

But I Thought We Won? Why Are We Still Here?

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Jesus achieved the ultimate victory.

Paul lays out for us what happened on the cross

We won, but...

Romans 8:37–39

“But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (NASB 2020)

Paul addressed this situation by announcing that the powers of darkness had been defeated by Christ on the cross. Though their power was still real and potent even after the cross, they were not to be feared by those “in Christ” (Romans 8: 37– 39). In Christ, believers had died to the elemental powers of the world (Col 2: 20) or, in an image reminiscent of the Exodus, had been redeemed from slavery to those elemental spirits, whether the context be Judaism or any other tribal religion (Gal 4: 3– 9). Thus, when Paul spoke of the hostility of the powers in this age and their defeat by Christ, he spoke a language that was not only fundamentally Jewish in its echo of Old Testament archetypes and the pattern of

redemption, but one that met fear with liberation in the hearts of his Gentile audience. (Longman III and Reid 2010, Kindle Locations 1683-1688)

...for Paul, (the death and resurrection of Christ) is most fundamentally a decisive act of war initiated by God against everything that opposes him. It put Christ in a position above all demonic powers, and he shall continue to battle from this exalted position until every one of these powers has been destroyed—until what he accomplished in principle through his death and resurrection is realized as a completed act. (Boyd 1997, 244)

The point is unmistakably clear. Through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God stripped Satan and all levels of demons of all their power (Col 2: 15). Therefore Christ now reigns in the power of God far above all such demonic powers. Expressing the tension of the “already/ not yet” that characterizes the entire New Testament, Paul can here say that “all things” are already “under his feet,” though the actual manifestation of this truth is yet in the future. But the central point remains: the work of the cross was about dethroning a cruel, illegitimate ruler and reinstating a loving, legitimate one: Jesus Christ. When Jesus Christ is reinstated, all who are aligned with his rule, all who are “in Christ,” all who are his “bride” and part of his “body,” are reinstated to their appropriate position of authority as well. (Boyd 1997, 246)

Because of what Jesus did on the cross, we are...

Ephesians 2:4–7

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our wrongdoings, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and **raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus**, so that in the ages to come He might show the boundless riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.” (NASB 2020)

The Greek verb used here is for raise up and sit down are two separate words.

Συνεγείρω – sunegeirow - of participating in the resurrection of Jesus; the believer, in mystic union w. him, experiences this. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 967)

Συγκαθίζω - synkathizō - cause to sit down with someone, trans. ἡμᾶς ... συνεκάθισεν ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις (God) made us sit down with (Christ) in the heavenly realms or simply in heaven. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 951)

In the Greek, both of these verbs are in the aorist indicative. That is significant.

aorist — The aorist verb tense is used by the writer to present the action of a verb as a “snapshot” event. The verb’s action is portrayed simply and in summary fashion without respect to any process. In the indicative mood, the aorist usually denotes past time... (Heiser and Setterholm 2013)

We are raised up with Him, an action that took place in the past and is still being realized in the present. We are, literally, raised up as a result of His resurrection to new life and we are new in Him. And we are currently seated with Him in the heavenly places. Again, since He went to be at the right hand of the Father, we are too. We are His, and since He, through the Holy Spirit, is in us, we too are seated with Him.

Because of our union with Christ, we can be victorious over Satan! We have authority over the demons because of our position in Christ. (Morey 2003, 40)

What else did Jesus promise as part of what He was achieving on the cross.

John 14:16–18

“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, so that He may be with you forever; the Helper is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him; but you know Him because He remains with you and will be in you. “I will not leave you as orphans; I am coming to you.” (NASB 2020)

John 14:26

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and remind you of all that I said to you.” (NASB 2020)

John 15:26

“When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, namely, the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father, He will testify about Me,” (NASB 2020)

To be able to effectively serve Messiah, as He began pointing out earlier back in Caesarea Philippi, things were going to change. Part of that change is not simply delegated power, but true power, the Holy Spirit coming to personally indwell each believer.

Another reason for the veil between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies to be torn, that was no longer the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit, sacred space was to be moving and moving directly into each and every believer.

The Spirit was to come and indwell and empower believers. The events on Pentecost in Acts 2 mark the coming of the Spirit. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 295)

The Holy Spirit is clearly identified in the new testament as also being the spirit of Jesus. We know, based on our studies in the Old Testament, that Jesus is the second power in heaven, He is the Angel of the Lord, the Captain of the Lord's Host, the one in the burning bush as well as the one leading the nation of Israel in the cloud.

