

## How to Conquer the Dragon

Revelation 12:7-13:18

#25 in our series "The Gospel According to Jesus: The Revelation"

June 17, 2018

Peter Hiett

### Prayer

Thank you Father, for this opportunity to speak about you. Father, I pray that you would help us to preach. In preaching through the Revelation, we see that it is an incredible picture of your love for us. Some of us might have missed parts of this series, and so I pray you would help us to connect the dots. And for those who are having trouble connecting the dots, I pray that you would help them to know that Jesus is the one who connects all the dots and so they don't have to worry about it. I pray that we all would just look at the dots and that your Spirit would connect them. Thank you that the picture you are painting is Jesus. So, Lord God, we trust you to reveal yourself to us, in His name, Amen.

### Message

Last week, I began the sermon by talking about two Tibetan boys who didn't know Russian, German or English. They went for a walk in 1941 and ended up conscripted by Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Army, and then conscripted by Adolph Hitler and the German Army, and then finally captured by the Americans, who heard their story through a translator. When they were done listening to their story, they asked the boys: "Do you have any questions?" The boys only had one question: "Why were all those people trying to kill each other?"

I love that story because I think that story's about me; I think that story's kind of about all of us. Maybe you've been asking, "Why are all these people trying to kill each other?"

I've lost track of all the school shootings... There have been at least ten so far this year, including eight dead at Santa Fe High School in Texas, and seventeen dead at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High school in Florida. That's just school shootings, let alone church shootings like the twenty-six that died at the Baptist church in Southerland Springs Texas six months ago.

Recently in staff, we asked the question, "Should we develop a plan for an active shooter at the Sanctuary?" Fortunately, we're a small church: "*So listen all potential shooters, I think we make a bad target. Check out the Catholics down the street.*"

... But still the question is a bit disturbing . . . as may well be my response..

For me, it all began down the street at Columbine High School on Hitler's birthday in 1999... When Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold murdered thirteen people and then murdered themselves. (And you know? Far more kids die from shooting themselves than getting shot.)

One of my friends and parishioners, Rich Long, was the teacher that drug Dave Sanders down the hall after he'd been shot. He told me, Peter, I could just feel the presence of evil. Later, he told me a story about the tangible presence of Jesus, but he also felt evil.

Last week, we spoke of how evil is like a nothing that becomes a terrible something. This is something to ponder, but maybe nothing really is nothing, until we notice the nothing, name the nothing, and fear the nothing, and then make it a terrible something. As Jesus told my wife, "With fear you put flesh on the evil one." Perhaps, that flesh is our own flesh.

Well anyway, it's not a bad question:  
*"Why are all those people trying to kill each other?"*  
And then, *"What do we do about it?"*

Last week, in answer to that first question, I showed a video.  
I hope it doesn't seem irreverent, 'cause I think it may be the right answer.  
This is that video:

[Video with children's fearful responses to their shadows or the shadows of others]

We're all terrified of the shadow, and in particular our own shadow.

A little child cannot make himself...  
And yet, he can make a shadow by blocking the Light.

I think the lie of the devil is basically this: "You are your shadow."  
In other words, "You are the choices you've made, and the deeds that you've done."

In the Garden he tempted the woman to eat from the tree of the knowledge of Good and evil, saying, "Dying you won't die and you will be like God." It was very subtle lie, which we continue to hear every day.

It sounds something like this: "Something's wrong with you, so take knowledge of the Good, so you can choose the Good, and make yourself Good in the image of God. "Save yourself, redeem yourself, justify yourself, and create yourself."

So, we make our choices and do our deeds, and then, think *that* is who we are.  
If we compare ourselves to others—at that point, it can make us feel proud.  
And yet, over time, it will fill us with shame and then terror, for we realize that what we have made is nothing...

Not Good, but the absence of Good.  
Not Life, but the absence of Life.  
Not I Am, but I am not.

Not Light, but a shadow.

The devil will then say,

“Look! You’re nothing; you better make that nothing into something.”

“Look! You’re evil, you better take the good to make yourself good.”

“Look! You’re dead, you better take the Life to make yourself alive.”

Jesus is the Life, and Jesus is the Good in flesh hanging on a tree in a garden.

So why are all those people trying to kill each other?

Well... They’re trying to take the Life to make themselves alive.

