

CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

717 North Stapley Drive, Mesa, AZ 85203 Phone: (480) 833-7500

Series: The Lord's Prayer
Number: 16
Text: Matthew 6:13; 1 Peter 5:8
Date: August 11, 2013 a.m.

Pastor/Teacher
Gary L.W. Johnson

The Lord's Prayer: The Sixth Petition (Part III)

Hatred is not a word that we care to associate with Biblical Christianity. In recent years, however, "hate speech" has been used by many in the gay culture to smear Christians who label the homosexual lifestyle "sinful".¹ You often hear the motto, "hate the sin; love the sinner." There is an element of truth in that statement, but there is also an equal dose of error. Sin is personal, and not abstract. When a person's behavior is sinful, it is the individual who is responsible before God. We can no more separate the sin from the sinner than we can the action of a soldier who displays bravery and courage during combat from the individual soldier. The Psalmist declared, "Do I not hate those who hate you (God)?" (Psalm 139:21)² Elsewhere in Scripture we read: the fear of the Lord is to hate evil (Proverbs 8:13); let those who love the Lord hate evil (Psalms 97:10; hate what is evil (Romans 12:9); I hate every false way (Psalms 119:104, 128); I hate falsehood (Psalms 119:163); I hate the work of those who fall away (Psalms 101:3); you love righteousness and hate evil (Psalms 45:7). Satan is evil personified. He is "the evil one." Therefore, Christians should *hate* Satan and his works. We must acknowledge the role of Satan in the creation of certain forms of popular culture. There can be little doubt, it seems to me, that where gratuitous violence is exalted, social upheaval is advocated, and radical self-indulgence is made the final standard for life, a spirit is at work which is diametrically opposed to the Spirit of God. At the same time, we must avoid blaming all of the wrongdoing and the wickedness we see in the world on the Devil. Fallen humanity is hostile to God and does not need Satan's help to display this animosity. "In a sinful age such as ours – indeed, in any age but especially, it seems, our own – sinful men and women are capable of producing offensive even dangerous, cultural forms, quite apart from any influence of the Evil One. His presence among us, however, as he stalks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, does not help the situation."³ Peter's description of our adversary exposes us to a truly dreadful foe.

I. HIS MALICE AND ENMITY

He is called our "adversary." The word ANTIDIKOS was a legal term referring to an opponent in a lawsuit and underscores his malice: he is out to get you. His name is DIABLOLOS, the slanderer. In it's New Testament usage, it always denotes lying and falsehood, done with intent to harm (comp. II Timothy 3:3,11, and Titus 2:3). Richard Gilpin, a masterful Puritan divine, wrote that this title, "particularly hints that when he hath in malice tempted a poor wretch to sin, he spares not to accuse him for it, and to load him with all things that may aggravate his guilt or misery, accusing him for more than he hath really done, and for a worse estate than he is really in."⁴

II. HIS POWER

He is further described metaphorically as a "lion," a beast of prey. The apparent source of Peter's imagery is a psalm in which Christians took considerable interest in connection with Jesus passion: i.e., Psalm 21:14 [22:13] where the Psalmist speaks of "fat bulls" who "opened their mouth against me, like a ravening and roaring lion" (cf. Ezekiel 22:25). The lion, which in some traditions stands for the Jewish Messiah (cf. Ezra 12:31-32) or even Jesus Christ (cf. Revelation 5:5), in this psalm represents the enemies of God and of His people. In II Timothy 4:17, the Apostle Paul uses similar imagery: "I was delivered from the mouth of the lion." The expression "whom he may devour," KATAPIEIN, literally refers to drinking down or swallowing. In other words, like lion can easily dispatch a little calf so humans are no match for Satan. One of the ways that Satan devours is through deception. When people are duped into believing a lie, they are wallowed up by the Prince of Darkness. Christians can be misled and deceived – as demonstrated by the Galatians (Galatians 5:7-8). "People instinctively but wrongly assume that only stupid or highly gullible people would wind up believing and accepting false things, but nothing could be further from the truth! Our Jehovah's Witness and Mormon friends are highly intelligent people. Intelligence alone has nothing to do with deception! Look how many brilliant people have bought into

