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| Occasioned by dreadful Witchcraft broke out here a few weeks past, and one Member of this Church, and  another of Salem, upon public examination by Civil Authority vehemently suspected for she-witches, and  upon it committed. John 6:70. "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a Devil." . . .  Doctrine: Our Lord Jesus Christ knows how many Devils there are in his Church, and who they are.  1. There are devils as well as saints in Christ's Church.  2. Christ knows how many of these devils there are.  3. Christ knows who these devils are.  Proposition 1: There are devils as well as saints in Christ's church. Here three things may be spoken to: (1) Show you what is meant here by devils; (2) That there are such devils in the church; (3) That there are also true saints in such churches.  (1). What is meant here by devils? "One of you is a devil." Answer: By devil is ordinarily meant any wicked angel or spirit. Sometimes it is put for the prince or head of the exit spirits, or fallen angels. Sometimes it is used for vile and wicked persons—the worst of such, who for their villainy and impiety do most resemble devils and wicked spirits. Thus Christ in our text calls Judas a devil: for his great likeness to the devil. "One of you is a devil": i.e., a devil for quality and disposition, not a devil for nature—for he was a man, etc.—but a devil for likeness and operation (John 8: 38, 41, 44—"Ye are of your father the devil.")  (2). There are such devils in the church. Not only sinners, but notorious sinners; sinners more like to the devil than others. So here in Christ's little Church. (Text.) This also Christ teacheth us in the parable of the tares (Matth. 13:38), where Christ tells us that such are the children of the wicked one—i.e., of the devil. Reason: Because hypocrites are the very worst of men—*corruptio optimi est pessimi.* Hypocrites are the sons and heirs of the devil, the free-holders of hell—whereas other sinners are but tenants. When Satan repossesseth a soul, he becomes more vile and sinful (Luke II: 24-26). As the jailer lays loads of iron on him that hath escaped. None are worse than those who have been good, and are naught; and might be good, but will be naught....  Proposition 2: Christ knows how many of these devils there are in his churches. As in our text there was one among the twelve. And so in our churches God knows how many devils there are: whether one, two, three, or four in twelve—how many devils, how many saints. He that knows whom he has chosen (John 13: 18), he also knows who they are that have not chosen him, but prefer farms and merchandise above him and above his ordinances (2 Tim. 4: 10). . . . |
| **Source:** Rev. Samuel Parris’ sermon , “Christ Knows How Many Devils there Are”, March 27, 1692 |