

## **Spiritual Battle and the New Archbishop of Canterbury**

*Leanne Payne*

***The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available--dynamic in its working.***

*James 5:16 The Amplified Bible*

There are times, and now is certainly one of them, when we know more keenly than ever the truth of 1 John 5:19, that "**the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.**" The media daily assaults the airwaves with "news" concerning individuals, institutions, nations, and even whole civilizations--news that essentially "uncovers" modern man's capitulation to evil (demonic) power, that which C. S. Lewis in his extraordinary novel by the same name terms "that hideous strength."

Today such news may even be written up as something good, that which is to be accepted as "the norm." An example of this has just occurred with "news" that the newly elected Archbishop of Canterbury will be pushing for the ordination of practicing homosexuals, that he in fact has already transgressed church law by doing so. This was listed together with other equally troubling and distinctly unorthodox beliefs and practices that characterize this man. There was, of course, no corresponding "news" of how tragic and historically momentous his election is for the holy church, God's faithful people.<sup>1</sup>

How will this affect those who truly intercede for England and her leaders? Is the English church throughout the world now to be given over even more fully to Baal, the idol god of sexual perversion and permissiveness?<sup>2</sup> Is it to be exactly that which happened to Israel under Ahab and Jezebel, and the prophets of Baal? Apparently so. We are informed that the final choice of Rowan Williams as the next Archbishop of Canterbury was made by England's Prime Minister. It was Tony Blair who chose the Archbishop!

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<sup>1</sup>After writing the above, I found two articles by Terry Mattingly, who writes a weekly column for Scripps Howard News Service (tmatt.gospelcom.net), and he does indeed give the corresponding "news." In an article entitled "Alchemy Comes to Canterbury," he writes the following:

*For example, consider an essay entitled "The Body's Grace." In it, [Rowan] Williams questioned traditional definitions of "sexual fidelity," sharply criticizing conservatives who would attempt to "legalize" such a term. Sexual bonds can lead to spiritual transformation, even in relationships outside of marriage.*

*"The realities of our experience in looking for such possibilities suggest pretty clearly that an absolute declaration that every sexual partnership must conform to the pattern of commitment or else have the nature of sin and nothing else is unreal and silly," he wrote. While many worry about the impact of this viewpoint on Christian morality, "more damage is done ... by the insistence on a fantasy version of heterosexual marriage as the solitary ideal."*

<sup>2</sup> See *The Healing Presence*, ch. 14, for more on this.

With such a hierarchy what chance does the Anglican church have? That entity that has given the world such innumerable holy treasures as the King James Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, the prayers and poetry of many, many such extraordinary and diverse saints and souls as Bishop Thomas Ken and John Donne--what chance of survival does it have? Or the precious English liturgy, that which preserved the church, nurturing the faithful, during other times of unbelief? The news article did not air this historic event as something cataclysmic, something involving unspeakable loss, something that will split the Anglican church worldwide, something that will further weaken the monarchy, actually finally destroy it as in any way a Christian monarchy.

What a truly momentous thing it would be to find that the Queen has refrained from voting for one who holds such views as Rowan Williams does, and that she will yet stand up and refuse to be named in any way as a Christian monarch over a church that, through political power operating in a spiritually bankrupt Bishopric and State, has fallen so fully under "the power of the evil one." Her soul, and the soul of England, as over and against political and theological compromise, just might prove to be the prize.

And not just England's soul, for this man will be the darling of today's liberal media. Though he has few followers (less than 3 percent of the English attend Anglican services<sup>3</sup>), with the aid of the media he will step forward as the "official" spokesman for Christianity. A liberal press, hostile to the orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic Pope, are even now putting Williams forward in this light, using a word long neglected in their vocabulary, the term holy. How alien that word must seem as it falls from the lips and pens of today's media, one rife with feminist and homosexual activists who are crying "holy, holy," in their descriptions of Williams.

While praising God for the voice and writings of the present Roman Pope, grateful that he is the one universal Christian voice routinely heard on the world's stage, I have long lamented the fact that there is no balancing and corresponding audible voice representing the orthodox protestant world. Billy Graham has been the closest to it, for, as an evangelist pointing always to Christ and the good news of salvation, he has been heard and respected universally.<sup>4</sup> But his speaking is largely limited to the area of evangelism, and he, like the Pope, is aging and unwell. Now we see stepping into this vacuum one who is a wizard with words, one who is eagerly looking forward to being that spokesman, one who calls good evil, and evil good.

### **Antichrist Rising**

What does the spirit of Antichrist look like? Where does it reside? We are now seeing the shape and dread shadow of it as it rises. We see it in the verbal alchemy of the gnostic (the syncretist as we see above), and, to quote Josef Pieper,

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<sup>3</sup> The vast majority of Anglicans live in third world countries, and they, together with their bishops, will likely be forced to split away.