And why are all those people killing themselves?

I think they’re getting “psyched out.”

They look at their shadow, and think “that’s myself,” I better destroy myself, but you see that’s only more self, more psyche, a deeper darkness . . . It’s choosing to fight the shadow with more shadow.

Sometimes we hide from our shadow in more shadow. Did you notice the little boy in the video that ran from his shadow and found he could hide from his shadow in more shadow?

*[Image of a child hiding in a shadow.]*

If you’re greedy, surround yourself with greed and you’ll feel less greedy. If you do it long enough, your whole world will go black. People who run from the Light hide in Hades (often translated Hell).

Even now we exist in the land of the “shadow of death,” the shadow that *is* death (Matt. 4:16). I don’t think that means death casts a shadow. I think it means death is a and death of death is Light.

I think Jesus, John, and Paul referred to this shadow self as the false self—the psyche. That’s a Greek word that gets translated as soul and sometimes life.

You have a soul (a psyche) but Jesus is the Life (the *zoe*, in Greek).

According to the book of Hebrews, that life is indestructible... (7:11). But your psyche can be lost and found, destroyed—reduced to dust, and redeemed—re-made. It’s like your mental and emotional map with which you ascribe meaning to your experiences. It’s a Greek word that translates the Hebrew word *nephesh*.

The *nephesh* is like a container for the Life.

In the beginning, God breathed into the dust and *ha adam* became a *nephesh*, a psyche, a living soul.

So, the psyche is something God originally makes of dust.  
But at the fall on the sixth day of creation, we took over construction at the advice of the devil . . . and now the psyche we make is false . . . a false self.

Paul refers to the false self as the *old man* or *false Adam*. (Eph. 4:22,25; Col. 3:9; Rom. 6:6).

It's no longer a container for Life because we consumed it and killed it.

It's no longer a container for Life, but death,

No longer a vessel of truth but lies,

No longer a temple of light, but a house of darkness—a shadow.

Jesus said, "*The ruler of this world is coming, but he has no place in me*" (John 14:30).

Paul wrote, "*Give no place to the devil*" (Eph. 4:27).

But you see... we have given place, an empty place, to the devil... in our psyche.

That's how we put flesh on the evil one... we put our flesh on the dragon.

Have you ever thought about your flesh? ... I mean really?

Because it's a bit terrifying.

In one way, it's so amazing, as if it's an imprint of the very Glory of God...

And yet, in another way it's utterly broken, depraved, and terrifying.

In Scripture, the problem with flesh is not so much that it's physical, but that it's almost entirely self-centered. Except for in a few fascinating instances, your flesh knows only it's own pain and pleasure. And, this is the shocker, your flesh literally grows by eating life and excreting death... And Jesus said, "I am the Life."

Well . . . that's just something to ponder tonight when you go to bed . . .

Try not to get psyched out!

So, I was just saying satan tempts us to believe we are our shadow.

Then he gets us all anxious about our shadow.

Then he tries to get us to fix our shadow by consuming the Life, which only makes more death, more shadow, more dragon flesh, more psyche. He's trying to psyche us out.

When I used to play baseball, I'd get so worried about the game that I couldn't play the game. I'd get psyched out. Sometimes I get so worried about my life, I can't live my life. I get psyched out.

Your Father is Light. You cast a shadow.

The devil will tell you that you are your shadow.

But your Father wants you to turn around and see yourself reflected in His eyes.

When my children were little they lived in the light of my eyes.

They believed they were good because I saw them as good, and yet they didn't really know what the good was; they just enjoyed being themselves, and that was so good. If you're a parent you may remember something like that with your own children.

But in each of them, there came a day when they gained knowledge of the good, and they started trying to make themselves good. And ironically, it was like they covered up their goodness with badness; they covered it with self-consciousness, pride, fear, and shame.

That was the day they started building one of these?

*[Image of a girl inside a cage shaped like a woman, by Igor Morski]*

. . . An ego.

Remember these pictures?

*[Image of a boy inside a cage shaped like a man, by Igor Morski]*

One day when my daughter Elizabeth must've been about six, I took her for her annual physical. The young doctor had her sit on the examination table. I remember that she was smiling at me and swinging her legs back and forth. The doctor began with a question: "So Elizabeth, what do you like about yourself?" Without skipping a beat, looking at me, she smiled and said, "I like being with my daddy."

