

Message: More Than
By Senior Pastor Tom Harrison
Romans 8:37-39
Romans 8 Sermon Series
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Life is more than winning. Alexander the Great supposedly wept when there were no more worlds for him to conquer. We are “more than conquerors.” Jesus more than defeated His enemies; He was exalted to the highest place of honor and is now seated at the Father’s right hand. When we choose to align ourselves with Jesus, we align ourselves with the greatest power that exists. All the promises of God find their “yes” in Jesus. He is more than everything we need.

Review chapter 8 by completing this two-column list of what God has been done and what we receive. For example, in verse 2, it says God has set us free from the law of sin and death. That is a definite act of God. Our benefit is found in verse 1, where it says we no longer live with condemnation. We did not do this ourselves; it is the gift of God. However, we must receive and apply the gift. I counted 16 ways our Benefactor acted on our behalf. I counted 25 benefits.

When I looked at my two columns, the obvious question was: *“Who in their right mind wouldn’t want benefits like these: life, peace, freedom, no condemnation, adoption as children, etc.?”* What God has done for us in Jesus is stunning. I cannot imagine why anyone would not want the Lord in their lives. Two possible explanations: Either they have not heard and understood this gift because we have not communicated the “Good News” in a winsome way; or they have a mind so completely set upon the flesh that they cannot comprehend how wonderful this gift really is.

APPLICATION:

The best of Romans 8 comes last. In fact, this is one of the best parts of the entire Bible. I challenge you to conclude our study on Romans 8 by memorizing verses 37-39: *“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 rulers, 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.”*

In 31-36 Paul asks 5 questions:

1) ***“If God is for us, who can be against us?”*** He didn’t say “Who can be against us?” There’d be a lot of answers. But he frontloads the Q by observing, *“If God is for us....”* That’s a game changer. We have formidable foes arrayed against us.

2) **how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?** He does the same thing – he doesn't ask "Will he give us all things?" He says, *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all.* That's a game changer.

3) **Who shall bring any charge against God's elect?** *It is God who justifies.*

4) **Who is to condemn?** Much condemnation (often self-condemnation). Paul explains why we are we not condemned: ***Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised— who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.***

5) **Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?** He mentions 7 possibilities: ***Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*** 8:35-36 Christians are not exempt from suffering or death. These are all things that can result because one is suffering for the gospel. Paul had experienced enormous suffering. He would become a martyr, too, which is the ultimate test of faith. Hebrews 11 describes the experiences of people of faith who were chained, flogged, jeered, stoned, and even sawn in two. He asks the question – can being tortured and enduring enormous physical and emotional pain and loss, separate us from the love of God? He answers this 5th question with a great flourish.

Romans 8:37-39

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ 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.

No, in all these things He's talking about real problems, not inconveniences: ***tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?*** Let me re-tell a story from 3 weeks ago. I want this story to "stick" with you. A guy took a job working at the front desk in a resort. After a week on the job, he was frustrated with how things were going, so he lashed out at the manager about all the problems he was experiencing. After a 20-minute tirade, the manager finally interrupted him. He said, *"You think you know everything, but you don't know the difference between inconvenience and a problem. If you break your neck, if you have nothing to eat, if your house is on fire – then you've got a problem. Everything else is inconvenience."* If we learn to separate inconveniences from problems we'll live better and quite possibly, longer. I've known people who have chronic, persistent problems....not inconveniences.

I spoke with Jim Stovall this week. This blind man is a Tulsa treasure. He told me: ***I think we must have 3 things to be happy. We got to have***

something to do, someone to love, & something to look forward to. If you have those 3 things you can be happy whether you're blind, burned out or broke or anything else or you can be a billionaire & have everything in the world that if you don't have one of those 3, you know, it's it doesn't work. I get calls from unhappy, depressed, or burned out people. If you're not a Believer, you must find 3 things. If you're a Believer, all you got to do is find 1 thing: Jesus. That's why "*seek ye first the KOG and His righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you.*" **If we follow X. We have something to do, someone to love, & something to look forward to.**

we are MORE THAN CONQUERORS What's this mean? 2 thoughts:

