

# Bible Student's Notebook

# The Herald of His Grace

Volume XIV Issue 343

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

# More than Conquerors

by — J.R. Miller (1840-1912)

In all these things we are more than conquerors – through Him Who loved us! (Romans 8:37).

battles, to *sink* under our loads, to be *crushed* beneath our sorrows.

We all have our *struggles*. Life is not easy for any of us; or, if it is, we are not making much of it. A useful life is never easy. It must be, from first to last, in the face of opposition.

Paul constantly pictured life as a *battle* – a warfare. We are *soldiers* with enemies to fight. The enemies are *strong* – not flesh and blood, but evil, spiritual foes, wicked spirits. They are *invisible*. They lurk in the darkness. They hide in ambush.

Every life has its *cares*, its *duties*, its *responsibilities*. There are *sicknesses*, *sorrows*, *pains* and *losses*, and a thousand things which make it hard to live victoriously. It is possible for us, if we are Christians, to overcome in all of these struggles and trials.

*In all these things we are more than conquerors.* 

To be *more* than conquerors is to be *triumphant* conquerors – not merely getting through the battle or the trouble, but coming out of it with rejoicing, with song and gladness. Some people *bear* trial and are not overcome by it, but bear it *without* any glad sense of victory. Others *conquer* their sorrow, and all through it you hear, as it were, the notes of triumph.

Paul himself was this sort of conqueror. His life was one unbroken series of struggles. It never became *easy* for him to live *nobly*. He gives us glimpses sometimes of his experiences. He was beaten with rods. He was stoned. He was shipwrecked. He was

in perils of robbers, in perils in the wilderness, in the sea, among false brethren, in watchings, in fastings, in cold and nakedness. He spent years in prison. In all of these things he was "more than conqueror."

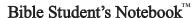
/ Someone compares Paul's life to one who goes along the street in a dark stormy night, singing sweet songs; or to a whole band of music moving

through the rain and darkness, playing marches of victory. That is the way we should all live: not merely *enduring* our trials and coming through our struggles, but doing so *enthusiastically* – "*more than conquerors*." Not only *may* we be conquerors, but if we are Christians we *are* conquerors. There is no *real* failure possible in a true Christian life. There may be *seeming* failure; indeed, often times there is. Christ's life failed, as it *appeared* to men;. Paul's life failed; but you know what glorious successes these lives were in the end.

Being "more than conquerors" – in all adversity, in all loss, in all feebleness of health, in all persecution, injustice, wrong – it is impossible for us truly to fail. Hence we should never yield to discouragement.

(see Conquerors, page 3120)

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Paul Our Guide - Christ Our Goal

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This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13):
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

This publication is a joint effort of a few members of the body of Christ. It is a product of our individual lives and ministries together. We do not claim infallibility for its contents. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

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### **ENCOURAGING OURSELVES**

Sometimes, perhaps often, we have to remind ourselves afresh of the faithfulness of God. We see this important lesson from the life of David who, in the middle of a great distress, encouraged *himself* in the Lord.

David was greatly distressed ... but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God (I Samuel 30:6).

I have always loved this verse greatly. It has meant so very much to me over the years.

From time to time we all are in need of encouragement, because we are always faced with difficulties, as we are reminded in the Book of Job:

Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward (5:7).

In these times of discouragement – when everything seems to be falling apart, when our load seems too heavy to bear – we need to learn, like David, to encourage ourselves in the Lord.

When David no longer could encourage himself in *his* home, in *his* family, or in *his* possessions, in *his* circumstances, he could encourage himself in *his* God.

Obviously, it is possible for others to strengthen us in the Lord. Jonathan did so to David when he visited him earlier

Jonathan ... went to David ... and strengthened his hand in God (I Samuel 23:16).

What was it that Jonathan actually did? He encouraged David by reminding him of the surety of God's promises (:17).

Although, thankfully, others can, and sometimes do, encourage us in the Lord, Father actually is bringing us into a place of spiritual maturity where we encourage *ourselves* in the Lord.

Encouraging ourselves in the Lord is a very *intentional* act – it doesn't just happen. The Hebrew word translated "encouraged" (King James Version, Concordant Literal Translation) is chazaq, and is also rendered "strengthened" in the Young and Darby translations. Chazaq suggests a persistent and continuous act. There is nothing passive about encouraging ourselves in the Lord in our times of despair.

Listen to this example of David encouraging himself in his own words:

Why are you cast down, O my soul? Why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God: For I shall yet praise Him, The Help of my countenance and my God (Psalms 43:5).