This young lady doctor reacted with a speed and intensity that betrayed a wound buried in her past. When Elizabeth said, "I like being with my daddy," she said, "NO... What do you like about *yourself*?"

Elizabeth looked at her as if to say, "Well, I just told you..." The doctor clarified, "I mean, what do you like about yourself... like that, you know how to sing or that you run fast?" And Elizabeth said, "Well, I guess I like that I can run fast."

I remember wanting to scream . . .

"Get behind me satan."

"How dare you tell my daughter that she is her decisions and deeds!"

"How dare you suggest that she like herself because she can beat her neighbor in a foot race!"

"How dare you tell my daughter that she is her flesh... One day her legs will fail; her flesh will fail; one day her flesh will turn to dust and blow away...!"

"But love is eternal, and she will always be my beloved in whom I delight."

"How dare you tell her that she is her shadow!"

I remember feeling so angry with that doctor. And then I had to remember that she had also been a little girl—a little girl that may very well have been cursed and abused by her father, a little girl that didn't know that God is her father and God is Good.

Satan wants us to believe that we are the decisions we have made and the deeds that we have done.

Our Father in Heaven wants us to turn and see, that we are the decision *He* has made and the deed that *He* has done.

When we see and believe that we are His Beloved One, we will choose the Good in freedom, and we will do the deeds, which God prepared beforehand that we would walk in them; we will do the will of God; we will love God and our neighbor in Freedom.

Now the Revelation: In chapter 12 we meet a woman giving birth to a baby who is the Will of God or the Judgment of God. The woman is us, and the Will of God in flesh is Jesus.

Revelation 12:4 *"[The dragon] stood before the woman, so that when she bore her child he might devour it."* The dragon wants to eat the Baby. And the dragon tempts us to eat the baby—the dragon is evil.

Next, we meet Michael and his angels who go to war with the dragon and his angels.

Michael means, "Who is like God?"

Michael is "the Archangel" (in Jude 9), which means "chief of the angels,"

Which sounds like the "Commander of the Lord's Army, the Angel of Yahweh."

So, several scholars argue that Michael is a depiction of Jesus.

And that would make some sense, for we've learned that the whole revelation is like a picture of the conquest of Jericho on steroids . . .

And the Commander of the Lord's Army plays a critical role. The Commander of the Lord's Army, wasn't on the side of the Canaanites or the Israelites, but He was against the wall that separated them.

A few weeks ago, we talked of how the dragon tempts us to build walls around our souls in order to protect ourselves from other self-centered souls.

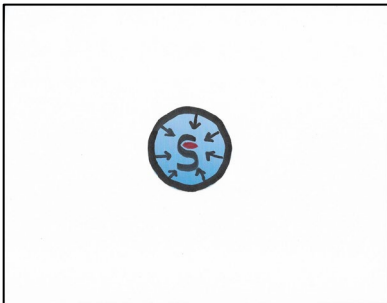


Figure 1 Image credit: Peter Hiett

And we talked about how groups of self-centered souls will form covenants of self-interest to protect themselves from other groups of self-centered souls.

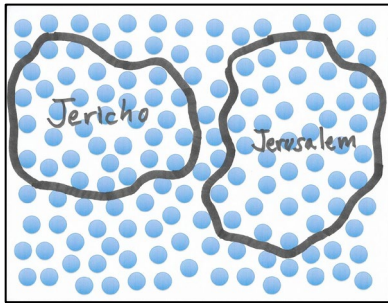


Figure 2 Image credit: Peter Hiatt

We call them nations, churches, and even economies . . .  
That is politics, religion, and business.

Well, The Commander of the Lord's Army hates all the walls, and he especially hated the walls of Jericho, for on one side of those walls was his super great Jewish grandfather . . . Salmon. And on the other side, his super great Canaanite grandmother . . . named Rahab.

I've never known quite what to do with this, but Rahab means dragon.

You see? I think she's a picture of us.  
She's been dragoned; she's like the Bride of Christ trapped in dragon flesh and acting like a harlot. She's been dragoned and she's about to be un-dragoned by the Commander of the Lord's Army.

