

"THE WALK OF LOVE: The Pattern We Follow"

Ephesians 5:2

REVIEW

We are studying one of the greatest themes in scripture with reference as to how we are to live out our lives on this earth.

This study, which began in 2:1 and continues to the end of the book, I have titled

"Our Spiritual Walk In Everyday Places"

We studied first OUR NEW WALK - (2:1 - 3:21) see 2:2, 10

It was a study of -

- The nature of the behavior from which we have been delivered.
- The nature of the grace by which we have been delivered.
- The nature of the life to which we have been delivered.

Secondly, we have studied THE WORTHY WALK of chapter 4.

In this study we looked at our attitudes and actions in response to our calling in Christ Jesus. 4:1 tells us clearly "to walk worthy of the vocation (the calling) wherewith (we) are called."

Now, thirdly, from chapters 5-6, we will study THE ENLIGHTENED WALK.

(This study takes a look at particular truth, and instruction by which we enhance and safeguard our behavior.)

THE ENLIGHTENED WALK is a summary title I give for three specific descriptive walks of the Believer in Christ.

I. The Walk of Love.

- v.2 "Walk in love, as Christ also has loved as..."

II. The Walk of Light.

- v.8 - "For you were sometimes darkness, but now you are light in the Lord: walk as children of light:..."

III. The Walk of Accuracy.

- v.15 - "See then that you walk circumspectly (accurately - Vine), not as fools, but as wise."

We will later see, in greater detail from the complete text of chapters 5 & 6, how we are to learn, how we are to think, and how we are to live as a result of this love, light, and accuracy which form our ENLIGHTENED WALK as children of God.

This study concerns

THE WALK OF LOVE

5:2 "Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us, and has given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savor."

There are three descriptions that open for us a broader understanding of THE WALK OF LOVE.

I. THE PATTERN WE ARE TO FOLLOW

- "Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us..."

II. THE PRICE WE ARE TO PAY

- "...and has given Himself for us as offering and a sacrifice to God..."

III. THE PLEASURE WE ARE TO GIVE

- "...for a sweet smelling savor."

* *

I. THE WALK OF LOVE: THE PATTERN WE ARE TO FOLLOW.

- "Walk in love, AS Christ loves us..."

- Our pattern is Christ. Love patterned after any other is counterfeit.

1. THE STANDARD OF THE LOVE WITH WHICH CHRIST LOVES US.

-- "GOD IS LOVE" (1 John 4:8)

-- That means that He is the standard by which all other claims of love must be measured.

-- John 15:9 "As my Father hath loved me, so have I loved you." (There is the standard illustrated.)

2. THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LOVE WITH WHICH CHRIST LOVES US.

-- John 15:12 "This is my commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you."

-- We are required to love as Christ loves.

-- Ruth Paxson said,

"Let us not wince under these words, but rather worship Him who thinks we have the capacity to love like that." (The Wealth, Walk, and Warfare Of The Christian. p.123: Paxson spent 25 years in China as a missionary.)

3. THE REACH OF THE LOVE WITH WHICH CHRIST LOVES US.

(1)It encompasses all people.

-- "For God so loved the world that He gave..."

-- There are those today who seek to discredit this reach of the love of God.

-- (Try to explain the "Limited Atonement" idea.)

-- But God has not allowed us to put such limits on His love or on ours.

i. The Love of Christ crosses all geographical divisions:

-- "Into all the world" is the commission of Christ.

-- Our Lord is not willing to ignore any geographical group of people. No territory is forfeited to the enemy.

ii. The Love of Christ Transcends all class distinctions.

-- That is why racism, classism, nationalism, and all such things have no place in a Christian's life.

iii. The Love of Christ extends our marital devotion.

-- Dr. Harry Ironside was one of America's great preachers in the early and mid part of this century.

The story is told of a young man who came one day to confess a fault to Dr. Ironside.

The man's fault, as he told it, was "I am loving my wife too much. I have put her on such a high plain I fear it is sinful."

Dr. Ironside replied, "Do you think you love your wife more than Christ loved the church?"

The husband did not dare say he did.

"Well, that's the limit to which we may go, for we read, 'Husbands, love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it.'" (Info Search filed under Christ's Love, #1213: For Men Only)

(2)It surpasses all knowledge.

-- One of the Apostle Paul's greatest desires for those he was training and teaching in Christian life and service was this:

"(That they may) know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that you might be filled with all the fullness of God." (Ephesians 3:19)

i. This love of Christ surpasses knowledge with reference to our academic ability.

