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Satan and Us

Series: A Brief History of Satan

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The Village Church at Shell Point

Evening Service

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I. The Abominable Advantage

- A. Screwtape (Senior Tempter; letters to Wormwood, the Junior Tempter)
 - 1. Vacillates
 - a. Confident assurance of success
 - b. Difficulty understanding what the ‘Enemy’ (God) is doing
 - (1) “We know that He cannot really love: nobody can: it doesn’t make sense. If we could only find out what He is *really* up to!” (P. 101)
 - c. Occasionally whines that the ‘Enemy’ doesn’t always play fair; the Enemy has certain advantages
 - 2. “Abominable advantage” – Letter 1
 - a. Disadvantage – demons are spirit beings, without bodies
 - (1) Trying to tempt humans which are spirit beings with bodies
 - (2) Difficult for demons to understand humans
 - b. Advantage
 - (1) Only God has become flesh
 - (2) Enables Him to identify more easily with humans
 - 3. **Hebrews 2:14–15** (ESV) —
 - a. 14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,
 - b. 15 and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.
 - 4. Passage speaks of the final conquest of Satan
 - a. Does so by calling attention to the incarnation
 - (1) Abominable advantage indeed
 - b. Satan hates that advantage
 - (1) Screwtape: “Humans are amphibians – half spirit and half animal. (The Enemy’s determination to produce such a revolting hybrid was one of the things that determined Our Father to withdraw his support from Him.)” (P. 37)
 - 5. **Hebrews 4:15–16** (ESV) —
 - a. 15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.

- b. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
- 6. Our encouragement is rooted in God incarnate having been made in such a way as to have been tempted as we are
 - a. He understands what it means to be human
 - b. He understands what it means to be the object of Satan's attack
 - c. That truth in itself should lead us to draw near to God
 - d. The bottom line as far as Screwtape is concerned – do the demons' activities lead their targets away from God or toward God
 - e. Screwtape: "Nothing matters at all except the tendency of a given state of mind, in given circumstances, to move a particular patient at a particular moment nearer to the Enemy or nearer to us." (P. 101-2)
- 7. The abominable advantage both destroyed the power of Satan, and also inclines us to move nearer to God
 - a. No wonder Satan hates the incarnation
- B. There are other advantages that God has as well
 - 1. And that Satan hates as well

II. **The Right Man on Our Side**

- A. Last message – Satan and Christ
- B. The supremacy of Christ over anything Satan could produce
 - 1. Luther
 - a. For still our ancient foe,
 - b. Doth seek to work us woe.
 - c. His craft and power are great,
 - d. And armed with cruel hate.
 - e. On earth is not his equal
 - 2. Identified three characteristics of Satan
 - a. **Craft**
 - b. **Power**
 - c. **Hatred**
 - 3. In every case, Christ was superior
 - a. **Craft – wisdom**
 - (1) Turned tables of Satan and used Satan's own means (death itself) to defeat both death and Satan
 - (2) Edwards: He slew Satan, as it were, with his own weapon... the wisdom of Christ so ordered things that Satan's subtlety and malice should be made the very means of undermining the foundations of his kingdom; and so He wisely led him into the pit that he had dug.
 - b. **Power – power of an indestructible life**
 - (1) Of all the power in the world, there is none like the power of righteousness
 - (2) That power was what raised Jesus from the dead

- (3) **Ephesians 1:18–21** (ESV) — 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
- c. **Hatred – love**
 - (1) Satan is still perplexed by that love in which Christ lay down His life, not for His friends, but for His enemies, for those who least deserved it
- C. Satan would think, “OK, Christ is superior. It’s a nasty pill to swallow. But all is not lost. I still have these detestable little hybrids called human beings. I can handle these little worthless urchins. They are all dead meat as far as I’m concerned.”

III. **The Second Incarnation**

- A. Another abominable advantage – a second incarnation
 - 1. Careful – easy to become a heretic
 - a. Word of Faith theology teaches that we actually become little Gods
 - b. Don’t mean that
 - 2. Do mean that God enables us to become partakers of the divine nature
 - 3. **2 Peter 1:3–4** (ESV) — 3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.
 - 4. Peter means that, contrary to Word of Faith preachers, you are still human beings still beset with the residue of your sinful nature
 - a. But God has made available something of His divine character to us to enable us to live a godly life
- B. Second incarnation is manifested in two ways
 - 1. Christ comes to live in us individually
 - 2. Christ manifests himself corporately, through the church
- C. **Individual Incarnation**
 - 1. Texts
 - a. **Romans 8:3–11** (ESV) —
 - (1) 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh,

