

## MORE THAN CONQUERORS

Romans 8:35-37: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?... Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

### INTRODUCTION:

A. Christianity is pictured in the Scriptures as a constant battle.

1. Paul pictures himself as running a race from Earth to Heaven.

- (a) 2 Tim. 2:4-5: "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. And if a man strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned except he strive lawfully."

Weymouth, "If anyone takes part in an athletic contest, he gets no prize unless he obeys the rules."

- (b) Heb. 12:1: "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

- (c) I Cor. 9:24-27: "know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we are incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: but, I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

- (d) Phil. 3:13-14: "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

- (i) Chappell has said in his Values That Last, p. 36:

"Paul had a Fighting Heart. His vocabulary is not that of the cloister. It is that of the barracks and of the athletic field. He thought of himself

and of his fellow-Christians as engaged in the most exciting of all games, the most exacting of all conflicts...The game he was playing, the fight he was making, demanded all the high daring and courage required of the soldier and the athlete. And Paul felt that he and his fellow-saints were not inferior in this respect."

2. Paul pictures the battleground as our hearts and the world, Satan as the enemy and eternal life in heaven as the victory.

(a) Eph. 6:10-17: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace: Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God."

(b) II Tim. 4:7-8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

(i) To win the Crown, a man must:

- (1) Enter the Race.
- (2) Run According to the Rules.
- (3) Run his very best.
- (4) Run to win.

I. THIS BATTLE IS CONSTANTLY BEING WAGED WITHIN EACH OF US EVERY DAY WE LIVE.

A. Rom. 7:15-25: "For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. I find then a law, that evil is present with me, the one who wills to do good. For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man. But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing

me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? I think God - through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

B. We, too, as Paul, must wage this battle inside of us - inside the heart.

1. We must conquer self.

- (a) Sin causes one to fall out of himself.
  - (i) Psalms 38:3-8
  - (ii) Gal. 5:24
- (b) Man is a moral being, made to live in harmony with God. When he is at variance with his Maker, he is miserable and fearful. This sense of right and wrong and feeling of guilt for wrong-doing is found among all people both civilized and barbarian, even though their concept of right may be perverted.
- (c) Peace of mind is not possible until a person has conquered his spirit and brought it under God's control. Otherwise, the tumult of personal war rages within. He is like a ship filled with rebellious sailors who produce tumult within no matter how calm and peaceful the sea.
- (d) Self is the one person from which there is no escape. If one should go to Mars, he would still have to deal with a person from which there is no escape. In eternity, we must live with ourselves, and this is one reason a loving Father beseeches His children to keep self fit to live with.

2. We must conquer distressing circumstances and discouragement.

- (a) We cannot choose what happens to us, but we can choose How it affects us.
  - (i) This conquest must be won within the mind.
- (b) Discouragement can be caused by:
  - (i) Self-Pity.
  - (ii) Apparent injustices in this world.
  - (iii) Loneliness. (There is a difference between aloneness and loneliness). Some could be in a crowd and still be lonely.
    - (1) Loneliness can be caused by:
      - a) Uncontrollable circumstances such as a loss of a loved one.
      - b) That which we create ourselves - This is devastating.
      - c) The occasional loneliness common to life, experienced by everyone, for there is a part of us which can be shared by no other person.

(iv) Criticism (Psalms 69-20)

(1) Abraham Lincoln once said:

"If I were to try to read, much less answer, all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how, the very best I can. If the end brings me out all right, what is said against me won't amount to anything. If the end bring me out wrong, then angels swearing I was right would make no difference."

(v) Persecution:

- (1) Elijah, because of the constant persecution of Ahab and Jezebel, "arose and sent for his life... a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and requested for himself that he might die." (I Kings 19:3-4) Weary of heart and soul and body, he had lost his will to live - or fight.

3. We must conquer sin.

(a) There are four basis considerations in doing this:

1. It cannot be removed by the passing of time.
2. Sin is not erased by simply denying that it exists.
3. We cannot forgive ourselves.
4. Good works alone will not blot out sin.

(b) We can drive sin out of our lives by:

1. A determination to make some changes.
2. By realizing that all improvements require much effort and self-discipline.
3. By setting definite goals for ourselves.
4. By overcoming evil with good.

4. We must conquer our fear of death.

- (a) "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?... But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ Our Lord." (I Cor. 15:54-47).

- (b) Psalms 116:15: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints."

- (1) Those who have followed Christ through this life can follow Him through the valley of the shadow of death and into His eternal home.

(c) Matt. 5:12: "Great is your reward in heaven."

II. IN ADDITION TO THE BATTLE WE MUST WIN WITHIN OURSELVES, WE MUST CONQUER THE WORLD.

- A. We must fight the battle against religious division.
- B. A battle must constantly be waged against false teachers and false doctrines.
- C. We must wage war against indifference, materialism, worldliness within the church.
- D. We must fight against social and political injustices everywhere in the world.
- E. Christian people must fight crime, graft, corruption in their governing bodies.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We are in constant struggle: God against Satan.  
Church against the World.  
Man against Temptation to Sin.
- B. The toils of the road will seem nothing  
When I get to the end of the way.