

**Mark 3:20-35**  
***“Plundered and on the Ropes”***  
***Third Sunday after Pentecost***

**June 10, 2018**  
**First Lutheran Church, Glencoe, Minn.**  
**Pastor Peter Adelsen**

“Hail the Savior! The strong foes yield to Christ, our shield, and we, the victors, hold the field.” (*Rise! To Arms! With Prayer Employ You*, LSB 668, stanza 1b)

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ! Amen!

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

***[Intro]***

***“He is out of his mind!” “This man is crazy!” “He’s gone completely nuts!”***

Oh, too have been there on that day. The scribes and Jesus’ own family were saying that Jesus was possessed by Satan.

Now, we could understand the Jewish leaders and scribes being against Jesus. For their own livelihoods were at stake. They wanted to remain important. They didn’t want to lose their authority over the Jewish people.

But, Jesus’ own family? They thought He was nuts? They thought He was possessed by Satan?

Did Mary forget her son was the Son of the Most High? How could she forget that some thirty years earlier, the angel Gabriel came to her to tell her she would give birth to the Son of God?

Now, we see Mary and Jesus’ brothers trying to stop Jesus from being Jesus.

What is going on here?

***[The Crowds]***

Well, Jesus was becoming increasingly popular. He was healing person after person – a man with an unclean spirit, Peter’s mother-in-law with fever, a man with leprosy, and even a paralytic. The crowds were getting larger and larger.

And, it's likely that Jesus' own family was beginning to wonder: Will He ever come home? Mary was likely thinking of Jesus as her son and she wanted Him home with her. The brothers likely thought of Jesus as just like themselves. They didn't see Jesus as any more important than themselves.

Later Jesus went home, but the crowds were still following Him. There were so many people that Jesus couldn't even eat. The crowds wanted to be near Jesus to receive any form of healing.

### ***[Jesus' Opponents]***

Soon, Jesus' own family realized that He was back in town.

They likely thought, "This is our chance to get Jesus to stay home!"

Along with His family, the scribes arrived to confront Jesus. For the scribes did not like Jesus getting all this attention.

***"He is possessed by Beelzebul,"*** they said, ***"by the prince of demons he casts out demons!"*** (Mark 3:22)

Then Jesus answered them, ***"How can Satan cast out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house will not be able to stand."*** (Mark 3:23-25)

I'm sure you could have heard a pin drop. For how could you respond to that?

Now, we have the scribes from Jerusalem and Jesus' own family questioning His power over demons.

### ***[Earth: The Strong Man's House]***

Then, Jesus tells everyone why He is doing what He is doing. Jesus has come to destroy Satan by plundering his house.

For Jesus said, ***"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."*** (Mark 3:27)

You see, Jesus has come to bind the strong man – Satan – and his evil enforcers from His followers. Jesus has come down to earth to declare victory in Satan’s home town – the world.

Jesus came to save His creation from the destruction of hell. Jesus came to bring peace to a dying, sinful world.

At this time, Jesus knew what was to come. He knew the only way to destroy the power of Satan was to die on behalf of His fallen creation. For Satan, he would think of Christ’s death as a victory for him.

Although, Jesus knew He would not remain in the grave, since He would be resurrected on the third day. This would be the ultimate victory over Satan. For everyone who believes and trusts in Jesus is freed from Satan’s bondage.

But, for those who refuse to recognize Jesus as Lord and Savior, they will remain under the dominion of Satan.

### ***[Satan’s Dominion]***

Now, Satan’s dominion is all around us. Don’t be fooled. After all, Satan is the great deceiver.

Just because you are a Christian doesn’t mean that you are free from Satan’s temptations.

Because we are Christians, we are on the front lines against Satan and his minions.

Satan wants to confuse us. He wants us to doubt God, or even doubt God’s existence.

Satan just wants a little opening, a little doubt, into the heart of a Christian.

He asks us: ***“Did God really say?”*** (Genesis 3:1)

Satan wants us to stray from the Triune God in hopes of finding pride in ourselves, instead of salvation in Jesus.

### ***[On the Ropes]***

Since Christ ascended into heaven, Satan has been infiltrating Christ's bride, His Church.

Satan knows no bounds and of all the people on the earth, he wants Christians the most. For Satan, Christians are his prized catch.

Satan has tried to bring divisions within Christ's Church through false teachings. Satan has been whispering in the ears of men and women since the beginning of time.

Satan was likely whispering in the ears of Mary and Jesus' own brothers in hopes of getting Jesus to stop the ministry of the gospel. For Satan knows how to tug on our sinful thoughts to get what he wants.

You see, Satan is desperate. He knows his time is short.

He thought he destroyed the Son of God on Good Friday to only find out that he was conquered on Easter.

This is why Satan continues to sneak into Christ's Church in hopes of convincing some to turn away from the study of God's Word and to turn away from receiving God's grace in the weekly Divine Service.

Satan is on the ropes. He is bruised and bleeding, but he's willing to still take a cheap shot to get a form of revenge on God.

### ***[Spiritual War]***

Now some of us look at church attendance each week. Some of us may think, "What happened? Where did they all go? It seems like yesterday that every pew was packed."

Some of us may think, "Maybe if the church just got with the times – if it were in line with the culture – we may have more attendance."

This is Satan again whispering in our ears: "Look around, you know, it was better back then."

Instead of focusing on God's eternal truth, we focus on temporal numbers.

Sadly, we have seen many Christian denominations turn from God's Word in hopes of getting more people in the pews, but that has come to no avail.

We are in a spiritual war, but we know the ending. Satan was plundered and he awaits his final defeat when Christ returns to judge the living and the dead.

As the Apostle Paul wrote, ***“We do not lose heart. Through our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day. For this slight momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.”*** (1 Corinthians 4:16-18)

We face afflictions and struggles every day, but this is only temporary. For these afflictions and struggles are light compared to the glory of being God's reconciled and restored people.

### ***[Renewed]***

As our sinful nature is passing away through repentance and following the will of God, we are being renewed day by day – through what Christ has done once and for all time with His death and resurrection from the grave.

Through Christ's sacrifice, He has triumphed over sin, death, and Satan. And, by grace through faith, we received this victory as a gift from God.

We were renewed at our baptism with the water and the Word.

We are renewed when we read or hear God's Word.

We are renewed when our sins are forgiven with confession and absolution.

We are renewed and strengthened when we receive the Lord's Supper.

Through being in God's Word, following Christ as our foundation, receiving His gifts of forgiveness of sins, life and salvation , and being with your Christian brothers and sisters – who lift up our faith in Christ – we are reminded that we are Christ's true family. For, ***“whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother.”*** (Mark 3:35)

As Christ's family, we share in Christ's victory over Satan. Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord. Amen.

✠ SOLI DEO GLORIA ✠