-- Ruth Paxson said, "The expression of Christ's love is knowable, but the essence of it is unknowable.

-- We can never know the love that paid the cost of leaving His eternal home... to (be) rejected and crucified...

- We can never know the knowledge surpassing love that voluntarily emptied itself of its inherent glory and...became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
- We can never know the love that on Calvary's cross suffered the anguish of heart compressed in that cry, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'
- We can only confess our utter inability to comprehend such love and tell Him that it makes Him unspeakably precious to us, more precious than anyone or anything in heaven or upon earth." (Paxson, p.77-78)

ii. This love of Christ surpasses knowledge with reference to our commitment to Christ.

- Our knowledge of Christ will take us only so far, but love takes us to the point of being "filled with all the fullness of God."
- John Eadie said,

"the fathomless fervor of a Divine affection surpasses the measurements of created intellect." (Eadie, John; A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians, EDINBURGH, T.T. CLARK, 1883, p.256-257)

- When Christ questioned His disciple Peter, He did not ask about his knowledge of Christ, but about his love for Christ.
- There is a little cliché that states this truth in a memorable way: "I don't care how much you know until I know how much you care."

But more significantly,

iii. This Love of Christ surpasses knowledge with reference to Christ's commitment to us.

- God gave the Son, the Son came to us, - not because of Their knowledge of us, but because of Their love for us.

-- (APPLICATION)

And we are to walk in love as Christ loves us. That means our Walk of Love will take us places our knowledge will not.

-- But Not only does the Reach of the love of Christ -
(1) Encompass all people, and

(2) Surpass all knowledge,

It also

(3) Outlives All Time

-- Jeremiah, in his message of hope to troubled Israel, reminded Israel of God's love -

-- "I have loved you with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn you." (Jer. 31:3)

-- John said this of Jesus,

"When Jesus knew that His hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end." (John 13:1)

-- Annie Johnson Flint expressed it this way:

"His love has no limit;
His grace has no measure;
His Power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite
Riches in Jesus
He giveth and giveth
and giveth again."

-- The Hymn writer Frederick Lehman, expressed the extensive nature of the love of God this way:

-- "The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell,
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell;

The guilty pair, bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.

CHORUS

Oh love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure,
The saints' and angels' song.

When hoary time shall pass away,
And earthly thrones and kingdoms fall;
When men who here refuse to pray,
On rocks and hills and mountains call;
God's love, so sure, shall still endure,
All measureless and strong;
Redeeming grace to Adam's race -
The saints' and angels' song.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade;
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Tho' stretched from sky to sky."

APPLICATION - There are no limits to our WALK OF LOVE.

No limits with reference to people.
No limits with reference to knowledge.
No limits with reference to time.

-- For we WALK IN LOVE as Christ loves us.

REVIEW

Not only is there:

1. The Standard of the Love with which Christ loves us, and
2. The Requirement of the love with which Christ loves us,

3. The Reach of the love with which Christ loves us, there is also:

4. The Courage of the love with which Christ loves us.

-- There are four major things I want to say about this COURAGE. Never was courage so evident than that shown by Christ with reference to:

(1)The Position He Abandoned.

(2)The Path He Took.

(3)The People He Sought.

(4)The Prize He Offered.

* *

(1)THE POSITION HE ABANDONED.

i. THE POSITION OF POWER

- Phil. 2:6,8 "Being in the form of God, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (but) being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself,..."
- The Creator made Himself subject to the Creation. (Col. 1:16) (All because He loved.)

ii. THE POSITION OF PROTECTION

- At the time of Judas' betrayal and the so called arrest of Christ, Jesus reminded His disciples of the Power He abandoned in order to fulfill His mission:
 - Mt. 26:53 "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions (one legion equaled a Roman Regiment - Strong) of angels."
 - When we walk in love, we do not hesitate to abandon our positions of protection.
 - This position of Protection, abandoned by John and Betty Stam, Mary Beam and Betty Cridland, Linda and Norman Keefe, etc.

iii. THE POSITION OF PRIVILEGE

- John 17:5 - "Father glorify me with yourself with the glory which I had with you before the world was."
- Philippians 2:7 "He took upon Himself the form of a servant."
- When we walk in love we do not hesitate to abandon our position of privilege.

iv. THE POSITION OF PURITY.

