



"This notion that it does not make much difference what a man believes, this notion that doctrine is unimportant and that life comes first, is one of the most devilish errors that are to be found in the whole of Satan's arsenal."

—J. Gresham Machen

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Eradicating Humanity

When I am not editing someone else's writing or writing something of my own, I am often found reading. It is something I have been doing with regularity since I plowed through a children's version of *The Ugly Duckling* when I was five years old. Seeing that I took to reading like, well, a duck—make that a swan—to water, my parents encouraged it with access to lots of books, and I am still in the habit.

My current fare is C.S. Lewis' *The Abolition of Man*, a skinny volume whose main theme is, according to the back cover, "how to best teach our children—and ourselves—not merely reading and writing, but also a sense of morality." The late Mr. Lewis was certainly qualified to discuss such a subject, since as a professor of medieval and Renaissance literature at both Oxford and Cambridge universities, he was involved in education all his life. The book is actually a transcript of a series of lectures he gave—obviously to a highly educated audience, as his prose is liberally salted with references to Classical literature and phrases in foreign tongues (Latin predominating). In a similar vein, his arguments are quite intellectual and logical in that Oxford

don't sort of way. Because of this, I have had to re-read many sections, many paragraphs, and many sentences two and three times to catch his drift. This is not a book for the faint of heart. Though it runs only 109 pages, it is not a quick read.

Beyond the main theme of education, however, lies a concept with which most Christians should be familiar, which is found in the title, *The Abolition of Man*. Lewis restricts his comments to the methods by which modern educators, whom he calls "Conditioners," are attempting to wean the younger generation away from adherence to natural law. In other words, modern education's premise, he posits, is to remove from humanity what makes it essentially human—its universal values. He argues that the products of today's educational system are "Men Without Chests," the title of his first chapter; the education-elite are ripping the heart out of mankind by mass-producing essentially valueless graduates. Their philosophy has come to be known as relativism or postmodernism, which is commonly understood to mean "there are no absolute truths."

Because he is speaking to a secular audience, Lewis does not take his argument the further step that a thinking Christian would. Lewis was a deeply religious man, and he probably contemplated the spiritual ramifications of his thesis in his private thoughts. Nevertheless, he does not mention the malevolent influence behind this valueless philosophy, [Satan](#) the Devil. Such an excursion into the realm of "the ruler of this world" ([John 14:30](#)) would not have been well-received by his audience. We, however, must take his presence, his power, and his participation in the affairs of humankind seriously.

What is the primary aim of "the prince of the power of the air" ([Ephesians 2:2](#))? The abolition of man! Ever since [God](#) created the first man and woman in the Garden of Eden, Satan has been interested in nothing else but the eradication of humanity from his "proper domain" ([Jude 6](#)). He sees mankind, made after the God-kind ([Genesis 1:26-27](#)) with the potential of being born again into the God Family ([John 3:3-8](#); [Revelation 14:1-5](#); [20:4-6](#); etc.), as interlopers, squatters, and vagrants in his realm. He is painfully aware that God intends humanity to replace him and his demons as rulers of this planet, and he is fighting like a cornered rat to retain his place and power. Though he has already been personally defeated by [Jesus Christ](#) (

[Hebrews 2:14](#)), he still believes he can win or at least frustrate and perhaps ruin God's plan by deceiving, attacking, destroying, and killing as many human beings as he can ([I Peter 5:8](#)). He especially desires to derail and exterminate as many of God's children as he can ([Revelation 12:17](#)).

Most people would probably laugh at such a notion, for it is not popular to believe in a being of ultimate evil like Satan the Devil. This is a very skeptical world. If people cannot see it, they do not believe it—and Satan has done a good job of deceiving the whole world into believing that he does not exist ([Revelation 12:9](#)). Now he can hide in plain sight and go virtually unnoticed. Mankind blithely ascribes his malicious works to "natural causes," "unfortunate accidents," "coincidences," "delusions," "mental illnesses," "misunderstandings," even "progress." Thus, the valueless educational methods Mr. Lewis decries are considered by the intelligentsia to be an evolutionary step forward for mankind—while the truth is that Satan has merely handed Western civilization a time bomb calibrated to render millions of people spiritually deaf to God's call.

The serpent is more subtle than any beast of the field ([Genesis 3:1](#)), and Adam and Eve's descendants are proving to be just as gullible and sinful as their first parents—perhaps more so in our degenerate age. It is interesting that when Adam and Eve ate the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, their eyes were opened (verse 7), but in reality, now they had their eyes wide shut. Paul writes, ". . . whose minds the [god of this age](#) has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of [the gospel](#) of the glory of Christ, who is the [image of God](#), should shine on them" ([II Corinthians 4:4](#)).

It is only when we are called by God and our eyes opened by His Holy Spirit that we can see what is really going on in [the world](#) ([II Corinthians 3:16](#)). We are in a life-and-death struggle "against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" ([Ephesians 6:12](#)). We have to "put on the whole armor of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (verse 11). In this battle, we have to recognize the real enemy and his stratagems and to "resist him, steadfast in the [faith](#)" ([I Peter 5:9](#)).

No worries. It is just the fate of humanity on the line.

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[How Satan Destroys Faith](#)

by John W. Ritenbaugh

If our faith had been strong over the past 20 years, we would not have been scattered. Because we behave and make choices on what we believe, any affront to the belief system will alter our choices and behavior, placing us on a destructive trajectory. Satan's chief strategy is subtle deception, planting doubts by subtle little half-truths, equivocations, and deliberate lies. Among the lies Satan has foisted off on the world are: (1) God is weak and ineffectual (as seen in effeminate pictures of Jesus, crucifixes, etc.) (2) God is disinterested and has gone off somewhere. (3) God is so merciful that anything goes (we aren't obligated to keep His law).(4) Sin is pleasurable and leads to prosperity. (5) We deserve more than we have been given. By imbibing these deceptions, we shipwreck our faith and jeopardize our salvation.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[It's All Relative](#)

by Richard T. Ritenbaugh

We frequently hear our culture labeled as postmodern. What is postmodernism? How is it related to relativism? Richard Ritenbaugh explains these terms and shows examples of them in politics, music and advertising — and gives God's opinion of it.

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