Well anyway, the dragon tempts us to think that we are our shadow.  
... And he tempts us to hide in that shadow, which becomes a prison, which also becomes a place for him.  
... It's a place which scripture refers to as death and Hades (often translated Hell)  
... Your ego is an outpost of Hell.  
... Your ego is your shadow and as long as you seek to save it, you lose your life—the Life, and trap yourself in death.

*"He who seeks to save his psyche will lose it, but he who loses it for my sake and the gospel will find it,"* said Jesus—Commander of the Lord's Army... and our Husband.

Revelation 12:7-16

*Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world*

*[oikoumenein like “economy,” the inhabited world the world of humanity]—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives [their psychen—that’s their psyches] even unto death. Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!” And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.*

The river is a river of lies all based on one lie.  
And that lie is that you are your own creator.  
It’s a lie that holds sway in the *oikoumenein*—the world of men.  
But it’s a lie that’s swallowed by the Creation, the earth, which God created.

There are times when I get utterly terrified by the river of lies and the sight of my own shadow—I get psyched out thinking: “I can’t justify myself, save myself or make myself into the person that I should be.” And then I go for a walk in the mountains and I remember, “*Hey! I’m not my own maker; I’m not my own savior; I can’t justify me—but my Creator has justified me... and then I’m free, free to be me—the true me.*”

Revelation 12:16- 3:1

*...The earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.*

*And I saw a beast (therion) rising out of the sea...*

The word translated beast means wild, ravenous, and untamed animal.

A beast sees the Good and takes the Good.

A beast sees the Life and just eats the Life.

The dragon is like a beast; it sees Jesus and waits to devour Jesus; it wants to eat the baby.

You may remember that in the *Chronicles of Narnia*, Eustace gets fascinated by a



dragon, thinks he did battle with the dragon, but in fact becomes a dragon and before he knows it, and to his horror, he's already eaten half the dead dragon.

Lewis comments:

"And there is nothing a dragon likes so well as fresh dragon. That is why you so seldom find more than one dragon in the same country."

In the introduction to the *Screwtape Letters* he writes:

I feign that devils can, in a spiritual sense, eat one another; and us. Even in human life we have seen the passion to dominate, almost to digest, one's fellow... On Earth this desire is often called "love." In Hell I feign that they recognise it as hunger... There, I suggest, the stronger spirit... can really and irrevocably suck the weaker into itself and permanently gorge its own being on the weaker's outraged individuality... It is for this that Satan desires all his own followers and all the sons of Eve and all the host of Heaven. His dream is of the day when all shall be inside him and all that says "I" can say it only through him. This, I surmise, is... the only imitation he can understand, of that unfathomed bounty whereby God turns tools into servants and servants into sons, so that they may be at last reunited to Him in perfect freedom of a love offered from the height of the utter individualities which he has liberated them to be.

That's an amazing quote, but I hope you see:

God does not desire to eat us...

At least not until we first hear Him say, "eat me."

God is not a beast.

He is the slaughtered Lamb standing on the Judgment Seat of God.

In the *Chronicles of Narnia*, Eustace can't un-dragon himself for that's just more dragon—more self. Eustace has to be un-dragoned by a lion that chooses to be a lamb. He is the Word of God that cuts like a knife separating soul from spirit, that's *psyche* from *pneuma*—the breath of God.

Well, anyway, in Revelation 12 the earth swallows the devil's lie, so now, to help him lie, the devil is calling up the beasts.

They are the principalities and powers, the world rulers of this present darkness.

They are politics and religion, and soon we'll meet the harlot—an economy of consumption.

They are all antichrists . . . antichrist means imitation Christ.

And who hasn't looked to government, religion or business to save them . . . or at least help them save themselves?

Revelation 13:1-8

*And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads, with ten diadems on its horns and blasphemous names on its heads. And the beast that I saw was like a leopard; its feet were like a bear's, and its mouth was like a lion's mouth. And to it the dragon gave his power and his throne and great authority. One*

*of its heads seemed to have a mortal wound, but its mortal wound was healed, and the whole earth marveled as they followed the beast. And they worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?"*

*And the beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. [Get that? "it was allowed"—by who? Who else but God? "it was allowed to make war on the saints and conquer them."] And authority was given it over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all who dwell on earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who was slain.*

Let me pause and point out what we just read...