Jesus clearly identified that He and the Father were one.

John 8:57–59

“Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I AM.” Then they took up stones to throw at Him; but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.” (NKJV)

Romans 8:9–10

“But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His. And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.” (NKJV)

We are beginning to see why, as NT believers, we believe that God exists in three distinct persons.

Observation

...the Old Testament is the record concerning one God with little recognition of Three Persons, while the New Testament is the record concerning the character and achievements of the Three Persons with little recognition of their essential unity. (Chafer 1993, 17)

Objections

Some critics consider orthodox representations of the Trinity a mathematical monstrosity; the doctrine, they contend, is as fallacious in its claim for the three-in-one God as is the formula $3 \times 1 = 1 \times$. But this description patently distorts the doctrine. Christian theology affirms neither that three gods are one God nor that three isolated persons are one God. Rather, it affirms three eternal personal distinctions in the one God, in short, 3 x in 1 y. (Henry 1999, 165)

Trinity is not a Biblical Word. You will not find the word in the Scriptures. The concept is everywhere. The word was coined by Tertullian.

Intimated in the OT, clearly taught in the NT

“...one divine essence with three eternal personal manifestations.” (Utley 2004, Lk 3:22)

Calvary Jupiter

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are equal in power and glory.

Bottom line – the Trinity is an essential of the faith.

God is one in regard to essence

It means all three Persons possess the summation of the divine attributes but yet the essence of God is undivided. Oneness in essence also emphasizes that the three Persons of the Trinity do not act independently of one another. (Enns 1997, 200)

God is three in regard to persons

In suggesting God is three with respect to His Persons it is emphasized that (1) each has the same essence as God and (2) each possess the fullness of God. (Enns 1997, 200)

The three Persons have distinct relationships. The three Persons are equal in authority.

Jesus is making it abundantly clear to us, that He is not done with the enemy yet and He is moving forward with a plan to enable His followers to conduct warfare on His behalf.

First, not only did the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross mean the fall of Bashan, emblematic of the cosmic powers of evil, but it also triggered the empowerment of the Church by the gifts of the Spirit. Second, that victory and empowerment also had something to do with Pentecost. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 295)

Acts 1:4–8

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, “you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.” So when they had come together, they asked him, “Lord, will you at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?” He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or seasons that the Father has fixed by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (ESV)

Luke 9:1

“And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases,” (ESV)

This was not a permanent thing. Remember, all twelve received this power from Jesus and one of the twelve was Judas.

Just a little further in Luke 9:40 we see the disciples lacked the capability they had just a few verses earlier.

Mark 6:7

“And He called the twelve to Himself, and began to send them out two by two, and gave them power over unclean spirits.” (NKJV)

Common to both verses is the kind of authority provided - ἐξουσία – exsousia - It is used of the possibility of action given authoritatively by the king, government or laws of a state and conferring authority, permission or freedom on corporations or in many instances, esp. in legal matters, on individuals. (Foerster 1964-, 562)

The disciples, in the past, had been the recipients of delegated power that ended at some point in time. The promise Jesus is making in Acts is added to what He already said in John 14:16. He promised a helper that would be with those who follow Him to be with them forever, now He is adding to that promise saying that a type of power that before was delegated only for a short time, it was now going to be a permanent thing. What kind of power are we talking about

Δύναμις – dunamis potential for functioning in some way, power, might, strength, force, capability. (Arndt, et al. 2000, 262)

It is the same power as that which created His own existence and which He possessed during His ministry. He endows His disciples with this power, and they continue His activity in His place (→ I, 433). As Lk. records it, the endowment with power takes place at Pentecost. (Grundmann 1964-, 310-311)

Remember what Jesus said - “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.” (John 14:12, ESV)

This is the exact same power that Jesus had, but it is no longer delegated, it is now a permanent possession of anyone who places their full trust in the work that Jesus did on the cross and place their believing loyalty in Him

Pentecost is D Day.

