

Forced Disarmament

Harmony M.B.C., December 9, 2007 (Morning)

Robert P. Myers

Col 2:15 *And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

Our view and understanding of Calvary begins with a heart full of gratitude, when on the day of the Lord's visitation with renewing grace for our souls, we look upon Jesus Christ for the first time with faith of newborn sons or daughters. We see at that time our great need, our undone condition, the open door of salvation that beckons us to Christ and we cannot help but feel the wonderful power of revealed mercy and extended grace. Our hearts are immediately sold on the Lord Jesus Christ, and although we know almost nothing about the mighty works of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit which wrought this grandest of plans for the salvation of the elect, yet we know enough that our souls sing after having tasted of the wondrous glory of salvation's power over our own souls.

As time goes on, if we are thoughtful and studious, our knowledge of our Savior grows as we study His word and pray for the understanding we need. By little and by little, the tapestry of amazing grace unfolds to our spiritual eyes and we see things about the Lord that reveal to us more and more how glorious He really is. The deeds of our Savior here on earth shine more and more with wisdom as we read and think about them. The awesome experience at Calvary becomes more and more a focal point of our worship and thought. The mystery and power of His death and resurrection becomes more meaningful to us as we think on the magnitude of what transpired in this experience of His. And so, we grow in grace and knowledge of the truth about our Lord.

This text verse is one of those verses that we read every so often and we are always thoughtful about it. We think of what it tells us about our Savior's victory. So let's look at this verse again now, as once again we contemplate what it tells us about the wondrous work of Christ that is revealed when we look into the depths of the gospel message.

I. The verse tells us that in that great and awful experience our Lord endured from the night in Gethsemane to the Sunday morning at the sepulchre, He "**spoiled principalities and powers**"

- The Greek here alludes to disarming the enemy and stripping them of their armor
 - > What appeared to occur is completely contradictory to this statement
- To fully understand about this overpowering victory Jesus gained over the powers that were against him, we need to understand how those powers manifested themselves.

A. The weapons of the enemy in this encounter with Christ were:

- The lying Jewish religionists and their lackeys (Mat. 26:57-66)
- The mob hysteria of the people (Mark 15:11-14)
- The animosity, egotism, and cowardice of the government representatives (Mat. 27:2-24)

- The wrong actions and paralysis of doubt of his disciples

B. The armor of the enemy in this encounter with Christ was:

- The **unregenerate hardness of the human hearts** of those seeking to destroy him
 - > Depraved hearts make a super-hardened bomb shelter for Satan to operate out of
- The **apathy of government** about spiritual matters
 - > Righteous cultures and righteous behavior in a people is never more in jeopardy than when government is apathetic about spiritual things. Such an environment provides ideal armor for the enemies of Christ...they are shielded from being reached and they can do violence to holiness and the righteous principles of God without fear of being held accountable.
- **The cloak of lies**
 - > One of the most impenetrable layers of the armor of Christ's enemies (those principalities and powers spoken of in our text) is the diamond hard layer called "lies."
 - > All the defenses of the kingdom of Satan are constructed from lies.
 - The first polluting thing to taint the perfection of earth was the speaking of a lie by the serpent in the garden (I bring this up as part of the armor concept because this is what effectively put a barrier between God and men)
 - Satan is called the Father of lies (John 8:44)
 - > The human heart can hide from reality behind lies (armor) and this armor appeals to the spiritual coward that humans are. Providing this armor, the devil equips us to be very useful destroyers of conviction and repentance, thus making us great tools for his purposes.
 - > Humans can avoid being accountable for behavior through lies (armor); this armor appeals to the nature of humans because we have an innate tendency to find someone else to blame for our faults. This armor makes humans a perfect tool for the execution of his power against God

C. How Did Christ disarm them of their weapons and strip them of their armor?

- Despite all the lying, the examiners could find no fault with him
- All the yelling, urging, and insistence by the people did not alter the direction and omnipotent management of events
- Despite concerns by the politicians about Jesus being a King, His response to their probing questions and taunts actually caused them to abandon the idea of getting rid of a competitor
- The secular and apathetic judgments of the rulers and examiners produced a spiritual result (an innocent substitute dies for guilty criminals)
- Bloodletting by Peter and the disciples fleeing did not break Christ's determination nor His communion with God
- **Object Lesson: In life's events, look for the interpretation which speaks of divine power in the midst of weakness and apparent failure**
 - > I want to remind us all again of this fixed rule about God's ways of doing things:

- **1Cor 1:27 -29** “But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; 28 And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, *yea*, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: 29 That no flesh should glory in his presence.”

