

To the Saints of God at Topeka, Kansas January 15, 2017

Note: Part of this sermon was adapted from Martin Luther.

THE PRINCE OF THE POWER OF THE AIR & HIS ULTIMATE FAILINGS CONSIDERING THE ELECT OF GOD

Beloved, since The Fall, Satan has had time to refine his beguiling strategies, craft his fiery darts for improved accuracy and destructiveness, and enhanced his arsenal of offensive weaponry to lay siege and pierce the souls of mankind. It is only by taking the shield of faith, helmet of salvation and sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God (Christ) (Eph. 6:16-17), that we can overcome him.

One of Satan's most potent devices is to convince us that sin has no real consequences or that they are cancelled by time or by man-invented endeavors. The more man seeks credit for himself by his own efforts, the deeper he goes into debt with God. Satan knows that nothing can take away sin except the grace of God. In actual living, however, it is not so easy to persuade oneself that by grace alone, in opposition to every other means, we can obtain the forgiveness of our sins and peace with God. The world brands this a pernicious doctrine. We desperately want to perform this action by our own merit. The world advances free will, the rational and natural approach of good works, as the means for forgiveness of sin. But it is impossible to gain peace of conscience by the method and means of the world. We find no rest for our weary bones unless we cling to grace, and grace alone.

Our works, all works - forever forgotten,
without merit, without power, buried and dead.
The Son - the Everlasting Gift to a few,
free love, free grace, free mercy, from the Godhead.
Undeserved, unrequited, and Unearned.

Eph. 2:4-10 –

4 ¶ But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness

toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

As a “gift,” the receiver has done nothing (from the least to the greatest) whatsoever to earn it. The word “gift” means: a present or offering. There is no entitlement, claim or proffer for it. You have no standing or coin in this realm to earn it, in any way at all. It is not of our desiring, nor of our deserving, nor of our performing, but is of the free grace of God. You have nothing, done nothing, or can ever do anything in the future or with your life to earn credits or favor with God. The whole world cannot make amends for a single sin. The natural man does not have the spiritual eyes to fully understand sin’s fundamental nature. The natural man underestimates and makes light of sin. Satan blinds the eyes of men in this matter. So virulent and vicious is sin that it takes the ransom of Christ - God the Father’s only Son, to atone for it. Sin is grossly understated by man; it embraces the whole kingdom of Satan.

Eph. 2:1 And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

The “prince of the power of the air” means that subject to God’s limits, Satan is the ruler, commander, chief, and leader in that jurisdiction. The air is represented as the seat of Satan’s kingdom. The expositors say that there are legions of apostate angels that fill the air (Matthew Henry, says that “lower region of the air”) and that there is one power over them. These multitudes of devils are noxious and accusing spirits that have their residence in the air and fly about and do Satan’s bidding. Air is all around us – we cannot run or escape from it! Satan himself is a spirit, and an evil, and an unclean one; and who operates powerfully in unbelievers. Satan has great influence, especially over the reprobate part of them; whose minds he blinds, and whose hearts he fills, and puts it into them to do the worst of crimes and to do as much mischief and cruelty to the world as he

can. The wicked are slaves to Satan. They walk according to him, and conform their lives and actions to his will and pleasure. The course and tenor of their lives are according to his suggestions, and in compliance with his temptations; they are subject to him, and are led captive by him at his will, whereupon he is called the god of this world, and the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. It is with these eyes that we realize that we are truly behind enemy lines.

2Co 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out.

John 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.

John 16:11 Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.

Satan is called the god and prince of this world, not by right, but because he has usurped dominion over it, and has great power and efficacy in the hearts of the children of disobedience, who yield a voluntary subjection to him, as if he was their proper lord and sovereign. The time is shortly coming when he will be cast out of the empire of the world he has assumed.

You cannot reform Satan. All mankind is sold under sin. Sin is a self-replicating virus that cannot be vanquished by any created power, but by the sovereign power of Jesus Christ alone. There is a false conception of sin, that it is a small matter of insignificant trifles. No, Satan, you cannot delude us into thinking we are holy. Your Jedi mind tricks, only work on the weak minded and spiritually blind. The truth is that we are all sin. Our sins are not imaginary transgressions, but sins against the Almighty. They are sins of unbelief, doubt, contempt, hatred, ignorance of God, ingratitude, and so much more.

