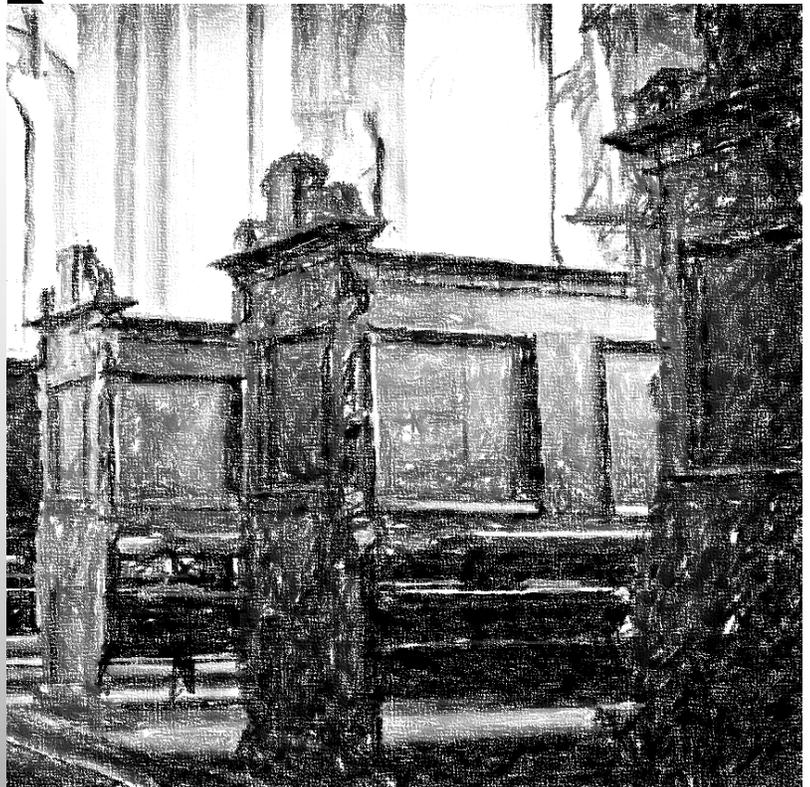




St. Paul's Lutheran Church
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The Epistle of First John

Responding to Threats Against The Church's One Foundation

1 John 3:1-12

As a way of review, let us examine Pastor Wolfmuller's modified Anti-catechism chart. Note the differences:

<u>Catechism (Light)</u>	<u>Anti-Catechism (Dark)</u>
<i>Ten Commandments</i>	<i>Anti-Commandments</i>
1) God	Atheism & Agnosticism
2) Good Doctrine	Witchcraft, Lies, & Deceit
3) God's Word	Secularism & Nihilism
4) Authority	Anarchy & Rebellion
5) Life	Abortion, Euthanasia, & Death
6) Marriage	Sexual Hedonism
7) Property	Greed & Communism
8) Good Reputation	Group Identity
9) Contentment	Covetous Fueled Entertainment
10) Contentment	Narcissistic Consumption of G&S
<i>Apostles' Creed</i>	<i>Anti-Creed</i>
Creation	Evolution & Gnosticism
Justification	Self-Justification
The Church	Mysticism
<i>Sacraments</i>	<i>Anti-Sacraments</i>
Baptism	Gender & Race Identity/Sex. Orientation
Confession	Conceal & Celebrate Sin
Lord's Supper	Works Righteousness

The Apostle John continues in chapter 3, distinguishing between the child of God and the child of the Devil. As stated before, John upholds a binary of Light and dark - there is no in-between. And so, we can conclude the following from John in chapter 3:

<u>Child of God</u>	<u>Child of the Devil</u>
Knows God	Does not know God
Lives in Jesus' Purity	Lives in Lawless Sin
Does not abide in sin	Practices Sin
Loves	Hates
Good deeds	Evil deeds

As stated in previous studies, there is a drastic difference in being a child of God and a child of the Devil. There is a difference between Light and darkness. There was a difference between Cain and Abel.

In verse 12, John references the Old Testament person named Cain. Cain and Abel were the sons of Adam and Eve. And as we learn in Genesis chapter

4, Cain murdered Abel because of jealousy and hatred. Cain stands at the beginning of humanity, demonstrating what a child of the Devil exemplifies. Michael Horton, in an article titled, "Pelagianism," comments on Cain and Abel saying,

"Cain murdered Abel because Cain sought to offer God his own sacrifice. The writer to Hebrews tells us that Abel offered his sacrifice in anticipation of the final sacrifice, the Lamb of God, and did so by faith rather than by works. However, Cain sought to be justified by his own works. When God accepted Abel instead, Cain became jealous. His hatred for Abel was probably due in part to his own hatred of God for refusing to accept his righteousness."

And so it makes sense why John displays Cain as an example of a child of the Devil. It makes sense why our Lutheran reformers attributed many corrupt Roman Catholic theologians with the spirit of Cain. The spirit of Cain does not know God, lives with constant guilt (often without admitting it), continually practices sin, and condemns anyone else who does not uphold their lawlessness. You see, the spirit of Cain is a rebellion against God. The spirit of Cain is the sinful –Satanic–inspired-rejection of the Lord's Word.

As previously stated, we must guard ourselves against thinking too simplistically about the Devil. We often do not find the devil grumbling loudly with a red cape and pitchfork, but at work in getting people to live for themselves in sinful rebellion. In fact, the spirit of Cain is such that the darkness not only despises the Light but will often attack the Light with enraged anger. All one has to do is follow the trail of martyr's blood to find the spirit of Cain at work.

But this brings up an interesting point. John says that those born of God do not sin. However, John also says in chapter 1 that if we – Christians – say that we do not have sin, the truth is not in us. So which one is it? Do we have sin or not? In verse 9, what John is indicating is that the child of God does not actively sin in his ongoing practice – he cannot because he is born of God. God is not the author or promoter of sin. So does the Christian's sin? Yes! Can the Christian make sin his hobby and continual practice? No! Why? Because when the Christian sins, he/she runs to confession! Sin does not (actively and presently) belong with the Christian; that is the reason why Christians are always confessing sin. Beware of so-called Christians that never admit their sin or confess it! Also, beware of so-called Christians that make sin their ongoing practice. Both are wrong – both are of darkness! The Christian lives in hope, peace, joy, good works, and love. When these things are not present, the Christian confesses sin and prays that the one who began a good work in him/her will continue it. Create in us a clean heart O God and renew a right spirit within us!

