

# The Beloved's Throne and the Christian

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## Ephesians 2:4-6

*But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.*

Last Sunday morning in Iasi, Romania, I preached in two different churches. In the first service we spoke on the process of sanctification and the promise of God to sanctify His people. In the second service I preached from Ephesians 2:1-5 and I feel led that I should continue from that chapter and speak to you this morning.

In chapter two beginning with verse one, Paul tells us we are all in this predicament and this is where God finds you: spiritually dead. Dead in trespasses and sins. No more could you free yourself from this condition called spiritual death than could a dead man deliver himself from his casket and grave. Yet the Bible says that God in His great love wherewith He loved us showed us this amazing grace, the same amazing grace we sang about earlier,

*Amazing love, how can it be?  
That Thou my God should die for me?*

It's so amazing it seems unbelievable. But it's true. However, Paul does not stop with the Gospel proclamation. As great as it is, it only gets better. It's one thing to be found by God and forgiven of your sins but it's another thing what God does thereafter.

We've tried to reduce the Christian faith to bumper stickers. We are truly a sound bite nation. So often we read statements like, "A Christian isn't perfect, just forgiven." But there is a big difference between forgiveness and perfection and to simply say a Christian is just forgiven is to bring a shortcut to the Gospel and reduce what God has done. You and I are more than just forgiven. No, we're not perfect yet, and He's not done saving us, but we're further down the road than just being forgiven. According to this apostle in verse six, we have been seated with Christ on His throne. This is as much a part of your salvation as deliverance from sins. Paul puts it all in this announcement of what God's grace has done for us.

He says in verse eight, "For by grace have you been saved by faith that not of yourselves it is the gift of God, not of works—lest any many should boast." Paul wants you to know that saving grace includes verse six. You have already been seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. And on this

Mother's Day, there is no better illustration to explain how that is possible than when a mother carries her child within her those nine months.

A mother and the child in the womb are seemingly one yet two distinct persons are they not? That little life within her is an independent person with personality, soul, and all that goes into being a person, and yet that person within her completely depends upon her for survival. The air the mother breathes oxygenates the little body and her heart pumps lifeblood to that small life. She has to be so careful during those nine months about what she eats and drinks for what she imbibes can affect that child to the good as well as to the negative. Why? Because their lives are joined. His or her life is within their mother and so it is with you and I—we are *in* Christ Jesus. We are independent and separate, yet on the other hand He is in us and we are in Him. Have you forgotten? Whatever is true about Him and His redemptive and mediatorial function and role is true about you.

Remember, if you put a piece of paper in a book then whatever is true about the book is true about the piece of paper. Whatever I do with the book, I do with the paper. The same is true with you and I. Because of our union with Christ, we have been joined to Him and whatever the Father has given and bestowed upon Jesus He has inasmuch given to you. You have received all of the blessings and benefits that Christ has earned. Not I, not you, Christ has earned it. Oh to be in Him, drinking, receiving this eternal life. I will not die and enter into eternal life; I'm there now! That life is in me and I am in Him. Because of that, you're looking at a man who not only has his feet firmly on this earth but one who is seated in the very throne room of God.

This is hard for us to grasp. These thoughts aren't new to us, you've heard them before, so what else can you know about them? It's not that you will know more about them; my prayer is that you will believe them.

It is my prayer today that the Holy Spirit will open your understanding and give you revelatory comprehension. May you believe that at this very moment, while you're in the midst of much tribulation on this earth, you are in the very presence of God in the holy of holies, seated with Christ on His throne.

What does this word *throne* mean? Typically we see a picture of a chair gilded with gold and ivory. We see a man seated in His regality, with an ornate crown. That's what we think of when we think of a throne, but I want to separate the image that's now in your mind with what Paul wants you to see. What he wants you to see when you read, "seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" and upon the throne of God, is that the throne represents the authority and power of the Monarch, the King. Therefore, heaven's Monarch, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, the God of the universe, having all authority and power, is at this moment sharing that power and authority with us. That is what we need to understand here when we hear the word *throne*.

