

# He has done it

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Good morning everyone. Good morning. And a warm welcome to the service this morning. Good to see some who are visiting with us.
- And if you're visiting, if you're here for the first time, then you're very welcome. And we're delighted to see you. There's tea and there's coffee at the end of the service. And if you're able to stay behind, please do so.
- We just meet through in the hall on my left here. And the evening service tonight is 6 o'clock, 6 till 7, as we carry on going through Joshua. You've got an information sheet and the information's been on the screen as the service has been preparing to start.
- And you have the list here. If I can just highlight one or two things out of the ordinary. One is to say that the Deacon's Court meets tomorrow night at 7. So please come along to that if you are an office bearer.
- On Tuesday evening, as well as Road to Recovery, which meets here, there will be a meeting about Adam. Adam is a missionary. It's not his real name.
- [ 1 : 0 9 ]     He works in various countries in a very dangerous kind of ministry that the Lord has given him. And Adam will be speaking about his work in the Middle East in Scalby Free Church on Tuesday at half past seven.
- Those who've heard Adam before will know that it's definitely worth going out to hear him share something of that ministry. And those who haven't, let me just encourage you to go along if you're able to.
- Prayer meeting is on at half past seven on Wednesday. Be encouraged to go to that also. And the service is next Sunday, 11 o'clock, and I hope to conduct that myself. The Youth Fellowship meets at half past four.
- And the evening service is a Gaelic service at six. And that will be conducted by John McSween, not Roddy Morrison. And there's an English Fellowship at the end of that.
- The Youth Fellowship today, maybe just for clarification, one or two people ask me the question what time it's at. I'm looking for Stuart. And after the service today. After the service, the Youth Fellowship meets at half past seven here.
- [ 2 : 1 6 ]     On behalf of DOCHIS Education Trust, Nurse Marion, we'd like to thank God who gave generously to that work at the Tide and Collection at the Communion Weekend. And just under £500, 47965 was collected.
- And that money will go towards the work that we hear of and we pray for. Western Isles Presbytery seeks a Youth Discipleship Support Worker. You can read about that there. And also for the Presbytery Junior Camp, if there is anybody who's interested in that, you have details there also.
- These, I think, are all the intimations. So, I was reading the verse this morning. Lamentations, chapter 3, verse 25. It says, The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him.
- To the one who seeks him. It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord. And we'll pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for this, your day.

And we thank you for your word, which we have sung. And even these verses that we read there just a moment ago. We thank you that you are the God who seeks us.

[ 3 : 31 ] And you are the God who saves us. We thank you that you are the God who loves us and who loves to be gracious to all who come to him.

And so, Father, we come this morning. We come in the name of Jesus. We come thankful for the salvation that has been offered to us in Jesus.

And we ask, Lord, that as we seek to draw near to you, that you would draw near to us. We pray that we would know that you are with us.

And we pray that as we sing and as we read, and as we take a while to meditate upon your word, we ask, Lord, that we would know the ministry of the Holy Spirit working within us, drawing us to see and to trust in Jesus.

For the psalmist, we confess that we are those who are sinners. We know that in our thoughts and in our words and the things that we do and the things that we leave undone, we sin.

[ 4 : 41 ] We don't hide that, Lord. We can't hide that from you. But we thank you that as we tell you about it, as we confess that sin, and as we look in faith to Jesus who died on the cross to save sinners, we thank you that we are promised that we are saved.

So, Lord, as we wait quietly in this place upon you this morning, we ask that we would know that our hope is found in Christ alone.

We pray that we would know, not just in our minds, but in our hearts, that Jesus is the Saviour and that he is our Saviour, that he is our friend, that he is the one who sticks closer than a brother, the one who hears us and who helps us when we are in need.

And we pray, Lord, for each one who is in need this morning, there are those here who have particular needs. And, Lord, you know our hearts and you know our circumstances.

And even what others may not know of us, we thank you that you know us through and through. And so for every head that's bowed in every home that's represented, we pray that where we have anxieties and where we have struggles, where we have difficulties, we ask that you would meet with us, Lord, at the point of our need and that you would help us.

[ 6 : 06 ] And for those, Lord, today who are not here, some whose hearts may be sore from grief, some who may be struggling with sickness and with infirmity, with old age, we pray for some who may be in their homes and feeling a sense of loneliness.

Lord, for each one that comes to our minds, some who sat with us in the past, but who are not able to sit with us in the present because of various reasons, Lord, we bring them to you in prayer.

