

Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil

1. INTRODUCTION:

- a. Meaning of ADVENT? Coming, arrival, manifestation
- b. Why did Jesus come? Sermon series for the next three gatherings
 - i. Popular ideas: To be an example? To start a new religion? To teach us how to love? To defeat Rome? To be a social warrior? To defend truth and justice? Maybe some of those ideas fall into your way of thinking.
- c. *1 John 3:8, Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*

2. **Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning.**

- a. God doesn't want us to sin
 - i. *1 John 2:1, My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.*
 - ii. Notice that here in 1 John 2, John doesn't say that he doesn't want us to habitually sin; he says that it's his hope that we don't sin at all. He is not saying that occasional acts of rebellion are acceptable
 1. Like saying to your wife, "It was only a one night stand!"
 - iii. Realistically, we know that we aren't going to live perfect lives. When we do sin, we are not hopeless people! We have an advocate, a champion
- b. But this is not what is being discussed in 1 John 3. Practicing sin is another level.
 - i. Practicing is defined as one of two things:
 1. To perform repeatedly or regularly in order to improve one's proficiency
 2. To carry out or perform habitually or regularly
- c. If you are in the habit of doing that, John has strong words for you
 - i. You are of the devil! What does that mean? In a sense, it means that the one who practices sinning is giving their allegiance to him. He's a tool in the enemy's grimy paw
 - ii. If you are in the habit of improving your sinful struggles without remorse or repentance, then you are, essentially, doing Satan's work
- d. How can he say something so strong?
 - i. *John 8:44, You are of your father the devil, and your will is to do your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks out of his own character, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*
 - ii. The devil has been practicing (and getting better) at sin since the beginning.
 - iii. When we practice lawlessness, deceit, rebellion, sin, we are walking in his father's footsteps

- iv. This is the way all of us once walked, maybe some still do - as tools in Satan's hand, doing his will, spreading his vile fame and corruption
- e. Even the best among us have habitual struggles of pride, frustration, anger, self-centeredness, etc. There are many days when I feel like I am pulling all the same dirty laundry out of the hamper decades later
 - i. John's words could, for some, be a needed eye opener
 - ii. For others, it could feel like oppressive condemnation
- f. If this were the end of the sermon, it would kind of stink, but it's not! **There's good news**

3. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

- a. We return to our initial question: Why did God send his son?
 - i. To be an example? To start a new religion? To teach us how to love? To defeat Rome? To fulfill prophecy? To show us the way? In some ways all
- b. John gives us the purpose for the revelation, the appearance of God's Son.
 - i. John tells us: "For this purpose the Son of God was revealed: to destroy the works of the devil."
 - ii. Why did Jesus come? Why does the advent matter? Why is the incarnation important? Why celebrate him at all? How would Emmanuel ransom captive Israel and break their chains of exile?
 - 1. Because of God's intended purpose for his manifestation: to destroy the works of the devil
 - iii. Consider that since before Adam and Eve rebelled, Satan has been laying the foundation of lawlessness and sin.
 - 1. He has been building an evil empire, brick by brick, working and practicing to dethrone God (were it possible)
 - iv. Do you remember that final scene in Return of the King? When the ring of power is thrown into Mt Doom? The obliteration of the Deceiver is apparent:
 - 1. The temple of Barad-dur begins to collapse and you can see the eye of power panicking as it's piercing gaze goes this way/that
 - 2. The massive army, bent on the destruction of all that is good in the world begins to scatter as their champion, their king falls to the ground in burst of finality
 - 3. The ground cracks as if it too is finally released from it's own bondage to evil and it swallows up the horde of orcs and goblins
 - v. The work of Sauron was destroyed, just like that - in a moment
 - vi. As Jesus, innocent, hung on the cross, God poured out his wrath on him instead of me and you. Jesus paid it all - the fullness of punishment and cried out "IT IS FINISHED!"
 - vii. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil → all that he was building
- c. Interesting word, "Lu-O" in Greek → To loose, break or destroy
 - i. John 1:27 it refers to a literal loosing of one's sandal-thong when John says he cannot untie Jesus' sandal b/c he is too holy