Luke 4:5-6 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto him, All this power

will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

Devil - Strong's 1228 - AV-devil 35, false accuser 2, slanderer 1; 38

1) prone to slander, slanderous, accusing falsely

1a) a calumniator (to utter maliciously false statements) , false accuser, slanderer,

2) metaph. applied to a man who, by opposing the cause of God, may be said to act the part of the devil or to side with him.

Satan the prince of the demons, the author of evil, persecuting good men, estranging mankind from God and enticing them to sin, afflicting them with diseases by means of demons who take possession of their bodies at his bidding.

Satan is puffing here. It is true, that he is the prince of this world and has some power, but whatever power is given or delivered to him (over the ungodly and godly) is done so at the peculiar and sole prerogative of God. Satan cannot dispose of the goods of a single man (Job), nor of a herd of swine, nor enter into them without leave from God. Satan is full of pride and arrogance and blinded by it.

Indeed, these demon spirits are always on the ready to step up and fly to deceive this flesh. Look at this wonderful picture of how the Lord used them to send Ahab to his promised death:

2 Chr. 18:14-22 And when he was come to the king, the king said unto him, Micaiah, shall we go to Ramothgilead to battle, or shall I forbear? And he said, Go ye up, and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your hand. 15 And the king said to him, How many times shall I adjure thee that thou say nothing but the truth to me in the name of the LORD? 16 Then he said, I did see all Israel scattered upon the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master; let them return therefore every man to his house in peace. 17 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell thee that he would not prophesy good unto me, but evil? 18 Again he said, Therefore hear the word of the LORD; I saw the LORD sitting upon his throne, and all the host of heaven standing on his right hand and on his left. 19 And the LORD said, Who shall entice Ahab king of Israel, that he may go up and fall at Ramothgilead? And one spake saying after this manner, and another saying after that manner. 20 Then there came out a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will entice him. And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? 21 And he said, I will go out, and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And the LORD said, Thou shalt entice him, and thou shalt also prevail: go out, and do even so. 22

Now therefore, behold, the LORD hath put a lying spirit in the mouth of these thy prophets, and the LORD hath spoken evil against thee.

Matthew Henry says that this spirit is of the power of Satan. He says that the devil destroys men by deceiving them and is thereby a murderer.

Gal 1:3 Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ,4 Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.

Paul says that this is a “*present evil world.*” Everything in this world is subject to the malice of Satan, who reigns over the whole world as his domain and fills the air with ignorance, blasphemy, contempt, hatred and disobedience to God. Man is not inherently *good* - that is Satan blinding the eyes of this world. This is the devil’s kingdom that we live in. Nothing can be good in this kingdom. Nothing. The world, with all its wisdom, technology, science, knowledge, energy, might and righteousness is the devil’s own – nothing more, nothing less. As long as a person is in the world he or she cannot by his or her own efforts rid themselves of sins, because Satan and this world are hell bent on evil.

..Our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins... according to the will of God and our Father (Gal. 1:3-4). We have nothing that we can offer here. If Christ does not willingly give himself for our sins, we are dead in our transgressions. The heavy artillery of these words explode papacy, works righteousness, free will and superstition. Sin cannot harm true believers in Christ because He has conquered sin by His death. The pronoun “our” is important and significant in these verses.

We readily grant that Christ gave Himself for the sins of Peter, Paul and others who were worthy of such grace. But we must also have faith in God to believe that Christ gave Himself for *our* sins and that he is *our* Lord, and *our* Father. Be assured that Christ has canceled the sins, not of certain persons only, but your sins. Let us praise and thank God for His mercy in delivering us from the captivity of Satan, when we were unable by our own strength to do so. Let us accurately reflect that our works-righteousness is worthless dung. Let us condemn as filthy rags all talk about free will, religious orders, masses, ceremonies, vows, fastings, soup kitchens, pot luck dinners, trunk or treats, Boy Scouts, volunteering and the like.

1 John 4:10 *Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

Psalm 130:1 *Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. 2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. 3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4 But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. 5 I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope. 6 My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning: I say, more than they that watch for the morning. 7 Let Israel hope in the LORD: for with the LORD there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption. 8 And He shall redeem Israel from all his iniquities.*

But there is forgiveness with thee...

And with God only; not with angels, nor any of the sons of men; and which flows from his grace and mercy, through the blood of his Son. It appears to be with Him by his promise of it in covenant; by appointing his Son to shed his blood for it, and exalting him as a Saviour to give it; by proclaiming it in the Gospel; and by the numerous instances of it, both under the Old and under the New Testament. John Owen wrote a book on the 8 verses of Psalm 130 – 400+ pages long and I highly recommend it. God is going to redeem Israel, the elect of God from their mountains of original and actual sins including the secret and the open ones and the sins of heart, lips, and life.

