



The Sick Lion **by Joe Sixpack**

A lion had who become too old to obtain food by force wanted to do so by trickery. He lay in this cave and pretended to be very sick, making sure all the other animals knew about his illness. All the animals of the jungle and expressed their sorrow, and came one by one to visit him in his den. As they came to visit, the lion devoured them.

After many of the animals of the jungle had disappeared in this way, the fox figured out the trick. He, too, went to visit the lion, but he waited outside the cave.

"How are you?" asked the fox.

"I am very sick. Won't you come in?" answered the lion.

Fox replied, "No, thank you, I noticed that there are many footprints entering your cave, but I see no trace of any coming out."

Our first pope, St. Peter, warned us of the lion in his first epistle. "Be sober, be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. Resist him, firm and your faith, knowing that the same experience of suffering is required of your brotherhood throughout the world." (I Peter 5:8-9)

On its face, this seems quite obvious to us. As Catholics, all of us are vigilant for the frontal attacks of the devil. What we fail to look out for is the trickery of the devil. Because St. Peter describes him as a lion, our natural tendency is to anticipate attacks from an aggressor and in an aggressive manner. Since lions are aggressive and attack in the most vicious way, perhaps St. Peter should have used a different metaphor. While it's true that the devil is on the prowl all the time to find souls, he seldom comes at us with a full frontal attack aggressively. More often than not, he uses trickery and subtlety to get us to offend Almighty God.

Perhaps a young person isn't able to see how the devil tricks us as well as I can, as I'm an old man now, but I have seen more lies from the devil in the last 60 years than he has told to the human race at any point before in history. When I was a child, I recall the adults speaking in whispered tones whenever a teenage girl got pregnant. It was considered a horrible scandal for that happen. Today, no one even pays attention. And it is so common that some high schools even offered day care. Yet fornication is no less an evil today than it was then.

When I was a kid, only "low class" people would consider living together instead of getting married. In modern times, however, if couples are inclined to get married at all, they first want to "try it out" before they tie the knot. They want all the pleasures of marriage without accepting any of the responsibilities. As a result, marriage is on the decline in our society. But this is still an offense to Almighty God.

A mere 60 years ago, it was common to see married people have five, six, or seven children. Today, people are actually pitted when they have more than two children. This is a result of the artificial contraception mentality, a lie from the devil that has convinced us that being open to the generation of human life is a bad thing.

Sixty years ago, it was inconceivable that anyone would commit the murder of a child in the womb. Today it is considered the law of the land, even among Catholics, with little or no outrage for the murders of millions of pre-born babies.

In the 1950s and 1960s, you could go to prison in most states for homosexual activity. Today it is considered a hate crime to even be critical of homosexual activity. Indeed, just writing these words is considered an illegal act in many jurisdictions. Worse yet is the attitude of acceptance among Catholics for this heinous act of human perversion against Almighty God.

These public attitudes haven't changed because we have evolved. They've changed because we've devolved. And the reason for this is because the devil has used his trickery and lied to us all these years until we finally accepted it.

Just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus commissioned us and gave His Church its walking orders. The nature of that commission morally binds all of us to carry the gospel message to all peoples in all places, and to affect change in this world for the better. Does the evidence of all the change in the last 60 years show us that we have done a good job in fulfilling this commission? No, it doesn't! We Catholics are the ones to blame for these changes, and we will one day have to give an account to Almighty God for allowing it. It's our fault; we are responsible.

What is the remedy for us? Well, the first thing we need to do is pray for ourselves, society, and our culture. The second thing we need to do is learn our holy and ancient faith well so we can share it with the rest of the world. The third thing we need to do is become intimately familiar with God's law and everything it implies so we can make sure our own moral compass is working properly. Finally, we need to live up to our name. We are Catholics living in the Church Militant. So we need to the militantly fight the devil in our society and culture. Our failure to do this will result in our hearing Jesus' words: "I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were cold or hot! *So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of my mouth.*" (Revelation 3:15-16)

Time grows short for every one of us. It doesn't matter whether you're young or old, the time to give an account to Almighty God is near. Life ending, whether it happens today or 60 years from now, occurs all too soon and unexpected. Be ready! We may not win the battle, but we will win the war. I've read the book of all the way through, and it ends happily for those of us who do as we're supposed to do. This is What We Believe... Why We Believe It.

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