

The Cross, His Showdown With The Enemy

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[0 : 0 0] we turn now to a second reading of God's word where I in these few occasions I'm with you standing in and I'm doing an occasional series on the cross of Jesus Christ particularly exploring the different achievements of the cross both how he went to the causes and dealt with the consequences of our sin we looked first of all at the most fundamental work on the cross and that is that Christ died for our sin that he took our sins in his body on the tree that he had our sins laid on him so that the penalty might be paid by him and not by us we look secondly at how Christ came into the world to confront the world to confront the world as it sits in stubborn resistance to God and we see that by the cross of Christ the world is crucified to us crucified to it and then today I want to see how Jesus deals with his enemy through his own death let us turn

John chapter 12 verse 27 and we read through to 33 Jesus says now is my soul and what shall I say for you you have made me from this hour but for this purpose I have come to this hour father father glorify your name then a voice came from heaven I have glorified it and I will glorify it again the crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered others said an angel has spoken to him Jesus answered the voice has come for your sake not for mine now now is the judgment of the world now will the ruler of this world be cast out and I when I am lifted up from the earth will draw all people to myself he said this to show what kind of death he was going to die so the crowd answered him we have heard from the law that the Christ remains forever amen and thanks be to God for his word now let us pray our dear Father we thank you for all the strength and the grace that you make available to us in our weakness we thank you the one who is in us is greater than the one who is in the world and we come now in prayer to draw strength from you for the days ahead we hear your appeal to us to the devil and to draw near to you and we draw near to you now so that we have the strength to resist the devil please help us

Lord but to be determined to resist help us as he seeks to bear us help us in the ways that he he differently tempts each one of us help us who are struggling today with apprehension and anxiety that comes from the evil one pray that they may turn to you for your inner resource and peace we pray Lord for any who are grieving and our hearts go out this morning to the family of Sadie Haxton who was taken to be with you and we are with thanksgiving for

Sadie's life but we're also full of tenderness towards our relatives and we pray that you would give them glory we pray Lord rejoice and we especially think of those our friends Jono and Ailey who are to be married soon we give them to you and we enter into their joy they will have when they're joined together in marriage and may they know of in being given to one another a signpost to the world of the union between Christ and his bride and the church we pray for those in our fellowship who are waiting the birth of a child and we especially give to you this week

Susie and Alex and little Ailey and we ask Lord that you will be the protector the guardian the deliverer into the world of their little baby we pray dear Lord for all who specially seek your help this morning who are under particular need we ask that they might shelter that they go into the hiding place of God and find safety we pray Lord for our two congregations thank you for our united work and pray for us asking that here in Partick we make a city set on a hill we want to the community we pray that you'll give us initiative and imagination in knowing how we reach out to our neighbourhood we commend you

[7 : 26] Lord the camps of the free church in preparation for this summer ministry pray for the to come forward we pray for good preparation and we pray that youngsters may go to those camps and to be truly changed by your grace and your spirit Katrina serving you in a far country and we pray for her thank you for our bond with her and our responsibility to uphold her help her with her friends help her with her colleagues at work help her concern back in Lewis so Lord we give our prayers to you ask that as we turn to the word of God it may come alive to us for

Jesus sake Amen John chapter 12 verse 31 one now judgment of this world now will the ruler of this world be cast out I want initially to ask who is the ruler of the world and how will this ruler be cast out if you're living in Florida it would be the

Burmese python if you're living in Australia it would be the European rabbit if you're living in Scotland it might be the Japanese knotweed these are non-native species that make a complete nuisance of themselves in an environment where they don't belong causing farmers gardeners ecologists governments headaches beyond we can think of and huge expense and the big thing about them is that we're incapable of eliminating them man's defiant rebellion against

God his turning away from God's perfect law was unknown in the creation first but when it was introduced it became lethal and it became to our ability utterly impossible to erase sin is the ultimate invasive species and when Jesus told a story about a farmer who planted wheat and field and got his workers to help him and shortly afterwards the workers came back the wheat having sprouted and said to the farmer didn't you plant good seed because they asked the question because with the germinating wheat had appeared and infested and the reply of the farmer was an enemy has done this and

