

THE BOOK OF ROMANS
"More Than Conquerors"
Romans 8:35-37

Aug 13, 1986

INTRODUCTION

1. God has given the glorious truth of infinite sovereign support for the elect (v. 33). What He starts, He will complete (vv. 29, 30).
2. Because of God's purpose (vv. 28, 29), a series of serious questions are raised: a. What shall we say then? (v. 31). b. How shall He not? (v. 32). c. Who shall say? (v. 33). d. Who condemns? (v. 34) and now e. Who shall separate? (v. 35).
3. This fifth question rises from the four reasons for God's acquittal as given (v. 34): Christ's expiation, Christ's resurrection, Christ's ascension, and Christ's intercession.

1. POSED QUESTION v. 35 a.

a. Who?

The interrogative pronoun is "who" and not "what," albeit nothing that follows is animate. Yet the nouns are all feminines and masculines, not neuter. "Us" is emphatic and refers to God's elect ones.

b. What?

Separation is like an amputation. The statement is clear--nothing can separate from Christ's love for us (objective genitive, not subjective). This is the faithful testimony of God's Word (cf. Jn 10:28 where "any man" is similar to "who" of this Romans verse!). Separation from His love is an impossibility!

2. EXPLAINED QUESTION v. 35b

Here is a list of seven possible agents to separate an elect one from Christ's love. Study them for they rise up as so many angry personalities whose cumulative force seems overwhelming. Paul had long aggravated trial. He knew experimentally the truth of His explained question (cf. 2 Cor. 11:23-27; 2 Tim. 3:10-12).

a. Tribulation

This is a feeling of pressure. The word was used early on in the church (Acts 14:22) and Paul gloried in it (Rom. 5:3). The word is used of the tribulation (Mt. 24:21). Not even such disaster can amputate from His love.

b. Distress

This is a narrowness of room or space. It is translated anguish (Rom. 2:9 cf. 2 Cor. 6:4; 12:10). Only used by Paul in N.T.

c. Persecution

This is pursuit or persecution by enemies (cf. Mt. 13:21; Acts 8:1; 13:50; 2 Cor. 12:10; 2 Thess. 1:4; 2 Tim. 3:11).

d. Famine

This is hunger (2 Cor. 11:27). For some this is destitution, but His elect know it does not cut one off from His love.

e. Nakedness

This is lack of clothing when one has to flee (cf. 1 Cor. 4:11; 2 Cor. 11:27).

f. Peril

This is real danger. The word is only found here and 2 Cor. 11:26.

g. Sword

This is a short sword carried by a heavily armed Roman soldier. This causes loss of life or martyrdom.

Note: None of these look like caresses of love, but an abandonment. Yet love cannot be amputated! The mention of "sword" alerts Paul to quote Psalm 54:22 to show that God's present elect suffer as His own in the O.T. and He loved them (cf. Heb. 11:37). Think of it: sword-killing and as sheep in a slaughterhouse yet no separation from Christ's love. Glory!

3. CONCLUDED QUESTION v. 37

Key words in this verse include:

a. "But"

Here is a shout of triumph. The very "things" which appear to spell separation, God says "in all these things" something different is evident. Amen!

b. "Conquerors"

Here is a verb only found here in the N.T. coined by Paul. Surpassing victory is the sense. Conquers and more! Blessed word.

c. Loved

The aorist tense and not the present is used. The surpassing act of Calvary's love is the crowning proof that He will not be amputated from us.

CONCLUSION

Beloved, once saved always saved is not a dangerous doctrine, IF taken in the light of the infinitely sovereign God of Scripture.