

The Indestructible Church

Joe Slater

As Jesus stated His intent to establish His church, He promised that "*the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it*" (Matthew 16:18). Satan appeared to have won the battle before it even started as Jesus lay dead in the tomb. But the Savior arose the third day, ascended back to Heaven 40 days later, and brought the church into existence ten days after that.

Satan wasted little time turning his full fury upon the church by means of persecution from both the Jews and the Roman government. Though it appeared for a time that the church would be wiped out, Jesus was true to His word. It has survived for nearly 2000 years, having endured innumerable conflicts from within and without.

John the apostle saw these very events in a vision recorded in Revelation 12. In the first verses, He saw a woman laboring to give birth; but a terrible red dragon stood before her to devour her child. Since the child was caught up to heaven and the dragon cast to earth, he turned his furious persecution upon the woman, sending a flood from his mouth to overwhelm her.

The application is not difficult to see as we consider the birth of Christ and the efforts made to destroy Him even as a little child. When Jesus ascended to heaven and the church began, Satan tried to destroy it with a flood of persecution. By the grace of God, however, he failed.

What happened next is worthy of our serious consideration: "*And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*" (Revelation 12:17).

Satan knows he cannot destroy the church. Untold multitudes of saints have already gone to be with the Lord; they cannot be harmed by the devil. But he has not given up on picking off individual Christians, groups of Christians, or even whole congregations here on earth! It may not be by overt persecution. Satan has other weapons in his arsenal. As Paul wrote, "*We are not ignorant of his devices*" (2 Corinthians 2:11). And Peter warned, "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*" (2 Peter 5:8).

The church will survive any and all attacks Satan hurls at it. Let each of us take earnest heed so that we will be among those who are faithful unto death, thus receiving the crown of life (Revelation 2:10).



The Best Things To Give

- To a friend: loyalty
- To an enemy: forgiveness
- To a stranger: kindness
- To your neighbor: peace
- To your boss: service
- To a child: good example
- To your father: respect
- To your mother: gratitude
- To your spouse: devotion
- To all men: love
- To God: your life

via Campbellsville, KY

Judge Rightly

The world judges those who judge, claiming it is wrong to judge others. One of the compliments that Jesus paid, however, was to a man who made a judgment.

Jesus said to him, "*You have judged rightly.*" [Luke 7:43b NET](#)

How is it, then, that Jesus could condemn those who judge, [Matthew 7:1](#), and praise one who did it? The verbs in the two verses are the same term in the original language.

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus condemns the critical spirit which seeks something wrong in others. Here, in Luke, he praises a man who reaches a right conclusion.

Jesus wants us to judge properly. After all, no human being exists who does not judge. To affirm that one ought not to judge is nothing less than a stupid claim, besides being a contradiction.

Judging wrongly is a great error. Judging rightly will carry us to eternal life. Let us have the humility to be judges who are guided by God's revelation in the Bible.

--Randal Matheny (via randalmatheny.com)

Too many folks are more concerned with having their name stamped on the outside of the Bible than with having their hearts stamped with what's inside the Bible