*"All who dwell on earth will worship it..."*

- In verse 16 we'll read that another beast causes all to worship and be marked.
- In 14:9, we discover that all of these worshipers of the beast, who are all who dwell on the earth, will have no rest and be tormented by fire and *theion*, the presence of God.
- In Chapter 19 The Commander of God's Army, the Word of God, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus comes with a sword issuing from His mouth and a robe dipped in blood having just trampled the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God. In verse 18 an angel calls to the birds saying, "Come eat the flesh of all men." *All* men, not *some* men, or not the men left after some pre-tribulation rapture, but *all*.

All must have their flesh cut away and then consumed by fire.

You see your flesh, your psyche, your old man is a far bigger problem than you ever dreamed and your sin is far more heinous than you ever imagined.

And this is my problem with most liberals—they don't think we really need a savior for most of us don't really need to be saved.

And this is also my problem with most conservatives—they think they can save themselves with a policy, program, or a little will power.

They think they are the savior and capable of saving themselves and they aren't even aware that this idea is the very definition of sin.

Solomon wrote, *"I said in my heart with regard to the children of man that God is testing them..."* not to see if some of them are beasts and others are not. He writes: *"God is testing them that they may see that they are but beasts."* Your problem is that you are a butt beast and you can't fix it. And you can't fix you with you. You are the problem.

Your sin is greater than you ever imagined . . .

But God's grace is more glorious than you could possibly dream.

John writes, "All will worship the beast . . . everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain."

OK? Wow! So, whose name has Jesus written in His book?

In John 3:35 Jesus says, "*The Father loves the son and has given all things into his hands.*"

Are you a thing? A shadow is not a thing, but I think you're a thing.

John 6:37 Jesus says, "*All that the Father gives me will come to me and he who comes to me I will never cast out.*" <sup>1</sup> WOW!

All are given to the son and predestined for eternal life. So then, where are most people? They're enslaved in their own bodies of sin, their flesh, their pride, shame and fear, their psyches . . . they've been psychéd out.

They're hanging on to their life, so they can no longer live life.

They're dead in their trespasses and sins on earth and the un-circumcision of their flesh.

They are the dead, whether walking or hiding from God in their graves.

In Revelation 20, "the dead" stand before the throne and they are judged by their deeds written in the books... the books of deeds... (This world is full of these books). But the living have already been judged, for their names have been written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

"The dead" think that they are the choices *they* have made and the deeds they have done. The living, know that they are the choice *God* has made and the deed that He has done.

There is no way that I can understand the Bible, Jesus, John, and Paul except to believe what they clearly say, and that is that I have an old man or psyche or self that must be surrendered and destroyed . . . a man of dust that must return to dust.

And I have a new man, or psyche, or self that is being born out of the old sack of dust that I thought was "me"... That man is the heavenly man. "*Just as we have born the image of the man of dust, so shall we bear the image of the man of heaven,*" writes Paul in 1 Corinthians 15 (1 Cor. 15:49).

In Revelation 13:8-18, John continues:

*...all who dwell on earth will worship [the Beast], everyone whose name has not been written before the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb who*

---

<sup>1</sup> All things will come to him, but no-things will not. Lies will not, the false self will not, those that are of their father the devil—the father of lies—will not. The tares will not, but the wheat will. Your false self will not, but your true self will.

*was slain.” [or, more literally translated, “whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.” (NKJV)]*

*If anyone has an ear, let him hear:*

*If anyone is to be taken captive, to captivity he goes; if anyone is to be slain with the sword, with the sword must he be slain.*

*Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.*

*Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon.*

Understand? This one looks like Jesus and talks like the devil.

Have you ever been listening to a sermon, when you realize the preacher isn't preaching, "God is salvation," which in a word is Jesus?

But instead, he or she is preaching "the government is salvation," or "our church is salvation," or "you and your giving are salvation?"

This beast is like that preacher. *"Beware when fighting the dragon lest you become the dragon,"* wrote Nietzsche.

