

Hardship Makes Character

by Charles E. Cowman

Charles E. Cowman's sermon emphasizes that hardship is essential for character development and spiritual triumph through God's grace.

Scripture: Psalm 34:19, Isaiah 11:14, Romans 8:37, 2 Corinthians 2:14, James 1:2

Topics: "Spiritual Growth", "Triumph Over Adversity"

Description

Charles E. Cowman preaches on the concept of being 'more than conquerors' through Christ's love, emphasizing that this victory goes beyond mere success to a complete triumph where we not only overcome our enemies but also gain valuable spiritual discipline and strength. He highlights how spiritual conflicts and temptations are blessings that strengthen our faith and character, enabling us to not just defeat our enemies but also make them fight on our side for further triumphs. Cowman encourages believers to see hardships as opportunities for growth and character development, ultimately leading to a life of vigorous vitality and enduring strength.

Transcript

"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us" (Romans 8:37).

This is more than victory. This is a triumph so complete that we have not only escaped defeat and destruction, but we have destroyed our enemies and won a spoil so rich and valuable that we can thank God that the battle ever came. How can we be "more than conquerors"? We can get out of the conflict a spiritual discipline that will greatly strengthen our faith and establish our spiritual character. Temptation is necessary to settle and confirm us in the spiritual life. It is like the fire which burns in the colors of mineral painting, or like winds that cause the mighty cedars of the mountain to strike more deeply into the soil. Our spiritual conflicts are among our choicest blessings, and our great adversary is used to train us for his ultimate defeat. The ancient Phrygians had a legend that every time they conquered an enemy the victor absorbed the physical strength of his victim and added so much more to his own strength and valor. So temptation victoriously met doubles our spiritual strength and equipment. It is possible thus not only to defeat our enemy, but to capture him and make him fight in our ranks. The prophet Isaiah speaks of flying on the shoulders of the Philistines (Isa. 11:14). These Philistines were their deadly foes, but the figure suggested that they would be enabled not only to conquer the Philistines, but to use them to carry the victors on their shoulders for further triumphs. Just as the wise sailor can use a head wind to carry him forward by tacking and taking advantage of its impelling force; so it is possible for us in our spiritual life

through the victorious grace of God to turn to account the things that seem most unfriendly and unfavorable, and to be able to say continually, "The things that were against me have happened to the furtherance of the Gospel." --Life More Abundantly

A noted scientist observing that "early voyagers fancied that the coral-building animals instinctively built up the great circles of the Atoll Islands to afford themselves protection in the inner parts," has disproved this fancy by showing that the insect builders can only live and thrive fronting the open ocean, and in the highly aerated foam of its resistless billows. So it has been commonly thought that protected ease is the most favorable condition of life, whereas all the noblest and strongest lives prove on the contrary that the endurance of hardship is the making of the men, and the factor that distinguishes between existence and vigorous vitality. Hardship makes character. --Selected

"Now thanks be unto God Who always leads us forth to triumph with the Anointed One, and Who diffuses by us the fragrance of the knowledge of Him in every place" (2 Cor. 2:14, literal translation).

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