- The sinless Son became the sin bearing Savior.
- The One whose name is THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS entered wilfully, and on our behalf, all of the filth of all of time.
- He who heard His Father say, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17) later cried to Him from the cross - where "He bore our sins in His body" (1 Peter 2:24) "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

REVIEW

Not only do we see the courage of the Love of Christ in:

(1)THE POSITION HE ABANDONED, but we also see that courage in -

(2)THE PATH HE TOOK

i. It was the solitary path.

- No one, absolutely no one, has walked or will walk the path He walked.
- We sing a chorus that anchors us to this solitary aspect of The Walk of Love:

"I have decided to follow Jesus"
"I have decided to follow Jesus"
"I have decided to follow Jesus"
"No turning back - No turning back"

- Now, watch this-
"Though none go with me, still I will follow"

"Though none go with me, still I will follow"
"Though none go with me, still I will follow"
"No turning back - No turning back"

-- That is The Walk of Love - and The Courage of the Solitary Path.

But in walking this path He set the example for our walk in love.

ii. It was the sacrificing path.

-- 1 Corinthians 15:3 - "Christ died for our sins..."

-- John 15:13 - "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

-- ILLUSTRATIONS:

-- In the late 1940's a young evangelist traveling across America in his car and preaching in tents turned down a Hollywood offer of instant fame and wealth to serve Christ and preach His gospel. Millions of people today are thankful that Billy Graham did not take the bait of a non-sacrificing path.

-- Jacob and Rosie Devasagayam

-- Martin Lloyd-Jones

-- I met this week with Jon & Sarah Risley who - etc.

-- No one can doubt that Christ was a mover of men, an astounder of intellects, a rebuke to the proud, a hope for the hungry, and a help for the helpless. On a human level - HE MADE IT BIG - but to reach His goals - He went to the cross.

-- More on the sacrificing path later.

iii. It was the sacred path.

-- John 17:4 - "I have finished the work which you gave me to do."

-- He was on assignment by God His Father. This was sacred business. The cares of the world could not distract Him. The course must be kept. The trip must be finished.

-- The very man who wrote these words for our Bible knew something of the sacredness of his path.

His testimony is this:

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7)

-- He knew his assignment in life. It was a sacred assignment.

-- 2 Cor. 4:1. Eph. 5:2

-- Do you know yours? Do you know your path?

-- It has become right popular these days for so called "middle aged men" to have a "mid-life crisis." As they experience this crisis they go off in all directions seeking to find themselves, to discover their new self. In doing so they generally make fools of themselves and wrecks of their family. We have a crisis in America today of Christians looking for counselors to affirm their comfort rather than a cross with which to affirm their courage.

A lot of so called "Christian psychologists" have "come to their aid" to give a psychological explanation for their search for identity.

NONSENSE! The issue is the issue of courage to take the path "as Christ loved us." That means that we become people who take the cross of courage and quit this silly so called Christianized version of a search for a couch for comfort.

-- Christ knew His path.

The Bible writer Paul knew his path.

They both knew its SACREDNESS.

They treated it as such.

We need to walk with the same courage.

REVIEW

Not only is the courage of the love with which Christ loves us marked by:

(1)THE POSITION HE ABANDONED

(2)THE PATH HE TOOK

It is also marked by:

(3)THE PEOPLE HE SOUGHT

-- Even knowing the human race with our limited knowledge, we know that this mission of Christ was a high risk mission.

Three things describe THE PEOPLE HE SOUGHT:

i. WE ARE CULTURALLY DIVERSE.

-- 1 John 2:2 says that Christ died for the sins of the whole world.

-- And in Heaven, the song of the redeemed tells us that Christ has redeemed people out of every "kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;..." (Rev. 5:9)

-- Christ dealt with:

-- The leper and the leper.

-- The pauper and the proud.

-- The sinner and the sinned against.

-- The defamed and the defamer.

-- Even in His choice of disciples, He called the culturally diverse.

-- He came to a world of Judaistic religion, Greek Culture, Roman government.

-- His church planting apostle spoke of preaching to the Greek and to the Barbarian, to the wise and to the unwise.

- Culturally diverse facts are noted in the Bible but never positioned as barriers. Not in the work of Christ, not in the ministry of the disciples, not in our Lord's commission to His church.
- The problem with our cultural diversity is what we have done with it. We have used it to fight wars, incite racism, practice genocide and nurture hatred.
- If we "walk in love as Christ loves us" we too, with courage, go after the culturally diverse, not to endorse culture or to overlook sin, BUT TO manifest The Courage and The Love of Christ in bringing diverse cultures to Him.

ii. WE ARE MORALLY DEPRAVED.