Acts 2:1–13

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each. Amazed and astonished, they asked, “Are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language? Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—in our own languages we hear them speaking about God’s deeds of power.” All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one another, “What does this mean?” But others sneered and said, “They are filled with new wine.”” (NRSV)

Divine Council imagery shows up here in Acts as does the Deuteronomy 32 worldview we studied earlier which arose as a result of the actions YAHWEH took when confronting the rebellion of Genesis 11.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9

“When the Most High apportioned the nations, when he divided humankind, he fixed the boundaries of the peoples according to the number of the gods; the LORD’s own portion was his people, Jacob his allotted share.” (NRSV)

YAHWEH divorced the nations in Genesis 11 and confused their language.

Jesus came to undo the work of rebellion and to provide a path for those divorced nations back to relationship with YAHWEH.

The first two points of the description that deserve attention are the “violent rushing wind” and the “divided tongues like fire.” Both are images in the Old Testament associated with God’s presence—the disciples are being commissioned by God in his council like the prophets of old. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 297)

Earlier we studied what the requirements were to be a prophet of God, they uniformly the same and we begin to see the same imagery showing up in Acts.

The pattern that emerges from the patriarchal sagas is that when God chooses someone to represent him, that person must first meet with God. By necessity, that meeting is with the visible Yahweh, who can be discerned by human senses. In many cases, the divine job interview occurs in a place that is described as God’s home or headquarters, the place where the divine council meets. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 236)

Let’s talk about the violent rushing wind, have we seen that before?

2 Kings 2:1

“And it came to pass, when the LORD was about to take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal.” (NKJV)

2 Kings 2:11

“Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire, and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.” (NKJV)

Ezekiel 1:4

“Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.” (NKJV)

In the Old Testament, the word used for the spirit was רוח – ruach - spirit, breath— breath of the mouth. (Gesenius and Tregelles 2003, 760)

We see that wind is tied to the presence of YAHWEH and His throne. Remember, where YAHWEH, the Divine Council is. The Holy Spirit or as it says in the old testament, the wind or spirit of YAHWEH is also associated with His throne as is the second power in heaven.

So we have an element we have seen in the old testament which is a element that we would need to see if someone was being called of YAHWEH to be His servant/prophet.

Again, when we looked at Ezekiel 1:4, and in our study of Ezekiel, we saw that YAHWEH’s throne room came to him and his calling involved not only the wind, but it also involved fire.

Isaiah also had fire as there were burning coals and one was used to make him pure.

Isaiah 6:5–7

“How terrible it will be for me!” I cried, “because I am ruined! I’m a man with unclean lips, and I live among a people with unclean lips! And my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of the Heavenly Armies!” Then one of the seraphim flew to me, carrying a burning coal in his hand that he had taken from the altar with tongs. He touched my mouth and said, “Look! Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt is taken away, and your sins atoned for.” (ISV)

Fire in the Old Testament identified YAHWEH's presence.

Exodus 3:2–4

“the angel of the LORD appeared to him in flaming fire from the center of a bush. As Moses continued to watch, amazingly the bush kept on burning but was not consumed. Then Moses told himself, “I’ll go over and see this remarkable sight. Why isn’t the bush burning up?” When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from the center of the bush, “Moses! Moses!” He said, “Here I am.” (ISV)

Matthew 3:11

“I baptize with water those who repent of their sins and turn to God. But someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not worthy even to be his slave and carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” (NLT)

The wind and fire in Acts 2 signified to readers informed by divine council scenes that the gathered followers of Jesus were being commissioned by divine encounter. They were being chosen to preach the good news of Jesus’ work. The fire connects them to the throne room. The tongues are emblematic of their speaking ministry. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 297)

...so the Lord now chooses to carry out his coup de grâce of the enemy by the foolishness of his church, these weak, struggling, imperfect people whose only qualification for warfare is that they have said yes to the Lord’s gracious invitation to be set free. (Boyd 1997, 253)

John the Baptist had foretold how the Coming One would carry out a baptism with wind and fire (Luke 3:16–17). In the disciples’ Pentecostal experience, then, fire had a part to play as well as wind: the manifestation of the Spirit’s advent was visible as well as audible. What appeared to be tongues of fire were seen, one of which lighted on each of them. Again, it is difficult to translate this experience into terms which will convey its true significance. As in the burning bush, fire denotes the divine presence (Ex. 3:2–5). (Bruce 1988, 50)

The Greek word *syncheō*, translated “bewildered,” is used in the Septuagint version of the Tower of Babel story in Gen 11:7: “Come, and let us go down there to confound [*syncheō*] their language” (LES). Both Acts 2:6 and the Septuagint version of Genesis 11:7 link *syncheō* with confusion over human speech. (Heiser, *The Bible Unfiltered: Approaching Scripture on its Own Terms* 2017, 171-172)

Just as bewilderment was the result of the confusion of languages in Genesis 11, the same word shows up in Acts 2, tying these two events together.

