

Confronting the Enemies of Christ

‘Three burly fellows on huge motorcycles pulled up to a highway cafe where a truck driver, just a little guy, was perched on a stool quietly eating his lunch. As the three fellows came in, they spotted him, grabbed his food away from him and laughed in his face. The truck driver said nothing. He got up, paid for his food, and walked out. One of the three cyclists, unhappy that they hadn’t succeeded in provoking the little man into a fight, commented to the waitress: “Boy, he sure wasn’t much of a man, was he?” The waitress replied, “Well, I guess not”. Then, looking out the window, she added, “I guess he’s not much of a truck driver, either. He just ran over three motorcycles”.’ Folks, just because I told this joke doesn’t in any way mean that I’m advocating this kind of behavior and “revenge”. What it does show is that ruthless and merciless enemies can emerge totally unexpectedly. It also shows that even when the fight seems flat out unfair, looks can truly be deceiving. For what chance could a little guy have against three burly guys? Who would put their money on him?

The truck driver, presumably didn’t have any real enemies before sitting down to eat his lunch. Then, out of the blue, three bullies, lowlifes, sorry excuses for men, barely better than animals, pull up this to same roadside cafe, spy someone weaker

than they, and proceed to humiliate him, steal his lunch, just because they can. They made themselves to be the driver's enemies. They weren't technically this man's enemies before they walked into that diner, but their mindset was such that they are already enemies of all whom they can overpower. In all of that, they serve as good examples of the enemies we all face in life.

Now maybe you've never had any kind of experience like this truck driver's. But those three thugs are still examples of one kind of enemy we, as Christians, members of the Kingdom of God, face daily on this earth. They are people, yet they are motivated by evil. As we've been taught in Ephesians 6:12, "For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places", those cyclists in themselves are not our enemies per se, but the evil spirits that they've allowed to influence them to do evil things. In that sense, we see these kinds of human "enemies" all around us, most especially in our world today. For even the most vile of people out there still have the potential to be saved. And Father God loathes to lose even one soul to eternal death.

And death, itself, is the final enemy to be subjugated by Lord Christ, as we read in I Corinthians 15:26, "the last enemy to be destroyed is death". There are many real enemies of Christ Jesus that assail against us and Him and the Kingdom of Heaven. These spiritual beings, some fallen angels, some demons, some

unclean spirits, are not a haphazard bunch of bad “guys”. Though these groups are not necessarily united as one powerful foe of the Lord, they all do work separately against the purposes of God, for the simple reason that all of them rebelled against God, or are the offspring of those who did and they’re following the evil ways of their progenitors. And there’s lots of them, millions possibly, or more. But every group has great, powerful leaders, and if it were possible, more evil than their copious underlings. The many “princes” among them fancy themselves as “gods”, “deities” that desperately want to glorify themselves, basking in the glory of the adulation and worship of as many humans as possible. For humanity was made for multiple purposes, not least of which is to worship Father God, and, in the Westminster Confession’s famous opening words, to “enjoy Him forever”. Humanity is “pre-programmed”, hardwired, installed with unalterable firmware, which causes us to automatically worship. It’s part of our self-identity. We innately know that we’re creatures meant to worship something outside of ourselves. But Lord Jesus’ enemies work overtime to divert our worship away from Him and onto themselves, and even to turn it back onto ourselves, where we worship the creature, us, rather than the Creator. The ultimate irony!

The great ones, as Ephesians 6 describes, are “rulers”, “powers”, “dark this-world forces”, and lower heavens, that is, outer space, “wicked, spiritual forces”. The greatest of them all is, of course, satan, meaning the “adversary”, whose name is lucifer.

For he was the most glorious of the angels God created, for the express and most exalted position of Heaven's worship leader, to direct all of creation's worship of God. As such, he was most glorious and beautiful to behold, almost like unto God Himself, which is to be expected if he was to direct the worship of all creation to God. But, as Ezekiel 28:15 says, "evil was found in you", and God "fired" him for he could no longer perform his duties, because he lusted to be worshipped himself. So influential and persuasive was he that not just he fell from Heaven, but a full third of God's angels joined his rebellion and all of them were defeated, expelled from Heaven by the archangel Michael and the loyal angels. So, bad guy that he is, satan is not the final enemy to be defeated by Christ. That distinction, as I said before, belongs to death itself.

All sentient living things, are spiritual beings. God is Spirit, and everything sentient that He created are like Him, in that they are spirit beings, because He breathed His Own Spirit into them to make them alive. We humans are unique in that not only are we spirit beings, but we have bodies as well. And we will always have bodies, unlike all the other angels and spirits, whether good ones or bad ones. But our bodies will not remain physical forever. As those of us who are older can easily attest to, the older these physical bodies get, the more they have to go in for service and repairs at doctors' offices! Despite the best care and maintenance we give them, they eventually go caput, every last one of them. But though not originally designed to break down and die

when Adam was first created, his and Eve's sin caused them to lose their sustaining connection with God, and we've been dying ever since! Paul described it in I Corinthians 15:49-50: "Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly Man. What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever". So as God remedied this great Fall of Adam, our bodies must die, all so they can be resurrected, transformed, transfigured, at the last trumpet, into glorified, everlasting, never to decay again, physical-spiritual bodies, just like Christ Jesus' body was after His resurrection. And what great bodies those will be! I don't know about you, but I can hardly wait! But all in its due, perfect time.

Death is the final enemy Lord Jesus will subdue. For death is not a state of being, so much as it's a spiritual being itself. And it's ravenous! Seeking to devour as many of us as possible, as many souls as satan can deceive, death follows him around with its dark, wicked maw wide open waiting to "feed". But at the end of the Millennial Kingdom of Christ on this earth, death will be sent into exile, along with satan, and all ours and Christ's wicked enemies, into the lake of fire, to be forever and ever separated from God and the Kingdom of Heaven. For since all sentient beings were given life by God's Spirit, they are all spiritual and therefore, by definition, eternal beings. None of them and none of us ever "die", in the sense of ceasing to exist. No, the forever "second

death” for all the wicked and unrepentant, is an eternal separation from God Himself, the source of all life and good.

Our Lord Christ Jesus had an immense mission assignment to accomplish when He came to earth 2,000 years ago. He was sent on a rescue operation that not only would save us, but would save the entirety of this physical universe in which we live and behold. He came to save us from our sins, because disobeying God automatically cuts us off from God’s sustaining eternal life. Adam sinned, and that connection was forever broken off, until Christ Jesus restored it at His resurrection. But it wasn’t just to restore that connection. For because the connection had been broken, all manner of evil beings had been given free rein over this earth and creation, usurping the authority over it that Father God had given to Adam, us, in the beginning. Not only did they despoil the creation, as magnificent as it still is, we only now can imagine how spectacular it was originally before the Fall, and even before the great flood of Noah’s time, but they have done all in their power to corrupt us, in their ultimately futile attempt to prevent us from ever living into the glorious purpose God originally designed us to be. For in the final analysis, we were made to be far greater than the evil ones, if for no other reason that they rebelled, and we have remained loyal to God. So folks, stay loyal to Him. To Him Who gave Himself, all of Himself, for you. He loves you, and will always love you. It only makes sense for us to fight His, our, enemies alongside Him and to love Him back!

