

BUILT ON HIS LOVE



We are the Face of Christ

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, "For thy sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered."

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:35-39

These closing verses of Romans 8 are a favorite passage at funerals. When we're looking at the death of a loved one and, through that death, contemplating the moment when we too shall leave this familiar world, what a comfort to be told of a love that goes right through that door of death with us and still holds on to us!

The love of Christ which passes know-ledge...

Love that...

never lets go,
never dies out,
never becomes stale,
never withdraws from us in disgust.

Love that holds on to us and keeps us sane even when the whole world is falling apart, when everything else we were ever sure of turns out to be a myth.

Love that remains, though the earth be moved, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

John 10:27-28

That there is such a love and that it does such things is the whole meaning of the gospel.

Until you taste that love you can't possibly understand who Jesus is, or why He laid down His life for His sheep. Nor can you possibly believe that He rose from the dead.

You have to hear His voice calling you by name and experience what it means to be led by Him beside the still waters and to have your soul restored by the breath of His Spirit.

You have to taste that peace which comes over you like a flood when Jesus tells you personally that He has taken care of your sins. Your sins are forgiven ... your life is healed.

If there is a reader who hasn't tasted this love, be sure of this: Jesus who opened the eyes of the blind, healed the sick, cleansed the lepers, and cast out demons wants to do no less for you. His desire is that you might experience some sign of His love, that you might know, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that your God does love you and that He has given His only begotten to be your life. So Jesus sends out His call. And it goes to believers, unbelievers, seekers, hypocrites, sinners, phonies... everybody!

"Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

"If any one thirst let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers off living water'".



Spilling Over

"Draw near!" "Call on my name!" "Open your heart!" "Confess your sins." "Tell me your needs!" There's not one of us who doesn't need to be touched by that love. And there's not one of us who need go away empty.

"He who comes to me shall not hunger and he who believes on me shall never thirst."

Jesus meets us where we are, deals with us according to our present need, manifests God's love to us in terms that we can surely understand.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

But so often at funerals where this magnificent passage is read people over-look an important fact. They overlook the fact that to be so held and preserved by the love of Christ it's understood that you have given yourself to that love.

You've said yes to it with all your heart. You've surrendered to it.

To stand by the coffin of a man who all his life spurned that love, and read, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" is meaningless. How can you talk about being separated from something to which you were never joined?

Yes, Jesus' hand is a hand of love that never lets go. But to be held by it you first have to surrender to that hand. You have to answer when He calls. You have to come when He invites. You have to put your life into that hand by doing the things Jesus tells you to do.



Out of the Mud

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock. And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."

Matthew 7:24-27

You cannot say to the house built on sand, "***Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?***" since the house isn't built on the love of Christ, it's built on sand. As long as the weather's good you can't see any difference between the house built on sand and the house built on rock. For all you know, beneath that lovely lawn is a foundation of granite. Nobody would dream that that life is anything but a solid, dedicated, true disciple. He appears to be doing the will of Christ. He's going through all the right motions and saying all the right words.

Ah, but when the storm comes when the rains fall, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat against that lovely house it falls, and its fall is great,

because it was built not on God's love but on the sand of self.

To be more than conquerors through Him who loved us so that nothing can separate us from that love, there is one thing we have to do: we have to build our lives on that love by doing His word.

Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house upon the rock...

Isn't it strange how often we think that doing Jesus' word is something hard or unpleasant, something that's going to wear us out and dry us up.

Whereas the doing of Jesus' word

is the gateway to life,
the threshold of constant joy.

A few things to keep in mind:

1. Everything Jesus tells us to do, He tells us because He loves us.

"Stop being anxious about your life," He says. Why does He say that?

Because He loves us.

He's the best friend we ever had. "Stop being anxious, it isn't doing you any good."

"Judge not." Why does Jesus say that? Because He knows what judging does to us ...how it warps and twists and sours our hearts.

Give to him who needs.

Love your enemies.

Don't practice your piety before men.

These are the words of One who cares about us.

