

Disciples – Indomitable

Romans 8:31-39 (Living Bible)

When I was a teenager, I did the martial art Tae Kwon Do (for a few months). I really enjoyed it and wasn't too bad at it, sadly it didn't last long - a teenage fad. One of the ideas behind the hard training was to create an indomitable spirit. As I reflected on and sought a word for I in our acrostic for DISCIPLES I thought of the word 'indomitable', this time not something created by hard physical training but developed by faith in Christ in the crucible of life.

The Cambridge online dictionary describes Indomitable as 'used to say that someone is strong, brave, determined, and difficult to defeat or frighten.'

For me faith in Jesus can offer the believer an indomitable spirit. In his letter to the Romans Paul unpacks what this might look like and why Christians might be indomitable. In Romans 8:31-39 we are called to face our fears. Paul lists all the things that could go frighteningly wrong for us. Commenting on some of these words from Romans 8:32, '**Since he did not spare even his own Son for us but gave him up for us all** (LB)', the 20th century thinker Karl Barth says about these fears:

If we fix our eyes upon the place where the course of the world reaches its lowest point, where vanity is unmistakable, where its groanings are most bitter and the divine incognito most impenetrable, we shall encounter there – Jesus Christ.

What powerful words. Barth wrote before, during and after the Second World War. He, along with many others, witnessed humanity at its worst. Along with others, Barth came to believe that the darkest, most appearingly God forsaken moments in human experience was inexplicably where we discover our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Barth and others of his day looked down the barrel of humanity's worst suffering and they saw Jesus; the one who had died agonisingly and rose again gloriously. As they arose from the ashes of war, they believed even more fervently (sadly many others lost their faith at this time too) in the Jesus who suffered and rose again for and with humanity.

There was nothing easy about the mid twentieth century, there is nothing easy about the early twenty-first century. But we who trust in Jesus are called to live by the Apostle Paul's words.

³⁸ For I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from his love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels won't, and all the powers of hell itself cannot keep God's love away. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, ³⁹ or where we are—high above the sky, or in the deepest ocean—nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ when he died for us. (Romans 8:38-39 LB)

Let's take a moment to ponder the Apostles words in the context of our own lives. How might these words cause us to live indomitably?

Connect group questions

1. What do you think of Paul's words from Romans 8 - pie in the sky, or truth to live and die by?
2. Can you think of a time in the life of Jesus where he was indomitable? What does his example teach us?
3. How might we cultivate 'indomitability' within our Christian life and what would that look like for 'you'? I put the 'you' in quotation marks because we are all very different and I want each of us to be honest with ourselves and each other about what this might look like.