

More than conquerors

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[0 : 0 0] Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that love God. Religious and even non-religious people can be divided into two kinds.

There are those who are certain that they are going to go to heaven and there are those who are not certain.

And yet it is a strange thing that very often those who are most likely to go to heaven are amongst those who are least certain that they are going to go.

And the opposite is also true. Those who are least likely to go to heaven are often amongst those who are most confident that they are going to go.

Almost everybody who does not go to church takes it for granted that when they die they shall go to heaven. But as those who are highly spiritual are not above examining themselves and searching their hearts now the reason of course between the reason for the difference between the two classes depends on a number of different things.

[1 : 4 2] Sometimes people's lack of confidence that they are going to heaven when they are converted is based upon their unsound teaching.

I remember once speaking to a girl who was born and bred in the Salvation Army a very amiable movement and this charming girl once said to me something which was as much nonsense as I ever heard in my life.

She said we believe that you can be saved today and lost tomorrow and then saved again on the third day and lost on the fourth.

she was being honest to extreme Arminian teaching but she was certainly talking nonsense in terms of the teaching of the word of God.

But if a person believes that kind of teaching clearly they cannot be sure that they are going to go to heaven and they could never use the sort of language that Paul uses here at the end of Romans 8.

[3 : 0 2] Clearly it would be worthless for a person to say that he is more than a conqueror through him that loved him if he believes it is possible that he might be lost tomorrow and saved on the next day but lost on the fourth.

I hope that none of us is so ignorant of the word of God as to imagine that that could ever be true of a real Christian. So that's one reason why some people who are converted may doubt that they are going to go to glory.

It depends in that case upon their bad teaching. But that's not the only reason why Christians may doubt that they will go to glory.

Another reason is that of their temperament. Some people are temperamentally gloomy and even morbid.

They are introspective to a fault. And they are forever pulling up the tree by the roots to see if it is growing.

[4 : 17] The strange fact is that these are sometimes amongst the very best Christians you will meet. And we have to say to such persons that the word of God does encourage the Christian to believe he is going to glory.

How could Paul possibly have used this kind of language in our text if he imagined that it was forever our duty to cast the clouds of doubt and despair upon our hope of Christ and of the world to come?

No, sir Paul, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. There is a third reason let me just touch on why some people have a doubt concerning their good standing in Christ and their hope of glory.

It is because of the malice and the temptations of Satan. This of course now belongs to the point of Christian experience.

There are those who are genuinely converted and yet in times of temptation may be brought through the craftiness of the devil to doubt that they ever repented to doubt that they ever believed to doubt that ever Christ did a work saving in their hearts and therefore of course to conclude that when they die they will go into darkness.

[5 : 51] But those periods of temptation are not the characteristic mood of the Christian in his best condition. There is an optimism about the gospel which is well reflected in the whole of Romans 8 especially at the end and which is epitomized in this very verse.

In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

what does this passage tell us? It tells us that we are going to glory. It tells us that if we have Christ we have God.

That if we have Christ we have glory. That we may face death triumphantly. That we may die in peace.

That we may go through the troubles of life with confidence that we shall emerge into the pure sunlight of celestial glory and bliss at the end of our sorrows.

[7 : 07] The trials and sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Paul explains the text that we have before us today.

With this amplification I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor anything else shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Now let's look at these words for a little time this morning. I want to point out in connection with them that the believer knows what his end and his destiny are and that is a great article of our faith and of our belief and one which should be like an anchor to the soul.

When the billows of life would rock the ship here we have the anchor that keeps us steady and stable. No matter whatever outward circumstances of our life may be we know as Christians that we are going to glory.

That is the statement the apostle makes. We are more than conquerors. through him that loved us. Now let's make it clear what we mean when we say that the believer knows his end and his destiny.

[8 : 53] There are things about his end and his destiny the Christian does not know of course. For instance he does not know how he will die. I do not know whether I shall die peacefully in my bed whether I shall be killed on the roads or whether in a time of persecution I shall be put to the sword or whether I shall wither and die in a prison or in a dungeon like the covenantal.

These things we do not know. I do not know how I will die and I do know when whether this day tomorrow next year ten years from now that is not something we know.

But I do know this that no matter how and when I die I shall die and go to glory. As a Christian I have that assurance from the word of God.

In other words the believer knows that he shall be with Christ in the end. That he shall be at peace in the end of the journey.