And we ask, Lord, that you would help them, that you would comfort those who are grieving, that you would lay your healing hands upon those who are sick, that you would draw near to those who feel lonely, that they would know that they are remembered, even in prayer, just now.

And, Lord, that you are near to them. We thank you that you hear and you answer our prayers. And we pray for baby Colin, as we have prayed for him in past weeks.

We thank you for the great news today, that he's due to come out of hospital. And we ask, Lord, that you would continue to increase his strength and that you would bless him and bless his family.

[ 7 : 19 ] We thank you, Lord, that as we have prayed, you have heard. And we praise you, Lord, for the fact that you, who are the God of all creation, would be so interested and so willing to get involved in the details of our individual lives.

We pray, Lord, that you would help us. We have a great gospel, great news of Jesus who came to save us. And we pray that you would help us with that. We think of the meetings in the week, the intimations, the time of prayer that's been set, the Road to Recovery meeting, the meeting in Scalpy.

And for every effort, Lord, that is made to reach out with the gospel and to hear from those who are reaching out in difficult places with the gospel message, we ask, Lord, that you would add your blessing, that you would help them and that you would help us as we would seek to be obedient to your command, not to hide the gospel, but to share it with all that you bring us into contact with.

So hear our prayers. Help us, lead us and guide us, we pray, in the power of the Holy Spirit and enable us to be in that spirit of true worship as we gather on your day.

And we ask this in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. And let's turn now to God's word. Colossians chapter 2 and we'll read from verses 6 to verse 15.

[ 8 : 50 ] This is God's word. So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and on the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.

For in Christ all the fullness of the deity lives in bodily form. And you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

In him you were also circumcised in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men, but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the written code with its regulations that was against us and stood opposed to us.

[ 10 : 07 ] He took it away, nailing it to the cross, and having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.

Amen. And may God bless that reading of his word to us. If you could turn with me now, please, to Sam, not to Sam, but to Colossians chapter 2.

Colossians chapter 2.

We've been going through this book for a few weeks now, and the letter to the Colossians is what it sounds like. It's a letter. Paul the Apostle was in prison in Rome, and he had made connections with Christians in different parts of the area that he'd been ministering in.

He'd never actually met many of these Colossians face to face, but the church that was planted there had been planted through Apatras, who likely had heard the gospel message through Paul.

[ 11 : 23 ] And so Paul, having met with Apatras, now he sends a letter to encourage and to instruct this group of Christians that were living in Colossae. And so that's what we're looking at here.

We're looking at our letter and Paul's instructions as God leads him to help and reach out to this small church. So as we go back to it, let's pray for a moment.

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you for this letter that came from Paul to this group of Colossians many years ago, many miles from here.

And yet we acknowledge, Lord, that this is a letter which was inspired by the Holy Spirit and was and is relevant, not just to them, but to churches through the generations and still to us here in this place today.

So we ask, Lord, that as we read these verses and as we take a few moments to think over them and to meditate upon them, we pray that the Holy Spirit himself would teach us and stir our hearts, open us up to the word as we open the word in front of us.

[ 12 : 34 ] We pray, Lord, that you would be with the children in the Sunday school and the creche. We ask that, as they learn simply of the gospel message, that their hearts would be soft and that they would be open to Jesus as he calls them to trust him and come to him.

And we pray, Lord, for ourselves here and we pray for all who meet like us. We pray for all the fellowships in Paris and Lewis and across these islands and across the nation and across all nations.

We ask, Lord, that wherever the word of God is opened and wherever Christ crucified is preached, that you would add your blessing, Lord, and that you would build your church.

Cleanse us from sin, we pray, empty us of all that we seek to just focus in on ourselves and fill us with the Holy Spirit, we pray, so that we might see Jesus.

And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Yesterday was the first day that we walked our new dog, Shoros.

[ 13 : 43 ] You're going to hear a lot about Shoros, probably more than you'd like to. But Shoros had his first walk yesterday and we had to take him out.

He's not allowed to see other dogs yet, so we kind of sneaked them out and were alert to other dogs being in the area. But we took the car down and we parked over at the car park just over there and we went along the back road.

And it's interesting. I saw this in part when I walked Gordon's dog in the past. But it's interesting. When you walk in a place, you see things differently to when you drive around in a place.

