Our Enemies were Defeated

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[0:00] If you don't know me, my name's Sean, I'm part of the leadership team here. This morning we are continuing with the series we started a few weeks back entitled Seven Things That Happened on the Cross.

Now, clearly, a lot of things happen on a cross, but these are things that happen differently on the cross that Jesus was on to any other cross in history.
These are unique seven things that occurred on the cross. And it's great as we lead up to Easter when we celebrate Jesus' resurrection that we are focusing on the cross, that place that was such a terrible death but then led to resurrection and new life.
And this morning we're looking at, as I said, the third in our series entitled Our Enemies Were Defeated.
So a victory, victory over enemies. But it says our enemies, so who are our enemies?
[1:20] Who is the victory over? Okay, so I felt actually in order to look at our enemies and then see how they were defeated, I thought it important to start right back at the beginning in Genesis.

So many of you will know that in the beginning there was nothing, just God. And then he spoke creation into existence.
The earth, the sun, the moon, the sea, the land, the birds, the fish, the animals, the insects. All those things spoken into existence by God.
And it says in the Bible that God saw and these things were good. And then the pinnacle, mankind, is created.
And we picked this up actually in Genesis chapter 1 verses 27 to 28. I put it up on the screen. You can obviously look for it in your own Bible. But there are going to be a number of different verses popping up, all of which I hope will appear behind me.
[2:32] So, Genesis chapter 1 verse 27. So as I said, all these things have occurred. And then it says, so God created mankind in his own image.

In the image of God he created them. Male and female he created them. So, we are created in the image of God.
That is why, if you like, we are the pinnacle of creation. Created in his image. And God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful and increase in number.
Fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground.
And those two words in there, subdue and rule, are so, so important. We were created to rule over what God had created.
[3:33] So, God had created the earth. He put all of the animals and the birds on it. Then he created mankind that said, rule it and subdue it. Keep a control of it.

So, Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, they were to have dominion. They had dominion. They were to sort out the problems and they were to prevent invaders. All was perfect at this point.
And just a side note, well, not a side note really, something else.
But they were created for, we were created for relationship with God. It goes on a little later on in Genesis to say that God walked in the garden.
It was something clearly that had been happening. That God came and had time with Adam and Eve. A relationship was established between the creator and the created.
[4:34] And then as we move on a little bit, in a moment, into Genesis chapter 2, we find that a rule is introduced.

Only one, one condition. Everything but this. And we read that in Genesis 2, 16 and 17.
So this was a rule, a command, but there was a choice.

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Adam and Eve could take it or leave it. They could accept the rule, steer clear of that tree, or they could rebel. And it would appear, obviously, I mean, for a period of time, it could have been only a few minutes, or it could have been days, it could have been months, we don't know.
But for a period of time, they did not break this rule. They did not eat from this specific tree. So, at this point, it's still all perfect.
[5:48] But, God had an enemy. Or enemies, if you like. Satan and rebellious demons.

They had been angels and they had fallen. They had rebelled against God. And so, God had an enemy. And he appears into this garden where Adam and Eve are in the form of a serpent.
Now, Satan, he is a liar, a manipulator, and he hates God. And therefore, he hates creation. And most of all, he hates Adam and Eve.
Because they are created in God's image. They are there to have a relationship that he had lost. To have a relationship with God. And so, we read on.
The story carries on in Genesis 3, verses 1 to 4. Now, the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made.
[6:53] He said to the woman, Did God really say? So, there's the manipulation. Did God really say you must not eat from any tree in the garden?

Now, the woman stands her ground to start with. The woman said to the serpent, We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden. But God did say you must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden.
And you must not touch it or you will die. There we go. The rule is spoken again. And then the serpent chips in. You will not certainly die, the serpent said to the woman.
And so, we have here, God's enemy has come down to earth to Adam and Eve. And he starts to sow doubt into their minds.
Eve stands strong, but only momentarily. Now, it is at this point, Adam and Eve had a choice. They were to subdue everything on the earth.
[8:04] They were the rulers. They were in control. They had one command, to not eat of the tree. And they had some choices to make.

They could get rid of Satan. Because they were in control. Got rid of him completely. No, get out of here. Be gone. You're a liar.
We don't want you here. They could have taken that authority and subdued him. But sadly, so sadly for all of us, they capitulated, they surrendered to the lies and were defeated.
They gave up a certain victory. And all mankind defeated at that point.
And here we have our first enemy. And it is at this point, the second enemy enters.
[9:10] It is sin. It is disobedience. It is rejection of God and his rules. It was only one, but they rejected it. And sin, therefore, the second enemy, enters into the world as well.

And if that wasn't enough, the third enemy also turns up. Death. Death. God had said, if you eat of this tree, you will die.
Now, they didn't die physically for 700, 800 years, we're told. But spiritually, they died as soon as they ate of that fruit.
The relationship with God was broken and they were spiritually dead. And therefore, the third enemy had turned up. So we have three enemies here just in this short passage.
Satan, sin, and death. Adam and Eve, mankind, created for a relationship with God to rule the earth.
[10:21] But they were defeated at a tree. Isn't it? That's what we call a cross, a tree sometimes.