That is a great thing to know that you will be at rest. To know that you will be around the throne of God. That throne which is in the center of the heavens.

[10 : 22] Whose occupant is the triune God. Around which there is that emerald rainbow the covenant of grace. And these concentric circles of angels and archangels and cherubim and seraphim and the saints in glory.

Now believe in friend it is a mighty comfort to you today to know that you whatever will happen to you and whenever you will leave this world are going to be there amongst that company.

That is your assurance from God. I am not saying these things as mere matters of pulpit rhetoric. I did not invent the words that are in this text.

We are more than conquerors because nothing shall separate us from this love of God in Christ. I am persuaded that death and life and any other creature is impotent to do so says Paul.

Or as Jesus puts it, no man shall pluck them, no man can pluck them out of my hand or out of my father's hand.

[11 : 33] I give to them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. I and my father are one and we are in the hand of the triune God.

I'm sure the children should know just as all you adults know that in the good old days grandmothers used to say to their grandchildren, now my dear, if you are a Christian, you are safe.

They would take the child's little hand and they would put a coin, perhaps a penny or a drifany bit, we used to have them once upon a time, a little coin into the child's hand, little tiny hand.

Then the older person would put their hand around the child's hand and say you will be safe like that my dear if you trust in Jesus because you will be in the hand of Jesus and in the hand of God.

No man can pluck you out of that hand, those hands. Now I want to say to you who have been thinking about the Covenanters in the last few days, do not be unduly upset because the Covenanters were killed.

[12 : 55] 18 to 20,000 of them were killed all around us here in this part of Scotland. Some were beheaded and their heads were used for games and sport, some of their heads were put on pipes above the cities of Scotland, their hands were cut off and displayed.

All that sort of terrible treatment was given to these Covenanters. Don't weep for them. They are now more than conquerors in the glory of God.

And I want you to be assured of that fact today. Now, secondly, let us for a moment pause to consider God.

For whose sake we know that we have this confidence. Paul puts it like this, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Now, that means to say God. When he refers to the one who loved us, he is referring, of course, to God.

[14 : 08] To God the Father, to God the Son, and to God the Holy Spirit. these three eternal, almighty, holy, loving, blessed persons of God, are the ones he is talking about when he says that they have loved us.

They loved us before the foundation of the world. They loved us with an everlasting love. And that is how you and I, today, if we are Christians, are brought into this privileged position.

We are not, in other words, in any sense, going to go to heaven because of ourselves. I don't suppose, and I certainly hope, that there is nobody so stupid here today as to imagine that you're going to get to heaven because of any goodness of your own.

And yet it's amazing how in churches that idea dies hard. I think of all the things that is difficult to get out of the human heart, it is the idea that we have some goodness of our own.

I don't know if you boys and girls have ever seen them, but when I was young we used to have a penknife. And amongst the wonderful things that came out of the penknife, well there was one, a little blade, and then there was a big blade, do you remember them?

[15 : 40] And then there was a thing for taking tops off bottles, and then there was a corkscrew, nobody ever used these, and amongst the other things there was, believe it or not, something was taking stones out of horses' hooves.

Could you not just imagine the absurdity of it? Like a little point for taking stones out of horses' hooves. I don't suppose one in ten thousand ever used it, but anyway, they were there.

I imagine it must be a difficult thing to take a stone out of a horse's hoof. I've never done it, I hope I never shall have to try. But I suppose it's so deeply embedded that you have to scrape and get that stone out.

Well, you know, there is something harder than getting stones out of horses' hooves. It's getting self-righteousness out of human hearts.

love. And so I do hope that there is nobody so stupid, so mad as to imagine that you're going to get to heaven for any goodness of yours.

[16 : 47] No, no, sir Paul. It is through him that loved us that we are more than conquerors. How then has this wonderful God in three persons loved us?

What have they done for us? Well, let's look at these three persons and say a little about what each of them has done for us in order to give us this assurance that we are going to go to heaven as Christians.

Let's begin with the person we talk least about, the Holy Spirit. I hope you love the Holy Spirit. I think I can say, if I can say anything about myself, I think I can say, I love the Holy Spirit.

And if I were to see him face to face as I hope to do one day, I hope to throw myself down at his feet and to say, I thank thee, thou Holy Spirit, that thou hast done such wonderful things for me and in my wicked heart, and hast been so patient with all my provoking in this life, in this world.

