good. Measured by this standard, as the negation of God's grace, nothingness is intrinsically evil. . . .

He knows nothingness. He knows that which He did not elect or will as the Creator. He knows chaos and its terror. He knows its advantage over His creature. He know how inevitably it imperils His creature. Yet He is Lord over that which imperils His creature. Against Him, nothingness has no power of its own. And He has sworn fidelity to His threatened creature. In creating it He has covenanted and identified Himself with it. . . .

And therefore it is He as the first and true and indeed the only man, as the Helper who really takes the creature's place, lifting from it all its need and labour and problem and placing them upon Himself, as the Warrior who assumes the full responsibility of a substitute and suffers and does everything on its behalf. In the light of this merciful action of God, the arrogant delusion of the creature that it is called and qualified to help and save and maintain itself in its infinite peril is shown to be evil as well as foolish and unnecessary. . . .

As God takes action on its behalf, the creature itself is summoned and empowered. It has no arrogant illusion as to its own authority or competence. It really trusts in God, perseveres in His covenant and chooses His help as the only effective good. . . .

If our thought is conditioned by the obedience of Christian faith, we have only one freedom, namely, to regard nothingness as finally destroyed and to make a new beginning in remembrance of the One who has destroyed it.

Karl Barth, Church Dogmatics, p. 137-138, 140-141, 143, 145-146