



An ELCA Pastor Discovers the Real Satan

Editorial Comment by Warren Krug (November/December, 2005)

We're all aware of the shocking story of Dennis Rader, the BTK (Bind, Torture, Kill) murderer from Wichita, Kansas.

We've probably heard that he was an esteemed member of a Lutheran church in Wichita, in fact, the president of the congregation at the time of his arrest.

We may have watched him on TV, describing how he murdered some of his victims, and showing about as much emotion as a witness to a fender bender.

However, we may not have read about how much soul-searching Rader's pastor has been going through since the arrest. In fact, in an interview, the Rev. Michael Clark admits to a fundamental change in his theology--he now accepts the existence of a living Satan.

Clark is a member of the liberal Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. He claims that because of his experiences and *training*, he "depersonalized" Satan and made the devil merely an object on which to project evil because "the source of evil is within us."

The arrest of Dennis Rader changed all that. Clark now believes "there is definitely an evil force out there that is viable." Clark now understands what Scripture means when it states that in the Upper Room Satan entered Judas.

Liberal theology has long ridiculed the idea that people in Bible times actually were possessed by demons, believing that the stories of demon-possession were merely descriptions of mental disease. But the Bible means what it says.

Surely, most cases of mental or emotional problems today can be linked to natural causes such as a history of abuse or chemical imbalances in the brain.

There are, however, a handful of cases which defy explanation. The Dennis Rader case appears to be one of them, and there is no Scriptural basis for denying that demon possession is possible today.

We often pray, as we do in Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers: "Let Thy holy angel be with me, that the Wicked Foe may have no power over me."

May we make regular use of the Word of God and Holy Communion so that Satan indeed has no control over us.
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—Warren Krug, editor