Now, what has the Holy Spirit done? Well, very briefly, I don't need to be tedious about this. First of all, he gave us new birth. The Spirit has quickened us.

[18 : 11] Paul was writing about this, if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised Christ from the dead shall quicken our mortal bodies, but he also does so to the soul.

he comes to us as a spirit of bondage and makes us afraid of sin and afraid of death and afraid of God. He takes away the pride and the presumption of our heart by becoming a spirit of fear and a spirit of bondage before we know the liberty and freedom of the gospel.

The Holy Spirit then teaches us how to pray. Did you remember the reference that Paul gave us here? He says, we do not know what to pray for as we ought.

Isn't that true? Sometimes when you try to pray, don't you find it so difficult? I remember what one of the Puritans said, a man in New England called Thomas Shepherd, and he could pray.

He was the founder of Harvard University, very wonderful spiritual man. And yet he said about himself, there are times, said Thomas Shepherd, there are times when I would rather die than pray.

[19 : 26] I can say my amen to that. I often have to drag myself to prayer, don't you? You see, you say to yourself, now I have to steel myself to pray for half an hour.

Or sometimes you say I must steel myself to pray for an hour. And you can think of everything in the world that you'd rather do. You'd rather climb Mount Everest than go down on your knees for half an hour or an hour.

All the discipline of prayer. We don't know what to say until we start. And you go so dead to the throne of grace, you don't know what to say, and you're there for ten minutes finding an agony of difficulty and paralysis.

And then you feel the spirit gives you help and you begin to get life in your own mind and heart and you go up in prayer to God and you can hardly stop praying and the tears flow down your face and your soul is strengthened by the power of God.

We know not what we should pray for as we ought but the Holy Spirit who loved us gives us this help. We are more than conquerors through this Holy Spirit's help.

[20 : 36] And he gives us of course assurance, the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba Father. He witnesses with our spirit. He confirms and seals to us by experience what our minds deduce by logic.

He makes it powerful, the witness of the spirit and of course the Holy Spirit will give us bodily resurrection in the end. When we rise in glory that will be the Holy Spirit's work.

In a sense it will be his last work before he fills our hearts and minds eternally in glory. Let us be thankful for the Holy Spirit.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit. Be spiritually minded my friend. Let the word of God dwell in you richly. Talk about the Holy Spirit. Think about the Holy Spirit.

Pray for the Holy Spirit. Be filled with this Spirit. Because he is the one through whose love we shall be more than conquerors.

[21 : 43] But then let us consider God the Father. God the Father is the one also who loved us. We are more than conquerors through God the Father's love.

Now what has God the Father done for us? Well he has made the covenant of grace with us in Christ.

Christ. And this is his divine plan or his divine purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began.

All things work together for good says Paul in this chapter. To them who love God to them who are the called according to his purpose.

And then he gives us a description of what this purpose and this plan and this covenant involve. And he gives us five distinct steps.

[22 : 46] Five links in a chain. It is an adamant chain of divine grace and love. From everlasting to everlasting.

From eternity past to eternity future. These chains are made by the blacksmith of heaven and they cannot be broken by the powers of hell.

What are these five links within the chain? Well he tells us in this chapter whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate.

Whom he did predestinate he also called and then he justified and then he glorified. God is the God of order and the God of logic.

And these chains of divine purpose which are found here in these verses that we read round about verse 28 29 and following they're all there.

[23 : 51] They are the love of God the Father toward you who love Jesus Christ toward you who are believers. these are the purposes of God for your destiny for your everlasting mercy and kindness.

God need not have done this he was under no obligation to make you a beneficiary of all his love and grace but he did this for you because he loved you.

What are these five distinct acts of God? Well the first of them is what he calls foreknowledge which is the same as choice.

He chose you and left others alone. He decided upon your name. He said I will have this man and I will have this woman and I'll have this boy and I'll have that boy but I won't have the others.

That's what meant by foreknowledge. Oh how thankful we should be to be born in a land where the gospel is known. to have bibles in our own language, to have preaching, to have fellowship, to have elders who are elders indeed, deacons who are spiritual men, men and women in the congregation who love the Lord.

[25 : 10] What a blessing it is to have these things. God has eternally given them to us in his love. Let us not despise them. And the second of the links in the chain is predestination.