I am not addressing defeated people, although you may feel defeated. I am not addressing people who are castaways or abandoned, although you may feel abandoned this morning. I am address-

ing kings and queens of heaven. I'm talking to a royal priesthood. I'm talking to an army of people who share the power of the God of the universe within your very soul.

## I. The Benefits and Privileges of Throne Life

It's so hard to enumerate these benefits since they're infinite in degree. Paul, struggling himself to describe all the privileges we have in Christ Jesus, who is now seated on the throne of God, summarizes it this way,

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)*

Every spiritual blessing has already been bequeathed and granted to you. There is nothing you need today. We sang, "Lord, I need You" earlier and I know what we mean by the song, but the truth is you really don't need anything. You already possess it all. You've been given every single thing that's necessary in order for you to live out the victory that Christ accomplished on the cross and through His resurrection in order to proclaim it to the world. You have it all.

These blessings and benefits are so amazing that Paul has to pray, literally pray, that his readers would understand what he is saying. We are not as so many suppose caught in this in between stage—merely saved and yet not entered into heaven where our victory lies. That is not the case with you. Listen, you're not *just barely* saved, although you may feel like it at times. Some of us wonder at times if we're even saved or not, but that's not the biblical fact about you. You're not *barely* saved waiting for some victory to come when you die or when Jesus returns. The truth about you and I right now is that you have already entered into the holy of holies, upon that very mercy seat we sang of earlier. Where Christ is seated, there you are also, for the kingdom has come.

The King has already come and established His kingdom. Here, again, we have confusion because we think of a geopolitical entity with society and culture already on the earth, and in that regard the kingdom has not come. But the kingdom is here and you are ambassadors and representatives of that kingdom and God's will is being done on earth as it is in heaven through the church of Jesus Christ.

So Jesus said, "be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." It's already done. This is our victory over the world, even our faith. You already have victory over this demonic and present evil age. Why? Because you're also in heaven above it all.

In John three, Jesus, speaking to the bewildered Pharisee Nicodemus, said this,

*"No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven." (John 3:13)*

I'm sure Nicodemus was even more concerned by that statement than he was about being born again. Was not Jesus standing there before him? Was he not hearing Him with his own ears? "What do You mean that You're in heaven? You're right here!" But it was true. While He was right there before Nicodemus He was also in heaven. How is that possible? Because of His union with the Father. The Father was in Him. The life that was in the man Christ Jesus was the life of God Almighty. The principle is the same right now. The life that is in you is the life of Jesus Christ and where is He? Seated in heaven. So the fact is true that while you're seated right there you're also seated in heaven. The spiritual realities of heaven do not come when you die; they're already yours in your heart while you may not yet possess them in your hand. Those realities are just as real now in the spiritual realm as they will be when we are in heaven. You are there.

The Apostle tells the Ephesians that he prays for them to realize this very fact. As you go through this prayer in chapter one, you'll realize why he is praying for the Ephesians to understand what he's saying.

He prays,

*"I . . . do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: <sup>17</sup> that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, <sup>18</sup> the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,"*

What could God possibly have in us that would be His inheritance? And yet Paul is saying, "You won't get this, you won't understand unless the same inspiration that came upon me to write and understand it comes upon you," so he's praying not just for those people who first read this letter but for us today. The prayers go through the centuries and we're the benefactors of this prayer that God would give you enlightenment, revelatory power to understand how much He values you. How much? Paul continues,

*"<sup>19</sup> and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power"*

*Lord, I'm going to write something to these Ephesians that they will not believe because it will be so fantastical, so help them to see the great power that's already in them.*

What is this great power? He defines it.

*"<sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup> far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."*

That's the power that resides in every believer in this room. What kind of power? Resurrection power. The very power God exerted upon the body of His lifeless Son that caused Him to come

out of the grave is in you. This is not imagination run wild. This is not some heavenly vision of some holy man; this is the reality of every one of you because this is what salvation entails. He doesn't stop with your sins forgiven, as great and awesome as it is. I never want to minimize this but why have we minimized the other benefits of our salvation? Why have we elevated this one gift—the forgiveness of sins—to the neglect of all the others? The forgiveness of sins just makes it possible for God to give you what He's now telling you—the power of the resurrected life of Christ within your very life. There is no reason why anyone here in this room does not have the power to experience the overcoming victory of Christ over this present age. It's ours.