*Then I saw another beast rising out of the earth. It had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. It exercises all the authority of the first beast in its presence, and makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound was healed. It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in front of people, and by the signs that it is allowed to work in the presence of the beast it deceives those who dwell on earth, telling them to make an image for the beast that was wounded by the sword and yet lived. And it was allowed to give breath to the image of the beast, so that the image of the beast might even speak and might cause those who would not worship the image of the beast to be slain. Also it causes all, both small and great, both rich and poor, both free and slave, to be marked on the right hand or the forehead, so that no one can buy or sell unless he has the mark, that is, the name of the beast or the number of its name. This calls for wisdom: let the one who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man [or "it is a human number"], and his number is 666.*

A "human number" would imply that the other numbers in Revelation are not merely human . . . like 1,260, 42, 3 ½ and 7.

But *this* number we are invited to calculate and it was common in that day to do so. There's a wall in Pompeii where you can read the graffiti from 79 AD. One of the things written on the wall says: *"I love her whose number is 545."*

At that time, every letter in an alphabet was assigned a numeric value and then added together to get the number of the name. "666" is the number of the beast, but some

ancient manuscripts record “616.” Emperor Nero’s name is spelled two ways in Hebrew. In Hebrew one way adds up to 666; the other way adds up to 616.

That and a slough of other things (that hopefully we can talk about next week), point to Emperor Nero. In chapter 17 an angel tells John that the seven heads are seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and one is yet to come. That means the beast is “alive” and kicking at the time of the Revelation. However, it’s not just at the time of the Revelation.

The beast clearly refers to Babylon, Persia, and Greece, as well as Rome—the lion, the bear, the leopard and the heads with ten horns—the beast that rises from the sea in Daniel 7, written 500 years before the Revelation . . . <sup>2</sup>

My point is that the beast is *political power* that manifests in different forms in every age. The second beast that preaches the first beast is *religious power*. It just looks like a lamb, but if you listen, you realize it talks like a beast.

The beasts don’t just attack the people of God outright the way Emperor Nero persecuted the early church and used both pagan and Jewish religion to do so. The beasts don’t just attack; they tempt you to worship. They teach you that politics is salvation and religion is salvation. And the Harlot will teach you that business is salvation while . . . Scripture declares over and over that God alone is salvation.

I find it utterly, horrifically, and tragically ironic that some will use the Revelation to scare people, and then ask those people, “How do we conquer the beast?” And then tell those people that they must support some earthly government like Israel or join some religious program and give money to their cause.

You cannot conquer the beast with politics and religion.  
The beast *is* politics and religion.

Both beasts will tell you that you are the choices you make and the deeds you do, so if you take their knowledge of the good it will help you make those choices and do those deeds; it will help you conquer the dragon and his beasts, but they are the beasts under the control of the dragon.

The beasts will always appeal to your ego, even if they ask you to sacrifice your ego... You do it to make yourself good, which is your ego. The Lamb will not appeal to your ego; I think He already sacrificed your ego on a tree in a garden at the foundation of the world.

---

<sup>2</sup> The beast gets destroyed by “the ancient of days” (Dan. 7:9), “one like a son of man” (Dan. 7:14), a “rock hewn not with human hands” (Dan. 2:45) and even “Michael the Arch Angel.” (Daniel 12:1).

The Lamb is the Word of your Father. He is the Decision of your Father and the Way the Father makes you in His Image.

When you see Him you will know:

You are not the choices you have made, but the choice that God has made.

You are not the deeds that *you* do, but the deed that *God* has done.

The Lamb is the Light and when He sits on the throne in the temple of your soul, you will no longer cast a shadow; you will be un-dragoned. You will be what you are eternally and forever are: the Image of God your Father.

So anyway, all these people are shooting and killing each other because they believed the dragon.

So, How do we conquer the dragon?

I can reduce it to theological and philosophical Maxims,

But it's best if you get the picture, or allow the picture to get you.

It's best if you look to the throne and see the lamb.

John writes: *They have conquered him by the blood of the lamb, and the word of their testimony, loving not their lives—their psyches—even unto death.*

Rachel Scott was the first student killed at Columbine High school. The name Rachel means female sheep or lamb. That year in the school talent show she performed a dance to the song "*Watch the Lamb*" ...It's a rather sappy song, but does tell how we conquer the dragon.

On the throne is a lamb standing as if it had been slain.<sup>3</sup>

He is the Life and the Life is in the blood and the blood forms a river.

You don't need to *take* the life, for He is constantly *giving* you His life.

