

**Devotional Thought**  
**Week of May 26, 2008**

THEME: "Through Troubled Waters"

**"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."**

*Romans 8:35-37*

There is a story that tells of a small boy who undertook the task of using a very small shovel to clear away a large amount of snow from the driveway of his home. A passerby stopped and asked him how he could ever expect to clear away so much snow with such a small shovel. The boy answered, "*By keeping at it, sir.*"

*By keeping at it* - through persistence, patience, faith, hope and love. Each of these ingredients is part of the secret of making it through the troubled waters of life! In our scripture lesson Paul mentions everything imaginable. Is it really possible that "*tribulation*" or trouble can separate us from God? No, not for those who trust in God because He will not allow it to happen. "*Distress?*" - you may think that God has let you down, but He hasn't. "Persecution?" - this is a reminder that there may be times when you think God has let you down, but He hasn't. "Persecution" - this will not separate the Christian from the love of God. "Or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or shoed?" If you will look closely at it this is a biography of Paul's life.

Paul, as well as the other disciples, may have had their moments of asking, "*Why me, Lord?*" Being persecuted in many places to which they took the gospel message, they perhaps felt like withdrawing from their mission at times. Yet, Jesus was their Lighthouse who kept beaming His light to guide them through each rocky shoal of resistance and tribulation.

What does it mean to be more than a conqueror? It means to have assistance from Another who get the victory for us, who never lets us be defeated. The victory belongs to Christ; not to us. The victorious life is not our life. It is His life.

If we were to interview these first missionaries and ask them how they withstood the persecutions, there would be at least two answers: First, they had Jesus to empower them. Second, they didn't give up!

PRAYER: Heaven Father, there are times when I am frightened by storms of life. Yet you have always been and protected me the treacherous and deceptive things in front of me. You are my lighthouse in the darkness. Keep me true to my mission for you. In the name of Jesus, I pray. Amen.

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