

Jimmie Young – sermon notes for Emmanuel LCMS – March 29, 2020

“One Little Word can fell Him” – Scripture readings: Old Testament  
Isaiah 49:1-6, Epistle Phil. 4:4-9, Gospel John 1:1-5,14

This reading in Isaiah when first presented to me for the sermon topic by Pastor Keith was a little confusing for me. This is old testament and it is a message truly meant for Israel, the Jews. It was promises made to them about Our Lord coming to save them and the world (us) through those people. We know God’s promises are always true and everlasting, so Isaiah’s words are important for us to understand.

But then the title of the sermon message given to me is “One Little Word can fell Him”. Sound familiar? If you are a generational Lutheran I am sure it does. Martin Luther ends a stanza of his hymn “A mighty fortress is Our God”.... When he speaks of Jesus talking to Satan, “one little word can fell him”. One word from Christ settles all things.

Actually, this is a pattern of power given to us from the beginning. God places a power in words. This is how He communicates, and how we are to communicate. God begins the Creation of everything by saying “Let there be....” And then there it is.

We communicate in a lot of ways. My wife Jennifer can communicate very clearly to me with just a look...sometimes that is good, sometimes not so good. Then she can also communicated to me with just a sound like...uh uh. But then there are certain words that are very clear like “yes” or “no”...and there is no mistaking what she means when she says those words to me. We all use words.

Words have power, as Our Lord has designed for us. Do you know how powerful? Think about it. We hardly ever do anything without talking about it first.

Page 2.

Do you want to go shopping? We talk about it before we go. Do you want to do this job? How do you want to do it? Do you like this? Do you not like this? Do you want to save that money or spend it? Whatever we do, we usually talk about it first. Therefore, the words we use so often determine what is done, how it is done, and what is the result of what is done. We talk about what is about to happen.

So, this is a very important topic to consider. Jesus used words to describe who He is, why He came into the world, and what He was going to do, what He did, and what He plans to do in the future.

But the sermon title given to me is “one little word can fell him”. So, I want to talk about certain words. What is the word that makes Satan fall in front of us?

The gospel of John begins with “In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”. “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” That Word is the Word that makes Satan fall.

But there are several words and any one of them make Satan fall, and I would like to take a look at them today as we turn to today’s Epistle reading the letter of Paul to the Philippians chapter 4. If you will please turn to your bibles and if you will follow along. Philippians chapter 4: 4-9 (READ) This is all so well said, so let us today pick out some of these words that Paul uses – beginning with these last couple of verses...backing up to verse 8.

The first word that comes to my mind is “true”. Being true is something that Satan certainly is not. He is the author of lies. The word true uncovers who he actually is. Satan is the perverter of truth.

He takes truth and tries to bend it to seem like it is truth, all the while knowing it is not. Truth is perfect in its’ power and is set alone by itself.

Page 3.

It is exclusive. In other words, you can't have something be true and not true at the same time. Certainly, Satan, and all that is evil, does not have any part of what is true. Jesus totally gives no quarter to lies. Truth is clear.

Truth it is eternal. What is true, is always true. Jesus condemns lies, and untruth to be evil. Lies are completely wrapped up in rebellion, confusion, division and total defeat wrapped in death. Jesus even calls Satan, the father of lies and he calls Satan a liar. And Jesus reveals to us He is The Truth, The Way and The Life.

The next word, "honorable" is a word that we could look at and it shows evil to be what it is....there is no honor in evil. Honorable according to the dictionary - means having high moral principle. Being set up in authority with a strong sense of knowing what is right and true. Being honorable is a word that Satan certainly cannot stand. He knows that he is that last thing from being honorable. Being "honorable" is a word that shows Satan's defeat to be so evident. He is never honorable.

The next word Paul uses here for us is, "just" or "justice". It is a word that Satan must dread. Satan knows that justice is coming. He knows it is not going to be forgotten. The definition of "Just" means being upright, honest and has the additional meaning of being considered as a legally binding. That is why we have a justice system. A place where we hope the truth and just decisions can be found out. The word "just" being upright, honest and legally powerful spells complete defeat for Satan.

Another word that Paul uses is the word "pure". This is another word that Satan must run from. The word "pure" means without blemish. Being pure means that you are without mistake. Being perfect is being pure. Jesus said, to be saved we must be perfect as Our Father in heaven is perfect. How can we be that? How can we be pure when we know we are certainly not? We know most of our sins.

