

June 7, 2015
Sermon for the Second Sunday after Pentecost
St. Peter Lutheran Church
Bowie, TX
Larry Knobloch, Pastor
Mark 3:20-35

J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus

Mark 3:20–35 (ESV)

²⁰ Then he went home, and the crowd gathered again, so that they could not even eat. ²¹ And when his family heard it, they went out to seize him, for they were saying, “He is out of his mind.” ²² And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying, “He is possessed by Beelzebul,” and “by the prince of demons he casts out the demons.” ²³ And he called them to him and said to them in parables, “How can Satan cast out Satan? ²⁴ If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. ²⁵ And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand. ²⁶ And if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot stand, but is coming to an end. ²⁷ But no one can enter a strong man’s house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. Then indeed he may plunder his house. ²⁸ “Truly, I say to you, all sins will be forgiven the children of man, and whatever blasphemies they utter, ²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit never has forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin”— ³⁰ for they were saying, “He has an unclean spirit.” ³¹ And his mother and his brothers came, and standing outside they sent to him and called him. ³² And a crowd was sitting around him, and they said to him, “Your mother and your brothers are outside, seeking you.” ³³ And he answered them, “Who are my mother and my brothers?” ³⁴ And looking about at those who sat around him, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! ³⁵ For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”

Grace, mercy, and peace from the one who touches our lives, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I recently read a story that tells the story of the old landlord. Suppose you live in a run-down apartment. The walls and ceilings have holes. The carpets are threadbare. The windows leak cold air in the winter and bugs in the summer. Each month the landlord comes to collect. He warns of an increase in the already high rent. When you hesitate, he threatens fewer services and even higher rent.

You are miserable, but since you have nowhere else to go, you keep paying. One day there is a gentle knock at your door.

Opening your door only a crack, you discover a nicely dressed and smiling young man. He explains that he has just purchased your apartment building. As your new landlord, he asks permission to come in and inspect your rooms. He is appalled with what he sees. He promises to begin repairs immediately and cancels all your debts. You can't believe your ears!

But just then there is another knock at the door. You swing open the door only to discover your old landlord glaring at you. He demands extra rent, immediately. What should you do—give in to his intimidations and pay? You're too weak to fight him yourself. But wait—the building doesn't belong to him anymore. It now belongs to the generous new landlord. Why argue with the old landlord—tell him to take it up with the new owner. You don't owe any further explanation! ¹

¹ *The Renewed Mind* (Bethany House, 1981), Larry Christiansen.

Like the old landlord, Satan is always demanding, always attacking us. Often, through the force of his evil ways and because his accusations of our sins are correct, he intimidates us into serving him.

But you have been bought with a price!
You now belong to Jesus, your new landlord.

Whenever Satan reminds you of sins you have repented of, or tries to coerce you into serving evil desires, simply tell him to take it up with your new landlord. Your debts...your sins... are forgiven.

Regardless of how often he keeps coming back, send him packing and trust the promises of the new owner, Jesus Christ.

Jesus defeated sin, death, and the devil once and for all. Jesus bought each one of us with a price—his blood. Even though Satan tries to convince us otherwise, we are very precious to Jesus. As we reflect upon Jesus' love and forgiveness, we gain strength to overcome temptations and strength to battle against evil. Recall Jesus' words: *"no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man."*

Although Satan is strong, Jesus is stronger!
Satan has his strategies. He tries to convince people that he may still win.

Evil sometimes does triumph in the world—but temporarily!
Satan tries to control and dominate us, as with those possessed by demons in our text. Possession may be rare today but only because Jesus has tied Satan up.

Satan attempts to discourage people from coming to Jesus by slandering Jesus' name and power (vv 22, 30; Acts 13:8). He would have us believe Jesus' gracious rule is evil, and His commands are not for our own good.

He tries to discredit the church today through scandals, etc. Tempting and attacking all the more those that serve Jesus and His church. From the pastor all the way through the congregation.

Satan even tried to talk Jesus out of offering His life on the cross as the substitutionary sacrifice for our sins (Matt 4:1–11).

But yet, Jesus triumphed.

Jesus overcame the devil's temptations and went to the cross. Your Savior has bound Satan, not by mere words but through His perfect life, death, and resurrection (3:27). All done for you in your stead.

Jesus said the words: *"It is finished"* (John 19:30). And it is! Though battles still rage, Jesus won the war on the cross. Victory is His, and final victory is assured for those who trust in Him as their Lord and Savior.

Jesus is stronger. God's Word tells us in 1 John 4:4: *"Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."*

Jesus has overcome the world! He has tied up the "strong man" who would terrify us. Satan may hinder us and cause problems, but Jesus will not let him prevail. And that includes your work in the Church from carrying out God's work of proclaiming the Gospel.

Jesus takes the victory from Satan and defeats his kingdom.

Satan falls whenever the Gospel is proclaimed and people are baptized into the kingdom of God.

Through the means of grace, Jesus frees precious souls from Satan's oppression and brings them into the safety of His marvelous grace.

So where does that leave us? What do we do? What is our response? Jesus invite and calls us to pray for the coming of His kingdom (Matt 6:10). That whole part of "*Thy Kingdom come*" that we pray in the Lord's Prayer is important.

We live in the tension of "*the kingdom is here*" (Matt 12:28), and it is yet "*to come*" (Matt 6:10).

In this life we must be on guard and combat evil, but we do so knowing God is with us and confident of Christ's victory.

If someone has already told you about the happy ending, a scary movie or suspenseful book no longer creates fear.

The final outcome of the war with Satan is already known: Jesus has won. In the midst of Satan's tempting, we cherish our knowledge of the end of this story; it finds us resting securely in Jesus' arms in heaven.

We have been set free—free to proclaim Jesus' forgiveness and peace. As the church militant—the church at war on earth—we labor with Word and Sacrament to free others so they may join us in the eternal church triumphant.

In gratitude we do the will of God (v 35). This involves the faith in our hearts, the confession of our lips, and our good works.

We may be tempted to give in to our old landlord and his constant nagging.

As sinners it is natural.

From time to time we may forget the victory that is ours.

But when satan, the old landlord knocks, let Jesus answer the door.

Whether we do this by God's Word or in prayer, satan cannot stand before the presence of Christ. So don't even give the devil the time of day. Don't argue with your old sins and temptations because Jesus now owns that building. As and He owns your heart now, let Him deal with your old debtor, because He has already paid.

And as we await the fulfillment of Christ's promise of eternal life, we enjoy life under our new landlord.

You are redeemed!

Jesus tells us: *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."* John 10:10 (ESV)

This is the abundant life of which Christ spoke.

In Christ we not only meet Satan's challenge, we are more than conquerors—we are victors!

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria – To God alone be the glory

Sermon Outline

Satan Is Strong, but Jesus Is Stronger

Mark 3:20-35

1. Satan's strategies.
2. Jesus triumph.
3. Our response.