

## Forde on the Devil:

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but become impatient and desert. In military terms we go AWOL—absent without leave.

For in the final analysis it is a battle. It is a real and concrete battle that goes on about us and within us to establish the proper kind of attitude towards this world. It is not something that can be taken for granted. We are tempted either to succumb to the world and its enticements or in religious indignation to forsake it. There is a kind of fateful pull in us to do either one or other of these things. In the language of Luther, we are under the sway of the devil, "The Prince of this World." Note that he is not the *king*; he is for the time being only the prince who has usurped the rule through sin. It is against him that the battle must be waged. His is a very subtle and crafty rule. It is not merely that he tempts us to the more obvious sins of greed, avarice, tyranny, and injustice, but also to the more subtle kinds of "religious" sin: that of despising the world and neglecting its concerns. For if he can get us to be so "religious" that we leave the world, he can have it all to himself. Either way, he wins.

The only way to combat the devil, in Luther's view, the only way to put down and conquer within us that pull either to give in to the world or to desert it, is through the faith and hope inspired by the promise of that world "to come." When hope is created in the future that God has in store, we begin to see this world as God's creation. We see this world as the place where we must fight the battle. We see for the first time the monstrous tyranny of the devil and with our eyes wide open and our hearts full of hope we enter the battle. We see that besides the world to come God also has another world—this world—where we are desperately