

## MORE THAN CONQUERORS

"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us" (Romans 8:35-37).

Observe carefully this phrase, "more than conquerors." It is a very significant expression and is used only once in the Scriptures. Who is this one who is more than a conqueror?

He is the one who gets victory, not out of conquest, but out of defeat; one who not only vanquishes his foes but uses these very foes as his allies and is enriched by them; one who is not only a victor in conflict, but who conquers without fighting; one who has no fear of his enemies but whose hope and faith are victors in advance of the battle. Every child of God is in every sense more than a conqueror, because he is born from above. But alas, so very few are aware of the victory that belongs to them. When God is with us, none can be against us and succeed. He organizes victory out of every defeat, yet in this very dying, He brought deliverance from death, so the victorious child of God dies to live, and lives to die, and in this very dying triumphs over death. "For Thy sake we are killed all the day long .... As dying and behold we live" .... a daily dying, not to get victory over sin but over every circumstance.

To this agree the words of Jesus: "He that loveth his life shall lose it and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal." Also, "Except a grain of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Christ is the fullest expression of these verses. He could have saved His life in this world, but He could not thus have redeemed humanity. As was truly said of Him, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save" (Mark 15:3 1). He laid down His life and was buried, but a harvest came up from His grave .... a new creation. If we would truly follow Jesus we must lay our lives down, not to make atonement, but to serve those for whom atonement has been made. The new creation is built upon sacrifice. The death of Christ is the foundation, and nothing adds to its structure, neither builds upon it, nor beautifies it, but sacrifice.

"Death worketh in us, but life in you" (II Corinthians 4:12). This is not dying unto sin of the old man. The latter never brings forth any good fruit. His works are manifestly evil and only evil. He was put to death by Christ upon the cross. "I have been crucified with Christ" (this is the old man), nevertheless I live (the new man), yet not I but Christ (identification of the new man with his source, Christ)." The old man is always identified with his head Adam; so the new man is identified with his head, Christ.

It is this new man who dies to bring forth much fruit. He turns his very enemies into his friend. The trials, the "tribulations, distresses, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril and sword" which beset him on every hand and threaten to disturb his peace and rob him of his power are the means of promoting them. He makes these very things serve him. He reigns over them and thus is "more than conqueror." All things work together for his blessing and final perfection. When the devil sends around a messenger to slap him in the face, he finds this the very means of getting a further revelation of the infinite strength which is at his disposal, but which is only made perfect through weakness. Satan designed to hinder Paul with his messenger, but the Lord overruled and made the "thorn in

the flesh" a blessing.

A conqueror wins through great ability or strength of arm, but the "more than" conqueror wins through weakness and defeat. He conquers without fighting ... stand still to see the salvation of the Lord. He abandons all effort in the conflict by yielding to every providence and trial as from the Father. He rests in the Lord and His enabling. And, in the greatest trial he is so confident of the final result, that he gives thanks in advance. For every battle, with its consequent victory, enriches him in faith, in courage, in hope and in love to God. A conqueror may be enriched by the spoil of his defeated foe, yet he too, loses heavily in the battle. But the "more than" conqueror loses nothing in the fray, for "all things work together for good" to him.

What about poverty? This cannot hinder him for he is making many rich by rejoicing in his circumstances; for he has nothing, yet in Christ, "he possesses all things." Is he unknown and unnoticed, creating no stir anywhere? Well, like Brother Paul, he takes comfort in the fact that he is well known unto God. Is he chastened? Then he thanks the Lord he is not killed. Is he killed? Behold, he lives! There is no defeat anywhere nor in anything. Every purpose and plan of the enemy is turned to good account. And while he may be perplexed, yet he is not in despair, and though sorrowful at times, yet his rejoicing is continual. He is some times cast down but never destroyed not forsaken of God, though persecuted by man. He knows that "we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." He takes "pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake," for when he is weak then is he strong. This is the overcomer! This is the "more than" conqueror! No one can harm him and nothing can defeat him.

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