You've got a bit more time. You just spend a bit more time just looking and seeing what's around you. For many years when I was here, I never noticed that just at the back of the school and beside the telephone exchange there, there's a building.

There's a building and it's, I don't know exactly the story behind this building, but it's only half built. There's a frame and it looks a fairly modern thing and there is some paneling and there's windows and a door.

[ 14 : 57 ] But there's no cladding around the outside. There's no finishing around it and there's nothing much on the inside as far as I can see. It's half a job. It's as far as I can tell.

It's not finished. It's not complete. Whenever I go away to different places to preach, people always ask about the building and the question they'll invariably ask is, is it finished?

We know that it was happening, but is it finished? And I say, well, you know, it's pretty much finished. We've got the structure done. There's maybe wee bits and pieces around the back that still got to be cleared.

We haven't got the parking properly marked out. We haven't got a final certificate to say it's complete. We've got a temporary completion certificate. So you could say, well, it's almost there, but it's not quite finished.

Officially, it's not quite finished. Now, as we turn to this letter, Colossians chapter 2, if you have a Bible in front of you, you can just focus on verses 11 through to 15.

[ 16 : 10 ] That's where we're going to go today. And what we see in these verses, what we see in the whole of Scripture, really, is that Jesus came to this world and he had a mission.

He had a job to do. He had a purpose. He had a mission. Now, when I think about mission as a word, I tend to think military.

You know, your mission, if you choose to accept it, you think of the soldier who's sent out with his instructions and his maps and his weapons. He's sent out with an instruction to seek and to destroy the enemy.

But Jesus' mission was different. Jesus' instruction, his will, together with the will of the Father and the Spirit, was not to seek and destroy, but it was to seek and save.

to seek and save those who were, by nature, his enemies, to seek and save sinners like the Colossians, to seek and save sinners like us.

[ 17 : 24 ] Jesus himself said in Luke chapter 19 and verse 10, for the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost. and my sin, by nature, makes me lost.

And so Jesus came to seek and save sinners like us. And what Paul teaches here in these verses is that the mission that Jesus came to do, it's complete.

that's the good news for this morning. As we sang there at the end of Psalm 22, he hath done this.

The words that echoed around Calvary as Jesus laid down his life as he died were his own words and they were this, it is finished.

So today what I'd like to consider for a few minutes is what Jesus has finished. His task, his job has not been half done.

[ 18 : 36 ] It's not like some half-baked building along the road. It's not like some task in the house that I'd begun with DIY and I set it aside because it's beyond me.

There's many of them. but Jesus' task, his work, his mission, it is finished. So what is it that Jesus has finished for those who are trusting him?

What is the good news? What is it that he has completed for those who are in Christ as the Colossians were? There's three things.

The first thing is he's finished the work of salvation for us. He has, as I said with the children, he's saved us. He's finished the work of salvation for us. The second thing is that he has finished the debt of sin that was against us.

And the third thing is that he has finished Satan's attack on us. So that gives the structure for the message today. First thing here then is he has finished the work salvation for us.

[ 19 : 46 ] Verses 11 and 12 says that in him you were also circumcised in the putting off of the sinful nature. Circumcision was the mark on the Jew.

It was a particular thing I don't really want to go into the details of but you probably know. In him you were also circumcised in the putting off of the sinful nature. Not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God who raised him from the dead.

These are kind of complicated verses. I'm not going to go into the details and the nuts and bolts of it really. I want to just grasp the central meaning of it.

And the way I'll hopefully do that is starting with a bit of spiritual maths. Louis, my youngest daughter, she came back the other day with her homework, which terrifies me.

It's all in Gaelic. But this was numbers, so at least I had some chance of figuring out the numbers. So I'll just give you two of the sums that were on the page that she asked me to check.

[ 20 : 58 ] The first one was this, 547 equals 500 plus what? The answer was 47. I think it was anyway, it hasn't been marked yet.

And the second question was 683 equals 600 plus what? So the answer she had down on the page was 83. Now, there were some Jewish people in particular in Colossae, and they were teaching some warped spiritual maths.

That was one of the problems that was plaguing this church. People were asking the question, how can we be saved? How can we know that we are Christians? How can we know that we are in Christ? And the answer that some were given was, well, you can be saved through the cross of Jesus plus some of our religious rules and regulations like circumcision, for example.

Jesus has done the main work of salvation. They agreed to that. God's said, they were saying, if you want to be sure that you are saved, there's one or two finishing touches, one or two religious strokes that have to be fulfilled in order for salvation to be sure.