The tongues (*γλῶσσαι*) of fire were divided – *διαμεριζόμεναι*.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9

“When the Most High distributed nations as he scattered the sons of Adam, he set up boundaries for the nations according to the number of the angels of God. And his people Jacob became the portion of the Lord, Israel an allotment of his inheritance.” (Lexham Press 2020, Deut 32:8-9)

From the Septuagint, the Most High distributed nations – distributed = *διεμέριζεν*.

This is a strong indication that Luke is drawing on the Septuagint, and specifically the Tower of Babel story in Genesis 11 and Deuteronomy 32:8–9, to describe the events on Pentecost. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 298)

What we are seeing happen in Acts is the undoing of what began in Genesis 11. The tongues of fire are distributed to the disciples who are now empowered, permanently, in the same manner that Jesus was empowered.

They have been commissioned to prophesy, preach the word from God to His people, and the disinheritance of Babel will be reversed by the message of Jesus and His Spirit.

Babel's disinheritance was going to be rectified by the message of Jesus, the second Yahweh incarnate, and his Spirit. The nations would again be his. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 299)

Acts 2:8–11

“And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs—we hear them speaking in our own tongues of the mighty deeds of God.” (NASB 2020)

If you count the names in Genesis 10, there were 70 names from which arise 70 nations. Remember 70. Israel is not on the list. Chapter 10 is called the table of nations.

The table of nations reflects the known world at the time the old testament was written. Remember, this is a reflection of the area the writers lived in. They did not know about the western hemisphere or much about the east either.

Tarsish was most likely Spain, perhaps the British isles.

The list in Acts, then, begins at the farthest points east where there were Jewish populations, then progresses westward. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 301)

The Jews who were in attendance at Pentecost, were from the nations listed, and the 3000 who were saved, returned home and spread the word about Jesus.

The area they returned to coincides to the area identified in the table of nations. They are the beginning of the reclamation of the nations by YAHWEH.

The book of Acts outlines the places that Paul took the gospel. He was filling in the spaces that those who went home had not filled in well. Paul found believers in Rome, but he was determined to go to Spain (Tarsish) and hit all of the areas that needed to be reclaimed. He knew his Bible and he knew the nations needed to be brought back into fellowship.

Romans 15:28

“Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain.” (NASB 2020)

The point is profound: Paul was convinced that his life's mission as apostle to the Gentiles—the disinherited nations—would only be finished when he got to Spain. As incredible as it sounds, Paul was conscious that his mission for Jesus actually involved spreading the gospel to the westernmost part of the known world—Tarsish—so that the disinheritance at Babel would be reversed. (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 303)

As believers in Jesus Christ, we:

- Are raised up with Him
- We are seated with Him
- We have all spiritual blessings in heavenly places
- We will judge angels
- We will be members of the divine council
- We will be with Jesus forever
- We are sons and daughters of God

Ephesians 1:3–23

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. In Christ we have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory. I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, and for this reason I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and revelation as you come to know him, so that, with the eyes of your heart enlightened, you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power for us who believe, according to the working of his great power. God put this power to work in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come. And he has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.” (NRSV)

I want to take a look at a word that shows up here and is translated as saint. Look at verse 18, “... what are the riches of his glorious inheritance among the saints,” (Ephesians 1:18b, NRSV)

ἅγιοις – hagio - as the quality of persons or things that can be brought near or into God's presence holy; (1) of things set apart for God's purpose dedicated, sacred, holy (MT 4.5), opposite κοινός (not consecrated, common); (2) of persons holy, pure, consecrated to God (LU 1.70); (3) of supernatural beings, as God (JN 17.11), Christ (LU 1.35), the Spirit of God (MK 12.36), angels (MK 8.38) holy... (Friberg, Friberg and Miller 2000, 32)

Paul is saying that “believers have a glorious inheritance among the holy ones.” (Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible* 2015, 311)

The Holy Ones are those members of the divine council who did not fall, we are talking about those who remain faithful.

Daniel 7:27

“And the kingdom and the dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High; his kingdom shall be an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (ESV)

We have a place, with Jesus, forever, among His holy ones and we will inherit everything He does.

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