- ii. John 2:19 to a destruction of Jesus' physical body which was understood by the hearers to refer to physical destruction of the Jerusalem temple.
 - iii. John 5:18 the Pharisees wanted to kill Jesus because they said he was "destroying" the Sabbath
 - iv. John 7:23 they accuse him of destroying the Law of Moses by healing on the Sabbath
 - v. John 10:35 Jesus says that the Word of God cannot be destroyed/broken
 - vi. John 11:44 at the resurrection of Lazarus when Jesus commands that he be released from the graveclothes with which he was bound
 - vii. 1 John 3:8 the verb means, with reference to "the works of the devil," to "destroy, bring to an end, abolish."
- d. Let's focus for a moment on the poetic irony
- i. Jesus was unable to be destroyed. Poetically, you couldn't even destroy his sandal
 - 1. Truly Jesus said, "No man takes my life. I lay it down of my own accord and take it back up again."
 - ii. Jesus body, the true temple, was destroyed so that the works of the devil - his tower of cards, his row of dominoes - might be smacked aside
 - iii. The Pharisees accused Jesus of destroying the Sabbath when it was the destruction of his body that would bring God's people into true sabbath
 - iv. They accused Jesus of destroying the Law of Moses when actually it was Jesus alone who fulfilled the Law of Moses on our behalf since we lived as constant law-breakers. It is his obedience that heals us, not destroys the Law!
 - v. It is precisely because the Law of God cannot be broken that Jesus came, in fulfillment of prophecy, that there had to be blood for atonement, in fulfillment of the unbreakable law. Jesus' body was destroyed b/c of the indestructible, unchanging Word of God
 - vi. Jesus destroyed death by being destroyed
 - 1. Do you remember the story of the Trojan Horse? Jesus destroyed death by being destroyed!
- e. Summarizing, how did he destroy the works of the devil?
- i. He practiced righteousness and love, living a perfect life
 - ii. He shouldered the penalty for practicing sin and lawlessness, despite his innocence
 - iii. He carried the burden of God's wrath, as the innocent, sacrificial lamb of God
 - iv. *2 Corinthians 5:21 - For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*
 - v. He broke the DNA of sin by creating a new lineage, one that practices the works of their new Father - the works of righteousness
4. What are the implications of such a great work?
- a. **Justification: Jesus came to destroy sin's penalty in your life. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.**

- i. Saving faith is found in confessing our need for Jesus and asking for forgiveness from the punishment we deserve. By humbly receiving the truth that Christ bore the penalty for my sins, I stand justified before God, my judge. Why? Not because I am innocent, but because my penalty (death) has been paid. Christ's sacrifice is sufficient for the sins of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. I do not need to be justified again and again. He was sacrificed once for sin and it is enough for me and for you. Now, for those who are reborn, there is no condemnation. Because Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, we were saved from sin's penalty.

b. Sanctification: Jesus came to destroy sin's power in your life. Jesus has set you free from the power of sin and death.

- i. The Bible says that anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone and the new has come - and is coming more and more (2 Cor. 1:20–22). We are new and being made new. We are set free and being set free more and more, with each passing day, from the power of sin in our lives by the power of the Spirit.
- ii. Without Christ, before being regenerated and reborn, we were unable to fulfill God's desire and design, but by his grace, and because of his restoration, we now have the capacity - by the Spirit of God - to do his work and accomplish his will. To ensure this, he gives us a precious wonderful gift, a helper, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus. Having once been slaves to sin, we are now free to serve God! We use this freedom to practice righteousness rather than abusing this freedom to practice sinning. Because Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, we are being saved from the power of sin in our lives.
- iii. Illustration: Muddy pond w/ a new source. As we remove all obstacles, that living water flows stronger and stronger and it dilutes the pond of death all the more until we are completely made new (Phil 1:6)

c. Glorification: Jesus will ultimately and finally destroy sin's presence in our lives and in all creation. Jesus is making all things new.

- i. We are called to overcome, to persevere, to fight for holiness and run this marathon. When we die, when we have fought the good fight, we will enter into the rest of the Lord forever. He will glorify us as he himself is glorified. Sin will no longer have any hold over us, there will be no more death, disease, or tears of sadness. Evil cannot exist in his holy, all-consuming presence.
- ii. Today we may feel assailed by sin at every angle, but one day sin will be no more. Because Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil, we will be saved from sin's presence.

d. Bottom line: Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil in your life and in the world - past, present, and future. Rest in the finished work of Christ.

TABLE TALK:

1. What struck you the most about this morning's time in the Word?
2. How does Jesus as the work-of-the-devil destroying savior bring you to a deeper sense of awe?
3. Which TRUTH of salvation did you need to most be reminded of this morning and why?
 - a. **Justification**: Jesus came to destroy sin's penalty in your life. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - b. **Sanctification**: Jesus came to destroy sin's power in your life. Jesus has set you free from the power of sin and death.
 - c. **Glorification**: Jesus will ultimately and finally destroy sin's presence in our lives and in all creation. Jesus is making all things new.
4. How can you remind yourself, your family, and your friends about the sin and death destroying power of Christ this Christmas season?