As we continually go through trials of all types, Father continues to re-teach us the same lesson of faith – over and over. The lesson is this: we can trust Him, no matter what. Regardless of the circumstances, He ever remains the faithful Creator.

Wherefore let them who suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls to Him in well doing, as to a faithful Creator (I Peter 4:19).

Until next week, my love to each of you.

Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

### God Could Not Possibly Love Us More

The powers of darkness want people ignorant of God, and they accomplish this by engaging men and women in the needless exercise of working to win God's affection. Religion demands that people "walk the line" to win the affection of a God Who already could not possibly love them more.

Martin Zender How to Be Free From Sin While Smoking a Cigarette (2007), Page 25

# The Myth of "Equality"

by — Dan Sheridan

acism was born when people looked at differences among people and attributed those differences to racial superiority. The counter movement to racism is just as evil: the desire to make all men equal in abilities and results.

### ENDOWMENTS AND ARROGANCE

All individuals aren't equally endowed or gifted. God has ordained it that way. If people don't see that God has gifted people differently, pride, elitism and the abuse of those less successful happens. What we are is what God has made us. The differences among people exist for a reason - they are part of God's design. If we see our endowments as God-ordained, then we will be humble and faithful. For who makes you to differ? What do you have that you didn't receive? If you received it, why do you boast as if you didn't? (I Corinthians 4:7.) We didn't make ourselves: God gave us our gifts, and we are to use them with humility for the benefit of others.

In I Corinthians 12, the Apostle Paul talks about the different gifts given to the Corinthian Church. Read the entire chapter. Not all had the same gifts. Each person's gift, no matter how small, was needed for the benefit of the whole church. What happened? Those who were given greater gifts boasted and said they had no need of those who had lesser gifts. They forgot that what they received, they received from God for the benefit of all. As a result, they were inflated with pride. Paul said that that attitude was arrogance. It was godless! Paul said that those who were less gifted were necessary! In other words, the gifted needed the less gifted. God put each member in the Body as it pleased Him.

### EQUALITY AND THE POLITICS OF ENVY

Another form of pride emerged as well in the Corinthian Church. Those who were given "lesser" gifts were jealous of those who had the "greater" gifts. They were full of envy and said, "because I am not as gifted as the others I am not part of the body." This is jealousy. They, too, forgot that God is the source of gifts, and each person was necessary for the benefit of all.

In the Old Testament we have an example of this jealousy (Numbers 16:3). Moses was selected by God. The people resented the gifts God gave to Moses and said, "Who are you to assume such a position? We are all equal. Who are you, Moses, to lift yourself above the congregation of the LORD? We are all equal, Moses!" They were jealous of Moses as God's man! So what did they do? They started a "politics of envy" movement and proclaimed that everyone was "equal." This led to judgment.

### WE ARE ALL GIFTED FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL, **BUT NOT EQUALLY GIFTED**

This idea is with us today. The modern idea of equality is to level everyone downward; to take the best and make them act like they were equal with those less gifted; to take the less gifted and make them act like they were equally gifted. This is a denial of God's sovereignty.

Modern "democratic" thought denies the fact of differences and unequal endowments or abilities. The result is presumption, pride and arrogance. When men view their endowments as their own rather than a gift from God, the result is more arrogance and pride.

Not everyone gets a trophy. The desire to make everyone "equal" is a denial of God's sovereignty. Not only that, it prevents the blessings God intends for all through the agency of each one's unique abilities. We all benefit from each other. From the throne to the stable, each individual is necessary for a society to function properly.

Be happy with the gifts God gave you – but don't be proud if you have greater gifts, and don't be jealous if you aren't as gifted: God uses both for His Own good purposes for the benefit of all.

