

## LESSON TEN: THE FACE OF EVIL

*Kill Bill* premiered in October, 2003. The movie is rated “R.” It features seven arm severings, five leg severings, two hatchet deaths, and a close-up scalping. 45 individuals are slain by swords, and a pregnant woman gets shot in the head. The film’s director, Quentin Tarantino, had this to say about the film: “If you’re a 12-year-old girl or boy, you must go and see *Kill Bill*. You will have a d—n good time. Boys will have a great time, girls will have a dose of girl power. If you are a cool parent out there, go take your kids to the movie.” The bad news is that *Kill Bill* is an outstanding success because people are lining up to see the movie. Thus, for evil to triumph, it takes only a few good people to do nothing.

**PRAY:** Father in heaven, when we pray to You as Jesus taught us to pray, we ask You to deliver us from evil. Help us to seek Your face, because we live in a world in which we are surrounded by evil. O Lord, deliver us from evil for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

**INTRODUCTION:** Bad news seems exempt from the laws of the universe. You can follow the rules, eat right, exercise daily, sleep well, love your neighbor, love yourself, go to church, be honest with the IRS, give blood, vote, attend PTA meetings, remember your mother’s birthday, tell no ethnic jokes, write thank-you notes, recycle, clean your refrigerator, read the Bible, serve dinner at the shelter, wear clean underwear, get your teeth cleaned—and still bad news happens to you. Like an obnoxious relative, bad news just keeps showing up again and again.

—Howard Hanger, “Chutzpah!” *Vision*, January 24, 1997, 3.

**BIBLE BASE:** Ask a volunteer to read John 8:31-47. Ask the other participants to follow along in their own Bibles.

**DISCUSS:** (The following questions are for discussion. The answers are to help the leader guide the discussion. Participants may fill in the answers in the space provided.)

### 1. Who was Jesus addressing in this discussion?

*Jesus was addressing a crowd of Jews in the Temple. There were some in the crowd who had a change of heart and believed in Jesus. To them He immediately speaks a word of grace. He told them to continue in His word and they would know the truth and the truth would set them free. As soon as He spoke that word of grace, the hostile Jews in the crowd raised their objections.*

### 2. Why did the Jews mention that they were the Seed of Abraham?

*This claim was a spiritual claim. By calling themselves the Seed of Abraham they spoke of a spiritual kingdom and not a political kingdom. Thus, they could claim honestly that they had never been slaves in spite of the fact that the Egyptians, Babylonians, and Romans had enslaved them politically. Yet even though they had spiritual liberty, they were still enslaved to their evil pride.*

### 3. What does it mean to be a slave of sin?

*Because all people sin, all people are slaves to sin. No human being can break out of that slavery under his or her own power. The effect of sin is as certain as night following day. “The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).” Even the pagan philosophers knew that. Plato maintained that liberty is the name of virtue and bondage the name of vice.*

#### **4. How did the hostile Jews betray their spiritual heritage?**

*Even though they were physical descendents of Abraham, they were spiritually depraved. They demonstrated this in their criminal determination to kill Jesus. Not only were they vile enough to plot murder, but also they were plotting murder of the Son of God whose day Abraham longed to see (verse 56), and for whom they were made. Jesus pointed out that the reason they had such an attitude was because His word did not have free course among them.*

#### **5. Why did the hostile Jews make the claim that they were not born of fornication?**

*Jesus had said that they were not doing the deeds of their father. They missed the point. They thought Jesus was talking about a situation where there was a biological father and a father in whose house they were raised and whose name they took. They would still have the nature of their biological father. This was not what Jesus suggested.*

#### **6. Why did Jesus tell them that they were children of the devil?**

*They were children of the devil in the spiritual sense. That is to say, they were inflamed with the same evil lusts with which the devil was inflamed. Since their relationship was moral and spiritual, they were inflamed with that evil by their own consent and not by some accident of birth. Through their unbelief they made themselves children of the devil.*

#### **7. How did Jesus describe the devil?**

*He described him as a murderer and a liar. Lying was the means by which the devil brought evil to the human race. When humans embrace evil, they also embrace death. That is why the devil is a murderer. Truth and the devil are opposites, even antagonistic.*

#### **8. Jesus and the devil are opposites. How?**

*Jesus is the truth. He brings the truth of God's love and grace and mercy. Those who believe Him will be saved and are His children.*

**CHALLENGE:** Talk about what your group can do to help your congregation find ways to combat evil like that which is seen on movies and on television.

**CLOSING THOUGHTS:** Rape, murder, homophobia, misogyny, wanton drug abuse—in the course of the 70-minute disc, 26-year-old Eminem (a.k.a. Slim Shady, nZ Marshall Mathers) raps about it all in graphic detail. And the youth of America are listening—avidly, in great numbers. Already, The Marshall Mathers LP has become the fastest-selling hip-hop album in history, with more than 5 million copies bought since its release. The disc is red hot in every sense, drawing the ire of gay-rights groups, feminists, parents and pundits outraged by its content.

Of course, lyrically scandalous rap and rock albums are nothing new. What distinguishes the Marshall Mathers LP—and what has a growing cross section of shocked adults asking the rhetorical question, Eminem: Clown Prince or Menace?—is the sudden ease and enthusiasm with which a mainstream of teens and preteens is absorbing its corrosive vision.

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Almighty God, Your Son has revealed to us that He is the Way and the Truth and the Life. Send us Your Holy Spirit to empower us and equip us to resist evil. Help us to seek the face of Jesus, and use us to reflect the light of Christ to shine the truth in this world filled with evil. Envelop us in Your grace and keep us safe from all evil attempts against us. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.