Page 4.

We are constantly in battle with them, but in Christ, covered by His perfect blood given on the cross, we are made pure in the sight of God. Satan cannot stand this. He must see his own absolute doom in the death conquered for us by Christ of a cross. God took that very instrument of death onto Himself for us, so that we could be made “pure”. We are pure now, whiter than snow in the eyes of God, and Satan must shrink in defeat away from the sight of purity.

Moving on we see the word “lovely”. It means possessing qualities that inspire admiration and love. It is delightful and pleasing. Evil personifies the opposite of that. There is nothing lovely in Satan. So, the word “lovely” must be a word that fells him. He knows he shouldn’t walk near a mirror.

And then Paul in verse 8 uses the word “commendable”. This seems like an average word, but it is not. According to the dictionary, the word “commendable” means to “commit with confidence”. Jesus certainly did that at the cross. His “committing with confidence” demonstrated a faith in what He was going to do on the cross. It is His faithfulness, not mine that saves me....that saves us. If it were my faith, Satan could make me fall, but Satan falls at the faithfulness of Jesus. And it is that faith that flows into my heart and into yours that saves us from evil. It is commendable!

I will combine these next two words, but they may stand on their own as each word shows Satan’s defeat. “Excellence” and “praiseworthy” – Those words show Satan how far he is from the holiness of Our Lord. Satan craves the praise. He craves and commands those who follow him, to praise him through evil words and deeds. Yet, when these words, “excellence” and “praiseworthy” are spoken, Satan knows that there is only one name worthy of excellence and praise and it is not his.

Page 5.

And that brings me to my conclusion on these words or you may just choose one word here to make Satan fall. You see these are the words that the apostle Paul used in his letter to the Philippians describe how we should live out our lives. This is how we should think. Paul says, “Finally” - We should think about whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is excellent and whatever is worthy of praise, we are to think of these things.

What Paul is really saying is that we should be thinking about Jesus. We should always be thinking about Him! He is the only God, Jesus Christ who can be considered as true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, excellent and worthy of praise. He is the only person in all of history to fit all of these words upon himself. He has proved everything He said He would do, by going faithfully to the cross and then to defeat death by leaving the tomb empty. Jesus shows Satan clearly, that death, and evil has been defeated and that Satan’s defeat stands eternally for us. We have no fear now as we think on these words...we fear not.

The name, “Jesus” that totally defeats Satan. Whatever the world of evil throws at us, we can say the name of “Jesus” and see His truth, honor, justice, purity, loveliness, excellence, worthiness of praise and see that one word makes Satan fall. One little word can fell him, a name...Jesus.

And seeing the power of that word, let me finish by backing up to verse 7. Philippians 4:7 (READ) -This PEACE that passes all understanding is a part of our witness to The Holy Spirit that is living in us. Those who do not know the grace of Christ marvel at our inner peace when the rest of the world is in panic and depressed. Someone who knows the power of Christ, knows He is the Prince of PEACE. The PEACE of God guards us from evil in this world. We have hope in our PEACE that can only be found in Jesus. Jesus reveals that God is not at war with us as Satan always wants us to believe.

PAGE 6.

Then Paul puts it another way. Look Philippians chapter 4:9 (READ) – The God of PEACE will be with us. Not only do we have the peace of God, but this God of PEACE will be with us! Jesus has brought us God’s love letter to us by going to the cross, to pay for all of our sins in full, and then leaving the tomb empty, proving death has no claim on us.

The name, The Word, “Jesus totally has defeated Satan, it is The Living Word that show Satan, the he is doomed, and that he is limited in power and in time. Jesus brings us out of darkness that shrouds Satan’s in defeat. In Christ is life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

As we face the challenges that are ahead of us in the coming days, we can trust that Jesus will be with us each step of the way. We can think of these “things” that Paul tells us to think about. God’s love and presence, and that He has won the most precious things for us already. And He will use us to help others see the light of Christ in the midst of darkness. How much more could we be blessed?

In closing, Pastor asked me to share a song, and as I sing these words from Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, let us take these words to heart. Let us lift them up to The Lord in Thanksgiving and Praise as our closing prayer.

Video -

Pastor Keith a couple of weeks ago made a short video message, that was so well said, that I wanted to feature it this morning in our worship. It is a short video, but it reveals our love from Our Lord to us, and our love to one another in His name. It couldn’t be said any better, so please take a minute and hear our Pastor Keith Enko.