And Paul, in the strongest possible terms, says nonsense. that's the wrong answer. And using their own language, the language of tradition and religion and circumcision, he makes clear that salvation, forgiveness of sin, new life in Christ, the promise of heaven, the assurance that we've escaped hell, all these things, they're available to both the Jew and the non-Jew, and it's offered in and through Jesus.

[ 22 : 59 ] His death, his life, his resurrection, full stop. Paul is saying, if you want to be saved, Colossians, if you want the assurance of salvation, it starts and it finishes with the person and the work of Christ.

See, when we believe, and this is a truth that we can see throughout scripture and we can focus on in these verses, when we believe in our hearts that Jesus is the Christ, he is the Son of God, and that he is risen from the dead, and when we confess with our lips that he is Lord, that he is our Lord, our Savior, then at that point when God opens our eyes through faith so that we see Jesus and all that he has done, at that point, the cut that God makes to our lives is not the surgical cut of a small area of skin being removed, but it's the spiritual cutting away of our old self, our old sinful nature.

The old man of sin dies in and the new creation in Christ rises within us.

2 Corinthians chapter 5 verse 7 verse 17 and 18 it says this, Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

The old has gone, the new has come. All this is from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ.

[ 25 : 19 ] Not through circumcision, not through a whole raft of religious rules and regulations, not through the good works and the religious activities that we have done, are doing, or hope to do, but through Christ, his death, his resurrection.

So, Paul is saying, you know, you don't need circumcision. You don't need to be preoccupied with these complex food laws.

You don't have to be plagued and weighed down with these washing practices. We can have a clear out policy and of all the nuts and bolts of religion that you're still trying to hang on to.

God is saying through Paul, Jesus has done everything to save us.

It is finished. The work is done. Jonathan Edwards says, you contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary.

[ 26 : 38 ] You and I contribute nothing to our salvation except the sin that made it necessary. So, if there are any people here this morning who are saying, you know, I cannot be saved until I sort myself out and clean myself up and become a bit more religious and a bit more respectable in terms of the expectations of churchy people.

Now, Paul is saying nonsense. God is saying to us, through Paul, if that is your mindset, if that's what you're saying, repent of that.

Turn away from that. your salvation and mine does not depend on you and me. Jesus has done everything for you and I to be saved.

So, we simply and humbly have to come to him with empty hands and ask him to save us.

you know, even my best religious activities, Isaiah tells me and the prophets, they're like filthy rags before God. You know, you don't come up to a king with your dirty washing saying, you know, look at me, accept me.

[ 28 : 14 ] We don't come to the king of kings with the filthy rags of our religious activities because they're all sin, pride, stained. We just stand before him because he sees us and say, nothing in my hands I bring, simply to thy cross I cling.

Naked come to thee for dress, helpless come to thee for rest, fowl I to the fountain fly, wash me saviour, or I die.

for anybody here this morning who believes that they are saved, there may be some who know they're not saved and they're saying I can't come to Jesus because I'm not good enough.

Nonsense says Paul. Of course you're not good enough, that's why you come. There may be others who are here this morning and who are saying well I believe I am a Christian, I believe that I am if that's our perspective if that's our belief do we understand that our salvation and our eternal security is built 100% on the finished work of Christ?

Some people have huge confidence on having their name in a church row or they have huge confidence in being able to go back to a date when they wore a long dress and were baptized as a child some people say to you well you know I've got an uncle and he was a great missionary in such and such a place at such and such a time God will look at me and my family line and they'll say you're okay that's not what the Bible teaches that's superstition not salvation salvation is built on what Jesus has done not on our religious codes not on our rules on our performances but it's on Christ we could have sung the hymn we're not today my hope is built on nothing less we could add and nothing more my hope is built on nothing less than Jesus blood and righteousness no merit of my own

[ 30 : 46 ] I claim but holy trust in Jesus name on Christ the solid rock I stand all other ground is sinking sand so Jesus has finished the work of salvation for us the work that we can never do we simply have to come and ask him for it everyone who calls on the name of the Lord as we said to the children will be saved the second thing here is that Jesus has finished sin's debt against us I'm going to read these verses in both the NIV and the ESV verses 13 and 14 in the NIV it says this I'm reading it in both because the words are kind of hard to translate and so you get the fuller meaning as you look at the two parallel translations NIV says verse 13 when you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature

God made you alive with Christ he forgave us all our sins having cancelled 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 the ESV the same verses say and you who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh God made a life together with him having forgiven us all our trespasses by cancelling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands this he set aside nailing it to the cross anyone who's gone through the Christianity Explored course will remember I guess that the illustration there's an illustration that's used the presenter says imagine every sin that you have ever committed every word every action every inaction every thought imagine it is recorded and it's played up on a big screen and everyone in the world all your friends and your family and everybody you've been connected with and those you haven't been connected with they're all gathered around and they see it all and why scream and the question is asked if everybody was able to see every detail and sin of your life how would you feel the answer for me is appalled now we know from

Psalms 139 for example that God has seen everything every sin every every transgression every time that we've slipped up every time that we have left something undone that we should have attended to you know others may not have seen it God has seen it and every sin of mine is an offense against God and it attracts a debt just as our legal offenses they attract a debt and God because he is holy he doesn't overlook these things but he sees them and he keeps a record of all our offenses and God because he is a just God he doesn't sweep these things aside and turn a blind eye he requires that where there has been an offense that justice will be done and that legal debt that is accumulating will be paid and we know from for example

Romans 6:23 the wages of sin is death so all the sin in my life that accumulates it builds up a debt and the debt that is building up means that legally spiritually I am one who who deserves spiritual eternal death that's the bad news about my condition but the good news of the gospel in the same verse there Romans 6:23 for the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life so the question then that we'll run with for a minute or two is how can that be how can a God who is holy and who requires justice to be done when he looks at me and my sin how can he make me the offer of eternal life when I'm deserving of eternal death and the answer is through

Christ in Jesus and on the basis of all that Jesus has done for me and for you if you're trusting in him so here's the question for this point what has Jesus done with our sins there's two things in these verses the first thing is he took him away and that's a term that takes us back a bit into the Old Testament it says there in verse 14 that having cancelled the written code of his regulations that was against us and that stood up post us he took it away he took it away nailing it to the cross now that that term took it away it takes us back to a chapter like Leviticus 16 and in

[ 36 : 38 ] Leviticus 16 we see the scapegoat now you know what a scapegoat is he takes the punishment for the person who has managed to escape and in Leviticus 16 we're given a window into this ritual that was happening and we're told that in that chapter the high priest was to lay both hands on the head of the live goat the scapegoat and confess over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites all their sins and put them on the goat's head he shall then send the goat away into the desert in the care of a man appointed for the task the goat will carry on itself all their sins to a solitary place and the man shall release it in the desert so we have that picture all the sins of Israel the high priest places his hand on the scapegoat by faith all these sins they are concentrated on that scapegoat and then that scapegoat is carried away he's driven away never ever seen again and that's a picture of what

Jesus was to do and has now done on the cross all our sin was laid upon him and he took it willingly and he carried that away he took it from us I think one of the most amazing verses in all of the Bible is this one 2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him Jesus who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God and that's what happened if you're a believer your sin was taken from you placed upon

Christ he took it he took the punishment for it and he carried it away Psalm 103 verse 12 as far as the east is from the west so far has he removed our transgressions from us so let me ask you the question have you confessed your sin if you want this not just to be a remote idea but a reality in your life then you and I need to confess our sin ask for forgiveness we have the promise that when we do Jesus takes it away but that's not all he does he nailed him to a cross it's the second thing now to go back to biblical times in biblical times when a criminal was punished there was a notice that was placed on the cross above the criminal it was a document called the titulus



I think it was called a Roman document it was pinned to the cross it gave the man's name and it gave a detail of the crimes that he was being punished for so for the passerby as they looked up and they saw the horror of the suffering of this criminal they could see well that he was dying for that reason and as he died justice was done but then as we look to Christ he never sinned he was innocent he was sinless so as we look if we can in our mind's eye to that hell and calvary as we look to that cross and see Jesus there and see the the titulus that we want to think in these terms whose offences do we see there's nothing to write against

Jesus life so what charges do we see pinned to the cross that Jesus is dying on well if you're a Christian then you see your charges and I see mine as I look to the cross I see these scenarios I see these thoughts I see these words I see these sins which I committed I see the list of charges and indictments that are against me they're pinned to his crops he's dying in my place as my substitute to make atonement for my sin or as we'll sing at the end to make an end of all my sin and he did it that's the good news he did it his work is finished so if you have confessed your sin he has made an end of all your sin and the devil may come and dig your sin back up and throw it in your face and people around you in the community may come to you and remind you of all your offenses but if you're a