II. The verse also tells us that in this spoiling of the best efforts of wicked forces, He “made a show of them openly...”

- This is what Herod’s murderous foray was all about around the 2nd century A.D. (That we read about in Mat. 2:16)
- This is what the altercation at Nazareth was all about (Luke 4:29-30)
- Why do you suppose that band of thugs who came to get Jesus in the Garden came armed (Mat. 26:55) with weapons? (Ans. To kill Him then and there if they got the chance)
- This thing of being sentenced to death though innocent, and then put to death on a cross was not supposed to happen. The powers and principalities that He disarmed and stripped never intended that He die a public death as a criminal...the prince of evil knew about the prophecies of the Old Testament that detailed Christ’s suffering and for it to come to pass that way was for our Lord to make an open show of the evil effort to get rid of Him some other way.
- **Object Lesson: Every time things turn out in our life in a way that neutralizes harm, it is a certain sign that God has advertised His superiority, authority, and control over principalities and powers that would wreck our lives and negate our purpose if they could.**

III. Last, this verse tells us that He triumphed over them in what He accomplished.

- All the defamation, mocking, beating was not a mark of guilt or weakness, but proof that God could devise a way for the innocent and perfect to substitute for the guilty...the just for the unjust...that He might bring us to God.
- The sentence of death was not a final blow to a guilty criminal, but a doorway to settling a debt
- The agony on that cross was not the fate of a pitiful individual who was at the wrong place at the wrong time, but it was a testimony to the magnitude of the debt to be paid and of the ability of the propitiator to pay it. The victory lies in the fact that here was One who had authority and the wherewithal to pay for our transgressions...that is the triumph he had over the powers that had us enslaved.
- The blackness of the tomb was not testimony to the futility of a fight with death, but it was mute testimony to the severity of the penalty for sin...it preached an immortal message about how terrible the judgment of God against sin is. With that message, the world is made aware of the awful peril that humans are in who go to the end of their days without life insurance. There is triumph in finally having a message about the penalty of sin which is equal to the horror of that penalty.
- That resurrection on that early Sunday morning is now a standing declaration that everything about Jesus’ experiences had on them the stamp of triumph.

- Object Lesson: When outcomes in our lives show the victory of salvation and guidance by the Lord, we may take that as a mark of triumph over evil forces which would always have things turn out otherwise.

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In darkness sinister forces fought,
Advantage over mighty power is what they sought,
They raged and conjured awful weal,
As human souls they thought to steal.

But mighty eyes observed all things,
That intended damage such evil brings,
He made a sweep with mighty unseen hand,
And dark battalions could no longer stand.

With weapons bent and broken by the blow,
And armor stripped and scattered, they all know,
That He stops worlds with just a thought,
And if He wills all else will come to naught.

For they had seen these things before,
Often done for 2000 years or more,
And they remembered once in Jerusalem,
When in a time of weakness this power had come.

It came with mighty rushing strength,
Undoing wicked plans and breaking evil links,
The lies and plots were foiled that night,
And all the wrong made all things right.

They'd planned and schemed to wreck what Jesus sought,
The reconciliation that His offering wrought,
They thought Him weak, He proved it might,
And all His foes knew great defeat that night.

He yielded up Himself to God,
And on that cross that awful winepress trod,
He tread it all alone that night,
But by that deed ensured us light.

He gave Himself to die for men,
And in that power He rose again,
As on that Sunday morning bright,
Those foes from hell were put to flight.

And now the centuries have rolled on by,
And we can know we'll never die,
Because our Savior met the foe,
And drove him back with mighty show.