- (2) 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
 - (3) 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.
 - (4) 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.
 - (5) 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot.
 - (6) 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.
 - (7) 9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact **the Spirit of God dwells in you**. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him.
 - (8) 10 But if **Christ is in you**, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness.
 - (9) 11 If the **Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you**, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.
- b. HS = Spirit of Christ
- (1) Spirit dwells in you = Christ dwells in you
- c. **Colossians 1:15–20** (ESV) —
- (1) 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.
 - (2) 16 For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.
 - (3) 17 And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
 - (4) 18 And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.
 - (5) 19 For **in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell**, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.
- d. **Colossians 2:15** (ESV) —
- (1) 15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.
- e. **Colossians 1:24–29** (ESV) —
- (1) 24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

- (2) 25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known,
 - (3) 26 the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.
 - (4) 27 To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**.
 - (5) 28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.
 - (6) 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that **he powerfully works within me**.
- 2. Satan has been forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Christ
 - a. Turns attention to the deception and temptation of these despicable little hybrids called humans
 - b. Only to discover that God has, by the work of the Holy Spirit, enabled this very same Christ, the supreme Christ, the One who has destroyed the dominion of Satan, the One who made a public display of the rulers and authorities, having triumphed over them
 - c. This same Christ has been enabled to live in the hearts of these obnoxious little creatures
 - d. Enabling them to withstand his every weapon
 - e. And so exhibit “life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence”
 - f. So that we can escape “the corruption that is in the world by lust”
 - 3. Satan has been foiled at every turn
 - a. Through the individual second incarnation
- D. **Corporate Incarnation**
- 1. But maybe Satan can still destroy the church
 - a. The institution that has been so vulnerable to corruption
 - b. That conglomerate that has been so tempting to Satan’s appetites
 - 2. Texts
 - a. **1 Corinthians 12:12–13** (ESV) —
 - (1) 12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.
 - (2) 13 For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.
 - b. **1 Corinthians 12:27** (ESV) —
 - (1) 27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.
 - 3. Miss the obvious
 - a. Hear teaching about the body of Christ

- (1) Christ is the head – in charge
 - (2) We are members of it
 - (3) We need to cooperate with each other, fulfill our respective roles
- b. Miss – the analogy teaches that the church is the physical presence of Christ in the world
 - (1) Body of Christ is the means by which the work of Christ is accomplished in the world
 - (2) You may have the greatest intentions, but without a body you can accomplish nothing
 - (3) Ex: Steven Hawking
 - (a) ALS – communicated by moving a prosthesis with his mouth
 - (b) Otherwise, his mind would be wasted – a brain in a vat!
 - (c) Even he requires some minimal physical response in order to do anything
4. God has determined that the church is means by which Christ manifests His supremacy in the world
 - a. What Satan believes is his playground actually turns out to be the means by which his defeat is solidified and demonstrated
5. Maybe you've never looked at the body of Christ and the gifts of the Spirit in the context of this great contest with Satan
 - a. **Ephesians 4:7–8** (ESV) —
 - (1) 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.
 - (2) 8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."
 - b. The distribution of the gifts of the Spirit is set in the context of a cosmic, spiritual battle
6. Maybe you've never looked at the church and had much confidence in its ability to be successful in this grand cosmic battle
 - a. **Matthew 16:17–19** (ESV) —
 - (1) 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.
 - (2) 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
 - (3) 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."
7. Satan has been forced to acknowledge the supremacy of Christ

- a. Turns his attention to these individual hybrids only to discover that God has enabled the very person of the supreme Christ to dwell in them
- b. Turns his attention to the church, this corporate conglomerate which has so often appeared so vulnerable to his onslaught only to discover that Christ has made the church His body
- c. And that God has already determined its ultimate success

IV. **A Mighty Fortress**

A. Luther

- 1. A Mighty Fortress is Our God
 - a. And though this world with devils filled
 - b. Should threaten to undo us,
 - c. We will not fear for God has willed
 - d. **His truth to triumph through us.**
 - e. This Prince of Darkness grim,
 - f. We tremble not for him.
 - g. His rage we can endure,
 - h. For lo His doom is sure.
 - i. One little word shall fell him.
- 2. A Mighty Fortress
 - a. That word above all earthly powers
 - b. No thanks to them abideth.
 - c. **The Spirit and the Gifts are ours,**
 - d. **Through Him who with us sideth.**
- 3. The supreme Christ
 - a. Dwells in us
 - b. Manifests himself in His body, the church
- 4. Both abominable advantages that incite the rage of Satan
 - a. Who ultimately finds no arena in which he can successfully fight in order to derail God's plan

B. These truths are designed to embolden us, to lead us into the battle

- 1. Fully fitted with the armor of God (Eph 6)
- 2. To enable us to do whatever it takes to manifest the superiority of Christ over Satan

C. A Mighty Fortress

- 1. Let goods and kindred go,
- 2. This mortal life also.
- 3. The body they may kill,
- 4. God's truth abideth still.
- 5. His kingdom is forever.