

You can overcome sin because the Son of God has destroyed the devil's powers to dominate your life.

1) The devil is the arch rebel.

- a) "for the devil has been sinning from the beginning"
 - i) sin = lawlessness/rebellion (3:4)
 - ii) "sinning"—present tense continuous
 - iii) "from the beginning"—Genesis 3
- b) The devil is the evil one who dominates the world (5:19; cf. John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; Eph. 2:2)
 - i) Tower of Babel illustrative of the devil's domination of the world (Gen. 11:1-9)
 - ii) Colossians 2:8 warns of the connection between human philosophies/traditions and demonic spirits.
 - iii) James 3:14-16 warns of the connection between human wisdom and demonic falsehood.
- c) **Application:** Beware! There is an intelligent and purposeful enemy that fosters humanity's rebellion against God.

2) The devil dominates the lives of rebels.

- a) "whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil"
 - i) "practice of sinning"—life characterized by rebellion
 - ii) "of the devil"—paternity, nature (John 8:44)
 - iii) Rebellion against God is not freedom (John 8:34; Rom. 6:16).
- b) "works of the devil"—powers over rebels
 - i) power of accusation/condemnation—"slanderer" *diabolos* (Rev. 12:10)
 - ii) power of dominant influence (John 8:34, 44)
- c) **Application:** Rebellion against God manifests in many ways: outward behavior, private habits, self-righteousness. Frustration and despair result from slavery to sin.

3) The Son of God destroyed the devil's powers which dominated you.

- a) "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil."
 - i) Son of God = deity of Jesus Christ
 - ii) "appeared"—lit. "was manifested"
 - (1) Incarnation/Casting out demons
 - (2) Crucifixion/Resurrection (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11)
 - iii) "to destroy the works/powers of the devil"
 - (1) Taking away our sins (3:5) destroys the devil's power to accuse and condemn us.
 - (2) The assurance of God's love through Christ's death casts out fear of condemnation (4:18; cf. Heb. 2:14).
 - (3) The love of Christ becomes the controlling principle (4:19).
- b) **Application:** You have freedom to practice righteousness.
 - i) Am I doing/saying/thinking this for the love of God?
 - ii) Am I doing/saying/thinking this for the love of the brothers?

Doxology: "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." Revelation 12:10