I want us to look this morning and to ask of this verse what exactly has the enemy done in instigating us to sin well who is the enemy the bible actually speaks about god's enemies in taking many different forms they are at one time a foreign army attacking his people at another time a giant of a man within that foreign army they the enemy might an evil king or always it would take the form of so called gods from the surrounding nations despicable carvings that could neither speak nor talk who wormed their way into the worship of

[12 : 56] Israel when came to that song of Moses did it strike you how much of a warrior god is and how he takes one who conquers their enemy the lord is a man of war the lord is his name your right hand oh lord glorious in power your right hand oh lord shatters the in greatness of your majesty you overthrow your adversary your fury it consumes them like stubble throughout the old testament we get a picture of god as this warrior for the cause for the cause of his people and that in god's battles that he won as we come to the first attack of enemy we interestingly are told that god declared enmity towards a snake the snake had come to the first man and the woman and had whispered to them a lie a lie about god's character and a lie about the seriousness of rebelling against god and they were taken and they rebelled against their lord the new testament tells us that the sacral is a mouth piece of this unseen spiritual angelic powerful intelligent being that we call the devil or satan and we're told that he had fallen at some point before he did we're informed that he was sinning from the beginning the cause and the occasion his fall is somewhat blurred we don't see it sharply but the effects of his work is everywhere and it's interesting and here

Jonathan I wonder if we could have that thank you if we it's interesting to see God's response to this invasive species entering humanity because he first of all addresses the enemy before he goes to the woman or the man he speaks to the snake and look carefully at what he says I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring that is to say war broke out between two factions the descendants of Eve and the evil squadrons of demons that crashed out of heaven along with

Satan and this war went on but then notice what the Lord God goes on to say as he addresses the snake he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel having spoken of the seed of the woman plural he now speaks about a seed the seed of the woman singular and the two are not in separate from one another but it's that the warfare of the snake is going on on two strata it is being fought amongst all the seed fighting the snake but at the same time there is this most intense singular contest between a particular seed of the woman and the snake whose head that and the snake will retaliate and that comes if the battle was going on in the

Old Testament it is ramped up manifold with the birth of Jesus and the fighting becomes intense right from the start first of all the enemy gets into the head of the king Herod and a blitz of genocide of all male toddlers so that by some sort of slaughter he might include Jesus himself in death when began his public ministry the spirit draws him out into the desert so that he might go in combat for a period of 40 days and more with the enemy where he is buffeted in heart and throughout his ministry they taunt

Jesus and expose him for who he is and he in his fighting with the devil takes poor darkened demon possessed people and he sets them free and when we come to the last Satan is crowding in on the Saviour and he first of all gets into the head of Simon Peter that Jesus could be distracted and take another route from the cross and Jesus is vehement get behind Satan he says to his nearest disciple of course there's Judas who would betray him and how did he do so well Satan put into his heart and we come then to the finale of the and it's interesting in verse 31 what Jesus says about where the contest will be max now will the ruler of this world be cast out and the emphatic now and we might ask well when is the now was the blue and naturally we might think well surely it's the resurrection there could be no victory that's sure but what

[21 : 11] Jesus goes on to say is that the killer actually took place at the cross I he says when I'm lifted up from the earth will draw all people to myself and he spoke to them of how he was going to die and so it is the turning point in the war we John uses the language of being lifted up and of course physically Jesus needed to be he could be publicly seen and publicly taunted but John's use of the word lifted up has another it's that he was elevated he was given a place of supremacy right at the time of his crucifixion now is the ruler of this world cross is cast out just as he would say in the next year is the son of man glorified who is the ruler as

Jesus explains it and how was the ruler of this world cast out well it's on the cross but I want I want to ask a third question what do we gain from his expulsion what do we gain well do you see in verse 32 when I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all people to himself the drawing it's the same word that John would use in the gospel of drawing a net full of fish he will draw all people to himself so you've got three things happening here you've got Jesus being crucified you've got Satan out and you've got a drawing of men and women to Christ in an abusive you have an abuser and a victim whether it's spouse with spouse partner with partner parent to child controlling person with a vulnerable person and strangely we read you've met people who actually find it difficult to walk away from their abuser abuser have the physical opportunity to do so but abuser has hold on them and the hold on them will be even stronger if the abuser has inveigled the victim into doing bad stuff then more than ever that the controlling abuser they have them they have leverage on them now it's our enemy he has ensnared every single human being and as a result of that he has something on us he's when we talk and when scripture talks ruler of the world it's in a limited sense because we know that

