

GHOULS, GRACE, AND THE GOSPEL



Recap: October 15, 2025

Speaker: Bishop A.L. Smith

Title: **Ghouls, Grace, and The Gospel**

Scripture: Ephesians 5:8-11, Colossians 2:15, 1 John 4:4

Overview:

Evil is real, but Jesus has conquered sin, death, and darkness. Because of the gospel, we can live with courage, hope, and confidence as children of light.

Point One - The passing from darkness to light (Ephesians 5:8-12)

- **For you were once darkness:** As Paul condemned those who practiced fornication, uncleanness or covetousness as the sons of disobedience (Ephesians 5:6), he also recognized that this was the exact darkness Christians had emerged from. But now, having been enlightened, we are to **walk as children of the light**.
 - Again, the theme is repeated: you are **children of light**, so live like **children of light**.
 - Paul doesn't only say that we were once in darkness. He says we **were once darkness** itself. Now, we are not only in the light, we **are light in the Lord**.
- **For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth:** In contrast to the walk in darkness and wrath is the **fruit of the Spirit**, more fully described in Galatians 5:22-23. **Goodness, righteousness, and truth** should mark us because we have the Holy Spirit in our life.
- **And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them:** Instead of associating with ungodliness, we expose the **unfruitful works of darkness**. However, we do not do this for the purpose of merely talking about them (which is **shameful**), but for the purpose of educating ourselves enough to avoid them.
 - Christians must guard against a unhealthy interest in **the works of darkness**, even in times of testimony or research.
 - Paul was careful to say that we should avoid the **unfruitful works of darkness**, not the people who are in darkness.

Point Two - The work of Jesus in His people through His work on the cross. (Colossians 2:15)

- **Having disarmed principalities and powers:** Another aspect of Jesus' work on the cross is that He disarmed principalities and powers. These ranks of hostile angelic beings don't have the same weapons to use against Christians that they have against those who are not in Jesus.
 - The greatest powers of the earth at that time – Rome, the greatest governmental power and Judaism, the greatest religious power – conspired together to put the Son of God on the cross. "These powers, angry at his challenge to their sovereignty, stripped him naked, held him up to public contempt, and celebrated a triumph over him."
 - We can only imagine how Satan and every dark gleeful demon attacked Jesus as He hung on the cross on our behalf, as if He were a guilty sinner. "As he was suspended there, bound hand and foot to the wood in apparent weakness, they imagined they had him at their mercy, and flung themselves on him with hostile intent. But, far from suffering their attack without resistance, he grappled with them and mastered them, stripping them of the armor in which they trusted, and held them aloft in his outstretched hands, displaying to the universe their helplessness and his own unvanquished strength
- **Triumphing over them:** Paul used similar phrasing in 2 Corinthians 2:14, where he had in mind the Roman victory parade where a conquering general led his defeated captives through the streets in triumph.
 - Perhaps Satan, for a moment, thought that he had won at the cross. But Hell's imagined victory was turned into a defeat that disarmed every spiritual enemy who fights against those living under the light and power of the cross. The public spectacle of defeated demonic spirits makes their defeat all the more humiliating.

Point Three - The protection of the child of God. (1 John 4:4)

- **You are of God, little children, and have overcome them:** The child of God need not fear the spirit of Antichrist, even though they should be warned of it, because they have the indwelling Spirit of God (1 John 3:24). That indwelling Spirit is greater than he who is in the world – Satan and all of his allies.
- **He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world:** The believer has a resource for victory, the vital presence of the indwelling Jesus, which makes victory always possible – if we will rely on **He who is in you** instead of relying on ourselves.
 - This understanding gives great confidence and spiritual power. For those walking in this truth, victory is assured – they **have overcome them**. It is a positive statement, not a wishful hope.
- **He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world:** This means the Christian has no place for fear. We have many spiritual enemies, but not one of them is greater than Jesus who lives in us.

"There are two equal and opposite errors into which our race can fall about the devils. One is to disbelieve in their existence. The other is to believe, and to feel an excessive and unhealthy interest in them." C.S. Lewis