That is to say he said about those who are Christians, I will see to it that their destination is heaven.

You know when you get on a bus, if you're not foolish, you first of all have a look at the front of the bus, don't you, before you get on. If you get on the first bus that comes, you might end up in the wrong place.

You maybe wanted to go to Glasgow, and you could end up in Cumnock or in Dumfries. And people do that. I won't say I've never done that sort of thing myself, perhaps you have in a thoughtless moment.

But we're not wise if we get on the wrong bus. You first of all look at the destination, don't you? You want to go to Glasgow, so you look up, and there the bus comes, destination Glasgow.

[26 : 12] You're safe enough, on you get, pay your fare, and away you go, and all being well, you get there. The destination's important. Now predestination means God made sure that those who are to become Christians would get to their destination.

He appointed them to this great purpose of getting to glory. Oh, friends, how thankful to God the Father's love we should be, that God has appointed us to salvation, and not to perdition.

He has not appointed everybody to salvation. Let's disabuse our minds of that. If people refuse the gospel, if people do not take an interest in the gospel, they have themselves to blame, but God's purpose was even before their choice.

What a mercy that God has stooped so low as to conquer the hearts of sinners. And then the other links are easier.

The calling means conversion. Calling is the third link, that is conversion. Did you ever decide for Christ?

[27 : 21] Did you ever choose Christ? Have you ever gone in your heart to God and said, Lord, save me? Did you ever ask Christ to be your savior?

Well, that is calling. It's not so much what we do that counts, but what God does in us. We love him because he first loved us. And then justification, of course, is putting us right in the eyes of the law of heaven.

And then glorification will be the last of all. But he uses the past tense, notice, in that list of the chains, links in the chain, in verse 30, then he also glorified.

Why does he put it in the past? We are not there yet. No, but we are as good as there. The past tense means that it is past with God.

It's not past with us, but past with God. I think you will see there is great encouragement in that thought. My feet are not yet upon the threshold of glory.

[28 : 33] I have not gone through the door into heaven yet, but so far as God's purposes go, I have, as surely as I have been brought to Christ, as surely as I have been called, as surely as I have been justified, I shall be glorified.

In God's counsels, it is a thing of the past. Oh, wonderful love, God the Father's love. And I say to you, my dear friends, love God the Father, love him because he is that holy father to whom Jesus prayed.

He is that father of lights with whom is no variableness nor shadow cast by turning. He is that God of all compassion, he is the electing God, the predestinating God, the judging God, the God of mercy and kindness.

Do you love him? Well, if you are a Christian, you do. No wonder when Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he taught them to use these words, Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed, or holy, or blessed be thy name.

And that's the way we should think of God. And so I come to God the Son. We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. I've spoken of the Spirit, I've spoken of the Father, how much more I should have said, how much more I ought to have said.

[30 : 02] But let me say a little at any rate about God the Son. There is the love of Christ here. that's mentioned in verse 39, separated from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The love of God is in Christ. If you don't know Christ, you will never know God. If you don't know the love of Christ, you will never experience the love of God. Everything is in Christ. So how does God the Son, Jesus Christ, how does he ensure that you and I if we are Christians are more than conquerors.

He does so in a way that Paul has been here talking about. You see there is the possibility that our sin may get in the way.

You and I are Christians perhaps but sinners still. Sin is in us. Sin is with us in all that we do. My friend if you're a Christian when did you last lose your temper?

When were you last impatient with your wife or husband impatient even with God? You could tell me if you were honest couldn't you? It wasn't very long ago I suspect.

[31 : 21] Are we not all the same? Oh foolish sinners that we are still even though justified yet sin is in us? Now there is a possibility therefore you see that sin should be reckoned against us that we should be accused of it that we should be condemned for it Paul takes account of this who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect who is he that condemn us these are the questions that he raises in this context just a few verses before bearing in mind the fact that we have sin in our lives that we sometimes are deceitful that we are often disobedient to God and that that sin and disobedience might be laid against us by heaven the great question is will not sin get in the way of my getting into heaven how can there be more than a conqueror in view of the sin in my soul that is there the answer is in terms of the love of