God and Christ rules everything from start to finish but in this particular sense he has a hold on sinners and that's why we take seriously that the whole world is in the power of the evil one now before if you're a God this morning before you came to Christ you haven't caught in his snares but when you came to Christ you discovered that the Lord Jesus on that cross had cancelled every single debt that he had and as a result of that the enemy had nothing on you believer his weaponry on you has been qualified by cancelling the debt has disarmed the enemy made a public example made a fool of him and triumphed over him and that's the glory of the cross that it strips of his hold on believers and so it is that people are now drawn to

Christ they are drawn in and Satan has no on those who believe if you're listening in you're not yet a believer in Christ maybe this is a hard one I find it hard enough to believe that Jesus is the son of believing that there is a personal devil that's another thing altogether I want to say this to you can you not acknowledge that there's some alien power that has something on you that you long to escape and as you come to

Jesus I want to tell you if you come to Jesus to have that sin written up as a debt cancelled you will find that that alien power is suddenly terminated if the son will set you free you will be free indeed please take that into consideration and please come to Christ now there's a question that I think many of us ask of John 12 31 and that question is if

[29 : 22] Satan has been cast out expelled at the cross why is he so evident in my life if there is an eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels as scripture tells us did God not cast him out there immediately it's a massive question and it's already one minute to twelve but I and I it's really for another day but I want to attempt answers here's the first one when Moses came out of took the people out and brought them to the edge of the promised land

God arranged for the covenant to be renewed this bond that God makes with his people and Moses related to them what the covenant involved and what the covenant expectations of them were and then Moses said these things interesting he said the secret things belong to the Lord but the things that are revealed belong to you and to your children after you and he's saying there there's two sorts of things to consider here there's there's what's clearly given to us revealed from God and we take those and we love them and meditate on them but there are secret things and Moses may well have been speaking about judgments on the people and they we have to say about them that they're not ours to question why or when

God will finalize his judgment but there's another answer that I want to give and that is back at the cross itself how did Satan view the cross how did Satan think things were developing as he got Jesus to Jerusalem and had him taken into the courts of the high priest and Herod and Pilate and had him buffeted and spat upon and mocked and then taken out to be strung up on that piece of wood and Jesus had said to the Jewish authorities this is your hour and the power of darkness and

Satan this was his hour this was his finest hour and then as you thought about how Satan looked at it think on Jesus he says here in this passage that he's pleading with his father save me from this hour but for this purpose I've come to you he's feeling the total strain but he turns to God and asks him to glorify his name and the reply is this I have glorified it and I'll glorify it again and what I want you to see is that Satan's finest hour was the very hour that showed up

Jesus in his greatest glory to show him up in all his goodness poured out to all people to show the beautiful holiness that he has in himself to show his justice his perfect justice and it's there where Satan was doing his damndest that Christ is most beautiful most glorious now take that to yourselves and ask yourself why why Lord why Lord does it keep on happening why why the attacks of Satan so persistently if he's really cast out why am I being pummeled day after day in temptation why is he still firing these arrows into my head arrows of irrational doubts and anxieties galore and even blasphemies and why why has he implanted in me that thorn in my flesh that makes me herple through life why

[35 : 17] Lord and why the hindrances to the church and the answer that comes back is that when you go to the cross you see that this is the way of glory that in Satan's finest hour if I could call that in your life that is when Jesus can say now is the son of man glorified you see I'll say this carefully but God uses Satan for himself Satan he is God Satan to do whatever he likes with it and to bring the greatest glory through the combat with the devil

God so for ourselves in the ongoing struggle asking why is he still here and the answer at least in part comes to us that we overcome the dragon through the blood of the lamb it's through what Jesus has done for us and that cross replicated in our daily lives and experience that we conquer and we become more than conquerors let's pray thank you dear God for a great victory thank you that on the cross Satan was cast out help us to live in the freedom of having no enemy taking leverage on our lives help us to rejoice that our debt has been cancelled and that you have triumphed over him for

Jesus sake Amen