- The Bible says of this human race "that God has made man upright: but they have sought out many inventions." (Eccl. 7:29)
- Early in human history the Bible says that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually." (Gen. 6:5)
- The Bible says of a representative group of our human race: "They provoked the LORD to anger by their wicked deeds." (Psalms 106:29 NIV)
- Jeremiah 2:19-20 "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee: know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of hosts. For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, playing the harlot."
- Romans 1:21 - The Bible tells us of a certain segment of the human race which is without excuse
 - "Because, when they knew God --- etc. (Read thru v. 25)

iii. As a human race we were not only:

- Culturally Diverse and
- Morally Depraved, but we were also
- SPIRITUALLY DECEIVED
 - 2 Corinthians 4 refers to us as having been blinded by "the god of this world."
 - Adam and Eve deceived themselves and were deceived by the serpent.
 - Jeremiah 2:13 describes the baffling mystery of spiritual deception:
 - "For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, that can hold no water."
 - Christ loved us with COURAGE - COURAGE that ventured into the awful arena of our
 - Cultural Diversity
 - Moral Depravity
 - Spiritual Deception
 - And then the Bible tells us to "Walk in love as Christ loves us."
 - Not only is the COURAGE OF THE LOVE OF CHRIST seen in:
 - (1)THE POSITION HE ABANDONED
 - (2)THE PATH HE TOOK
 - (3)THE PEOPLE HE SOUGHT
 - It is also seen in

(4)THE PRIZE HE OFFERED

-- The man whom God used to write this book of Ephesians, said of himself -

"This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."
(Philippians 3:13-14)

-- What is that Prize?

-- In its shortest and simplest definition it is "the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

-- For Christ to offer such a PRIZE is to manifest a courage unequalled in history.

Think of the scope of this offering. To culturally diverse people who are morally depraved and spiritually deceived, Christ came to offer "the high calling of God."

-- What are some of the specifics of that Prize "of our high calling of God in Christ Jesus?"

i. The Prize With Reference To My Criminal Standing Before God.

-- This is my "sin problem" because I have broken the law of God.

-- 1 John 3:4 "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

-- Now what is the Prize for such a criminal?

(i) Forgiveness For The Crime of Sin.

-- Peter said it: Acts 5:31 "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins."

-- Paul said it at Antioch in Pisidia: Acts 13:38 "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that

through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:"

- John said it: 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
- Jesus said it to Paul when he sent Paul to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins,..." Acts 26:18

(ii) Freedom From The Bondage of Sin.

- Romans 6:14, 17-18 "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."
- See Col. 1:13 for our deliverance papers

(iii) Forgetfulness of The Record of Sin.

- That is what happens in our justification. We are "declared righteous" on the basis of Christ's death for us.
- Hebrews 10:16-17-"This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I

write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

-- So complete is this "Forgetfulness" of the record of our sin that the Bible says that Christ will "present us faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24)

ii. The Prize With Reference To My Personal Standing In The Family of God.

-- Galatians 4:1-7

(i) REDEMPTION - Galatians 4:4-5

-- "When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son... v.5 to redeem them that were under the law..."

-- Eph. 1:7

-- Redemption is "to buy out," (Vine) and to "rescue" (Strong)

-- I had no right to call Him Father.
He had no reason to call me son.
I belonged to another.

"I once was an outcast
stranger on earth,
A Sinner by choice -
An alien by birth."

(ii) ADOPTION - Galatians 4:5 - "that we might receive the adoption of sons."

-- That we might be "placed as a son" (Strong)

-- Eph. 1:3-5 "Having pre-destinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself..."

-- This is courage, not merely to buy us out of the stronghold of sin, but then to place us in the very family of God.

-- "I once was an outcast
stranger on earth,
A Sinner by choice -
An alien by birth.
But I've been adopted,
My Names's written down."

-- But that does not yet tell the entire story. For after Redemption and Adoption there is-

(iii) INHERITANCE

- Galatians 4:7 "Wherefore you are no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."
- Roman 8:17 - "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ...." (joint heirs = "participant in common" - not merely a %.)
- See Colossians 1:12-13 for our inheritance papers.
- "etc." "An heir to A Mansion, A Robe, And a Crown."
- This is something of The Courage With Which Christ loves us.

