

Message

Sunday May 5, 2024

“JESUS VICTORY CONQUERS THE WORLD”

Pastor Hans Peethala

A man was in his front yard mowing grass when his attractive, female neighbour came out of the house and went straight to the mailbox. She opened it then slammed it shut and stormed back into the house.

A little later she came out of her house again went to the mailbox and again opened it, and again slammed it shut. Angrily, back into the house she went. As the man was getting ready to edge the lawn, here she came out again, marched to the mailbox, opened it, and then slammed it closed harder than ever.

Puzzled by her actions the man asked her, "Is something wrong?" To which she replied, "There certainly is!" My stupid computer keeps saying', "YOU'VE GOT MAIL."

How many times have we got it completely wrong?

Dear Friends! We assume so many things and we mess up things badly.

Is there something you've got completely wrong?

THE THEME “JESUS VICTORY CONQUERS THE WORLD”

Brian, a theologian once shared a story “It was about choosing basketball teams in PE class. The teacher chose two captains who picked the rest of their team. As usual, the poor players were always chosen last -- which did little to help their self-esteem. Kevin was the main character in the show. Some of his friends, who were usually chosen last, complained to Kevin. Kevin brings their complaint to the teacher, who promptly makes Kevin one of the next captains. He has to choose his team. His best friend -- and one of the worst players -- looks at Kevin with eager anticipation. Will Kevin choose him early in the rounds -- or be like all the other captains?

Kevin chooses his friend -- and he felt good about bolstering his ego. So, the next round, he chooses another poor-playing friend. Some of those he had chosen were getting after Kevin. "Pick some of those good players. We want to win this game." Kevin kept picking the losers -- and he felt good about it -- and they felt good about being picked early.

Kevin's team did miserably. They didn't come close to winning, but they enjoyed the game. They weren't playing to win. They were playing to have fun. Isn't that what sport should be about?

If Jesus wanted to win in the religious game -- he should have chosen the Pharisees. They were the extremely pious people in the first century. They were the ones who prayed at least three times a day. They knew their Bibles. They worked hard at obeying every one of God's laws.

They fasted once or twice a week to show their religious devotion to God. They gave 10% of their income.

Who did Jesus choose? He chose fishermen -- known to be crude and foul-mouthed, impatient, and hot-headed. He chose a tax collector -- known to be a swindler. He chose a zealot -- a fanatical revolutionary. **Jesus chooses us -- known sinners**, known to be somewhat less than perfect, known to have all kinds of problems in our lives. As someone else coined a slogan: God elects the rejects.

But there is a little difference between Jesus' team of poor players and Kevin's team, who at first wanted to win. Jesus' victory is already assured. So, it's no longer about winning and losing. It's about enjoying the game. Having fun. It's all about being filled with joy! Having life abundantly!"

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In 1 JOHN 5:4 we hear the good news “For whatever is born of God conquers the world. And this is the victory that conquers the world, our faith.”

Love is born from God and **God chose Kevin in the illustration to choose a team of failures not to win the basketball game but to win their hearts in the game of God's kingdom.** God continues to prepare us **to live in this world** not with rage and anger or fighting and destroying but **with love.**

1. JESUS CONQUERS US THROUGH AGAPE

Dear Friends! We all have battled in life in some way or the other. Soldiers are always prepared for a battle. They are trained to be alert and are given the training and weapons to be ready. **In a similar way God prepares us to fight every battle not by weapons that destroy the other but weapons that builds the other.**

The words *agapao/agape*, did not appear in vv. 1-8, but are found 9 times in our text. These words are prominent throughout the Farewell Discourse (ch. 13-17) -- the verb occurring 24 times in those chapters (and 13 times in the rest of the book) and the noun occurring 6 times (and only once in the rest of the book).

This verb in our text refer to:

God's love for Jesus (v. 9, see also 17:23, 24, 26)

Jesus' love for his followers (vv. 9, 12, see also 13:34)

The disciples' love for one another (vv. 12, 17, 13:34-35)

The noun refers to:

Jesus' love (v. 9, 10), The Father's love (v. 10)

Human (Jesus') love that lays down one's life for another (v. 13)

2. JESUS CONQUERS US THROUGH WATER AND BLOOD John shares the good news in his epistle that the weapons of water and blood of Jesus gives us the power to fight every battle. **Water is Jesus's baptism, and the blood is the death of Jesus on the cross. It is by water and blood Jesus conquers our hearts and his love enables us to conquer the world.**

3. JESUS CONQUERS US THROUGH OBEDIENCE Another new theme is "commandment" (noun in vv. 10, 10, 12; verb in vv. 14, 17). **Jesus keeps his Father's commandments, which specifically seems to refer to Jesus' death -- the laying down of his life, so that the world may know that he loves the Father (see 14:31 and 10:18).**

We are to keep Jesus' commandment which is to love one another as Jesus has loved us. Just as Jesus' obedience to his Father's command is his witness to the world about his love for his Father, so our obedience to Jesus' command is our witness to the world about our love for Jesus (see especially 13:34-35).

The word translated "keep" (*tereo*, v. 10) carries more the sense of "holding dear" than simple (blind) obedience. In a love relationship, one should want to do what the other asks. Such obedience isn't a burden, but a free and joyful response of love. It comes naturally to know what the other wants. **Jesus teaches us obedience means holding dear God's word in thought, word, and actions.**

It's God's love in us that transforms us to win our children with love.

The law or the commandments are given to us to keep it so that we may experience God in that obedience. We cannot win our children by laying burden of the law on them, but we can win our children's hearts by gently correcting them with love, the love that abides in us through Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Holy Spirit enables us to live the gospel, which builds our faith to conquer the world. Jesus abides in us so that we may overflow with his love and Joy in our hearts for God and towards one another.

God's weapons are filled with the gospel of grace, peace, and love. There is nothing that can defeat God's love that abides in us. The world might feel we are being defeated every day but in God's eyes his transforming love enables us to win every day.

We might feel we are losing everyday by loving the other and doing things in love for the other, it might look like it's all in vain, but we are sowing God's love every day that it transforms us and the other.

Victory is ours. Praise God that we have the Spirit and the Truth always present with us to be righteous children of God. Go in peace knowing victory is ours through Jesus Christ our Lord the CONQUEROR. Amen