[ 42 : 55 ] Christian if you've confessed your sin it's gone it's taken away it's nailed to the cross the penalty the price has been paid the debt is paid in full when I was beginning to think this through I was on the ferry on that long journey and just beside me there was two it was an elderly couple and they were having a barney with each other about who was going to pay the bill two baked potatoes were on the table and they were arguing over who was going to pay this bill and the lady was saying I'm paying it and the man was objecting saying you're not paying I'm paying it and they were getting louder and louder and I wonder if in the congregation here there is the same battle going on in the lives of some people and there are some people here who are saying I want to pay for my sin and I tell you what Lord

I'll do less bad stuff and I'll do more good stuff and I'll read my Bible for longer and I'll get better at saying prayers and more regular at saying prayers and I'll be more attentive to my religion and then maybe I'll build up enough credit with you so I'm at least making a significant contribution towards paying for my sin and Jesus says this through his word no you can't afford to pay the debt that you owe you don't have the currency to pay the debt that is against you payment comes through my blood and the whole message of the gospel is a message where Jesus pleads with us to let him settle the bill to let him pay for our sin and he pays when we ask him it's a free gift but we have to ask him and if we ask him he will cover the whole debt what is hell you know hell is a place that is real and hell is a place where those whose pride would not allow them to let

Jesus settle the bill hell is the place where people who have not come to Christ pay eternally the price for their sin now why would we want to go there why would we want to pay that price why would we not ask Jesus to clear the debt to carry our sins away to nail our offenses to his cross Jesus has finished the debt of our sin against us he has finished the work of salvation and finally just very briefly he's finished Satan's attack on us we live in a reality which is both physical and spiritual we see the physical but we sometimes feel the spiritual we feel

Satan's attacks at times other times we're unaware but they're real and in verse 15 it says and having disarmed the powers and authorities he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross sometimes you see these optical illusions on Facebook and social media and there are these pictures that are designed for you to look at long enough to see different things so you're looking at a picture and folks are saying are you seeing the duck and I'm looking at the picture and I'm saying I can't see a duck anywhere keep looking squint a little twist your head just a little bit more and you're looking and then you see the duck and you can't see the old lady that you could see before you saw the duck you know the more you look and the longer you look the more you see with these kind of elusive pictures and in a sense that was true on the cross I don't want to trivialize it at all that was true on the cross because as

Jesus was stripped and beaten and nailed to that tree it looked to all the eyewitnesses the disciples included like this is the end for Jesus it looked from hell's perspective like they had triumphed over him but the more we look the more we see and Paul is showing us through these verses that on the cross it was actually the devil who was stripped he was disarmed he was defeated ultimately now when a Roman soldier a general won a significant victory the defeated king of the those that he was victorious over would be marched to the streets of Rome stripped of their armour stripped of their weapons humiliated and Paul is showing us here that the cross was the place where

[ 49 : 04 ] Satan's defeat was showcased it didn't look that way at first but week after week after week as we keep coming back to this cross we see that this is where Satan was ultimately thoroughly defeated and so now yes he still snarls and yes he prowls but he's defeated in Pilgrim's Progress as Christian approaches the palace beautiful he begins to walk down a narrow passage and he sees two lions and they're standing in his way he's terrified but Bunyan adds this wee lion the lions were chained but he saw not their chains so often we if we're

Christians you know we can be fearful we can even be despondent as we hear the devil growl and as we see such evil in the world as we feel sometimes the ferocity of an attack you know we get knocked down but God says to us through Paul Christian don't be scared don't be discouraged remember he's chained you may not be able to see the chains but on the cross he was chained and these chains will be on him every day until ultimately he is thrown into the lake of fire see the cross is where Jesus finished Satan's attack on us the cross is the place where we see that Jesus is victorious and the resurrection is that event in history where that victory echoes far and wide and even the Lord's day today is a weekly reminder of it so it's finished the work of salvation is finished sin's debt against us is finished and Satan's attack on us is finished if we are those who are trusting in Christ so trust them we pray our heavenly father we pray that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear the wonder of all that you have done for us in and through

Jesus your son and give us faith we pray to believe so that all that we have learned of may be the benefits that we enjoy today and forever and we ask it in Jesus name amen and now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit be with us all both now and forevermore amen amen amen Amen