Defeated at that tree. The relationship, therefore, with God was broken because he could not be in relationship with sinful mankind. Not only was the relationship with God broken, but in not rejecting, kicking out Satan, instead, they bowed their knee to him and they said, basically, the authority that we had, it's all yours.
You now rule all the earth and everything in it. And Adam and Eve become slaves to Satan, to sin, and to death, our three enemies.
Such a sad story. It really is. I mean, we live in the truth of it. But, God had a plan.
Jesus, the Son of God, to come to earth as a baby, to live a sinless life and then to die on a tree.
[11:47] A cross. Now, the cross, a place usually considered, always considered, apart from this once, always considered as a place of defeat for those hanging on it.

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Clearly, they were defeated, often used for enemies of Rome. A place of defeat and yet a place of victory for the Romans.
Jesus gathered disciples to himself during his time and they had read about the Messiah.
It had been prophesied throughout the Old Testament and their expectation was that the Messiah would come and would bring an earthly kingdom to Israel.
but when Jesus was hung on a cross, they scattered because they thought no earthly kingdom.
[12:49] But it wasn't an earthly kingdom that Jesus came at that time to bring. Instead, he came to bring the kingdom of God, a spiritual kingdom, a restoration of relationship and Jesus won a spiritual victory on the cross.

And that is what we're going to look at this morning. We're going to start in Colossians chapter 2 verses 13 to 15.
It's a little complicated but I'll try and simplify it and draw it out for you as we go on. It starts at verse 13.
When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh. So, dead. There's death. Sins. There's another enemy.
The uncircumcision of your flesh. We were out of relationship with God. Circumcision was a physical sign for the Jewish nation of a relationship with God of sorts.
[14:04] It was through animal sacrifice. It was not perfect but there was relationship. We were not in a spiritual relationship with God. That's kind of what it means, uncircumcision of the flesh.

God made you alive with Christ. So, even when we were dead, God made us physically, spiritually alive. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness which stood against us and condemned us.
He's taken it away, nailing it to the cross. Wow, that's a bit wordy, isn't it? But I think basically, if you like, when we sin, it's all kind of written up.
There's a list of our sins and it's stacking up and stacking up and it's presented. This is the reason why you are rejected by God.
Your sins, this legal, if you like, this legal document of what we have done, presented, there it is before us and then Christ says, right, I'm going to take it, I'm going to put it up here and I'm going to nail it there and it is dead.
[15:11] Sin, dead, enemy broken. And then it goes on, so we've dealt there with sin, it's nailed to this cross, this place of defeat has become a place of victory where our sin is placed.

And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross. So, in Roman times, when a general had gone out with his army and they had a great victory over the enemy, what sometimes would happen was they would come back and they would have a triumphal procession through Rome.
They would ride in a chariot with four horses, this is the general. They would wear a laurel wreath and behind them, dragged along, would be their enemies, some of the key enemies, maybe they might have been kings or generals or key people that had been defeated.
They were brought along, displayed, if you like, a public spectacle before the city of Rome. And eventually, they would have been executed.
And in this, we see this is what Jesus was doing. So the powers and authorities, this is Satan and his demons, he has triumphed, he has defeated them by the cross and he publicly displays it, not only showing their defeat but also showing his victory as he went forth.
[17:11] I picked up something quite little, it was interesting, that as these generals were being paraded through the street, they would have someone behind them saying, you are not a god, you are not a god to them, so they didn't get too pumped up and everything.

But actually, when Jesus, on his triumphant journey, he is God, it's not that you are not a god, he is God, Jesus is God and he has triumphed over his enemies, our enemies on the cross.
So triumph came through this second tree, death and defeat through the first tree, triumph, victory through the cross, the second tree.
Okay, we move on, we've looked very briefly there at sin and Satan, we've got one more enemy to look at, death, let's go on in 2 Timothy 1, 9 and 10.
He has saved us and called us to a holy life, not because of anything we have done, but because of his own purpose and grace. We were powerless to defeat these enemies, we were dead in our sin, relationship broken with God and yet God broke in his grace.

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[19:00] He gave to us what we did not deserve, a restored relationship, sin washed away, new robes, a...

And yet he didn't give us what we did deserve, death, forever without him.
That is his grace. This grace, continuing in our passage, was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.
So Jesus died, he did die physically on the cross, but death could not hold him because he was sinless and therefore he was raised to life, restored, and in doing so he defeated our third enemy, death, and therefore we can be spiritually alive, restored in Christ.
It's good stuff, isn't it? But there is still a but. But what we've just discussed and what we actually experience in our lives can be quite different.
[20:24] there is still sin to explain. We are still able to sin. The devil still prowls and we still die physically.

In Hebrews 10, 12 to 13, it says this, but when the priest, this is Jesus, had offered for all time one sacrifice for his sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, and since that time he waits for his enemies to make his footstool.
Throughout the Bible, it talks about Jesus sitting at the right hand of God, having defeated sin, and waiting, it actually says, waiting for his enemies to be his footstool.
so Jesus ascended into heaven, he sat down until. So the victory is now, but not yet.
Christ conquered, but we are still fighting a battle. And for those of you who are aware of some of the things that happened in the Second World War, there was a day called D-Day where the British and their allies went forth and had a major victory over the Nazis and their allies.
[22:07] And that was in June 1944, and at that point, the war was effectively won. but then it took through to VE Day which was almost a year later on 8th of May 1945 when the war was finally finished.

