

145. Christ Redeemed Us from the Power of the Devil.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. 1 John 3,8.

Had Christ not redeemed us from the power of the devil, the work of redemption would not be perfect. But what does Scripture say? It says that just for this purpose Christ came into the world, to destroy the works of the devil. He became man "that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death." While, therefore, it is said of the unbelievers that the devil has his work in them, Scripture says of the Christians that, by the power of Christ's redemption, God has delivered them from the "power of darkness."

What is meant when Scripture speaks of "the power of darkness"? What is *the power of the devil*? This expression is to teach us the great strength of the devil and his evil spirits. St. Luke compares the devil with "a strong man armed"; St. Peter calls him "a roaring lion"; St. Paul describes the evil spirits as "principalities, powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world." Foremost, the leader of the host, is the Prince of Darkness. Around him, as their mighty captain, are legions of lesser evil spirits. They are now most bitterly and irreconcilably opposed to everything that stands in connection with the Redeemer and His redeemed. Therefore the great power of the devil is felt especially by the Christians. And the more we grow in faith and sanctification, the greater the gifts of the Spirit, the higher our rank in the kingdom of God which the grace of God bestows upon us, the deeper is our experience of the power of the devil and his fiery darts.

Indeed, not in vain does Scripture speak of the *power* of the devil. But just as sure and true it is that Christ has redeemed us from his power. The devil has no more claim upon us; he is no longer our master, but the Lord Jesus is our kind and merciful King, who has established His throne in our hearts. And in our dear Lord and Savior we have everything to make our happiness complete. The devil can no longer accuse us, and we can victoriously withstand his temptations.

Prayer.

O Lord, almighty God and heavenly Father, shield me, I pray Thee, under the almighty wings of Thy grace, against the Evil Foe, who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking to devour me. Graciously protect me that I may rest securely under the shadow of Thy grace and goodness, and the Evil Foe may not draw nigh unto me and harm me. Oh, how cordial is Thy love, how fatherly the care Thou bestowest on me, a poor sinner, having so graciously protected me all my days, from my tender youth to the present moment, against the manifold wiles of the devil, from whose power Jesus has redeemed me. Continue to do so, I beseech Thee, for Thy name's sake. Amen.

Forth, behold, the Savior goeth
Who the foe, Sin and woe,
Death and hell o'erthroweth.
God is man, man to deliver,
His dear Son Now is one
With our blood forever.

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