

More than Conquerors

Romans 8:26-39

Stresses and strains of life. People often feel defeated by life. Depressed, broken -stresses and strains - ill-health, difficult family situations, broken friendships, unemployment, financial problems. Christians aren't immune from all these things; we live in a fallen world. Even if we try to live a holy life, the problems come to us even if we're not making them for ourselves.

As you know one of my themes as a Christian is encouraging that we always know what the promises of God are and hang on to them. In the reading tonight we are given a number of promises from God's word. It's not surprising to find these words of encouragement in Paul's writings. Paul - had lots of stresses and strains in his life - list from 2 Corinthians 11 *23 Are they Christ's servants? I sound like a madman — but I am a better servant than they are! I have worked much harder, I have been in prison more times, I have been whipped much more, and I have been near death more often. 24 Five times I was given the thirty-nine lashes by the Jews; 25 three times I was whipped by the Romans; and once I was stoned. I have been in three shipwrecks, and once I spent twenty-four hours in the water. 26 In my many travels I have been in danger from floods and from robbers, in danger from fellow-Jews and from Gentiles; there have been dangers in the cities, dangers in the wilds, dangers on the high seas, and dangers from false friends.*

And it was he that has related those things that lifted him; to remind us of who we are - and what that should mean to us. God want us to grasp the right perspective on life and on eternity., They are particularly helpful when times are tough and always worth going to when things happen to us and we don't know what's going on. There are many promises in this passage. I could probably do a series on just these verses. But tonight I'm going to be a good Baptist and just focus on three of the promises here. So, apologies in advance if I leave out your favourite verse!

We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. (AV)

One of the hardest things when we go through difficulties in life is seeing through it to the other side. Or things that happen that make you ask the question; why me? Do you love your Saviour? Then here's a promise that answers that - He works all things together for the good of those who love God. The GNB and most modern translations has the nearer translation here. In the previous verses Paul talks about how the Holy Spirit interceded for us with groanings that cannot be expressed and this idea follows straight on - for believers the Holy Spirit also works all things together for the good of those who love God. It's not a maybe that God does this - it's a fact. God is preparing us for that time when we shall spend eternity with Him.

So if you are facing a dark time at the moment, or are just wondering how something is going to work out - then if you love your saviour, you know that things are going to work together for good. Just be patient.

If God is for us, who can be against us?

Then right in the next verse, Paul backs this up with another promise. How do I know that He is going to work all things together for good? Because He's for us and not against us. And He's proved that already so we can be sure that this promise is true. Let me give you the verses again. *God, who did not even keep back his own Son, but offered him for us all! He gave us his Son — will he not also freely give us all things? 33 Who will accuse God's chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! 34 Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right-hand side of God, pleading with him for us!*

We know that if God is for us nothing can be against us. He's proved that by giving His own Son

for us. If we know Jesus as Saviour and Lord this evening then you know that you have been brought with a great price – and that price was His own dear Son. The worst that could have ever happened to us has passed.

- He gave His own Son
- He chose us

So at times when we feel defeated by whatever situation we're in let's remember that in Christ, we are conquerors because He conquered sin and death on Calvary.

No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! NIV No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

The present has a brighter side. If God is for us, who can be against us! Look through the present situation and out to the other side. Look at the possibilities, not the problems.

And now for our final promise

For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, neither the world above nor the world below — there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Nothing can separate us from the love of God. I find this such an important promise. The best that could happen lies in the future. Nothing can separate us. Not death, not people, not anything spiritual. Nothing, nobody can come between us – I am His and He is mine.

Is that your experience of God. Good – then treasure it.

If it's not and you've trusted Christ then these are all promises for you. Read them, meditate on them, hold them close to you – ask God to make them so much more real to you.

As we come around the table this evening, let's re-affirm the promises of God they've all been made to us in Christ who showed His love for us by having His body broken and blood shed for us. He's already loved us so much to save us from the worst that could happen to us, so let's have confidence to trust Him to carry through what He's started in us, and let that characterise our lives.

26 In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. 27 And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.

28 We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, those whom he has called according to his purpose. 29 Those whom God had already chosen he also set apart to become like his Son, so that the Son would be the eldest brother in a large family. 30 And so those whom God set apart, he called; and those he called, he put right with himself, and he shared his glory with them.

31 In view of all this, what can we say? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 Certainly not God, who did not even keep back his own Son, but offered him for us all! He gave us his Son — will he not also freely give us all things? 33 Who will accuse God's chosen people? God himself declares them not guilty! 34 Who, then, will condemn them? Not Christ Jesus, who died, or rather, who was raised to life and is at the right-hand side of God, pleading with him for us! 35 Who, then, can separate us from the love of Christ? Can trouble do it, or hardship or persecution or hunger or poverty or danger or death? 36 As the scripture says,

“For your sake we are in danger of death at all times; we are treated like sheep that are going to be slaughtered.”

37 No, in all these things we have complete victory through him who loved us! 38 For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love: neither death nor life, neither angels nor other heavenly rulers or powers, neither the present nor the future, 39 neither the world above nor the world below — there is nothing in all creation that will ever be able to separate us from the love of God which is ours through Christ Jesus our Lord.