

## The Great “Gotcha!”

Acts 2:22-24 , Isaiah 53:1-12

Resurrection Sunday, April 1, 2018

***But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*** Acts 2:24

- **Backwards Truck cab.** Couple driving down Interstate, wife’s asleep. He pulls up behind a cab towing another cab. **GOTCHA!**
- **Patrick Ferren coming home from Iraq.** GOTCHA!
- **Eagles trick play in Superbowl 52**  
4<sup>th</sup> and goal. Eagles ahead 15/12. Great field goal situation. The plays began with **Nick Foles** faking an audible, then inching out of the way of the snap. The snap then goes to a **running back Corey Clement**, who gives it to **tight end Trey Burton**, who then tosses it to Foles in the end zone. **GOTCHA.**
- **Christ was crucified. Death had won. Evil had won.**  
But on the third day He rose. **GOTCHA.**

1. God pranked (or out-smarted) evil and death.

Acts 2:23-24 ***This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.***

- **It seemed Jesus was finished.**
- **It seemed evil had won, death had won**
- **It seemed that all hope had died with Jesus.**

Colossians 2:15 ***And having disarmed the powers and authorities, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.***

Psalms 2:1-6 ***Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain? 2 The kings of the earth rise up and the***

rulers band together against the Lord and against his  
 anointed, saying, <sup>3</sup> "Let us break their chains and  
 throw off their shackles."

<sup>4</sup> The One enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord scoffs  
 at them. <sup>5</sup> He rebukes them in his anger and terrifies  
 them in his wrath, saying, <sup>6</sup> "I have installed my king  
 on Zion, my holy mountain."

- The joke was on them!
- Like a dad arm-wrestling a child.

But it wasn't a prank just for the sake of entertainment.

Jesus didn't do this for the fun of it.

It was a brilliant strategy.

<sup>2</sup> Jesus came on a rescue mission.

Hebrews 2:14-15 **Since the children have flesh and blood,  
 he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he  
 might break the power of him who holds the power of  
 death—that is, the devil—<sup>15</sup> and free those who all their  
 lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.**

Colossians 1:13 **For he has rescued us from the dominion  
 of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son  
 he loves,**

- "The Victor" by Jamie Owens-Collins:  
 Swallowed into earth's dark womb  
 Death has triumphed, that's what they say.  
 But try to hold Him in the tomb--  
 The Son of Life rose on the third day.

Look, the gates of hell are falling  
 Crumbling from the inside out.  
 He's bursting through the walls with laughter!  
 Listen to the angels shout.

It is finished. He has done it.  
 Life conquered death.

*Jesus Christ has won it!*

*His plan of battle fooled them all;  
They led Him off to prison to die.  
But as He entered Hades' Hall  
He broke those hellish chains with a cry.*

*Listen to the demons screaming!  
See Him bruise the serpent's head.  
The prisoners of hell redeeming  
All the power of death is dead.*

*It is finished. He has done it.  
Life conquered death.  
Jesus Christ has won it. <sup>2</sup>*

3. The cross and resurrection were God's master plan all along.

Acts 2:23 <sup>23</sup> *This man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross.*

- *God told us His plans in the Scriptures.*

Luke 24:27, 44-47 *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in Scriptures concerning himself. ... <sup>44</sup> He said to them, all the*

*“This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.”*

<sup>45</sup> *Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup> He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup> and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

- **Isaiah 53** was written 800 years before Christ.
- **Psalm 22** was written 1,000 years before Christ.
- **Genesis 3:15** “ *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*”

4. God still pranks evil and death.

Ephesians 1:18-20 *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,*

Hebrews 13:20-21 *Now may the God of Peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do His will, working in you that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Genesis 50:20 *You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.*

Romans 8:28 *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who [ a ] have been called according to his purpose.*

- **Where do you feel hopeless or trapped?**
- **Where in your life does it seem that evil has won?**
  - **A habit or habitual sin.**
  - **Some addiction**

- **Sickness**
- **Depression or moodiness**
- **Broken relationship or loneliness.**  
(Write it at the bottom of the page as a way of inviting the resurrection power of Christ into that situation.)
- **Even in the bitter division in our country today, God is at work.**
- **Even in places like Syria, God is at work.**
- **Just as even as Hitler tried to exterminate the Jewish people, God used WWII to create the Jewish Homeland in Israel.**
- **The cross and empty tomb mean that evil never wins. Death never wins. The devil never wins.**

I Corinthians 15:55-56      *"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"*      56 *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law.*  
*be to God!*      He gives **us** the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

57 *But thanks*

5. **God pranks death and evil through**

YOUR NAME .

- **I have struggles in my spiritual life.**
  - **Attitudes and moods that don't reflect the love and power of Christ in my life.**
  - **Thoughts and behaviors that don't line up with what I really believe and who I really am.**
  - **(I'll spare you the details.)**
  - **But I experience the power of Christ working in me, and I'm getting better and better.**
  - **Ask my wife (7<sup>th</sup> husband!)**
- **I have physical problems, too.**
  - **Scoliosis, diabetes, kidney disease.**
  - **I expect those to be controlled and even healed.**
  - **But what if they aren't?**  
And even if they are, I'll die of something (unless the Lord comes back first).
  - **And then what happens?**
  - **Because Christ conquered death, I go to heaven!**

- No pain. No diabetes. No depression. No doubts.  
Eternal joy!

No diet!

I Corinthians 15:55-56

*“Where, O death, is your victory?*

*Where, O death, is your sting?”*

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*57 But thanks be to*

*God! He gives **us** the victory through our Lord Jesus*

*Christ.”*

- Even in death, Christ gives us victory.
- Believer, the very power that raised Jesus from the dead is at work in you!
- I proclaim to you that Christ has conquered all sin, evil and death in your life.
- I declare to you that Christ has defeated all sin, evil and death in your life.
- He has rescued you.
- You are free.
- You don't have to live in the dominion of darkness any longer.
- No foolin'.
- He's gotcha.
- Right in the palms of his nail pierced hands, He's gotcha.

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