**Jesus Christ Destroys the Works of the Devil**

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**1 John 3:7-13**

**Wednesday Evening**

**September 27, 2023**

**1 John 3:7-13**

7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.

9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. 10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, 12 not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous. 13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.

**7 Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous.**

Saints, apparently, the false teachers who were denying the doctrine of Christ were also claiming that they knew God, yet they were living unrighteous lives .

John warned his dear children not to let anyone deceive them about this: When people do what is right, it is because they are righteous, even as Christ is righteous.

Believers’ righteousness is given to them by Christ and naturally leads to doing righteous acts. In the same way, a tree that bears good fruit is a good tree.

Our own righteousness is what the Bible describes as:

**Isaiah 64:6**

“But we are all like an unclean thing, And all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; We all fade as a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, Have taken us away”

The fruit doesn’t make the tree good; it shows that it is good.

**8 He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil.**

Saints, Satan is the founder of lawless rebellion against God. Therefore, when people keep on sinning, it shows they belong to the Devil.

The Devil has been sinning since the beginning—even before the creation of the world. Since then, as the prince of this world, he has been both sinning and causing people to sin.

The false teachers who spoke lies and sinned without remorse showed that they belonged to the Devil himself.

Those who followed these teachers were aligning themselves with the Devil and thus fighting against Christ.

There is a cure for sin, however, because the Son of God came to destroy these works of the Devil. The Greek word behind “destroy” does not mean to annihilate; rather, it means “to break down,” “to undo,” “to render ineffective.”

**Ephesians 2:14-15**

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace…

Saints, though it would have made more sense, humanly speaking, for Christ to have obliterated Satan, he didn’t. Instead, Christ came to undo Satan’s work and thereby free people from sin and all its awful consequences.

John was therefore arguing that Christians cannot be involved in what Christ came to destroy.

**9 Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God.**

Saints, at first glance, these words appear to completely contradict what John said earlier: “If we say we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves”

This passage states that those who have been born into God’s family do not sin . . . they can’t keep on sinning, because they have been born of God.

**Do Christians sin or don’t they?**

Experience tells every Christian that sin still has its hold. For true believers, however, deep inside their spirits, they aspire not to sin.

This aspiration comes from the life of God within them. When they were “born again,” a new life was born inside.

**2 Corinthians 5:16-21**

16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him thus no longer. 17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Saints, Christians have this new life—God’s life is in them. They desire not to sin, and they fully renounce sin because sin is entirely incompatible with their new life.

Although, at times, they may give in to sin, they are continually fighting against it. Sin is still active, but it no longer has complete control over them.

The Holy Spirit works, through the Word of God, to set his people apart from sin—to make them holy and pure, as Christ is.

**10 In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.**

Saints, John spoke in absolutes; he offered no middle ground: a person belongs either to God or to the Devil.

The conclusion of the matter is that believers can tell who are children of God and who are children of the Devil.

The way to tell the “pretenders” is to see whether they obey God’s commands and whether they love other Christians.

**1 John 2:1-5**

1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

3 Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him.

**11 For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another,**

Saints, this comes not as a command, as in the old system of the law, but as an announcement of something good.

The message announced from God requires believers to love their brothers and sisters in God’s family.

The beginning refers to the time Jesus first told his disciples to love one another and to the time John’s audience first became believers.

**John 13:34-35**

34 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. 35 By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

**John 15:17**

“These things I command you, that you love one another”

**12 not as Cain who was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother's righteous.**

Saints, Cain and Abel were Adam and Eve’s first two sons. Abel offered a sacrifice that pleased God, while Cain’s sacrifice was unacceptable.

**Hebrews 11:4**

“By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks”

**Genesis 4:1-16**

1 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD." 2 Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.

3 And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD. 4 Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering, 5 but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. 6 So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?

7 If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it." 8 Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

9 Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" 10 And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. 11 So now you are cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.

12 When you till the ground, it shall no longer yield its strength to you. A fugitive and a vagabond you shall be on the earth." 13 And Cain said to the LORD, "My punishment is greater than I can bear!

14 Surely You have driven me out this day from the face of the ground; I shall be hidden from Your face; I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth, and it will happen that anyone who finds me will kill me."

15 And the LORD said to him, "Therefore, whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the LORD set a mark on Cain, lest anyone finding him should kill him. 16 Then Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and dwelt in the land of Nod on the east of Eden.

Saints, Cain brought grain and fruits for his offering, while Abel brought an animal from his flock.

Abel’s sacrifice (an animal substitute) was more acceptable to God, both because it was a blood sacrifice and, most important, because of Abel’s attitude when he offered it.

After Cain’s sacrifice was rejected, God gave him the chance to right his wrong and try again. God even encouraged him to do so. But Cain refused, and his jealous anger drove him to murder.

And why did he kill his brother? Because Cain had been doing what was evil, and his brother had been doing what was right. John’s point was not that Cain murdered and became a child of the Devil;

rather, because Cain belonged to the evil one, his anger and jealousy drove him to murder.

**John 8:42-44**

42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. 43 Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word.

44 You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of it.

John wanted his readers to understand the terrible results of refusing to love one another. Lack of love can lead to anger, jealousy, hatred—and, finally, even to murder.

**13 Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you.**

Saints, after telling the disciples to love one another, John added, don’t be surprised . . . if the world hates you.

**John 15:18-19**

18 "If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19 If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

The world is hostile to God. Jesus wants his followers to be distinctive; he sets them apart from the world. Their very separation, however, arouses unbelievers’ animosity.

When people become Christians, sometimes their lives change drastically.

This was especially true for first-century believers who had come out of the morally corrupt pagan world—John’s readers lived in Ephesus.

Former pagans would have been involved in many evil activities. After becoming believers, however, they no longer wanted to be involved in such things.

As Cain did with Abel, unbelievers reacted in hostility, often because they wanted to justify their own actions or silence their consciences.

When a person stands aside from certain activities, it makes the others think—and often they don’t like that.

Saints, Soon and Very soon, Jesus is about to appear, we are almost out of here!

**1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

13 But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. 14 For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

15 For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

17 Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. 18 Therefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 Corinthians 15:50-54**

50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed-- 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

**Short Movie Slide>**

**Acts 2:38-39**

38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."

**Let’s Pray!**

**Benediction**

**"May The LORD bless you and keep you, May The LORD make His face shine upon you, May The LORD be gracious to you, May The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, and give you His (Shalom) peace.”**