<sup>4</sup> C. S. Lewis continues to be that spokesman in the printed word, and a more extraordinary legacy than his could hardly be hoped for. Long after his death, centuries perhaps, his work will continue to speak universally.

*"in the extreme intensification of the mendacity and sham-sanctity which, in general, characterize the Antichrist. That later term must be taken very exactly. What is involved here is not the famous "cloak," but a total habitus extending into the province of the ethical, which must almost necessarily "seem" to be real sanctity--in a world to which the original ontic and religious meaning of this concept has become unrecognizable. Only through this deceptive imitation of genuine sanctity, which even deceives the "earnest," indeed, the believers, does the perplexity of the many and, "if it were possible, even of the chosen" become to some extent intelligible; here is something of the "strong delusions," of which it is stated in the New Testament that God sent them "that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. 2:11). This power of deception, tradition therefore sees as being founded primarily in the seeming sanctity of his personal life, over which the Antichrist takes great pains.... Solovyec describes the Antichrist as a "great spiritualist, ascetic and philanthropist," whose exalted self-esteem seems to be justified by the "highest expressions of abstinence, unselfishness, and active helpfulness"; he is "above all others a compassionate friend of man, indeed not only a friend of man, but also of animals; he is himself a vegetarian. It is part of the traditional picture of the Antichrist that he appears as a "benefactor"; and at audiences he is "so courteous that his courtesy will be spoken of in every broadsheet," says the *Life of the Antichrist*, written by a seventeenth-century Capuchin." [See pp. 138ff., *The End of Time: A Meditation on the Philosophy of History* by Josef Pieper, Ignatius Press, San Francisco. ISBN 0-89870-726-9*

No one knows when and where the Antichrist, the world ruler, will rise. But we are even now very clearly seeing the spirit of Antichrist, a political force that seats itself in a holy place, that which prepares the way to an even fuller apostasy, whether the final one we know not. Rowan Williams, of course, is not alone in all this. He would not be where he is today without his "John the Baptists"--the archbishops, bishops, priests, and theologians surrounding him, some of them known as orthodox evangelicals--having made and continuing to make the way for him. They too are wizards with words, speaking out in erudite and convincing tones as they work toward persuading the faithful that although there are some concerns, they yet support his appointment. The pride of intellect and of place has made them, even as Rowan Williams, answerable to God for the apostasy that overwhelms England just now.

Are we in spiritual battle? Simply the worst. Through political correctness and compromise here in the U.S., Canada, and abroad, true Christianity is steadily being "criminalized." Love, divine and human, is being outlawed in that those in the grip of sexual perversion and compulsion will soon not be given the chance to hear the Gospel, the good news. The Gospel of salvation is steadily being outlawed in the West (even as it now is in the Moslem world) as the forces of Baal and Moloch and all the old and ancient idol gods are resurrected and prevail. The spirit of death is powerfully abroad in a backslidden Christendom.

***Love as over and against the spirit of death:***

Sin kills by perverting, polluting and dividing, breaking down persons and their vital relationships.  
*Cornelius Plantinga Jr.*

***We know that we have passed out of death into life” -- Why? -- “because we love the brothers. Whoever does not love abides in death”(1 John 3:14).***

Remarkable words these are to meditate upon. And they speak of a love that does not deny sin or capitulate to a fallen culture. This love leads to life. In spiritual battle we come face to face with raw unlove in one form or another, with hate. And more often than not in spiritual battle it postures as love.

***“Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (v. 15). “We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous” (v. 12).***

This is the stuff of spiritual battle, and only in Christ’s righteousness and strength do we overcome. C. S. Lewis knew and recorded exceedingly well the way in which “that hideous strength” takes over and uses sinful, proud souls and the institutions (including churches) they govern and form into their own image. He understood their “inner rings” of power and their diabolical ways of controlling institutions and individuals. He knew, as well, the one prescription for salvation, and underwent the intensest forms of spiritual battle in the academic and church climate of his day as he stood for, wrote about, and celebrated the one way fallen man overcomes.

***Everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God? (1 John 5:4-5)***

This is the apostolic faith on which Christ builds His church, and the **gates of hell shall not prevail against it** (see Matt. 16:16-18).

Many may want to read or reread That Hideous Strength in connection with understanding spiritual battle, especially as this warfare is to be seen in its modern institutional as well as individual forms. Also, the last five chapters of Restoring the Christian Soul through Healing Prayer are on spiritual warfare. Chapter titles such as “*The Gift of Battle*,” “*Wrong Ways to Do Battle*,” “*Cosmic Dimensions of Spiritual Warfare in Christian Organizations*,” and “*The Use of Holy Water and Other Powerful Christian Symbols and Agencies*” are clues as to what is covered in that last third of the book.