

## “SILENCING THE ACCUSER.”

Rev. Robert T. Woodyard

First Christian Reformed Church, Lynden, WA

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**Texts for the Sermon: Revelation 12:9-11; Romans 8:31-34**

**Prayer:** Holy Father, glorify your Son in our hearts and minds through the proclamation of your Holy Word. Preach the truth of the Gospel to our hearts. Grant us a fresh vision of your glory. And merciful Father, grant to me now thought and expression that is worthy of the clarity and excellency of your Word. In the name of Jesus our risen Savior and Lord. Amen.

### **Introduction.**

Have you ever had a conversation with a doctor that started with the question, “Doctor, how bad is it, how serious is my condition? Give it to me straight.”

It is a mark of wisdom to want to know the truth, to deal with reality, to not have our head in the sand or believe ignorance is bliss.

The seriousness of our condition will be based on several factors. What is the problem, how far has it progressed, what are the treatments, and what’s the prognosis of the treatments. With cancer we know of measurements like stage 1 or stage 4.

What would you say is the seriousness of our human condition spiritually, how bad is it? Are we aware we are in a battle for our life of epic proportions? How can we tell?

There are *four ways* we can measure it. One, by the level of damage and destruction we see from the battle, second, by the adversaries involved in the battle, third how long the battle has been going on, and fourth, from the how serious the remedy that is needed.

### ***First, consider how absolutely horrific the damage and destruction are.***

The suffering in our world over the past six thousand years is unimaginable. We who live in the western world, the first world, the civilized world can talk about suffering only in a rather surfacy and shallow manner. And even what we see on the news, like in Ukraine, that is only a small glimpse of the horrors of man’s inhumanity to man.

War, terrorism, torture, murder, rape, abuse, trafficking, slavery, violence, hatred, disease, sickness, pain, plagues, pandemics, pestilence, famine, drought, starvation, injustice, corruption, falsehood, stealing, etc.

But here is the point of pointing out how bad all the human suffering is on our planet. All of it is only a symptom of something even worse. The physical horrors of suffering in our world point to an infinitely worse horror, the moral and spiritual outrage of sin’s offense against an infinitely holy, wise, just, righteous God.

In other words, all human suffering on earth shows us how even infinitely more worse sin and rebellion and disobedience toward God is. Human suffering is the result of our sin against God.

Or to say it yet another way. The only way you can make sense of the insane amount of suffering in the world, without falling into the trap of just blaming God, is to understand how bad sin against a holy God is.

Some people look at all the suffering and come to the conclusion, God must be bad. People with the Holy Spirit and Biblical understanding, look at all the suffering and come to the conclusion what we did against God must be way worse than we have dared to think. Suffering in our world is not God's crime against humanity, but our crime against a holy God.

The damage and destruction of sin say the condition of our world is serious, the battle is serious.

***The second reason for saying this is by considering the adversaries involved.***

When superpowers are at war you know it is serious. We have in our text a description of a great battle between two beasts, a dragon and a lamb.

Now if you were a betting person, where would you put your money? The dragon or the lamb? Most certainly on the dragon until you find out the lamb is the Lamb of God, the Son of God.

When you step back and look at the big picture, the Bible is the story of a great cosmic battle waged in heaven and on earth between the two greatest adversaries, God and Satan, between a dragon and a lamb.

Revelation 12:9 is one of the most complete descriptions of Satan in Scripture. We are told who he is and what he does.

He is called the great dragon, the ancient serpent, the devil (slanderer), Satan (accuser). We are told he is the deceiver of the whole world, and the accuser of the brothers, he accuses them day and night, before God.

We see him fighting Christ in the NT. Satan is in Bethlehem killing all the baby boys two years and younger. Satan comes after Jesus' baptism to tempt Him to sin and derail His mission. Satan fills Judas leading him to betray Jesus, and stirs up the leaders of the Jews and Romans to destroy Jesus. Satan utterly fails in every single attempt.

Why does Satan fail? Because he is not equal to God, he is a created being made by God and under God's control. It is not a fair fight, for which we can be eternally grateful.

***Third, we see how serious the battle is by how long it has been going on.***

In history there are some famous battles, the six day war, the seven years' war, the thirty years' war, the hundred years' war. Our history books never mention the six thousands' year war.

The only peace in the Bible is Genesis 1-2 and Revelation 21-22. Everything else in between is war. We think we are in peacetime, but we have our head in the sand, we aren't facing reality.

God announces the battle and the result all the way back in Genesis 3:15 when He says to Satan:

**Genesis 3:15** I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

History is the story of sin. The Bible is the history of God's battle with and defeat of sin. I like that summary of the message of the Bible, Slay the dragon, get the girl.

*Fourth, we see how serious the situation is by the remedy needed to solve the problem.*

Nothing less than the Son of God coming from heaven to die in order to throw down Satan.

**1 John 3:8** The Son of God appeared to destroy the works of the devil.

Today we celebrate Christ's victory over Satan, a battle that was as serious and intense as any battle ever fought, but never in doubt. Victory was assured. The cross is the decisive moment in the battle.

**Colossians 2:15** Having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

**Hebrews 2:14** Christ took on human nature that through death he might destroy him who has the power of death, that is, the devil.

**John 15:31** Now will the ruler of this world be cast out.

"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."

Up until this time Satan was allowed to appear in heaven and bring accusations against God's people (Job 1, 2; Zech 3:1). He could point to a sinner and tell God that righteous judgment required condemnation according to the holy Law of God.

Satan is depicted as the prosecutor in heaven who brings charges and accusations against God's elect. Satan has access to heaven, to the throne of God in the court of divine justice. Satan's accusations had legal force because of the law's requirement for justice and payment of sin.