what evolutionist Denton calls a “fairy tale for adults” – evolution. How many evangelicals believed Mike Warnke in the 1970’s when he claimed to have been a former highly placed Satanist, without ever checking his story? How many good people of normal or above –average intelligence believe that Benny Hinn truly heals people, or that the Holy Spirit has an interest in pinning people to the floor or throwing them into uncontrollable fits of laughter? The fact is that even Christians (of whatever intelligence) are not immune to deception, which is why the Bible warns us time and time again not to be deceived. If we could not be deceived, why the warnings (e.g., Matthew 24:4, Colossians 2:4,8)?”⁵

III. HIS CRUELTY

His is a “roaring” lion, suggesting his fierceness and terrible disposition that manifests his malice and intent to harm. George Swinnock, another of the Puritan commentators, wrote, “The lions of the forest have no pity, ‘Lest he tear my soul like a lion, rending it in pieces,’ Psalms 7:2. The lions break the bones of Daniel’s accusers before they came to the bottom of the den, But the lion of hell has much less pity; his tender mercies are cruelties indeed.”⁶

IV. HIS DILIGENCE

This is depicted in the words “prowls around.” He actively goes about and seeks his prey. The absolute use of the verb PERIPATEIN, “to be on the move,” (literally, “to walk around,” then more generally “to walk”) vividly portrays a pacing hungry lion (cf. also Job 2:2, where Satan is said to have come “from going back and forth over the earth and walking up and down on it”).

V. THE ADMONITION: BE ON GUARD!

This constitutes an apostolic call to spiritual alertness, The words “be sober” and “be watchful” are highly instructive. The first is NEPHO, literally “pay attention!” Peter used it as an imperative one before (4:7) in relation to prayer. He also used it in 1:13 in reference to being physically and mentally alert. The second term is GREGOREO. It too is in the imperative and literally means, “wake up, be on the watch.” These two aorist imperative are both ingressive and programmatic in setting out a new course of action once and for all.⁷ Thomas Manton comments, “What is sobriety?” A holy moderation in the use of worldly things. Be sure not to leave any carnal affection unmortified. And then be watchful; take heed not to play about he temptation, not put yourselves upon occasions of sin, for then we lie open to the devil, and give him an advantage against us.”⁸The opposite of this sober watchfulness is a kind of spiritual drowsiness in which one sees and responds to situations no differently than unbelievers, and God’s perspective on each event is seldom, if ever, considered.”⁹

CONCLUSION: To pray that God would “deliver us from the evil one” does not mean that we can now relax and go about our lives indifferent to the other Scriptural injunctions, like the one we find in our text. Heed the wise words of Calvin, “This explanation extends further, to the extent that we are ware at war with a most fierce and most powerful enemy, we are to be strenuous in resisting him. He uses a twofold metaphor, that they were to be sober, and that they were to be watchful. Surfeiting produces laziness and sleep, so those who indulge in earthly care and pleasures think of nothing else, oppressed as they are by spiritual lethargy. We now see what the meaning of the apostle is. He says that we must carry on a warfare in this world, and he rinds us that we have to do it with no common enemy, but with one who, like a lion, runs her and there ready to devour. He concludes from this that we ought to watch carefully. Paul encouraged us with the dame argument in Ephesians, chapter 6, where he says that we have a contest not with flesh and blood, but with spiritual wickedness, etc. We too often turn peace into sloth, and hence it comes about that the enemy then surrounds and overwhelms us, because we indulge ourselves according to the will of the flesh, as though we were beyond he reach of danger.”¹⁰

