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More than Conquerors

Romans 8: 32-39

Matthew addressed the whole question of How do I know I won't slip? using a mountaineering metaphor.

We looked at this video (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuR0KWtT1CA>) where Bear Grylls gets Zac Efron to do a dangerous rope crawl (you may want to see it again).

Will I be able to sustain my walk in Christ?; a lifetime is a long time! At times we all feel weak. We all can allow these thoughts to unsettle us...so it's brilliant that Paul pre-empted the question that everyone is thinking by boldly asking it.

Read Romans 8: 32-39 in NIV

Matt looked at 5 proofs in the passage that Paul draws our attention to.

1. What if I should fail?

When Paul says 'Who can separate me from the Love of Christ?' he doesn't mean my love towards Christ...as to how these challenges may cause me to stop loving Christ? He's talking about Christ's love for me! It actually isn't dependant on how well I hang on to the rope, but how well He holds onto me.

My salvation didn't start with a test of my love for him, but with his love for me! *1 John 4:10 This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.*

2. Looking Back.

Look at the tense of this verse “37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us” It doesn’t say in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loves us. Look again at Romans 5:6-8 . So if He died (past tense) when we were weak / powerless and still sinners, how much more will He continue to cherish and love us in the future, having now known Him and been brought into His family? Paul directs us back to something that has already happened- it’s not a ‘hoped for’ possibility, it’s a proven fact, He has died, He has already demonstrated His ‘no -holes -barred’ love for us.

It’s the difference between a conditional offer and an unconditional offer at a university.

3. More than Conquerors.

We don’t just squeeze through; make it by the ‘skin of our teeth’. Paul uses language that speaks of an overwhelming victory, a grand slam, an annihilation of the enemy! We don’t just limp through, by the seat of our pants, barely making it like some bedraggled marathon runnerbut much more like a Roman general returning after the rush of victory; where the conquering general would parade through the streets with all his army, with his captives in tow chained and humiliated. (look at Col:2:14-15/ 2 Cor 2:14)

So Paul says we are ‘more than conquerors’ because we are part of Christ’s victory parade, not narrowly getting in but triumphant, victorious and inseparable from Christ’s love.

4. God didn’t Spare His Son.

Looking at v 32 We get one of the strongest arguments about our certain hope, from the fact that God didn’t spare his son, even when he was crying out “*My God My God why have you forsaken me?*” How many parents can refuse to come to the rescue of their child when they cry out in desperate pain for help?

He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? (v32)

...Paul’s argument is that He didn’t spare His son. He was so committed to us knowing His love and salvation that nothing was too much. He followed through with the only solution for us; His son was going to have to die and die painfully, as God poured out all the His wrath on him, that was due for us. No price was too high- he didn’t ‘pull the

plug at the last moment', we know that God's love is there for us. He will see us through – it isn't dependant on our willingness or unwillingness, faithfulness or unfaithfulness....God has shown his faithfulness and extreme love already in this, that He didn't spare the most precious thing of all, the life of His son, to win us. How much does this mean He loves us?

5. 'I am convinced'.

Someone has convinced me, I have been persuaded ...it has a 'passive' voice QED, what is proven. I don't need to fear falling away, that I might be separated from His love. There is clear evidence of His love already, in the past, shown when I wasn't even looking for it, when I showed no qualification to merit it, through horrendous pain and separation of the Son and father on the cross ...which has convinced me that His love for me will never be separated, no matter what I go through, or how weak I become.

Paul was clearly convinced that his future salvation in Christ, this rope of God's love was not only strong enough to hold me, but didn't depend on my questionable decision making under pressure.

Martyn Lloyd-Jones says this: _“The convicted sinner no more 'decides' for Christ than the poor drowning man 'decides' to take hold of that rope that is thrown to him and suddenly provides him with the only means of escape....reconciliation means primarily a change in the relationship existing between God and man, man and God ..if while you were an enemy in his sight, God's attitude changed towards you was such that he sent his son to die for you, is it likely that his attitude towards you is going to change now that He regards you as his Child?”

Questions:

- Why is it that we know this truth and yet slip back so often into resting our salvation and God's love for me on my own efforts?
- Look at these verses too: John 10:28-29; 1 John 5:13; John 3:16; Eph 1:13-14; Heb 6:18-20; 2 Cor 5:17; John 6:39. These scriptures are clear that if we truly know Christ, we can be certain that we won't somehow lose Him. Discuss
- Which of the above proofs in Romans 8 was the one that most spoke to you?

Which one do you tend to forget?

- Looking at Martyn Lloyd-Jones' quote ...do you agree or disagree with him? Is it likely that God's attitude towards you will change even if we fail?
- Anyone want to share some scary rock climbing instances that they have experienced themselves?

Pray together for the peace of God, and that this truth that Paul lays out in Romans 8 moves from our heads to our hearts.



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