But here in Revelation we witness a scene where Satan is disbarred from being a prosecutor, something has happened that removes him from heaven and he is thrown out.

How is the accuser of the saints silenced? How is victory over Satan gained for us? **Three ways.**

***First, we have this victory through the blood of the Lamb, vs. 11.***

Satan's accusations against us before God are true, we are guilty. He knows our sin, our dark secrets. His accusations have power until we claim the blood of the Lamb as our redemption. There is no accusation that cannot be paid for and covered and thrown down by the blood of Jesus. There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.

Notice there is no self-reliance here, self-reliance is deadly, it will kill you. Christ-reliance is life-sustaining. Notice, it doesn't say conquered by the blood of Jesus or the blood of Christ, but by the blood of the lamb. This is specific reference to the sacrificial lamb, the substitute. Jesus is our Passover Lamb, "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world." The Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He paid all our debt, so that the angel of death would Passover us.

Justice is done, the case is closed. There is therefore, no more condemnation, no more accusation, there is no appeal to a higher court. With the cross of Jesus, all Satan's accusations are rejected and thrown out of the heavenly court room. The accuser is silenced.

***Second, we have this victory through the Word of our testimony, through the Truth, vs. 11***

Satan is turned back by the Gospel, by the truth concerning Jesus Christ. Truth defeats the deception of the devil. Satan is thrown down by the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God.

One of Satan's strongest tactics is to convince us we are not who we are in Christ and that we cannot do what He has saved us to do.

He lies and deceives to convince us we are worthless sinners, an embarrassment to Christ, worse than other Christians, too bad for God to listen, and helpless to ever change, beyond hope. And there is truth in that, it's true apart from Christ I am nothing and without God in this world. But thanks be to God in His grace and mercy while I was still a sinner He loved me and redeemed me. No one can bring any charge against God's elect.

Satan is no match for the Truth. Remember Jesus in the wilderness.

What is your testimony to the truth?

Do you believe Satan is not just a foe, but a certain kind of foe, a vanquished foe, defeated. The seed of woman has crushed the serpent. Christ's victory is our victory.

Do you believe he is no longer our accuser?

How often does past sin, past guilt, past shame overtake you? How often are you reminded of past secret sin, foolish faults, dark secrets, long ago repented of wickedness? How often do

doubts, fears creep in, reminders of hypocrisy, unfaithfulness? That is the accuser. How often are you robbed of your joy in your salvation, your joy in your forgiveness, the joy of your received grace?

What do you say when that happens? Start with Christ is risen. Speak those words over every sinful thought, every accusation. Christ is risen, I have a mediator with the Father, I have an advocate before the great eternal Judge of the universe.

“Everything you say, Satan, is true. All my sins are real and great. But they have all been laid on Jesus and they have all been paid and atoned for. I plead the blood of Jesus.

You silence his voice by testifying to the power of the blood of the lamb.

You will have no comfort from thinking better thoughts, or doing better works. You will have no comfort from improving your self-esteem or eating comfort food or taking a nice holiday. Your comfort is in the bleeding wounds of Jesus on your behalf.

Do you have a testimony, a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? Have you confessed your faith in Him as your Lord and Savior? Have you surrendered your life to Him and asked Him to take control? Have you agreed with God about the seriousness of your condition, the seriousness of your sin against Him, and do you agree with Him about the only treatment, to confess, repent and believe in Jesus?

**I John 5:10-13** Whoever believes in the Son of God has the testimony in himself. Whoever does not believe God has made him a liar, because he has not believed in the testimony that God has borne concerning his Son. 11 And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. 12 Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. 13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life.

Unbelief is not a trivial matter. It contradicts the one true God. The ungodly are guilty of the crime of blasphemy against God because they charge God with falsehood, with lying. They rob God of His glory and deny to Him the honor due to His name.

***Third, we have this victory through making Jesus better than life, vs. 11.***

What would happen if God let Satan do to us what He let Satan do to Job? What would happen if Satan stripped away everything, if we lost everything, all our possessions, all our family, all our security and support, all our bank accounts and insurance, everything, except our testimony, our belief in Jesus?

Would we say, “the Lord gives and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord”?

Would we say as the early Christians said:

**Hebrews 10:34** ... you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one.

Would we say as Paul said:

**Philippians 1:21** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Would it be said of us that he loved not his own life even unto death? Is your faith in Jesus better than life itself? If we can say that we silence the accusers final and greatest threat, his final weapon, the fear of death.

The threat of our own death no longer carries any fear, because Jesus has taken away the sting of death with His own death and resurrection.

**Silencing the accuser.**

Do you ever feel guilt and shame? Do you ever feel condemnation? Do you ever feel covered up with the lies and accusations of Satan? Do you ever find yourself listening to lies and even starting to believe his lies about you or Jesus or your salvation or your assurance? Is Satan making war on you?

What should you do? We can do what Jesus did and throw down and silence the accuser because of the blood, because of the Word of truth, because of Christ's victory over death.

**Romans 8:31-34** What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? 33 Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. 34 Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.

Christ is Risen!

**Prayer:** Holy Father, you have destroyed the last enemy death, you have defeated Satan, you have vanquished hell, you have raised to life your Son whom you crucified. Enable us, to live and to love in the light and truth and promise of the resurrection. Reorder and reorient our lives around this one central truth, the reality of Jesus' final and decisive triumph over death. increase in us your resurrection power, strengthen us for the battles ahead. Give us wisdom to recognize the enemy and courage and boldness to resist him. Make this reality practical in all our daily lives, in all our daily interactions and relationships and conversations, to the glory of Jesus Christ, in whose mighty name we pray, Amen.