The preceding arguments and demonstrations have, we hope, undeniably evinced the great truth that there is forgiveness with God, which is the life and soul of all our hope, religion and worship... The end of all of this discourse is to lay a firm foundation for [your] faith to rest upon... God for the forgiveness of sins, and to encourage all sorts of persons to this duty... [and to] seek after it.

The forgiveness that is with God is such as becomes him; such as is suitable to his greatness, goodness and all other excellences. It is great – such that therein he will be known to be God. It is not like that narrow, halving, and manacled (restrained) forgiveness found amongst men. It is full, free, boundless, bottomless, absolute, [and infinite] such as becomes His nature and excellences.

Zec. 3:1 *And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. 2 And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not*

this a brand plucked out of the fire? 3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. 4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

Satan - Strong's 07854 שטן *satan saw-tawn'*

1) *adversary, one who withstands*

1a) *adversary (in general-personal or national)*

2) *superhuman adversary*

It is not my intent to address the eschatology of these verses, but I do want to reflect on the 30,000 foot view of them. Satan stands always ready to resist Christ and accuse God's elect, even being at His very right hand to do so. When the people of God fall into sin, Satan, the accuser of the brethren (their avowed enemy), observes it, records it and accuses them before the Lord, and seeks their condemnation. He does so in open court against them, and charges them in a most spiteful, malicious, implacable and obstinate manner.

And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; These are wonderful words! Here Christ, the Son of God as a representative of the Godhead reproves Satan and makes a declaration against him for his hatred, malice and wickedness. He does not make a railing accusation, but instead states "The Lord rebuke thee."

Jude 9 - *Yet Michael the archangel (Christ), when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.*

This is a measured method of silencing Satan. He does not use a malicious tone and severe words (which Christ could have used and Satan arguably deserved). Christ would not behave in such a manner because that it comes right out of Satan's playbook and how Satan behaves and routinely conducts business. Instead our Christ uses a tempered approach that nonetheless confounds Satan's schemes, and restrains him from doing mischief. We must always be mindful of our Lord's example here! If the Lord restrained himself and would not do this, then we must not.

Even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem, rebuke thee: The Lord chose Jerusalem - that is the elect of God to completely acquit of their crimes. Satan's accusation was not

false, but the acquittal was out of the free love of God for His people. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Satan makes a go of it, but is shut down. The imputed love and sacrifice of Christ everlastingly answers Satan's charges and closes the door on payment of the sin, since the debt is paid in full.

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

The Lord rebuke thee Satan. God has justified the person(s) whom you seek to prosecute and condemn and you have no standing to bring the accusation and no case to make. Christ successfully pleads the case of God's elect. Who are you that condemn God's elect. Out of God's own sovereignty he swears that nothing will separate us from His love - nothing – not even Satan.

[is] not this a brand plucked out of the fire? The elect of God, through the grace, mercy, love, and power of God, are plucked out of this state by Christ's effectual calling, and are secured from everlasting destruction. He as much as says to Satan, you must cease imputing sin to them, on whom God has had mercy. Satan is reprimanded for attempting to bring any who are instances of such grace and goodness into condemnation. This is an ill-advised, wicked, malicious, bold, daring, vain and fruitless endeavor since such are secured by the grace and power of God, and are preserved for everlasting glory and happiness. Hence God, as our Redeemer and the eternal guardian of our salvation, is armed against Satan in order to restrain him. And, though we are unworthy that God should fight for us, yet His election is sufficient, as He proclaims war against Satan on our behalf. Let us then learn to rely on the gratuitous adoption of God, if we would boldly exult against Satan and all his assaults. It is not our power that saves the day, but God and His alone.

Jude: 21 Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. 22 And of some have compassion, making a difference: 23 And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh.

3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel.

4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.