It is the courage of not only rescuing us from the stronghold of Satan and of adopting us into the family of God, but also of granting us joint inheritance of the wealth of God.

iii. The Prize with Reference to My Possessions From the Provisions of God.

- The Bible describes our human make-up as consisting of
 - A Body
 - A Soul (Our Mind, Emotion, Will)
 - A Spirit
- The Missionary Paul prayed for a group of young Christians that "the very God of peace would sanctify them wholly - and that their whole (entire) spirit and soul and body would be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23)

- And so this part of our study considers the courage of the love of Christ in His Provision for all there is of us - our spirit, our soul and our body.

This is a part of the prize He offers. And it was a courageous act, and an act of great love, to offer to us such a provision.

- How do we look at that provision?

(i) Rest For My Weary Body

- Matthew 11:28, Jesus said, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

- As a part of such caring concern about our weary and laden life, the Bible puts before us some very practical guidelines which we must follow:

A - Observation of A Sabbath

- Ex. 20:8-9
"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy....in it you shall not do any work...."

B - Delegation of Work Requirements

- Read and explain Exodus 18:13-22 (exp. v. 22 "And they shall bear the burden with you.")

-- The Apostles
did this:

- Acts 6:1-3

- 2 Tim. 2:2

-- Christ did this:

- John 4:5-8

(Note: v.6 - Christ was weary
therefore He sat on the well
and - v.8 - delegated the
grocery shopping to His dis-
ciples.)

Not only is there:

-- Observation of A Sabbath, and

--

Delega
tion of
Work Re-
quire-
ments.
There is a
also:

C - Limitation of Personal
Responsibilities.

-- Not even Christ
did everything.

-- Mark 1:35-45
tells us of the
limitations of
responsibility
Christ imposed
upon Himself.

-- Note esp. v. 37-38.

-- When Christ came to the end of His Physical ministry - He told His Father in Heaven, "I have finished the work which you gave me to do." (John 17:4)

-- The Missionary put it this way: "I have finished my course (race)..." 2 Tim 4:7

-- Christ has offered REST FOR OUR WEARY BODIES.

Not only is there the plan of God as seen in

-- The Observation of A Sabbath

-- The Delegation of Work Requirements

-- and, The Limitation of Personal Responsibilities - BUT THERE IS THAT IN-DE-SCRIBABLE PROVISION TO BE YOKED

WITH
CHRIST. We
who are weary
and heavy laden
are to come to
Him.

-- But not only
does Christ
provide Rest
For My Weary
Body, He also
offers -

(ii) Peace For My Troubled Mind.

-- John 14:27 "Peace I leave
with you, my peace I give
unto you: not as the world
giveth, (there is a way the
world gives peace) give I
unto you. Let not your heart
be troubled, neither let it be
afraid."

-- Just how does our Lord go
about providing this Peace
For Our Troubled Mind?

-- Let me mention three ways:

A - By The Focus of Our Attention

-- Isa. 26:3
A Thou wilt
keep him in
perfect
peace, whose
mind is
stayed on
thee: because
he trusteth in
thee.@

-- Phil. 4:8-9
AFinally,
Brethren,
whatsoever
things are
true,
whatsoever
things are
honest,
whatsoever
things are
just,
whatsoever
things are
pure,
whatsoever
things are
lovely,
whatsoever
things are of
good report:
if there be
any virtue,
and if there
be any
praise, think
on these
things.
Those things,
which ye
have both
learned, and
received, and
heard, and
seen in me,
do: and the
God of peace
shall be with
you.@

B - By Confidence In
Christ's Authority.

-- John 16:33 -
"These are
things I have
spoken unto
you, that in me
you might have
peace. In the
world you shall
have tribulation:
but be of good
cheer; I have
overcome the
world."

C - By Obedience To Our
Assignment

-- John 20:21
"Peace be unto
you: as my
Father hath sent
me, even so
send I you."
(Here Jesus
clearly ties the
gift of Peace to
an assignment
of duty.)

-- But not only
does Christ
provide --

- Rest for My Weary Body

- and Peace for My Troubled Mind

He also offers:

(iii) Life For My Condemned Spirit.

-- That my spirit is
condemned and without life
is very evident -

-- Read John 3:16-18,36

-- Now what is the nature of the life Christ offers?

A. In John 10:10 Jesus describes it as
ABUNDANT
LIFE

-- In 10:10 -
"The thief
comes to
kill and
destroy. I
am
come,"
said
Christ, "to
give life -
and to
give it
more
abundantl
y."