Paul continues,

*“<sup>22</sup> And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup> which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.” (Ephesians 1:16-23)*

What is this “exceeding greatness of His power towards us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power”? It is the power of the resurrection and ascension.

In chapter 3:20 Paul prays again and says, “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.”

You say, “I don't have that kind of power.” I beg to differ with you. And remember I've got the whole weight of Scripture behind me. I've got the testimony of this epistle. Yes you do have that power. Most definitely. We'll talk in a few moments why you lack the experience of that power but for now, let it be established, let's agree together, that at least this is what the text is saying whether it's our experience or not. Shall we not do that? Can we not all agree I'm not adding or taking away from the text? The power of God, the resurrected Jesus, who is now seated at the right hand of God, is in you. The power by which all things were created, resides in you.

What does this mean? I cannot name all of the spiritual blessings, but let me give you four this morning.

### **A. Victory Over the Flesh**

The part of you that's still not perfected yet.

The part of you that's still easily enticed.

The part of you that reacts when somebody says something unkind.

The part of you that looks with envy or lust after others.

The part of you that still wants you to sit on your throne and forget about heaven's throne.

Oh, but you have victory over that because you are seated in Christ. “The old man was crucified with Him so the body of sin might be destroyed,” that means rendered powerless that you should no longer be a slave of sin. The Bible says there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. Why is that? Because the law of the

Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death. You can tell your flesh to submit and it must submit. You have a power that will bring it into submission and you can have victory over your own sinful inclinations that still abide within you.

God has not saved you to make you live a miserable life until you get to heaven. He has meant for you to have victory over your own self, which is dominated by the flesh. He has introduced to you the very resurrected power in you and not only that, He has given you the authority, by seating you on His throne, to exercise that authority even over your own desires. They that are Christ's have crucified—past tense—the flesh with all of its lusts and passions. You can have victory over yourself so that self can live by the Spirit and not by flesh.

Not only can you have victory over the flesh because Jesus' death has put an end to the power of sin in your life.

## **B. Victory over the World**

The world is the present system that tries to allure us and tell us that there's a better way.

To the man or woman who is truly converted, while we enjoy the world as God created it, it doesn't satisfy, does it? Not to the degree that you know Christ can. This is the proof of God working in you an awareness of where you're really seated. And though you have to live here in this world you live as a refugee fleeing this city of destruction. Judgment is coming and you know it and something has severed your ties to this place and something like a honing beam is influencing and compelling you to come and draw near to it. What is that? It's that City where you're now seated.

So the man, the woman, the child, who knows Jesus Christ and has this kind of power within them, grows increasingly dissatisfied with the world. Are you experiencing that? Or are you at the place where you think this is all that there is and that you might as well enjoy it while you're here? Oh dear friend, God has given you much more than this present age. You're seated in a place where things indescribable occur. When John tried to describe them he could only say "like as" or "similar to" or "as this" or "as that" because there is nothing on this earth that compares to the beauty and joy in the presence of God.

## **C. Victory over Satan.**

The archenemy of our souls.

The devil.

The dragon, as he's called in Revelation.

Apollyon, the prince of the flies.

Lucifer, the son of the morning star.

The one who wages war against all of God's saints.

The one who makes war with the woman and all of her offspring.

God has already given you victory over him. It was a battle, yes, but all Satan could do was bruise the Lord's heel, Jesus crushed his head.

Listen to Jesus before He goes to be seated on that throne where you and I are with Him seated. "All authority has been given to Me," all authority. And now we possess that authority, which leads me to the next benefit. Not only do you have victory over the flesh, the world, and the devil, but you have a delegated authority.

#### **D. Delegated Authority.**

The authority is not yours, it's delegated to you to use as He, the King, chooses. You are an ambassador.