ENDNOTES

¹ “Over the past year or so, the attempt to label homosexual behavior as “sin” has been described as “hate speech” by the politically correct. Christian organizations on university campuses have been censured by college administrations, and in some cases barred from activities. In Finland and Canada, laws have been passed to arrest people (especially pastors) who use Biblical language to condemn homosexuality. Robert H. Bork accurately pointed out the flaw in reasoning which was most recently captured in Colorado: “Modern liberalism tends to classify all moral distinctions it does not accept as hateful and invalid. Moral views about sexual practices are particularly suspect. As for the claim that homosexuals are uniquely burdened because they cannot pass the laws they want without changing the Colorado constitution, that burden is imposed on various

groups by every constitutional guarantee of freedom. Those who want to prohibit speech advocating law violation or violence cannot attain their end without amending the First Amendment. The First Amendment also stands in the way of those who would like to vote for an established church in their home state. All constitutional prohibitions of certain types of laws are subject to the same attack the Supreme Court leveled at Colorado's provision. The majority did not even mention its prior decision that homosexual conduct is not a constitutional right, but it is well on the way to holding that it is. If homosexuality may not be discouraged by state constitution, it is difficult to see how the provisions of various state constitutions banning polygamy can stand." *Slouching Toward Gomorrah: Modern Liberalism and American Decline* (Harper Collins, 1996), p.1113.

What we are experiencing here is, as Frederic W. Bave notes, actually a theological issue. "Homosexuality," he writes, "is basically a theological problem. It begins with false doctrine and ends with perverted behavior." *The Spiritual Society: What Lurks Beyond Postmodernism?* (Crossway Books, 2001), p.148. It is because of the decline of theology in our churches that the Evangelical church as large has ended up sounding very much like the cultural experts. "A therapist counseling a homosexual would generally not condemn his 'lifestyle' as morally wrong. Rather the counselor would try to make him feel good about himself, to accept his 'lifestyle choices' and help him get into a support group. Today this approach, omin-toleraant and anti-judgmental, operates throughout the culture." Gene E. Veith, Jr., *Postmodern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture* (Crossways, 1994), p.181. It is this kind of mentality that dominates Evangelicalism as large. "There is a widespread movement among evangelicals to integrate ideas Freudian psychology into counseling methods used by the church. Self-esteem theory, secular 'twelve-step' recovery techniques, and a host of other faddish therapies are all being 'integrated' with what Scripture teaches about how to address the problem of sin. Theses methods seem so sophisticated, so progressive. But all such therapies are based on humanistic ideas that are contrary to Scripture. They deny human depravity. They undermine the Holy Spirit's role in sanctification. To attempt to integrate them with biblical teaching does extreme violence to the biblical position. Integration turns out to be simply another word for syncretism. And 'Christian psychology that uses this humanistic integration is nothing but classic religious syncretism. It contradicts I Thessalonians 5:22: 'Abstain from every form of evil'. Satan is subtle. He often sabotages the truth by mixing it with error. Truth mixed with error is usually far more effective and far more destructive than straightforward contradiction of the truth. If you think everything you read or hear on Christian radio and television is reliable teaching, then you are a prime target for reckless faith. If you think everyone who appears to love the truth really does, then you don't understand the wiles of Satan. Satan disguises himself as an angel of light." Cf. J.F. MacArthur, *Reckless Faith: When the Church Loses Its Will to Discern* (Crossway, 1994), p.80. Charles Colson laments how this is all too common in our evangelical churches. "In my extensive travels over the past twelve years, I've met with pastors, talked with church members, and spoken in hundreds of churches. And from my observation I must conclude that the church, broadly speaking, has succumbed to many of the culture's enticements. I don't want to generalize unjustly or be overly harsh, but it's fair to say that much of the church is caught up in the success mania of American society. Often more concerned with budgets and building programs than with the body of Christ, the church places more emphasis on growth than on repentance. Suffering, sacrifice, and service have been preempted by success and self-fulfillment. One pastor confided to me, 'I try not to talk about subjects that make people uncomfortable. My job is to make sure they come back here week after week.'" *Against the night: Living In the New Dark Ages* (Vine Books, 1989), p.103. The fear of being labeled "judgmental" or "unloving", more often than not, will keep many evangelical churches from addressing "hot potato" issues like homosexuality - and those on the other side of the fence are quick to use this trump card. But Christians need not, and should not, retreat in the face of such tactics. "A Christian can interact with and respect a Buddhist while still believing on rational grounds that he is mistaken. In fact, the belief that both views cannot be right is an *impetus* to engage in meaningful dialogue. Dialogue thus becomes an opportunity for both sides to reexamine their presuppositions and clarify their positions. True tolerance grants people the right to dissent. It is very important that a Christian criticized for intolerance asks his accuser what he *means* by 'intolerance.' The accuser will probably say something like 'not being accepting of another's beliefs.' To this the Christian can gently respond, 'But you are not being accepting of my position. You think I am wrong.' The relativism is that it exalts tolerance to the status of an absolute. A belief is 'true for you' as long as it doesn't interfere with the belief that's 'true for me.' To be bit more consistent, the relativist would say, 'It doesn't matter what you believe' - period. Yet popular relativism slips absolutes in through the back door: '...just don't be judgmental' or '...but be tolerant' or even '...just as long as you don't interfere with another's freedom/happiness.' So, besides relativisms being intrinsically absolutist (because it says 'everything is relative' or 'there are no absolutes'), it holds to yet another absolute - the hallowed standard of tolerance. In other words, relativism is packed full of absolutes." Paul Copan, *True For You, But Not For Me: Deflating the Slogans That Leave Christians Speechless* (Bethany House, 1998), p.36.

