

Colossians 2:6-15

"Christ is Victor, as well as Savior"

Colossians 2:6-15 NLT

And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to him. ⁷ Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with thanksgiving for all he has done.

⁸ Don't let anyone lead you astray with empty philosophy and high-sounding nonsense that come from human thinking and from the evil powers of this world, and not from Christ. ⁹ For in Christ the fullness of God lives in a human body, ¹⁰ and you are complete through your union with Christ. He is the Lord over every ruler and authority in the universe.

¹¹ When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. It was a spiritual procedure—the cutting away of your sinful nature. ¹² For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to a new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.

¹³ You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ. He forgave all our sins. ¹⁴ He canceled the record that contained the charges against us. He took it and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross. ¹⁵ In this way, God disarmed the evil rulers and authorities. He shamed them publicly by his victory over them on the cross of Christ.

the other mo at NYMC Coord Council mtg , during devotional time I mentioned that I had come to major new understanding in my faith. radically changed in how I see something.

can be good: shows not "set in my ways" or stopped learning in old age.
can be dangerous: every novel understanding of Chrn truth has prob already been thot-of in some part of the ch ...& denounced-as-heresy.

almost preached this new understanding last June. decided wait / mull it over more.
now going to preach on it this Sun , next , & the following .
(this one - easing into it.)

begin by rdg part of a v :

1 John 3:8 ...The reason the Son of God appeared was...

how would you answ that?

why did J come to earth? why did J become a human being?

most of us Chrns here in Amer would say: so he could die on the cross for our sin. --

I'm a sinner.

God is all holy.

God can't have fellowship w a sinner like me unless J pays the price.

his death reconciles me to God.

the best-known sum is **Four Spiritual Laws** (drafted by the late Bill Bright of Campus Crusade in 1965).
(capitalization is part of Bright's presentation)

1. God LOVES you and offers a wonderful PLAN for your life.

2. Man is SINFUL and SEPARATED from God.

(thus we can't know and experience God's love and plan for life.)

3. Jesus Christ is God's ONLY provision for man's sin.

4. We must individually RECEIVE Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Then we can know and experience God's love and plan for our lives.

Four Spiritual Laws booklet ends with this prayer:

"Lord Jesus, I need you. Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Thank you for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Take control of the throne of my life. Make me the kind of person you want me to be."

God has used powerfully that sum of Chrn truth.

avoids the scare tactics of "hellfire-and-brimstone evang ."

emphasizes God's care for each individual.

more than 1.5 billion little booklets of "4 Sp Laws" published, in almost every nation on earth, in 100s of languages.

But. **Though true, it's incomplete.**

what do I mn "though true, it's incomplete"?

this is a pic of my son Daniel.



when I say "this is a picture of Daniel," though true, that description is incomplete.

only one part is Daniel.

also pic of bro Darrel helping him, & his sisters watching. & pic of an overlook near Frederick, MD.

so, have you caught what I mn when something " true but incomplete"?

the standard, American, evangelical answer that "Jesus become a human being so he could die on the cross for our sin" is true. but it's only one part of why Jesus came to earth. It's true but incomplete.

for the first 1000 years of Christianity, church would not have answered that question that way. church would have quoted 1 John 3:8 -

1 John 3:8 ...The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

context is talking about people sinning. & needing to be "born of God" so stop sinning. why would John describe this as "Jesus destroying the devil's work"?

need to go back to the beginning, to Genesis.

why did God create human beings in the first place. Genesis 1 - we're created to be kind of mini-examples of God. gives us his authority. viceroys.

God has plan for earth he created. but rather than govern this earth himself, directly, chooses to do it through us. we his "image" / rep.

God gave us authority over the earth (Genesis 1-2).

his goal is for us to align our hearts with his, & then carry out his will on earth. gives us an authority to be little kings/queens on earth who submit to supreme King of kings.

why says in Genesis 1 "have dominion over the earth." not dominate. but domesticate. loving, providential, guardianship.

that's why he told Adam to name the animals --"you decide what they are going to be called." (to name something in the ancient world was to have authority over it.)

tremendous responsibility. be a steward of earth.

we squandered our authority. we surrendered it over to God's cosmic arch-enemy. Satan.

apparently was some kind of civil war going on in heavenly realms long before we human beings arrived on scene.

& we in Genesis 3 did something that invited the forces-of-rebellion into our world, that brought the demonic realm from the heavenlies onto this earth: we sinned. obeyed the Serpent & his will. were surrendering our authority over to Satan.