In Luke 10:19, Jesus has sent out the seventy to preach, to heal the sick, and to cast out demons and they return rejoicing. They are ecstatic, happy guys, who are remarkably joyful at the fact that they can cast out devils in Jesus' name. So Jesus says to them,

*"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you." (Luke 10:19)*

Because Jesus is seated above every principality and power, including Satan, you too are over him. You have authority over the enemy because your King does and you're seated with Him and are His delegate and representative. Does the Bible not say, "Submit to God, resist the devil and he will flee from you"? He *will*. Not perhaps, not if he feels like it, not if you're spiritual enough, not if you pray enough. There is no other qualification but if you submit to the King with whom you are seated on His throne and resist the devil, he must flee. He cannot tolerate your Christ's authority in you.

In Matthew 16:19, Peter has made the famous declaration that Jesus is the Son of the Living God. Jesus says in response to Peter, specifically, but not only to apply to just Peter and the apostles but to you and I. I'm going to read this out of the Holman Christian Standard Bible because it says it exactly the way Jesus meant it to be interpreted.

*"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth is already bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth is already loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:19, HCSB)*

Keys are always the symbol of authority. I remember as a boy in elementary school always being fascinated by the janitor who had this huge ring of keys. I mean, there was no place to put another key on there and they jingled and jangled as he walked along. Mr. White was his name and I'll never forget the kindness of that man. He had all these keys—there wasn't a door in the school that he couldn't get into. He had the power to do so. And it fascinated me as a little boy. Keys. They're a symbol not of doors but of authority. You have the power to go where the locks hinder others. "I give you the keys," Jesus said. And what will these keys do? Whatever heaven has already decided should be bound will be bound and whatever heaven has decided should be loosed you will be able to loose. We are delegated representatives of God's authority.

Listen to the prayer again,

*“Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
<sup>10</sup>Your kingdom come.  
Your will be done  
On earth as it is in heaven.” (Matthew 6:9-10)*

How is the will of God in heaven being done on earth? Through the church presently occupying this place. We are His representatives. We bear His authority and we dispense it as He commands.

Delegated authority means that when God speaks and says, “I want you to loose this person,” you have the authority to do so. This is illustrated by Paul. For three days a girl who could tell people’s future and fortunes followed them around saying, “These men are from God and they have the way of salvation.” For three days Paul had to put up with that and I wonder why it took three. It was a demon that allowed her to foretell things in the future. Paul suffered this for three days and something happened on the third day and he could suffer it no more. He rebuked the spirit in her and immediately it came out. Why three days? The only answer I have is that he didn’t have the authority to do it the first or second day, but on the third day the Spirit spoke to him and said, “It’s enough.” And then the key, the delegated authority, was his to use. What had already been bound and loosed in heaven was now bound and loosed through God’s delegate, the Apostle Paul. The same principle works for us as God dictates.

I’ve spent a lot of time trying to get us to understand these benefits and get us to see them, to taste them, to desire them. We need to move on to the personal hindrances.

## **II. Personal Hindrances to Experiencing Throne Life**

### **A. Unbelief.**

We simply don’t believe what we’re hearing. We find it difficult to say, “That’s fact,” or “that’s true about me.” We can believe Him for the forgiveness of sins, we can believe that when we’ll die we’ll go to heaven, but we have difficulty believing this kind of salvation would include victory over the flesh, the world, and the devil. The reason is because of the twin evils of emotions and experiences.

### **B. Emotions.**

We don’t *feel* victorious. We don’t *feel* spiritual. We don’t *feel* powerful. These are the kinds of things we say to ourselves, is it not? We gauge our ability to do the will of God based upon how we are emotionally feeling that day. We base things on our state of emotions; the last thing you should base it on. Emotions have nothing to do with the truth of this text that you are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.



## C. Experiences.

It does not matter if you feel it or not and it doesn't matter if your experience seems to correspond with your feelings, arguing that you don't have that kind of power and that you're not seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Experiences and emotions have nothing to do with the truth of what God has spoken. It's true whether you feel it or not. The reason you don't often feel it is because you don't really believe it. You've done what all of us do at one time or another or most of the time: reverse faith and feelings.