You see? Your life is His life flowing through you.

You surrender and receive it constantly. You are His Body.

If you try to possess the life, you damn the life and damn yourself . . . you die.

When Eve took the Life of the Good on the tree in the garden, she died.

I don't think death was a penalty for her sin; death is her sin.

And when God said you are dust and to dust you will return; I don't think that was simply a curse, it was a blessing . . . It was a promise, "You will lose your psyche and find it."

*"We conquer by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony,"* wrote John.

---

<sup>3</sup> The book of Hebrew calls him the "newly slaughtered and living way" (Heb. 10:20). He died once and for all yet I think He constantly bleeds for you.

We conquer by confessing. Although I took His life, He for-gave His life, and now He is my life. We conquer not by exalting ourselves . . . but humbling ourselves.

In a note to herself, she wrote, “*Self-esteem is irrelevant. Christ-esteem is all that matters.*” Rachel knew that she was not her shadow. She knew that she didn’t make herself Good, but that her Goodness was the righteousness of Christ. She knew she didn’t have to take life from others, for her Father in heaven had *already* given it to her and was giving it to all. <sup>4</sup>

I think she learned about her Father in Heaven, from her Father on earth. Darrel is his name. He called me a few years ago, asked to take me to lunch and became a friend. He wanted to encourage me, for he believes in what we preach and he wants to declare God’s unfailing love for all

Well, John writes, “*They conquered [the dragon] by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, loving not their lives even unto death.*”

At one point, Eric Harris grabbed Rachel by the hair. She was already shot twice in the leg. Harris held her up and said, “Do you believe in God?” She said, “You know I do.” He pointed his gun at her head and said, “Then go be with him.” And he shot her.

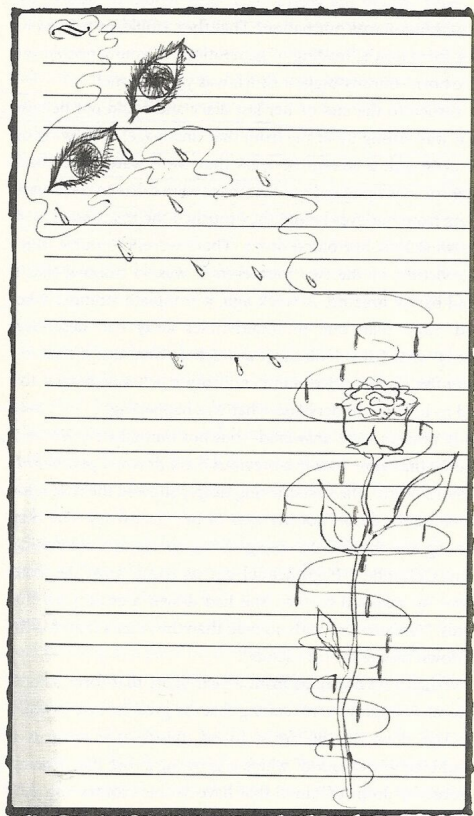
Was that the dragon’s victory over the Lamb?  
Or was that the Lamb’s victory over the dragon?

I don’t know how to stop an active shooter...  
But I do know how we conquer the dragon...  
We stop trying to save our lives and we lose them.

At Rachel’s funeral broadcast on CNN, her friends performed “Watch the Lamb” A man watched the funeral on TV and had a powerful prophetic dream. He called Darrel and described the picture he had seen: Rachel’s eyes crying tears that watered a rose. Darrel had no idea what it meant until the police returned Rachel’s backpack. He looked in her backpack. Found her diary and found this picture.

---

<sup>4</sup> Rachel knew that Life is not the survival of the fittest, but the sacrifice of the fittest for all.



*Figure 3 Image credit: Rachel Scott*

From her tears grew the Rose—the Bride of Christ is the Rose of Sharon.

He also read pages of prayers in which she asked to be a witness, particularly to those that were bullied and picked on . . . those who believe life is the survival of the fittest, when in fact it's the sacrifice of the fittest—people like Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold. She asked to be a witness to them. And he found a statement in which she claims that she knew she would soon be dead.

No doubt . . . God was in charge. So, nineteen years ago, Darrel started a program called Rachel's challenge. Along with about twenty-five other presenters, they just go into schools tell Rachel's story and encourage kids to see each with a different set of eyes—the Father's eyes.