We surrendered that authority to Satan when we sinned (Genesis 3).

the authority that we were to have & use-to-care-for-this-earth, we surrendered over to a regime who is not interested in having the earth be a domain where God is king --the "king of God." now, all over the earth we see beings who want earth as part of their own domain.

is that really the case --that we surrendered authority over this earth to Satan??

look how the NT refers to Satan:

Satan is "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31, 14:30, 16:11)

in Gospel of John Jesus 3 times refers to Satan as "the ruler of this earth/ the prince of this world."

Greek *archon*, referred to whoever was "boss" or CEO in a given region. Satan is the ruling CEO of our planet. because we surrendered our authority over to him.

Paul refers to Satan as

"the god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4)

"the prince of the power of the air" (Ephesians 2:2)

look at this verse:

"The whole world is under the control of the evil one." (1 John 5:19)

Satan in **Luke 4:5-6** shows to Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world" & says "they've been given to me. & I can give their authority and glory to anyone I want."

& offers them to Jesus.

Jesus doesn't dispute that Satan can offer all the kingdoms.

people wonder "how come bad things happen to good people / how come evil things happen in this world?"

but if realize what the Bible says, not all that surprising.

--world has been seized by this anti-God power. polluting, corrupting.

main question should be: "why do good things happen?" given the dark cloud that surrounds entire world.

it's bec God has not abandoned this world.
pouring his grace into this planet --"common grace" that goes to all &
"amazing grace" to who will enter rel w him.

God is fighting for this planet.

the cosmic battle betw good & evil, light & darkness that's been going on in
heavenlies for eons, has been enjoined in this planet.

why the world is so contradictory:

see much that reflects the glory of God's good design
in world of nature (Rom 1).
in strides toward elimination of slavery, valuing the handicapped.
in music of Mozart, Debussy (Clare de lune)

but also see a lot that is ugly, repulsive, dehumanizing.
some guy in Iraq going into market & blowing himself up & taking 30
innocent people w him - not glorify God.
having a million kids under age of 7 being gassed in WW2 -
genocide in Darfur -
fact that a third of the world is hungry this very min -
the AIDS that is ravishing Africa & others around the world -

& into this war zone came J .
when he met up against sickness and disease and blindness, never once said
"this is how it's all supposed to be."
he didn't have a "theology of resignation" (resign himself to the status quo).
had a "theology of revolt."
when he was healing people, was revealing F's will / k .

Jesus came to vanquish Satan and the powers of darkness and to free the entire creation

J comes into world and starts the beginning of the end for reign of Satan &
diabolical powers.

see this thru NT. already looked at some vvs :

1 John 3:8 - reason Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work.

John 12:31 - in context of talking about being "lifted up" on the cross &
dying, J says the *archon* of this world will be driven out.

Hebrews 2:14-15 - *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too [Jesus] shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--¹⁵ and free those who all*

their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

yes, a huge part of how he "freed ..." was by dying on the cross for their sins.
--when he found a race of guilty sinners / doomed to eternal death bec wages
of sin is death, **he died in their place on the cross.**
--when the Devil said to God, "these are mine -- they have obeyed me -- they
can't come back to you bec you are a holy God," J erased the Devil's grasp
on sinners by bearing their penalty of death himself.

Col 2:13-14 (Sc rdg) ...*He forgave us all our sins,¹⁴ having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.*
he came into this world to reconcile us to the the F .

but that truth is just one part [gesture] of whole, broader pic :
continue on in Col 2.

Colossians 2:15 **came to** disarm *the powers and authorities / make a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*
(ESV, NAS "triumphing over them in him.")

the ch for the first 10 centuries of its history delighted in telling the story J as a
story of victory.

"Christos Victor" (Latin for "Christ is Victor")

imagine the fun we would have telling the story of a young policeman who has
rescued some hostages at great physical cost, including his own temporary
capture and torture.

the story of J is even better bec stakes are higher, the stage is greater, &
you & I were among the hostages!

the early ch would tell & retell how, as a human, J died and gained entrance
to Hades; & then how, as God, he blasted it open and set the captives free.

why is it impor we see the full picture & not only [gesture] one part?

how we view Christ has huge impact in shaping our Chrn life.

when we begin to reframe what J was "about", reframe what we are "about."

the typical Amer evang way of understanding J's life & the cross is very
individualistic.

--my indiv sin seps me from holy God, so J comes and dies for me.

but purposes of God much broader than just doing something good for
me & you. **God's goal is more than "individuals going to heaven."**

the "4 Sp Laws" omits some of main elements of salv .
 (every sum omits stuff. but not good if omits essential stuff.)
 place too much emphasis on the indiv , as if salv is only a personal and
 private transaction. No! it's part of a plan involving all of creation.

B has a more wholistic understanding of why J became man & died of cross.
 it includes fness of our indiv sins. but also includes much more.