Fact must precede faith as a locomotive must precede a train. Think of the way faith and feelings work like the cars of a train. This train has three cars, the engine is truth, the next car is faith, and then the caboose, which is not necessary, is feelings. But if you say, "I know something is true if I can feel it," then my dear friend you'll never feel it and you'll never experience it. Some of us in this room are still yet defeated by the devil, the world has us where it wants us, and our flesh never seems to be controlled because we are always looking within these hearts trying to gauge how spiritual we are or are not.

I want to say again and plead with you that this is not the way; this is not the path to experiencing what is true about you. You must never look within your heart without the Spirit leading you to do so. The Spirit will never lead you to look within your heart unless He's ready to deal with something in your heart. My policy is this: I'm not going to worry about my sins or my weaknesses or my problems unless God exposes them to me, then I know He wants to deal with them. Otherwise, I leave my heart alone. That is not to say I will not deal with the sins I know I have committed. This we all must do. But we must not go looking within a cesspool thinking we will find pure water. You cannot look within very long and not find problems and if you don't, then you have another kind of problem called pride.

*I've never heard of that, you say.* Well, I'm telling you after years of experience doing it the other way that the other way will not work.

God does not lead you to become more like Christ and grow in spiritual maturity by causing you to look within; He does so by causing you to look away from yourself to Christ. Sanctification is nothing more than being changed from a self-centered stare to a Christ-exalting gaze. That's how you grow. When you see Jesus seated on that throne then faith has an object that it can latch onto and believe in—it's Jesus, not you or me.

God is not concerned about your state of spirituality right now. You heard me correctly. He is not concerned with your state of spirituality. Why is that true? Because He's promised all His children that He will save us, and saving includes conforming you to Christlikeness. Only He can do that and He's not concerned about what He can do. His only concern is whether you trust Him or not?

Do you, when you sing *Great is Thy Faithfulness*, really believe that or not? Must He beg as a beggar for you to trust Him who is faithful? Forget about what you feel and your experiences.

But you argue, *My experiences show I'm spiritually weak. There are no miracles in my life.* My dear friend, if you were to take God at His word and believe this text your life will not change all that much. You're still going to get up on Monday mornings and go to the factory or the office or school and you're going to live an ordinary life. But if you will believe what the Apostle is teaching us you will notice one thing that's not there presently. You will have an assurance of His abiding presence that will fuel your joy. That is the power source that you and I need and have. We already have it.

If you think what I'm talking about is something that will cause you to see miracles at every hand and every demon is going to fly at our presence, you've got it wrong. Not even that happened to the apostles. We just saw a demon following Paul around for three days. My friend, that kind of a concept is not even biblical. That's fantasyland. That's not real. When a man or woman is full of God, knowing they have the power of God, seated in heavenly places, their life is not so different except for one thing—the countenance tells of an assurance that is not rooted in this world but in another. There's a peace that abides in them. Do not let your emotions or experiences change the facts of what's true about you. You are seated right now with all authority in heaven and earth and you can use it as God delegates it.

### **III. The Throne Life of the Christian and the Church is Satan's Chief Opposition**

It's interesting how Paul ends his letter to the Ephesians. He begins the letter with high-toned blessings but he ends on a different note, or so it seems. He ends chapter six this way,

*“Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup>  
For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. <sup>13</sup>  
Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.” (Ephesians 6:11-13)*

That doesn't sound all that victorious, does it? To be engulfed in a conflict, to be in a fight, to be in the midst of a challenge and opposition? That doesn't sound very victorious. And yet it is. Here's why. Only the Christian who believes they are seated in heavenly places with Christ is a threat to Satan's enterprise and weaponry. Only the group of believers who say, “We will not walk by sight but by faith. We will not walk by our emotions or experiences but we will believe in the Word of the Lord.” That's the only church Satan is really concerned about.

