

A Word from Pastor Chuck



SIX VITAL QUESTIONS OF LIFE—PART 5

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

Romans 8:35a

The subject of Christ's love is so rich, so deep, that it is beyond our capacity to grasp.

In fact, Paul prayed for those in the church at Ephesus, *that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us* (Ephesians 3:17-20).

Paul is asking God to do the impossible for you, to give you a little bit of an understanding of the fullness of Christ's love for you—the length, the breadth, the depth, the height; to know the love of Christ that passes human knowledge. Jesus said, *“As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you”* (John 15:9a), and *“Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends”* (John 15:13).

NO SEPARATION

Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Romans 8:35b

Satan likes to use various difficulties we face in life to make us feel that we are separated from the love of Christ. When we go through trials, Satan likes to say, “If God really loves you, then why would He allow this to happen to you?” Satan uses tribulations, distresses, and persecutions to make us feel that God doesn't love us. Satan tries to plant in our minds the rationalization that a God of love would not allow us to experience such pain and mental anguish.

In Psalm 115, David asked, *Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God?* (Psalm 115:2 KJV). Sometimes, when something goes awry in your life, someone might torment you by saying, “Well, where is your God now?” Or we may be wondering that ourselves, thinking, “Where was God when this happened?” or “Why didn't God stop that?” We may begin to question the love of Jesus Christ when we experience painful circumstances.

DRIVEN TO CHRIST'S LOVE

As it is written, for thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Romans 8:36, KJV

At the time of Paul's writing, he had already gone through tribulation, distress, persecution, nakedness, peril, and the sword. He shares a long list in 2 Corinthians 12 of the things that he suffered, but they couldn't separate him from the love of Christ.

Now Paul quotes from Psalm 44:22, *Yea, for thy sake are we killed all the day long; we are counted as sheep for the slaughter* (KJV). In this psalm, the writer complained about various problems that God's people were facing: feeling that God had “cast us off and put us to shame,” or that He had “given us up ... scattered us among the nations.” The psalmist went on to say that even though he felt this way, he would not turn away from God. So here Paul is talking about the same kind of distresses—sufferings that often cause our minds to challenge the love God has for us. But, for Paul and the psalmist, these sufferings only drove

them closer to God because they knew that only God could deliver them from such things.

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Romans 8:37

We are more than conquerors in all our trials and tribulations. A conqueror is one who wins the battle, defeats the enemy, and rejoices in victory, sometimes even while the battle is still raging. You can be more than a conqueror because you already have the victory through Jesus Christ. We can rejoice in the midst of the conflict—that is true victory!

Jesus fought the battle and defeated the enemy almost two thousand years ago. When He cried from the cross, “It is finished,” it was a cry of victory. Satan's powers were broken. Jesus triumphed over the forces of darkness that are against us. *And you, being dead in your trespasses ... He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us ... having nailed it to the cross. Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it* (Colossians 2:13-15).

You who are in Christ can enter into His victory. Oh, we're still in a battle, to be sure. There are still perils, distresses, tribulations, and persecutions, but in all of these things we are more than conquerors because Jesus defeated the enemy. The only hold that Satan can have on you is a lie, which you allow. But thank God through Jesus Christ we can have—and do have—complete victory over Satan. It is ours; all we have to do is claim it. You can claim victory over temptations and the powers of darkness because Jesus spoiled these, triumphing over sin at the cross, making an open display of His victory. 🗝