

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

VOL. XXXVIII.

MONCTON, N. B., JANUARY 15TH, 1952

No. 289

Conquering!

Harry E. Jessop, D.D.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).

I. THE SITUATION—"In all these things . . ."

Much as the statement may at first tend to startle, the formidable list which Paul relates does not mean much to us today. How much do **you** know about it in actual experience? What do we know about tribulation? or distress? or persecution? or famine? or nakedness? or peril? or sword? Any attempted comparison for most of us would be utterly absurd. Yet, while Paul's actual list is not ours and in all probability never will be, the comprehensive expression surely concerns us. **"In all these things"**—what things?—the things which go to make up the environment in which we have to live.

It will be immediately clear that as such, no general list will suffice. What would be a severe test to one would have no effect whatever on another; each person has his own. Suppose you should write yours, what would you write. Possibly somebody's list would read somewhat as follows:

1. An unsympathetic atmosphere in which I am compelled to labor, and to live.

In my home, all my relatives are worldly, and in the place where I work religion is spoken of only with a sneer.

2. A weak body in which I am called to serve.

I am doing all I can to serve the Lord, but while worldly people around me are strong and well, I often find it difficult to keep going at all.

3. Financial strain which seems as though it will never cease.

I am striving to be ethical and to meet my obligations; but it is just one long wearisome grind that never seems to end.

4. Misunderstandings which stubbornly refuse to be straightened out.

Things are just a hopeless tangle—at least so it seems, and the more I try to put them right the more difficult they become. It seems as though hell itself is let loose, and I am utterly helpless.

That is your list, or maybe it is only part of it, or it is possible that the things mentioned are not yours at all. Probably your difficulties are of such a nature that you could not even discuss them with an outsider. But whatever may be the circumstances they are yours. You cannot disown them; it is impossible to slip from under them. **"In all these things!"** Remember, they are not haphazard.

They did not reach you by chance—and your attitude toward them is going to have much to do with the standardizing of your character—yes, and the ultimate salvation of your soul.

II.—THE DECLARATION—"We are more than conquerors."

Literally, we are super-conquerors. That means, to conquer and then have some power left over; not to live on the border line and to come through on a narrow margin, but to have an over-weight of victory, a spiritual plus. Having fought to the end, we remain victors on the field.

Such an experience was Paul's in the midst of all these things, and this same experience is for every believing child of God who will appropriate divine grace.

Let us turn for a moment to an Old Testament character by way of contrast. There is an incident in the life of Jacob which will help us here. His sons had returned from Egypt, except Simeon who at the command of the high official there had been left behind. Now the demand was that Benjamin should go. The official at the Egyptian court had declared that he would not even grant them an interview if they returned without their brother. Poor Jacob! It was the last straw. Burdened, distressed, and sorrowful, in the deep agony of his soul he cried out:

"Me ye have bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me."

There are thousands of people in that very place today. Things have gone from bad to worse—that is, on the surface, and it is difficult to imagine they may be better than they seem. But even if the worst were true, that would be no cause for despondency. It depends entirely upon how you look at things.

**"Two men looked through prison bars,
One saw mud—the other, stars."**

Paul had learned to govern the outlook by the uplook.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose" (Verse 28). Therefore, **"In all these things we are more than conquerors."**

What a remarkably full expression is this! **"More than conquerors."** There is about it the thought of over weight, as though he is conscious of enough and to spare.

By nature, we **come short**, but in the abundance of spiritual power and victory here represented, we are bigger than our circumstances, bigger than our needs, bigger than our difficulties. We conquer, and then have

some strength left. No longer do we feel that we are working to a margin; reservoirs of divine grace are at our disposal, avenues of blessing are open before us. We have been launched into a life of complete, unbroken and abounding victory in God.

III.—THE EXPLANATION—"Through Him that loved us."

Not through change of circumstances, nor through change of viewpoint, but **"Through Him that loved us."** The victory comes through the all-victorious, victory-giving Christ.

I. It is through the fact of His Person.

Spiritual victory cannot originate in ourselves. It must always relate itself to Him.

**"And every virtue we possess
And every victory won;
And every thought of holiness
Are His alone."**

2. It is through the fact of His Passion.

All His victory centers in Calvary. It was there that He spoiled principalities and powers, making a show of them openly; triumphing over them in the Cross. (Col. 2:14, 15).

3. It is through the fact of His Possession.

This is not a victory by proxy, but a real victorious life governed by the fact of an indwelling Saviour who has first conquered us on the inside.

In those amazing categories of things in which Paul declared himself more than conqueror, there is one significant omission. Go through those lists again. Is it not strange that amid **all these things** there is no mention of sin? Look at the lists carefully. Sin is not there. There must be a reason for it. What can it be? Simply this, that sin does not belong in such a category. Sin cannot be conquered, it must be destroyed. Paul knew this, hence his word in an earlier chapter: **"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin"** (Rom. 6:6-7).

Now thanks be unto God who always leads us forth to triumph with the anointed One, and who diffuses by us the fragrance of the knowledge of him in every place" (II Cor. 2:14).—Heart and Life.

"In praying for His disciples, Jesus did not ask for trials to be kept from them, but that they might be spiritually prepared to be overcomers. There is no crisis too great for us if we have the inner resources to meet it. That inner resource is the power that comes from a clean heart filled with God's Spirit."