The Dragon

Series: The Lamb Wins - Revelation
Date: 8 November 2026, 22nd Sunday after Trinity
Location: St George's Battery Point
Texts: Genesis 4.1-8, Hebrews 2.14-18, Revelation 12, John 8.31-36

One of the things about being human is that we know there is a right and wrong, and that we sometimes choose what is wrong, not what is right. If we're honest we know that temptation to do the wrong thing is pretty much a daily feature of life. Becoming a Christian doesn't change this. If anything, it makes it worse. You become more aware of the ways you're tempted. You see the wrong is sin, and it's an offense against God. But the wonderful news of the Christian faith is that you can be forgiven and freed from guilt and shame because Christ died for our sins on the cross. What's more, God gives us the Holy Spirit, to help us resist sin and live for him.

One of the things I found most helpful in my own struggle with sin in the past few years has been meditating on the theme of the Dragon in the Bible. That theme lands in Revelation 12 and we'll look at that next week, but I just wanted to share how this theme has helped me understand what is going on spiritually in my life.

You probably remember the snake tempting Adam and Eve in the garden to doubt God's love for them and then to disobey his word. Revelation 12 tells us that little snake was none other than a huge dragon, Satan, our great adversary, who leads the whole world astray. In the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis we get another picture of the dragon. God says to "sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must rule over it." The apostle Peter writes, "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." Behind the sweet words that pull us to sin is a great monster that wants to devour us. I find that picture really helpful. It helps me stay more alert. It helps me to pay more attention to the times I know I'm more vulnerable to temptation - when I'm tired or stressed, to remember that the monster is lurking and I've got to resist him.

I find our readings from Hebrews and John so helpful too. Jesus knows what it's like to be tempted, because he shared my flesh and blood. He did that through his death he might break the power of the one who holds the fear of death - the devil - and free all those who were held in slavery by their fear of death. That is the ultimate of dying. But it's also fear of those little deaths we face - loneliness, rejection, loss of control, missing out things we think will bring us life. So often we reach for things that we think will bring us life, happiness,

satisfaction, security, comfort, when actually after the short term hit they then spiral out to a sense of guilt, shame, anger, bitterness, resentment. The dragon lures us with a lie and then enslaves us with accusations and judgment. Worse still we can take the weapons of the dragon, the power of death, and use it to protect ourselves and in doing so hurt others.

But Jesus' death has broken the fangs of the dragon. He took all our sin, all our guilt, all our shame, and made them his own on the cross. He died taking the just penalty of death that we deserve so that we might live; so we could be forgiven, washed clean, and reconciled to God. We don't need to fear death, in all its forms, because in Jesus we're safe. He rose again. He has defeated the dragon. And nothing can separate us from God's love in Jesus. Jesus says, "If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed."

I have found this to be true in my life. Coming to Jesus honestly, not trying to hide from shame, but confessing my sin. Then asking for forgiveness, and trusting that he really has taken my guilt and my shame and lifted that burden from my shoulders. That breaks the dragon's power to accuse. He may accuse you of sin, but if you are in Jesus, then you stand forgiven and free, holy and blameless in God's sight. There is no condemnation for those in Christ, so that accusation is a lie. And because I'm safe, I don't need to fear death, my ultimate death or all the little deaths I may face. In fact, I can die to myself, surrendering my life to Jesus, so that his life may be born in me. That is how we fight the dragon day to day - dying to myself, and living for Jesus. Being alert to his schemes, resisting him, not opening the door to him, but trusting each day that my life is safe in Jesus.

Where is the dragon lurking in your life? What sweet words does he tempt you with? Where do you need to resist him? Remember. Your life is hidden with Christ. He offers you full and free forgiveness. He will set you free. Nothing can separate you from his love. Make that choice each day to trust him, to find your life in him.