J didn't just come to destroy our indiv sin.
 he came as an act of war.
 came to destroy sin itself / the principality and power behind all sin.
 came not just to forgive indiv racists. came to destroy the power of racism .

can say that he came to heal our sick bodies & souls. but that's incomplete.
 came to vanquish the virus that makes people sick in the first place.
 what J did applies to the cosmos, not just to us.

can say that he came to help the indiv poor people. but that's incomplete.
 came to destroy the principalities/powers that create poverty in the first
 place. --the demonic powers that create greed and social oppression.

came to make the earth the "dome in which God is king."

yes, the ch's msg must always have lots of indiv application.
 calling indivs to surrender their life to Christ, to make their life a "dome in
 which God is king" & set free from k of darkness.
 calling them to look for parts of their lives that are not in line w God's will.
 --"take every thot captive."
 also behaviors, relationships.

but, must not stop there. also calling them to look beyond their own pers lives.
 look for pockets of creation that are not in line w God's will.
 then manifest the truth and love and wisdom of God in bringing that back to
 God.

where hatred we bring love. bitterness - fness. sickness - offer healing.
 disunity - reconciliation.
 be "walking, talking demonstration" of God's kingdom, pushing back the k of
 darkness.

don't stop w goal of "me going to heaven."

God's goal is "heaven coming to earth." (next Sun!)

think of Lord's prayer: Thy k come...

see, when we Amer ch mainly think of J as Savior,
 if Christ mainly came to suffer so our sins could be forgiven, then it seems
 like God's main investment in my life is that I be forgiven & go to heaven.

& after I get saved --if I want to do some extra-- then maybe I'll do something
 to help k of God advance.

but when we realize Christ came to wage war --to bring in the K of God & push
 back K of darkness-- then that is what God is most invested in.

& that's what our lives must be about.

no longer just "me & J , on our way to heaven"

goal is glory of God fill whole earth as waters cover the sea.
 (again, stayed tuned for next Sun .)

one last observ . **A needed reminder:**

okay. if we are going to join this war. look for pockets of creation that are not
 in line w God's will, & then work to bring them back to God,
how do we do that?
 what's the flavor of our doing this?

had fun listening to MP3 by Greg Boyd "Christos Victor"

when start using war metaphors: plundering the enemy's camp, storming the
 gates of hell.
 it can press some people's "redneck buttons."

get militant, conquering mindset. making people the enemy.
 led to crusades & other barbaric things in J's name.

the warfare we are to be about doesn't look like that.
 that's the world's way of waging war.

We are to wage war the way Jesus waged war.

-- everything about his life was manifesting love & pushing back the
 principalities & powers that way.

Paul in **Ephesians 6:12** (NIV)

*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.*

if it's got flesh & blood, it's not someone you are to be fighting, it's someone you are to be fighting for. trying to rescue.
doesn't matter what their lifestyle is, relig is, if have flesh & blood, not enemy.

when the temple guard came to arrest J , Peter cuts off ear of servant of high priest who w them. (aiming for head)
that how the world wages war.

J : "that's not what we are about. Here's how you do warfare in my k :"
--picks up the ear & heals the guy. **Luke 22:49-51**

"in the k of God we heal ears, we don't cut them off."

could have called 12 legions of angels.
but this is a kingdom that defeats evil by the tactic of love.

so, why did J come to earth?

the complete picture is that he came to stand up against Satan and the powers of darkness --forces that bind & dehumanize people, & dominate & destroy creation.

this fuller understanding of Christ's life gives you & I a fuller persp on our life.

several yrs ago J. Nelson Kraybill (president of Assoc Menn Biblical Sem)
published an attempt at a fuller, more complete "4 Sp Laws."

I tweaked them further. Here's what came up w :

1. A God of love made you and me as a good part of creation, intending us to live at peace with him, our world and one another.

2. Sin destroys harmony in creation and yields control to the Powers of Darkness. Suffering, greed, violence and broken relationships result.

3. Jesus died on the cross because he confronted the Powers that fracture our world.

Jesus healed the sick, forgave enemies and lived in the joy of the Kingdom of God.

4. God forgives us and gives us a new beginning when we confess our sin, and the Spirit of God enables us to follow Jesus in pushing back the Powers of Darkness in all of life.

close praying this together.

but first moments of silence while read it to decide if want to say it w me.

Prayer: God, I have sinned by turning away from you and trying to run my own life. Separated from your love, I am shaped by the Powers of greed, lust and violence that bring chaos to the world. Forgive my sin and let me start anew. Thank you for your Son Jesus, who defeated Satan and brought the Kingdom of God to reality. Give me power to live like Jesus -- loving the enemy, sharing possessions, serving others, caring for creation and speaking Good News of your salvation. I commit myself to the church as the body of Christ. I give allegiance to Jesus and his way of forgiveness above every other loyalty. Amen