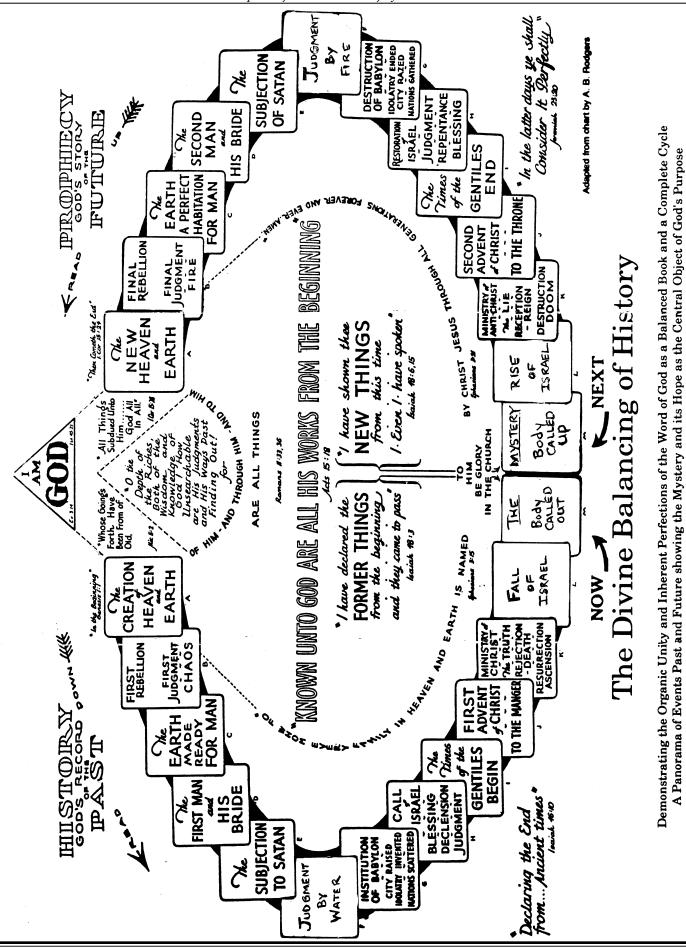


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## God's Icon

by — André Piet

In Colossians 1:15 Paul begins a lofty description concerning "the Son of God's love," then he calls Him "the **Image** of the invisible GOD, Firstborn of every creature."

The word "*image*" in Greek (the language in which Paul wrote this) is *icon*. It indicates a symbol or emblem. The Son is not literally GoD, but in *Image* form. Or, as He Himself once said,

He who has seen Me, has seen the FATHER (John 14:9).

The Son is *not* the Father, but makes Him *visible*. Like Father, like son. As such we read the salutation of John's Gospel:

No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared HIM (John 1:18).

the one hand, Christianity has reasoned away the countless, unequivocal statements about the one God. On the other hand, they took the figurative expression concerning the Son, as Him literally being God. In early church history the doctrine of the trinity developed in this befuddled, unclear thinking milieu. It is a concept that abounds in non-Scriptural terms, concerning which supporters themselves acknowledge that it is complex and incomprehensible! This doctrine has robbed us of the simple truth of "the one God." Of the figurative expressions, that even a child can understand, this dogma

As *Icon*, the Son represents "God the Invisible." On

How obviously important and vital it is to return, not to the foggy formulas of Nicaea and Athanasius, but to the clear words of Paul, Peter and John.

has made a complicated, theological construction.

### Conquerors (continued from front page)

Sorrow comes into every life; and while we cannot shut it out, we can be conquerors in it. When the snow melts away in the springtime, I have often seen under it sweet flowers in bloom. The very drifts were like warm blankets to keep them safe. So it is in sorrow: under the *cold snow of sorrow*, the flowers of grace grow unhurt.

This does not mean that we should not shed tears in our sorrows. The love of Christ does not *harden* the heart – it really makes it more sensitive. The grace of Christ does not save us from *suffering* in bereavement. Yet we are conquerors. Our sorrow is not meant to *crush* us. We can go through it victoriously, with sweet submission and joyous confidence.

In the same way must we meet worldly losses and adversities, the failures in our human plans and hopes, the fading of our human joys. "More than conquerors" is the motto which is written on our crown!

Do not forget the closing words of Paul's statement:

In all these things we are more than conquerors – through Him Who loved us!

The text would not be true if these last five words were left off. It is only through the Lord Jesus Christ that we are conquerors.

Some of you may be asking, with deep eagerness, "In what way does Christ bring us victory?" One part of the answer is that He overcame all things Himself. He came in the flesh for us. He was the Captain of our salvation. He met every *enemy* that we have ever met, and He was more than a conqueror in every single struggle. He was *tempted* in all points like as we are – yet without sin.

He worked as a carpenter, but He never chafed at the hardness of the work or the smallness of the pay. Later, He had nowhere to lay His head, even the foxes and the birds being better homed than He, but He never complained. When the people scattered off to their homes in the gathering shadows, leaving Him alone, He quietly climbed the mountain and spent the night under the stars in peace. Thus He was more than conqueror in poverty.

