

A Series of devotions on Psalm 33

COMMIT YOUR WAY TO THE LORD

Psalm 33:16-17 “The king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a false hope for salvation, and by its great might it cannot rescue.”

The United States has, for many decades, had the most powerful and best equipped military in the world. Our country has spent huge amounts of money to try to ensure that this remains true. Yet, men in flowing robes, standing in the beds of Toyota pickups with a large gun bolted to its bed and IED's has driven the United States out of their country. What are we to think?

Judas, when he betrayed Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane thought he needed a detachment of soldiers and police from the chief priests and Pharisees. The Bible doesn't say how many soldiers were there, but a normal Roman detachment was around 1,000 men. The Bible says they were “armed.” (John 18) When Jesus asked who they were seeking to arrest, he was told, Jesus of Nazareth to which He replied, “I am He.” The Bible then says, “they drew back and fell to the ground.” (John 18:6)

Peter, thought a military engagement was in order, so he drew his sword and cut off the ear of a servant of the High Priest. Jesus strongly rebuked Peter. Jesus said, “Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matthew 26:53) Imagine what would have happened if Jesus had called for those angels to protect Him. Instead, Jesus healed the ear of the servant, permitted Himself to be arrested, tried, convicted and crucified.

Only one, namely Jesus, was able to win the war against Satan and His evil allies. Satan might have thought he won the war when Jesus died. How wrong He was. God's plan for your salvation required sins to be punished with death. Only His Son's suffering and death was sufficient to satisfy God's justice. With His crucifixion Jesus paid the terrible price for your sins and the sins of all humanity. Jesus, however, won the war with His resurrection on Easter morning.

You are not saved by the strength of a great army. You have God's forgiveness of your sins through the blood of Jesus shed on Good Friday. He alone has rescued, redeemed, purchased and won you. His victory is your victory.

Prayer: Lord God Almighty, You sent Your Son to take away the sins of the world, not by bringing an army of angels but through His life, death and resurrection. You have forgiven my sins through the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, and the power of the Gospel. Through my faith in Him grant me my victory over sin, Satan and the world. In His holy name. Amen.

God loved the world so that He gave His only Son the lost to save,
That all who would in Him believe Should everlasting life receive.

Christ Jesus is the ground of faith, Who was made flesh and suffered death;
All then who trust in Him alone Are built on this chief cornerstone.

God would not have the sinner die; His Son with saving grace is nigh;
His Spirit in the Word declares How we in Christ are heaven's heirs.

Be of good cheer, for God's own Son Forgives all sins which you have done;
And, justified by Jesus' blood, Your Baptism grants the highest good.

If you are sick, if death is near, This truth your troubled heart can cheer:
Christ Jesus saves your soul from death; That is the firmest ground of faith.

Glory to God the Father, Son, And Holy Spirit, Three in One!
To You, O blessed Trinity, Be praise now and eternally!
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