

Calendar:

Group 4 Meeting, Sunday, 9-27 after AM services

Group 8 Meeting, Sunday, 10-4 after AM services at the Raposa's

More Than Conquerors

"Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment'" (Mt 22:35-38).

These words of Jesus should not be surprising. Those who love God are those for whom the world was created. Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified."

Observe from verses 29 and 30 that those whom God foreknew and "predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son" were the ones whom He called. But according to verse 28, those whom He called are those who "love God." So those who love God are those He foreknew, predestined, justified and glorified according to His purpose -- the purpose of the ages. Whether we are a

part of this great plan depends upon whether we love God. If we do not love God, then we are not among those predestined.

The love God asks is not a "touchy-feely" kind of love. The love with which He loved us was certainly not that kind; if it had been, we would not have been saved by His love. His was an active and sacrificing love. Ours for Him must be the same. It must be a love that commits itself to doing the will of God. "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (I John 5:3). This kind of love "seeks not its own" (I Cor 13:5); rather is "seek[s] first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (Mt 6:33).

Love for God is often tested. Too often, we see someone who has claimed to love God disillusioned by disasters and disappointments. Sickness that takes the life of a child, an automobile wreck that leaves one handicapped, a fire that destroys a home, or the loss of a large investment sometimes cause people to blame God. Some do as Job's wife encouraged him to do: "Curse God and die" (Job 2:9)! This only proves that their love was not genuine.

In times of distress, genuine love does not fail (I Corinthians 13:8). "Who shall separate us

The church of Christ

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Brent Agee: 916/786-0436
Bryan Byrd: 916/351-9320
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Michael Caisse: 530/672-2902
Jeff Clark: 916/985-8689
John Daniels: 916/985-3090
Jerry Deschler: 916/285-9115
Steve Dickey: 916/983-1071
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Service Times

Sunday Morning Assembly
9:30 AM
Sunday Evening: 5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible Study
7:30 PM
Classes for all ages.
Private classes arranged at your convenience.

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

Throughout the Old and New Testaments when trials came, those who truly loved God ran to Him rather than from Him. When God demanded that Abraham offer his son as a sacrifice, Abraham confirmed his love for God by proceeding to do it. Joseph's suffering, rather than diminishing his love for God, seemed only to increase it. David's love for God grew as Saul pursued him and some of his most beautiful psalms were written when he was in the greatest danger. Still ringing down through the centuries from a prison in Philippi are the songs of praise from Paul and Silas as they suffered the pain of bleeding backs and bound feet. Truly in all of these things, they were "more than conquerors."

If our love for God is genuine, we too will be "more than conquerors." Conquerors merely defeat their enemies; those who are more than conquerors make their enemies their servants and

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emerge from the conflict stronger than before. When we face "tribulation, or distress, or persecution," etc., we need to see it as a test, a challenge and an opportunity to prove our love for God.

And if our love for God does not fail, we can be sure that His love for us will not fail. "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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom 8:38-39).

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things" (Romans 8:31-32)? "Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you,' So we may boldly say: 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?'" (Hebrews 13:5-6).

Sewall Hall

The Church And Christians - C R Nichol

March 1948

When it is said one is a Christian, the thought is conveyed that the one referred to is a follower of Christ—that he believes Christ is the savior and subscribes to his teaching without any reservations, and embodies in his life the principles of Christ's teaching in all relationships.

I do not recall that human slavery is specifically condemned in the New Testament, yet I am persuaded that the principles of the teaching of Christ led to the freeing of the slaves in our country.

The New Testament does not give the "blue prints" by which we are to build our residences; yet in building them the Christian follows the principles of Christ in building, as does the workman in the construction of the house.

The store-keeper, if he is a Christian, follows the principles of Christ, in dealing with his customers—honest dealing, and truthful representations.

Though the New Testament does not specify in what particular field of human endeavor a man engages, it does demand that he work and provide for those who are dependent on him; and have to give to the work of the Master.

Christians not only sustain a relationship to the Lord; but being a citizen in the country in which they live sustain a relationship to that country—citizens with whom they associate.

The church is in no sense a worldly institution. It is not the business of the church to enter the marts of the world in an effort to make money—it is not the business of the church to become a competitor in the business world. Rather the church gives of its money to help suffering humanity, and to preach the gospel.

The church is the pillar and ground of the truth. (1 Tim. 3:15.) I think it would be well if many who are members of the church would give serious study to the foregoing passage; and in connection therewith it will be well to remember:

"Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." (1 Cor. 10:31.)

The first work of the church is to preach the gospel. He who thinks the physical demands of humanity comes first—in importance—has not learned the first lesson of the Scriptures. By way of comparison the physical life, and blessings for the physical man sink into insignificance compared with the spiritual. If needs be one must sacrifice his physical life, rather than deny the Lord. It is more important to maintain your faithfulness to the Lord than to preserve your physical life.