God the Son of course the other persons are involved in this because the provision is that of the triune God but the distinct way in which God the Son makes us more than conquerors is he takes care of this problem of our sinfulness now in this life how does he do it who is he that condemn it is Christ that died who is even at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us now that is Paul's answer and it's all in terms of the gospel and the work of Christ our Lord why does he use these four phrases who is he that condemns the Christian the answer is nobody because Christ died the relevance of course is clear this is logical this is not sentimental slush of the kind that you get written on some calendars that are sent to you by somebody who is not a

Christian but thinks they want to send you something pious and devout and you get these little verses by some American woman or other who has made a fortune writing for calendars around the world and whose name is on them all this is not sentimental rhetoric there is logic there is teaching there is divine understanding given to us here who is he that condemneth and the answer is fourfold it is Christ who died that is to say Christ is the atonement for our sin his death is able to nullify and negate our sin to cancel our sin if you like Christ died for our sin and there is the love of Christ acting so that we should be more than a conqueror not only that but Christ also rose again what's the significance of that well it proves that God the father accepted the sacrifice which our sins needed in order to be expunged and removed the fact that

Christ rose again on the third day proves that God the father accepted the sacrifice necessary to remove my sins had Christ not risen again there would have been no acceptable sacrifice that's why the scripture says he died he rose again he rose again for our justification he died of course for our justification in a different sense justification in a sense of removing sin but rose again to prove to us that the sacrifice was acceptable it came up to God as a sweet smelling savor God the father smells in the death of Christ a sweet smelling sacrificial atoning propitiatory sacrifice which he will accept as a substitute for the sins of his people and a means of reconciliation of the church but he goes on who is he that condemneth it is

Christ who is on the right hand of God we have an advocate with the father not only that says he but he also makes intercession for us in the last few weeks we have heard a lot about the Lord High Chancellor of England well here we have the Lord High Chancellor of Heaven Christ our Lord he is at the head of the legal system if you like of Heaven itself and he pleads our cause as the advocate of advocates as the great High Chancellor and advocate of Heaven itself and he never loses a case nor does he ever fail in any of the suits that he pleads in Heaven with God the Father and this was his prayer oh my father I will they also who now has given me may be with me where I am that they may behold my glory who is he that condemneth in the light of that well you see we are more than conquerors through the three persons of God who loved us now let me close why does he say more than conquerors why does he not leave it at conquerors why does

[37:10] Paul seem to use exaggerated speech well it's not exaggerated speech it's very carefully chosen and very exactly and correctly worded let me explain in closing why the original language uses the word hyper which we still have in the English language don't we if you want to go to a little market you just call it a market what about a very very big market what do you call that now that's a hypermarket or a supermarket the word is the same a hypermarket or a supermarket not only a little one but a huge one well the Greek word hyper means above and beyond over and above bigger and bigger and bigger now then he says this that we are hyper conquerors that's the word he uses hyper conquerors we're not just simply conquerors full stop we are more than conquerors why are we more than conquerors well because not an enemy will be left standing in the day when Christ returns there will be no death standing there will be no wicked world standing and there will be no Satan standing against us every single one of our enemies will be abolished and then we'll be more than conquerors because not a single one of

Christ's soldiers will be lost imagine a battle in which one army was so much victorious that not so much as a single one of its soldiers was lost that's almost unique I don't know whether I have a husband in such a battle the nearest I can think of it is Julius Caesar when he came to a certain part of the east he went to a certain kingdom where there were enemies and his very name was so famous that Julius Caesar said this rather proudly I came I saw I conquered I came I saw I conquered Vene Vede Vecchi my very reputation was enough to quell all opposition just so my beloved when Christ returns not a single one of his enemies of his friends of his soldiers will be lost not one of the elect will be lost the whole church triumphant will be there more than conquerors and last of all our enemies will fall to rise no more now that's a rare thing some of you perhaps have been here the older ones of you have been through two world wars not one like me but two terrible world wars the first world war was called the great war it was thought to be the war to end all wars and would that that had been true but it was I'm afraid empty optimism as history has since proved but you see in the first world war we fought against

Germany and we won but in the 1930s Germany emerged again and we had to fight Germans a second time they arose to fight again that is what will never happen we are more than conquerors because Satan sin the world temptation all that is against us will be abolished forever in the day when Christ returns they will be cast into the lake of fire and they shall be against us no more so my Christian friend be of good cheer and believe these things and be persuaded as Paul was that nothing shall separate you from this love of Christ but what about those of you who aren't Christians what a lot you are missing what a lot you have left out of life all you think about is this world

I hope you change your mind and