And Jesus has defeated his enemies on the cross, but we are part of the final days of the war until the enemy becomes his footstool, until it's all wrapped up.
And so there is still fighting and a battle to be had. So how do we deal with three defeated enemies? Just a note here, a reminder that when Adam and Eve first created, they had that authority, they gave it to Satan.
When Jesus took this victory and defeated Satan on the cross, that authority was taken away from him. And for those who accept Jesus, that authority is given back to us.
So we now have that original authority in Christ. You may remember if you read the Gospels that Jesus sent out his disciples and he said, I'll give you all the authority to break the enemy.
[23:40] authority. And that is what we also have, that authority through Christ. And so let's look at our three enemies very briefly before we conclude.

Ephesians 6, 11 to 12, it says, put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.
So we've been told here by Paul that actually we need spiritual armor because we're still fighting. But we have been given authority and we have been given armor, so that's the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes, the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit.
We have this armor and this authority to stand against Satan and his demons. It goes on also, not only do we have the spiritual armor, Paul goes on in verse 18, which is not up there, but we are to pray in the spirit on all occasions.
So we are to be active, we are to be pressing this victory that Christ has won on the cross, but we should expect attacks.
[25:08] We are, if you like, in the last days, as I said, mopping up, breaking down the enemy. We need to seek the Holy Spirit.

We need to join with other believers, that is the church. We need to pray and we need to rebuke the enemy. Moving on then to the second enemy, sin, Romans 6, 14, for sin shall no longer be your master because you are not under the law but under grace.
I think we all know we can still sin, but we are no longer enslaved to it. We have a choice in Jesus.

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Through the Holy Spirit we are able to resist temptation, we are able to deal with sin. Sometimes we will sin and therefore we deal with it through repentance and seek his forgiveness.
But we need to make wise choices. That is what I watch, who I spend time with, what I do with my time. Remember our sin is nailed to the cross.
[26:20] It is defeated. Sin no longer accuses us as Christ's victory has brought us freedom. death. And then we will wrap up the final enemy, which is death.

This is a little more complicated. 1 Corinthians 15, 22-26, for as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive, but each in turn.
Christ, the first fruit, so Christ was the first to rise from the dead. then when he comes, those who belong to him, then the end will come when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father, after he has destroyed all dominion.
So this is then talking about the end end times, if you like, when he comes again the second time. For he must reign, there we go again, he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet, and the last enemy to be destroyed is death.
So we were spiritually dead, but in Christ we are spiritually alive. That happens when we accept and receive Jesus as our Lord and Saviour.
[27:33] We become spiritually alive. The relationship is restored, but physical death is still a certainty, and along with that comes sickness and disease and pain, that display of our human frailty.

But we are to oppose these things through the Holy Spirit and prayer. However, Christ has defeated death. He rose from the dead. He conquered.
He had the victory. And when he comes again, the Bible tells us that we will all rise. The dead will rise. Death finally will be completely destroyed, and eternity awaits those who have received Jesus as their Lord and Saviour.
no tears, no pain, no suffering. So Jesus defeated our enemies on the cross. We need the Holy Spirit.
Jesus said, I will send my Holy Spirit. We need the Holy Spirit and each other to press that victory home. we need to be active in this battle.
[28:56] Could the plan come up, please? I'm just going to, I want to pray, and then we'll... just before I pray, I had a verse earlier on, I just felt maybe for a few people here that are really struggling with life at the moment.

It says this, and this is 2 Thessalonians 3, verse 16, and just as I was looking it up, we actually started singing about peace. It says this, now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way.
Amen, yes, may God's peace be with each one of us. I just want to pray, and then we will worship.
Lord Jesus, what a victory.
What a victory. Thank you that even as you rose again and you went into heaven, you said I will pour out my spirit upon us.
And so I pray first of all, Holy Spirit would you come fresh upon us. May we experience your empowering, your encouraging, your building up. Help us to be ready for the battle.
[30:18] I pray especially maybe for those who have not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Lord, would you come in power upon them this morning. May they know the reality of this victory in their lives and receive your power, your leading.

May we all receive a fresh filling of your Spirit because we need your Spirit, Lord. Without you we can do nothing. Pray against the enemy's schemes in our lives, whether that's sickness or suffering, maybe relationships broken.
I pray that his schemes would be thwarted and we would resist him and he would flee from us in the authority you've now given us in Christ. And help us, Lord, to resist temptation and sin, to stand firm, to be more like Christ.
Lord, I pray for those who are sick here this morning. I pray for healing. I pray for those who are in chains. I pray for breaking of chains. Lord, I pray that there would be something more of your kingdom coming here this morning as the enemy is pressed out of here.
As we take the authority you have given us that Adam and Eve didn't take, that we would stand against the enemy and say, be gone from this place, be gone from our lives, for Christ has the victory.

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[31:45] Amen.

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