He's telling us to do things that run contrary to our nature, but what miracles start happening in our lives when we do them. The best proof of who Jesus is, is to notice what happens to you when you start keeping His words.

2. Everything Jesus tells us to do is based on the fact that we have been forgiven.

You don't take the Sermon on the Mount and lay it on a man or woman *who hasn't been to the cross*. How can a person whose heart is crushed with guilt be expected to love his enemies or forgive men their trespasses?

First, you take that person to the cross.



Looking Down

You show him the Author of the Sermon on the Mount hanging there for the sins of the world. You show that woman the blood which cleanses her from all sin. You call that man to repentance and offer him peace with God through the blood of the Lamb. Then you bring that person to the Sermon on the Mount and say, "Now you can do these things because God has freed you from your past and given you a new heredity.

This is how Jesus calls His forgiven ones to live, who are born of His Spirit."

3. The things Jesus tells us to do are not legalism, but life.

He's not a tyrant spitting out rules and regulations to make your life complicated. He's your friend, giving you truth that will set you free, raising you from the dead with His spoken word.

Even when you hear words from Jesus that seem impossible, or don't make sense to you, just remember that the One who speaks them is closer to you than your beating heart. And He will absolutely make clear how those words apply in your case ... what He wants you to do.

Notice how Jesus always connects His words with Himself. They are not some impersonal body of truth, they are part of Him and He is in them.

"Everyone then who hears these words of mine..."

"If any one keeps my word he will never see death..."

"If you abide in me and my words abide in you..."

"The words that I speak to you, they are Spirit and they are life."



There I am with Them

And when we take hold of these words we find again and again that we are taking hold of the living Christ Himself.

4. Everything Jesus tells us to do is watched over by the Spirit of God.

"If you love me you will keep my commandments and I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever, even the Spirit of Truth."

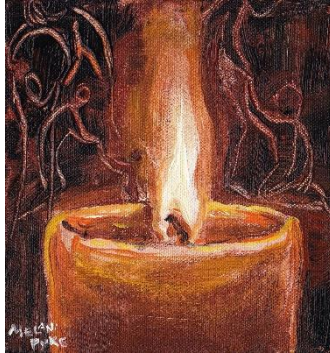
The Holy Spirit goes *where the word of the Lord goes.*

The Holy Spirit undertakes *where the word of the Lord is obeyed.*

The Holy Spirit moves with power *where the word of the Lord is believed.*

The words of Jesus are never allowed to drift out there on the sea of this world unattended. Wherever those words are, the Spirit hovers above them, ready to come down and confirm them to

any heart that receives them. If the words that you now hear are truly from the Lord, you can be sure that the Spirit of the Lord is hovering above them and the minute you open your heart and receive them, and make them part of your life, and act on them, the Holy Spirit comes in behind like a mighty rushing wind *to help you do them.*



Let Your Light Shine

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The question is,

have we been building our lives on that love?

If we have, the storms that are approaching will do us no harm.

If we haven't, may God give us wisdom to listen to the words of Jesus as we've never listened before. And may God give us grace to do them. For it is only in the doing of Jesus' words that we come to know that love which never lets go.

Prayer- Gracious, kind, loving Jesus... We seek your perfect love. A love that will never let us go. We draw near to you now, we call your name...Jesus, Jesus... We open our hearts to you. Flood us with your love, flood us with your presence. We give ourselves over to your love, we surrender absolutely to it. We seek your forgiveness, your healing. We behold how deep your love for us is, dying for us to purify us, to forgive us. We are awed by such love. We want to embrace and follow what you teach us, because it brings us to your love. Fill us with your Spirit, so we can receive your truth, so we are empowered to live it, and so we can build our lives on your love that will help us conquer anything and never let us go.

Original: Written by REB... date unknown by manager. Found in the booklet "Love" which is available upon request.
Art: All art by Melani Pyke who has a passion for bringing hope and encouragement to others through her art. Melpyke.com



Maranatha Mirror Messages

mmirror.net

maranathamirror18@gmail.com

586-530-6983 (text or call)