² Spurgeon aptly comments on this passage with the words, "I hated in them their iniquities, I loved thy creation. This it is to hate with a perfect hatred, that neither on account of the vices thou hate the men, nor on account of the men love the vices. For see what he addeth, 'They become my enemies.' Not only as God's enemies, but as his own too doth he now describe them. How then will he fulfill in them both his own saving 'Have not I hated those that hated thee, Lord,' and the Lord's command, 'Love your enemies? How will he fulfill this, save with that perfect hatred, that he hate in them that they are wicked men and love that they are men? For in the time even of the Old Testament, when the carnal people was restrained by visible punishment how did Moses, the servant of God, who by understanding belonged to the New Testament how did he hate sinners when he prayed for them, or how did he not hate them when he slew them, save that he 'hated them with perfect hatred? For with such perfection did he hate the iniquity which he punished, as to love the manhood for which he prayed. - Augustine." C.H. Spurgeon, *The Treasury of David: An Expository and Devotional Commentary on the Psalms VII* (rpt. Baker, 1978), p. 252.

³ c.f. the excellent discussion by T.M. Moore, *Redeeming Pop Culture: A Kingdom Approach* (P&R, 2003), p. 73.

⁴ Richard Gilpin, *A Treatise on Satan's Temptations* (rpt. Soli Deo Gloria, 2000), p. 10.

⁵ D. Veinot, J. Veinot & R. Henzel, *A matter of Basic Principles: Bill Gothard & The Christian Life* (21st Century Press, 2003), p. 322.

⁶ *The Works of George Swinnock III* (rpt. Banner of Truth, 1992), p. 115.

⁷ cf. J.R. Michaels, *I Peter: Word Biblical Commentary* (Word, 1988), p. 299.

⁸ *The Works of Thomas Manton I* (rpt. Maranatha, 1976), p. 208.

⁹ Wayne Gruden, *I Peter: Tyndale New Testament Commentary* (IVP, 1994), p. 196.

¹⁰ *Calvin's New Testament Commentaries 12* (rpt. Eerdmans, 1974), p. 319.