Since they started, walls have come tumbling down.



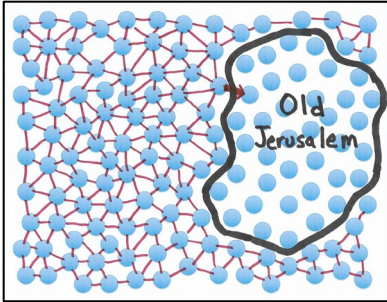


Figure 4 Image credit: Peter Hiatt

And people in bondage have been set free

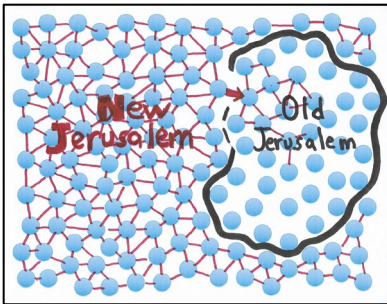


Figure 5 Image credit: Peter Hiatt

They begin to believe: maybe we're not 7.5 billion isolated and lonely souls

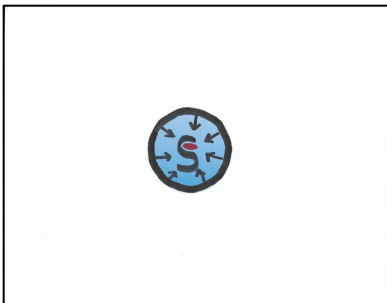


Figure 6 Image credit: Peter Hiatt

Maybe we're 7.5 billion cells that all belong to each other in one body.

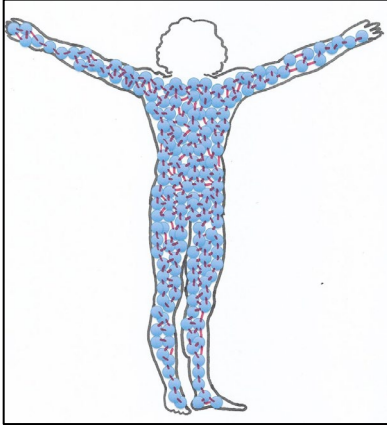


Figure 7 Image credit: Peter Hiatt

That body is the Body of Christ, slaughtered Lamb, and Son of God, in whom the Father is well pleased.

And of course, Rachel isn't dead, May 20<sup>th</sup> 1999 was the day she began to live . . . Well, according to their website over 1.5 million people are now involved each year in Rachel's challenge. Each year they present Rachel's story to 1200 schools and businesses. And each year, at least 150 suicides, that they know of, are averted.

Now that's probably a bad example cause it is a program; it's just that you can kind of measure a program... and use it as an example.

There is no way to measure the impact of one act wherein you simply love because you've been loved... but that's how we conquer the dragon.

You love because you've been loved... and you've been loved.

Jesus from the bosom of the Father took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given to you." And He takes a cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you." And He'd already told them, "If you've seen me, you've seen the Father." In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel. Amen.

### **Benediction**

Scripture says that the enemy has kept us in life-long bondage through the fear of death. I think that is the power of death and Jesus gives us freedom from the fear of death, for the death of death is life. That's freedom to do what Rachel Scott did at Columbine High school. It's to risk your life for the sake of the Gospel. It's to "love not your life even unto death."

But it's not just freedom for the last day of your physical life on earth; it's freedom for every day because the thing we die to is our *psyche*— our ego. That's the thing that keeps us in prison and bondage every day. So, how do you fight? Well, today, after this

sermon . . . (I'm used to it) I'll hear a voice and it will say, "Peter, your sermon was way too long. It was way too confusing. People couldn't follow that. Peter, you suck. Peter, that's what you are . . . a piece of shit, so why don't you just quit? If you're too scared to quit, why don't you just run and hide in the shadows because you know where to find the shadow?"

Then I need to listen to the voice of my Father, it says, turn around Peter and look into my eyes and listen to me closely, you are not the sermon you preach. You are the sermon that I'm preaching. Even when you fail, it's in those very places that I reveal my greatest glory. You are my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. And now, if you'd like to talk about me, you are free to do so.

In the name of Jesus, believe the Gospel.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*