

Love, Don't Hate, the Liars

written by Tim Jennings, M.D. | November 9, 2020



This morning, I read about Jesus' trial and crucifixion from the gospel of John and was struck at the poignant lessons that apply to us today.

The religious and political leaders conspired for months to mislead the people about Jesus and prepare the nation for the moment they would strike. They had their "media pundits" spread misinformation about the Messiah. They misrepresented His actions as being of the devil (Matthew 12:24).

They threatened to "cancel" people from the synagogue if they spoke in support of Jesus (John 9:22). They bribed one of Jesus' followers to betray Him. They hired people to perjure themselves at His trial (Matthew 26:59-61). They broke their own laws in how they conducted the trial, as the Sanhedrin was forbidden from examining evidence or legal issues between the evening and morning sacrifice. They misled the Roman governor and hired a mob to riot and intimidate him and to silence any who would oppose them. They voted for a known criminal over the innocent Christ (Matthew 27:16-21).

And why did they do all of this?

For power, of the type this evil world wields - the power of force, coercion, and deceit to dominate and control others.

But there was another, even more sinister reason these corrupt politicians treated Christ with such contempt, maliciousness, and injustice: These events were orchestrated by Satan to tempt Jesus with outrage at the injustice and choose to accept and apply Satan's methods, the methods of selfishness – of me-first, of the ends justify the means, of using might and power – to put down the injustice. Satan was working through his human agents to tempt Jesus to use His divine power to stop the injustice by force and protect Himself. In other words, this was Satan's last desperate gambit to get Jesus to choose selfishness and reject love and, thus, fail in His mission to save us.

One Christian author put it this way:

Satan was at hand to press his temptations upon the Son of man. Why should He now go ... to certain death? ... Why face death now, and leave the work in its infancy? The foe who in the wilderness had confronted Christ assailed Him now with fierce and subtle temptations. **Had Jesus yielded for a moment, had He changed His course in the least particular to save Himself, Satan's agencies would have triumphed, and the world would have been lost** (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 486).

And the temptation to use power to stop this injustice and save Himself only intensified throughout the crucifixion weekend:

The people stood watching, and the rulers even sneered at him. They said, "He saved others; let him **save himself** if he is the Christ of God, the Chosen One" (Luke 23:35 NIV84).

Those who passed by hurled insults at him, shaking their heads and saying, "You who are going to destroy the temple and build it in three days, **save yourself!** Come down from the cross, if you are the Son of God!" In the same way the chief priests, the teachers of the law and the elders mocked him. "He saved others," they said, "but he can't save himself! He's the King of Israel! **Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him**" (Matthew 27:39-42 NIV84).

Just as the Bible says, He was "tempted in every way, **just as we are** – yet was without sin" (Hebrews 4:15 NIV84).

Jesus was tempted just like we are tempted! Do you feel the temptation of the enemy? Do you feel the pull when you see injustice, when you see the lies, the fraud, the manipulation, the pure pursuit of power regardless of the principles of honesty and integrity? When you see what is happening in America and around the world, are you tempted with desires to strike down the liars, to use power to overthrow the frauds, to destroy the enemies of justice?

If so, then your heart is being assaulted by the enemy of God and you are in a spiritual battle.

Satan is the father of lies. Satan is the murderer from the beginning – the author of conflict, the instigator of hate, the master of division. Satan wants each one of us to choose his powers, to choose to use his methods of deceit, force, intimidation – even if it is only in our hearts, even if we only wish,

dream, or fantasize about God sending the destroying angel to kill our enemies.

Why? Because if we choose his methods in our hearts, we become like him.

Yes - we are in a war, but "though we live in the world, **we do not wage war as the world does**. The weapons we fight with **are not the weapons of the world**. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We **demolish arguments** and every **pretension** that **sets itself up against the knowledge of God**, and we **take captive every thought** to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:3-5 NIV84).

We are in a war, but it is not a war of might fought with tanks or guns. It is a war for hearts and minds! And our weapons are the divine weapons of truth, love, and freedom, which demolish the stronghold of fear and selfishness built upon the lies of the enemy.

We are never to succumb to the enemy! We are *never* to give our hearts over to the prince of darkness: Never choose the power of lies, of deception, of fraud, never choose the power of might over others to coercion or force our way. We are to wield the sword of truth in love while leaving others free. We are to be agents of a kingdom that is not of this world, a kingdom that comes from another place - a kingdom of love, which is the kingdom of God!

We are to be the lights of God in a world of darkness.

Love for souls for whom Christ died means crucifixion of self. He who is a child of God should henceforth look upon himself as **a link in the chain let down to save the world, one with Christ** in His plan of mercy, going forth with Him to seek and save the lost. The Christian is ever to realize that he has consecrated himself to God, and **that in character he is to reveal Christ to the world**. The self-sacrifice, the sympathy, the love, manifested in the life of Christ are to reappear in the life of the worker for God (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 417).

Truth and love lived out in those whose citizenship is in heaven is how we win the war!

Understand this clearly: We are entering into the final battle of this cosmic war between Christ and Satan - and this battle is not a battle of might, of military forces, or a conflict over lands between nations. It is a battle for the hearts and minds of every person on earth.

Satan inspires the nations of the world, the power structures of this world, the political parties of this world, to use his methods - to lie, manipulate, propagandize, deceive, coerce, and do all manners of injustice - in order to have power over others. This is the beastly kingdom of the enemy.

Realize that as the enemies of God take power through these evil methods, the righteous are simultaneously being tempted to reject the methods of God and take Satan's methods into their hearts and attack the liars. But Jesus said, "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, **that you may be sons of your Father in heaven**" (Matthew 5:44, 45 NIV85).

As events unfold, we will see more and more wickedness and greater evil. We will see riots, mobs, injustice, deceit, abuse, lying, and fraud. We will be placed in positions in which we will be tempted to

act selfishly, to embrace the methods of Satan, to join with those parties that will do anything for power. But we must instead surrender ourselves to Jesus, ask for His Spirit to indwell us and remove all fear and selfishness from us and to write His law of love upon our hearts giving us the ability to love the liars, for –

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it (1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV84).

So when the temptation comes to hate and attack the liars, to hate the enemies of righteousness, realize it is the devil seeking entrance to your heart. When your heart is burning with anger and frustration and is being tempted to hate, go to Jesus and ask Him to fill your heart with His love, ask for His wisdom to enlighten your mind, so that you can hate the lies while you love the liars!