He was victorious in all of the *wrongs* He had to endure. From enemies and from friends He suffered wrongs. His enemies pursued Him with hate and

(see Conquerors, last page)



*The Problem of Evil* by Knoch is the best gift I've ever received that is of earthly origin. Each thought is worth unabridged consideration. Thanks for sharing with me from a pure heart. – *IN* 

What a blessing you are. I have passed on your site information to others so they, too, can be edified! – OK

I had two copies of your book *The Church in Ruins*. Gave one away, and loaned the other after re-reading the first 60 pages. So recently I bought a  $3^{rd}$  one and will finish it soon. Really impressive! – CA

Thanks again for teaching the truths of God. - FL

Thanks again for the hard work you pour into the *BSN* and *Daily Email Goodies*. This has been so helpful for my family. – *IA* 

I appreciate your beauty Clyde [in your audios] ... You beam literally. – *Canada* 

I praise Father for how He is using you to share all that He has given you. ... The Lord continue to unveil all that He has for us. – TN

The *Not Many* article really helped me get back in focus. Also, I had quite an experience when I started reading Mr. Knoch's response to Mr. Torrey a couple weeks back. Quite frankly I started laughing hysterically. I think the weight of how

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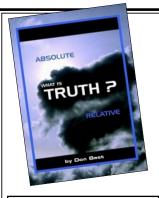
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ridiculous the eternal torments doctrine is plus Mr. Knoch's gentle sarcasm got the best of me. I needed a good laugh after the serious time I had formulating my own response to the Torrey booklet that was given out at work. The lunacy of the torments doctrine is as funny sometimes as it is tragic. How in the world did we believe for so long that God is worse than Hitler? – *OH* 

Just want to let you know that I appreciate the electronic archives and versions of the *BSN* – this makes it so easy to share articles with friends or to post them on Facebook for general interest. I

(see Mailbox, last page)



## What Is Truth? Absolute and Relative

by — Don Bast

High above the storm clouds the sun is always shining. When we get a glimpse of God's perspective we are able to experience the Son of His love shining through the darkest storms of life.

Dean Hough of the *Concordant Publishing Concern* and the *Saviour of All Fellowship* writes to Don concerning his book:

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### MAILBOX (continued from previous page)

haven't had much positive response so far, but who knows who's reading these. I figure I'll just put it out there and let God do the work. Anyway, I was searching for something helpful for Easter, and Arthur P. Adams in BSN 337 hit the spot. Praying that people read it and at least consider. A happy resurrection expectation to you all! – *CA* 

André Piet was given the opportunity to be interviewed on a nationwide Christian radio station here in Holland and Belgium, for a whole hour. During the final 10 minutes someone would be brought into the conversation, to act as an opponent. All went well for the first 50 minutes. André was able to speak as he wished, and then came this "opponent" with the simple message that he was not going to get into a discussion with André. Why? "Well," he said, "the church, historically and worldwide, has proven that this theory is a false one, and that is good enough for me!"

### Conqueroros (continued from page 3120)

persecution, and at last nailed Him on the cross. His Own chosen friends did many things to pain and trouble Him – one of them at last *betraying* Him for money, another *denying* Him in His darkest hour. Enmity and hate and wrongs cannot hurt us unless they rouse us to resentment, anger, bitter feelings, to acts of revenge. Yet Jesus was victorious in all of His endurance of injury. His love never once failed in any of its sore testings.

He was also Conqueror in His struggle with death – the last enemy. It did not seem so at first. Death seemed to overcome Him on the cross, and bore Him captive into its dark prison – but it could not hold Him. He burst the bars of death and triumphed

When André then asked him what was wrong with the Bible quotes that he had used, this gentleman simply said: "We have to read the Bible and what the fathers have written!" André then asked about Romans 5:18 and the man just refused to reply!

Isn't it sad? Mind you, this was not your average church goer, he is leader of one the largest Christian organizations here in Holland.

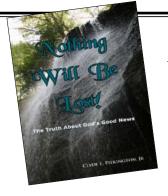
Oh yes, one of the first remarks that this gentleman made to the interviewer was that he blamed the radio station for giving this "dwaalleraar," this false teacher, such a large platform.

Well, whatever happened, at least the message of salvation and reconciliation of all was spread over a large audience. The interviewer told André afterwards that this had been a show that had by far the most reactions, by phone and email (most of them negative though). – *Netherlands* 

over the grave. He came forth the glorious Conqueror, out from death's power, with all of the radiance of life. Thus Christ is *Universal* Conqueror. There is no enemy we shall ever have to meet that He has not met and vanquished. The Conqueror changes the curse of the bitter cup into a blessing. We are more than conquerors, but through Him Who loved us.

God so shapes all of our life's events and experiences that in every one of them there is a blessing for us. We are triumphant over all of the ills of life, over all adversities, until at last, rising out of death, we shall stand before God without spot or blemish, wearing the image of Christ!

(Originally published in 1912)



## Nothing Will Be Lost! The Truth About God's Good News

by – Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

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