He provides for our barrenness,
our meaninglessness, our de-
stroyed sense of worth and value.

He responds to the treason against
our soul.

He gives us the bread of life and
the water of life.

This is the 23rd Psalm - life -
Green Pastures, still waters, re-
stored soul, a rod, a staff and a
prepared banquet, a pilgrimage
that is accompanied by goodness
and mercy all the days of my life.

That is something of His
Abundant Life.

B. In John 3:16 Jesus describes
this life which He offers
to my Condemned Spirit
as -
ETERNAL LIFE -

-- That is
Heaven
occupying
life -
forever
with Him,
defeating
sin, death
and the
grave.

Conclusion: This is a part of the prize we are offered by Christ:

- The yoke of His burden bearing strength and companionship.
- The Peace of His promise and truth to our troubled heart.
- The offer to live with Him forever.

REVIEW

Not only did Christ love me with the courage that dealt with:

- i. My Criminal Standing before God
- ii. And My Personal Standing In The Family of God
- iii. And My Abundant Possessions From The Provisions of God
 - But He also showed great courage in -
- iv. The Prize He offered With Reference To My Calling In The Service of God.
 - And here is some of what He offers in that calling.

(i) Confidence in the Will of God.

-- Romans 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

A. The Confidence that Prompts A Living Sacrifice

B. The Confidence that Performs A Reasonable Service

C. The Confidence that Provides A Rewarding Satisfaction

(ii) Certainty in The Commission of God -

-- Matthew 28:18-20 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

A. The Certainty of Authority

B. The Certainty of Assignment

(iii) Security In The Presence of God.

-- "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." (Matthew 28:20)

-- Now this is just a little view of THE PRIZE HE OFFERED.

But can you imagine this, that our Lord, in loving this culturally diverse, morally depraved, spiritually deceived race would dare offer a PRIZE like that?

Christ loves us with such a love - and commands us

"to love each other as He has loved us." (John 15:12)

Are we ready to love the unlovely, the unregenerate, the unthankful, the ungodly, the unholy, the unreached with the courage to believe that they also may share in "The Prize of The High Calling of God in Christ Jesus."

But That Is Not All There Is About The Pattern Of The Love With Which Christ Loves Us.

For not only do we have:

1. The Standard of The Love With Which Christ Loves Us
2. The Requirement of The Love With Which Christ Loves Us
3. The Reach of The Love With Which Christ Loves Us
4. The Courage of The Love With Which Christ Loves Us

We also have

5. THE STRENGTH OF THE LOVE WITH WHICH CHRIST LOVES US.

-- From Romans 8:35-39, we shall study these aspects of that strength:

- (1) Its Pervasive Power
- (2) Its Preeminent Victory
- (3) Its Permanent Presence

(1) ITS PERVASIVE POWER

-- The question we ask is this:

-- Romans 8:35 - AWho shall separate us from the love of Christ?@

-- AShall tribulation?@ (THLIPSIS)

-- For the child of God, tribulation never breaks the Power of the love of God.

Tribulation, in fact, does just the opposite.

-- Jesus spoke to the matter of tribulation:

-- In John 16:33 AThese things have I spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation (THLIPSIS); but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.@

- In Acts 14:22 the missionaries taught the new believers to continue in the faith and told them openly that the kingdom of God would be entered through much tribulation.
- The Apostle Paul even said that he gloried in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience. ROMANS 5:3
- And when he experienced sufferings he said that the sufferings were not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Romans 8:18)
- And the record continues that tribulation, trials, and sufferings do not defeat THE PERVASIVE POWER OF THE LOVE OF GOD.
- The same must be true for distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword -

or - as in v. 38 - death, or life, or angels, or principalities, or power, or things present or things to come.
- The Love of Christ has already conquered each of these.
 - v. 35 In all these things....
 - There is nothing in all life that claims pre-eminence over the love of Christ. God does not look at our circumstances and then decide if His love is strong enough to be our keeper. We already know that in all these things His love is our strong keeper.
 - That is why we are instructed:
 - In everything give thanks... I Thessalonians 5:18
 - Be careful for nothing (don't be anxious about anything) but

in everything by prayer and
supplication with
Thanksgiving let your requests
be made known unto God.@
Phil. 4:6

- Not only in The Strength of the Love With Which Christ Loves Us seen in its Pervasive Power - It is also seen in -

(2)ITS PREEMINENT VICTORY

- v.37 -AIn all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.@

- This Preeminent Victory has three particular characteristics.