As I bring this message to a conclusion I want to make it very applicable. I have noted, as many of you have noted, that so many of our brothers and sisters, so many of us, often seem to walk in the valley of the shadow of death. We seem to be plagued with one trial after another, one tribulation after another. Over the years I have watched as people come here and identify with our church and as they become a part of us they enter into an intense spiritual battle like never before. They often say, “I've never experienced this before.” Thankfully they don't make that as-

sociation with the church, some do and some don't stay. I've watched this and I've thought so much about this. *Lord, I think, why don't doesn't XYZ church have the same problems? Why don't You send the devil down to them and give us a break?* I didn't pray that, I just thought that.

Why do we have to walk in mud instead of on water? Why does it feel like we're just dragging along trying to make a step? I think the answer is and always has been that there is an enemy who is taking note of my anointing. There is an enemy who recognizes truth when he hears it even though those who are hearing it might not realize it. He also is able to know the hearts of the people and he sees they want more than the average Christian wants. You can't listen to this kind of message week after week unless you want it. What happens if you don't? You feel condemned, don't you? It's not meant to make you feel condemned. Even this message, I wanted it to be a hopeful and encouraging message but maybe you hear this and say, "That's not my life," and you get discouraged all the more. But you want it don't you?

Can I say this without any disrespect? There are a lot of churches that are quite happy with their routine and their system and they don't think there is anything more. They're quite content so long as the bills are being paid and there is a sufficient number there to support that work, they're okay. That's why there are pastors who do nothing but read the latest book that's published that will help them to maintain what they have and maybe grow. That's why they travel from one conference to another always trying to find some new key or principle. The reason is that's all they have.

Satan knows there is a body here that has determined to wait on God. That's always scary to him. When you say, "Listen, I'm not going to manufacture this thing no matter what the opposition does," that frightens him. Number two, he knows there is a body of believers here who has said, "I know there is more to the Christian life than having my sins forgiven and then waiting to die and go to heaven." That makes him tremble. He knows there is a body of believers here that knows that only God by the Spirit can achieve supernatural things and they still believe that. That, he knows, is a nail in his coffin and he will do all he can to get your eyes off the fact of this text. He will do his best to oppose you one way or another in order that all you see is your tribulations and not the truth of the Scripture, not the truth about you that you are seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. I am convinced this is the issue at hand.

So what can I say? I can only ask that God would do what Paul prayed for the Ephesians and open our eyes to see the wealth that's already been bestowed. I pray we would not wait for some sound of a rushing mighty wind and cloven wings of fire to set upon one and all of us, but rather we would receive what God has already given. If you don't have the strength to receive it, then just let God give it. Just let Him go ahead and give to you what is already yours. Let Him appropriate it. Just stand, and doing all to stand, say, "God, if I perish, I will perish believing that I've already been seated with You in heavenly places on the throne of all the universe, and all authority is Yours in heaven and on earth and, Lord, I'll do what You want me to do knowing I will have Your power at my disposal."

Maybe while waiting on God we ought to remember that God has already done everything necessary. "Do not think it a strange thing that you have fallen into a fiery trial." Don't think it strange. You have an enemy and all of his subtleties and assaults are not to get you to lose your salvation because we have a Savior who will never turn us loose. The enemy's goal is to rob you of the inheritance you've already been given. So the Apostle Paul says of himself and all believers,

*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup>As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."*

Where is the victory in that? Ah, but listen,

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

Remember what Jesus said? He said if you walk with Him and love Him and trust Him not one hair of your head will be hurt. He said when they turn you over to the governors and the kings, don't worry about what you're going to say, He'll give you the words and not one hair of your heads will be lost. And yet perhaps even this day Christians are going to lose not their hair but their heads. What does He mean that not one hair will be harmed? He means that the body is not the most important thing. The most important thing is that you trust God and display even in the hour of pain and problem that Jesus is sufficient for your soul!

Who cares what the doctor says if the Great Physician will never depart from you?

Who cares what the banker says if the One who owns the cattle on a thousand hills is with you?

What does it matter if that loved one scorns you and heaps upon you all forms of verbal derision, if He who will stick closer than a brother will not depart from you?

Paul says in these things we are more than conquerors.

*"38 For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, 39 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." (Romans 8:35-39)*

That's victory, to be seated with Him never to be torn apart. In this let us rejoice. Amen.