The pardon of God's elect continues. God's elect are not taken away in chains of darkness (2 Pet. 2:4), but instead their sins are removed from sight and replaced with white raiment/robes (Rev. 3:5, 6:11). This is the ultimate "visual" of our sins being forgiven and remembered no more. Gill says *Christ took his iniquity upon himself, bore and made satisfaction for it, and removed it as far from him as the east from the west; and now caused the guilt of it to pass from his conscience, and gave him a comfortable view of the free and full pardon of it.* In addition, another happy thought is that "garments" is plural and most likely suggests multiple suits of apparel, with which changes might be frequently made. This robe of righteousness Christ has wrought out for his people, and he clothes them with it; it is his gift unto them, and they receive it from him; by which they are freed from all sin and condemnation, and their persons and services are accepted with God. The word "behold" is prefixed to this declaration of pardon, to ascertain the truth of it, to fix his attention to it, and raise his admiration at it. The pardon is confirmed, God's elect are as it were reinstated in full and holy communion with God as before the fall. The significance of the full pardon, a gift, without any element of being earned or deserved is why the elders fell down and cast their crowns before the throne.

Rev. 4:10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. 7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. 8 And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? 9 Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? 10 Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. 11 But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face. 12 And the LORD said unto

Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

Now there was a day the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD...

This is generally understood of the good angels, so they may be said to go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth into the several parts of all the world, to do the will and work of God assigned them and then, having done their work, return again, and present themselves before the Lord, to give an account of what they have done, and to receive fresh orders from him, being ready to do his pleasure in everything he shall or that they appear before him pursuant to a special occasion.

...and Satan came also among them. 7 And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

Satan, that old serpent, the great dragon (Rev. 12:9) comes as the adversary of the Elect of God and appears before God either for the express purpose of accusing Job, or because God required his presence to give an account of himself. The LORD inquires as what Satan has been up to. Then Satan gives a non-answer. Joseph Caryl says that we should not think that God speaks by forming a voice with organs or instruments of speech. He says it is an allusion to the manner of men. Caryl says it was either a voice God created in the heavens or spoke in a spirit without forming a voice at all and was a declaration of God's will and mind unto the angels minds. Caryl says God's question here put, is not for information, as if the Lord did not know whence he came, but it was to extract a confession from Satan (such as when God asked Cain where Abel was, when he full well knew what had happened because Abel's blood among other things cried out to him and God sees all). Caryl also says that the mere question put to Satan in this manner was to communicate that God was intimating a dislike or abhorrence for what Satan did and to suggest that God well knew that Satan had come from murders, thefts, adulteries, blasphemies and from provoking men to all wickedness. That is, by asking this question, God is putting Satan on the defensive.

Satan could not pretend he had been doing any good, could give no such account of himself as the sons of God could, who presented themselves before the Lord, who came from executing his orders, serving the interest of his kingdom, and ministering to the heirs of salvation. Satan would not own he had been doing any hurt, that he had been drawing

men from the allegiance to God, deceiving and destroying souls and causing misery - no. In saying that he had walked to and fro through the earth, he intimates that he had kept himself within the bounds allotted him, and had not transgressed his bounds; for the dragon is cast out into the earth (#Re 12:9) and not yet confined to his place of torment. While we are on this earth we are within his reach, and with so much subtlety, swiftness, and industry, does he penetrate into all the corners of it, that we cannot be in any place secure from his temptations.

Or, he answered swaggering and boasting, as if he was indeed the God of the whole world, the Prince and King of it, and had and exercised a sovereign dominion over it, and as such had been making a tour through it, and taking a survey of it, see #Mt 4:8, and as if he was at full liberty to go where he pleased, and was under no control. Caryl says that as Satan moves in the earth he goes about as a spy, to search, inquire, observe and diligently consider all things for the purpose of his recreation which is to tempt and draw men to hell. Satan, craftily conceals his real intent if as much as to say that that he is like a pilgrim walking in the earth.

The Lord then asks Satan if he had considered His servant Job. Satan then makes accusations against Job that if the Lord will take away Job's prosperity that Job will curse God.

And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

God, puts hard constraints on what Satan can and cannot do, though Satan does not want to admit it. Satan can do nothing without God's expressive leave. Then Satan went forth from the presence of the Lord. You can almost see the skip in Satan's steps and glee in his eye with the thought that he has the okay to commit acts of terrorism against Job and his family. As soon as Satan had got leave, he at once went forth to execute what he had permission to do, glad at heart he had so far succeeded; and eager upon doing all the mischief he could to a man that was the butt of his malice, and the object of his envy and hatred; the sad effects and consequences of which follow. This is Satan's role in this life, to create mayhem, temptation, sin and destruction and cause as much grief as possible on earth and to God's elect. Satan intends it for evil, but God intends it for good.

I love you! Amen.