- i. It Is A Pervasive Victory

(This is what we have just studied)

- ii. It Is A Decisive Victory

- v. 37 - Awe are more than conquerors...@

- The strength of the love with which Christ loves us does not lead us to slight victories. With Him we do not merely win, WE WIN BIG!

- The love of Christ is not of the nature to see that we merely have enough. He is determined to see that we are AMore than conquerors.@

- ILLUSTRATIONS:

- When God led Israel out of Egypt, He purposefully created a situation in which He would show His AMore than conquering@ love.

God was not simply going to show to Pharaoh a simple victory for His people. He was going to show to Pharaoh and to His people that He is the God of The

Exceptional Victory - The Decisive
Victory.

To do that, he hardens Pharaoh's heart.
(This hardening of Pharaoh's heart has
nothing to do with God making it
impossible for Pharaoh to be saved.)

In fact, the opposite is probably the truth,
for God said,

I have hardened his heart, and
the heart of his servants, that I
might show these my signs
before him:....@ (Ex. 10:1)

And so when God conquered freedom
for Israel, He did it with the enterprise of
being A More than Conquerors.@

-- He kept giving this illustration:

When Israel got to the Red Sea, they
crossed the sea on dry land - not on
marshy land or even slightly wet land.
(Ex. 14:21-22)

Shortly after that, that big and strong Egyptian
army of rebels against God tried to go over that
same land and they were drowned.

God has shown that He is More Than A
Conqueror.

-- When Israel came to the walled city of Jericho -
God did not arrange for the wall to be merely
breached, He arranged for it to fall down flat.@
(Josh. 6:20)

And then, as if to rub it in, He arranged for one
specific section to remain. (Ex. 6:22-25)

- These are physical illustrations of the pre-eminence of the Victory of God in being More Than A Conqueror.

There is another line of truth we need to know.
(This will review matters already presented)

Not only has God delivered us from the guilt and power and penalty of sin, But He has delivered us into His family by Adoption and granted to us joint-inheritance with His Son.

That is the AMORE THAN CONQUERORS@ aspect of the strength of the love with which Christ loves us.

- Not only is the Preeminent Victory of The Love of Christ seen in its
 - i. Pervasive Victory
 - ii. Decisive Victory
 - it is also

iii. Its Exclusive Victory.

- v. 37 AIn all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.@

- This strength of the love of Christ is found only in the Christ who loves us. That should be quiet obvious.

- Not only is the strength of the love with which Christ loves us seen in

- Its Pervasive Power and

- Its Preeminent Victory,
it is also seen in

(3)ITS PERMANENT PRESENCE

- READ Romans 8:38-39 (Accent the phrase And things to come@ in v.38)
- Can Believers Be Confident of the Future?
- God said to His people Israel,
 - AI have loved you
with an everlasting love....@ Jer. 31:3
- There are only two ways we may be separated from the love of Christ
 - A VICTORIOUS ENEMY (That is ruled out.)
 - A FAILED PROMISE
 - What of this Promise?
 - Moses said to Israel in prep. for their entrance into the Promised land;@ A(For the Lord your God is a merciful God;) He will not forsake you, neither destroy you, nor forget the covenant of your fathers which He swore unto them.@ (Deut. 4:31)
 - In Deut. 31:6 ABe strong and of a good courage, fear not nor be afraid of them: for the Lord your God, He it is that doth go with you; He will not fail you, nor forsake you.@
 - Josh 1:5 A...I will not fail you, nor forsake you.@
 - (See also ISA 41:17, 42:16, 49:15)
 - In Hebrews 13:5 the New Testament quotes the Promises of the Old Testament, AI will never leave you, nor forsake you.@
 - And in that clear statement of Christ when He sent His disciples to Ateach all nations,@ He promised - AI am

with you alway, even unto the end of the world.@ (Mt. 28:20)

- Christ will not fail His Promise. We who belong to Him are assured of the Permanent Presence of His love - and nothing shall separate us from that love.

CONCLUSION - And that is The Pattern We Are To Follow - for we are to Awalk in love as Christ also has loved us.@ (Eph. 5:2)

- We are to love others with that strength. We are not to forsake them in tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword -
- How are you doing in that walk? Do you walk in The Strength of the Love With Which Christ has loved you?

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