

Dracula, bram stoker - a religious analysis



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Before the Victorian Era of the nineteenth century, faith in Christ was pretty much a necessity in Europe. But Christianity underwent its challenges with the theory of evolution anticipated by Charles Darwin. This event made people in industrialized cities, and most of their views of Christ, dissipate. After the drastic change in people's views, the idea of the Anti-Christ, in most Christians was highly thought about. Most speculated that the Anti-Christ was already walking with them and were many different ideas of what "he" looked like. In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Stoker simulates Dracula as the Anti-Christ by using many beliefs from Christianity to exhibit abundant amounts of the evaluation of the influence of Dracula with the influence of God, Anti-Christian morals, and superstitious beliefs.

In this fictional novel, Dracula has certain powers that the other characters surely do not. A lot of these powers, to Christians, are characteristics of what no man but God could have. The only difference is that unlike God, Dracula uses these powers for evil. One example is the fact that Dracula can change the weather around him. In chapter eight, when Dracula is trying to transport his boxes of "earth" to Carfax, he crashes the ship by creating a fierce storm. "The waves rose in growing fury" and "The wind roared like thunder, and blew with such force that it was with difficulty that even strong men kept their feet" (Stoker 87) This event shines a light on his character because it eventually kills everyone on the ship. Killing innocent people when he didn't have to because he was selfish does portray the Anti-Christ in him. Christians also believing that taking the life of a child of God is a sure-fire way of going to hell (The Ten Commandments) surely puts him in the category of demonic.

Christians believe that in order to go to heaven and having an eternal life with God, digesting God's body and blood (Holy Communion) is vital. For Dracula, he is residually undead, by consuming the blood of the existing to thrive and to gain his power. Doing this, Dracula counts on human beings to renovate his undead being and not directed on God as the foundation. It is also said that you must let God into your heart; Dracula cannot come into a person's home unless invited in. In the Bible, Christ is known as the light, which signifies bliss or life. Dracula moves to an old abandoned Church not used anymore which can show that God is no longer present which would accomplish Dracula's purpose of spreading evil.

Dracula is too looked as the Anti-Christ by sharing comparisons with Jesus but in wicked ways. As Dracula moves to Carfax and begins his journey on to feeding on his victims, just as God had his disciples, Dracula has his followers as well. Renfield is a prime example of Dracula's disciple. " I am not even concerned in His especially spiritual doings. If I may state my intellectual position I am, so far as concerns things purely terrestrial, somewhat in the position which Enoch occupied spiritually"(287) A few times on the book, when Renfield discusses Dracula, Dracula name or as a pronoun is always capitalized; in Christ, most people would refer to God in that manner. Readers can infer that Renfield thinks of Dracula as his master. Another reason readers think that Renfield is Dracula's follower is that Renfield wants to be Dracula's " wing- man" as Enoch was a follower of God.

Another power in which Dracula uses most of the time is fact that he can control animals. In the first chapter Jonathan Harker notices that he " saw Dracula stand in the roadway. As he swept his long arms, as though brushing

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aside some impalpable obstacle, the wolves fell back and back further still.”(18) This is a very strange and scary thing that even God can’t do. Also the fact that he only control dog, wolves, bats, and rats are quite interesting because most Christians say that the Anti Christ was the ruler of the night. In the Bible, God is passed on as the light, which signifies joy or life. This is a coincidence because these animals are creatures of the night, and Dracula has an influence over all of them. Another part where he does this is when he breaks into Lucy’s house to kiss her. “ There was a crash at the window, and a lot of broken glass was hurled on the floor. The window blind blew back with the wind that rushed in, and in the aperture of the broken panes there was the head of a great, gaunt gray wolf.”(157). He controls the wolf into breaking in because Dracula desperately needs blood and would do anything to get his hands on his prey, even if that means hurting others to get to them.

Dracula’s Anti-Christ ways are more protruded by the superstitious beliefs invented by Christians. In the first chapter, when Jonathan Harker departs to Dracula’s castle, the old lady puts “ rosary round my neck and said, ‘ For your mother’s sake”. (9) One of the common superstitions is that holy objects, in this situation holy beads, will shield you from all wicked, which in Jonathan’s case, is Dracula. When Jonathan slashes himself shaving the next day and Dracula ” starts to attack him, he notices the beads and the crucifix and backs down.” You should not put your faith in such objects of deceit”(31). This is a prime example of Dracula’s hatred towards God. This also proves that Dracula is the anti-Christ because he can’t even approach rosary without harming him. Another example in which this superstition

shows his anti-Christian self is later in the novel where Van Helsing utilizes the communion wafers to prevent Dracula from getting into his coffins. Once Dracula notices that there are holy objects around in boxes of earth, he cannot go in them. So much hatred for holy objects, to the point where he has to repel from them proves that Dracula is definitely the Anti-Christ.

Even though there are a lot more examples to prove that Dracula might be the Anti-Christ, it is certain that Dracula epitomizes Anti-Christian values and mistreatment of Christianity. In numerous traditions Dracula is symbolized as the essence of sin. In these closing stages, he is overcome by godliness. By illustrating a similarity between Dracula and anti-Christian beliefs, Dracula employs loads of biblical meanings. In Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, Stoker uses Dracula as a capsule, to trap in all the hate and evil by using countless viewpoints from Christian beliefs to show the signs of Anti-Christianity.