

Vigilant

Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.

– 1 Peter 5:8 –

The devil is our enemy, and a very formidable foe at that. He hates us because we are the special object of God's affections. Though he was defeated once and for ever at Calvary (praise God!), Satan is still permitted to tempt men, even believers, enticing us toward self-destruction. Though his bark is worse than his bite, he is masterful at creating elusive traps via the world and the flesh that draw men to perdition. It therefore becomes critical to recognize his influence, to identify his snares, and to steer clear of his entrapments.

Scripture tells us that the whole world lieth in wickedness (1 John 5:19). This is no surprise, because the devil is the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4). He owns a certain right of reign that he ceased from Adam in Eden. As the prince of the power of the air (Eph. 2:2), he wields powerful influence in the sphere where Adam's progeny uniquely participates – the arena of ideas. As mankind collectively and increasingly resists the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Lucifer's sway tends towards more control in the thoughts, words, and deeds of men and nations. While limited to advance only as far as God permits, the Serpent's leash appears to be getting longer of late. The growing acceptance of sin and the militant normalization of perversion is advancing at a breathtaking pace and on a global scale. We no longer see a localized Sodom and Gomorrah serving as epicenters of devilish thought and practice, but are rather witnessing a widespread and hydra-headed cultural push for mankind to cross every boundary and unfetter every restraint to fulfill the devil's primal promise, "Ye shall be as God." The stage is being set for the Man of Sin to embody this lawless mystery of iniquity in human flesh, thereby giving the devil what he has desired for so long – the willful and collective worship of mankind.

All of this has very practical implications for us as believers in these latter days. We are exhorted to be sober and vigilant. Sobriety is desperately needed in the modern church of Jesus Christ. We must recognize that we are engaged in a mortal battle, commissioned by God Himself in a spiritual warfare against the devil's principalities and powers that are incessantly assaulting us through every conduit of information and entertainment. We must be vigilant. There is no relaxation in this war. While our soul finds rest in Christ, our spirit must be in a constant state of watchfulness. The Enemy's subtlety is as polished as it was in Eden, if not more so. Perhaps now more than ever, believers need their senses exercised to discern good and evil. Faintness of heart will lead to decimation of witness and significant loss of reward.

Greater is He that is in us than he that is in the world. Believe it, Christian! Be circumspect. Be vigilant. The day of our Lord's appearing and our Enemy's destruction is soon at hand. Until then, watch. -- D. Murcek