

Vital Issues of Life!

Some years ago a young evangelical Christian from Belfast, Ireland, came to a distinctly liberal Theological Seminary in New England. He took some time to size up the situation. Then he spoke his mind."

"The students on this campus," he said in his open air voice in the dining hall," do not believe in a personal devil but you're not here more than a day or two before you meet him face to face."

Many 19th century theologians did away with the devil. He had no place in their world and life view. And many modern men dismiss the whole notion of a personal devil as rather primitive. Someone wrote:

. ."And so they've voted the devil out,
And of course the devil has gone;
But simple people would like to know
Who carries his business on!"

It is interesting to see that in our age many start to take the demonic seriously again. This does not always mean an acceptance of a personal devil but it is often an attempt to explain somehow the evil of our day. The experiences of the last world war, the Vietnam war, the increase of violence, the brutality and gross egoism we witness in our society must have their origin in some dark power. There must be some demonic force behind the folly of our time. This line of thought does not go far enough.

The devil has made a come back in our time, though he has actually never left the stage. C. S. Lewis in his well-known work, *The Screwtape Letter*, has reminded us that the world is a continual battleground against the forces of darkness. And we see this battle waged right here and now.

The Bible itself does not refer to a demonic force but it speaks about a personal devil. And it does not talk about it abstractly but in alarm.

James urges the people of God "So then submit to God. Resist the devil and he will fly from you." Revelation 12:12 says "The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."

Satan is hard at work today. In the Middle Ages the devil walked around with horns and a tail. The devil is now quite modern. He comes in camouflage. The evil is hidden under nice slogans and with sweet persuasion. The power of darkness seems to have the upper hand. Yet, it is not so. Christians take the devil serious, and they ought to. The reality of evil is felt and seen. We are told that Martin Luther once threw an inkpot at the devil. We don't do this anymore as we run into the danger that our resistance is weakening. Yet, Christians ought to resist the devil, and live in the power of the resurrection. The devil has been defeated on the cross. The victory belongs to Jesus

Christ and Christians share in that victory. This is not the time to feel defeated, but for everyone to take courage in Jesus Christ! The devil has come back!

Many have tried to think him away but didn't succeed! The 20th century devil is as real as the one of the ages past. Therefore the Bible gives these words of assurance to each child of the Lord in his fight against the devil: First of all, Christ lives in me. Second: Greater is He that is in me, than he that is in the world. Third, He will never leave me, nor forsake me. Do you share in this victory of Jesus Christ?

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