1) "**Conquerors**" = we think of a Roman military image, but Paul was a conquered man in Chapter 7. He was conquered not by an outward foe, but the Law awakened him to his sin. He was condemned. However, in Chapter 8 he finds the Holy Spirit. He is not condemned - he is a conqueror. His strength is not his own performance and obedience but is in relationship with Jesus. We are more than conquers through him who loved us. When we try to live according to performance, we are stuck in the quicksand of chapter 7. Only by trusting in Christ are we freed. The HS releases us for a new identity – sons/children of God – not slaves to fear and death.

2) A conqueror defeats his enemy, but "more than conquerors" means that the conqueror forces the enemy to serve his own purpose. That's what Paul is saying – that all of these foes are going to work together for good. Don't give up. Don't be short-sighted.

THROUGH HIM who loved us. This is key. We are more than conquerors, not because of WE (that we are lovable, good, deserving, etc.) but because of HIM. We must never take credit for him.

For I am SURE (supreme confidence) ***neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, ³⁹ 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.***

Psalm 44 *O God, we have heard with our ears, our fathers have told us, what deeds you performed in their days, in the days of old: you with your own hand*

drove out the nations, but them you planted; you afflicted the peoples, but them you set free; for not by their own sword did they win the land, nor did their own arm save them, but your right hand and your arm, and the light of your face, for you delighted in them. You are my King, O God; ordain salvation for Jacob! Through you we push down our foes; through your name we tread down those who rise up against us. For not in my bow do I trust, nor can my sword save me. But you have saved us from our foes and have put to shame those who hate us. In God we have boasted continually, and we will give thanks to your name forever. But you have rejected us and disgraced us and have not gone out with our armies. You have made us turn back from the foe, and those who hate us have gotten spoil. You have made us like sheep for slaughter and have scattered us among the nations. You have sold your people for a trifle, demanding no high price for them. You have made us the taunt of our neighbors, the derision and scorn of those around us. You have made us a byword among the nations, a laughingstock among the peoples. All day long my disgrace is before me, and shame has covered my face at the sound of the taunter and reviler, at the sight of the enemy and the avenger. All this has come upon us, though we have not forgotten you, and we have not been false to your covenant. Our heart has not turned back, nor have our steps departed from your way; yet you have broken us in the place of jackals and covered us with the shadow of death. If we had forgotten the name of our God if we had forgotten the name of our God or spread out our hands to a foreign god, would not God discover this? For he knows the secrets of the heart. Yet for your sake we are killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. Awake! Why are you sleeping, O Lord? Rouse yourself! Do not reject us forever! Why do you hide your face? Why do you forget our affliction and oppression? For our soul is bowed down to the dust; our belly clings to the ground. Rise up; come to our help! Redeem us for the sake of your steadfast love!

You might be living in Psalm 44 today, and think, “If you only knew what I was going through, you wouldn’t say God can turn it for good.” But if living in that dark, desperate, hopeless place of Psalm 44, we are *precisely* the person Paul describes. *Our Psalm 44 is swallowed up in Romans 8*. Do you feel like a sheep set to be slaughtered? Paul calls you more than a conqueror.

Do you feel like darkness is your only friend? Paul says not even death itself can harm you. God’s purpose is unchangeable, his power is unchallengeable, and his love is unconditional. *There is nothing to fear*. All those things that oppose us—persecution, famine, sword, earthly & demonic powers—those may affect our **situation**. But they can’t touch our **identity**. We are more than a conqueror. We

are not defined by our situation. We are defined by who we are in Christ: the treasured child of a heavenly Father.

Are you afraid? If you are in Christ, you aren't thinking right. *If God is for us, who can be against us?*

Are you anxious? If you are in Christ, you aren't thinking right. *He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?* Are you guilty? If you are in Christ, you aren't thinking right. *There is therefore now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.*

Are you afraid you'll not make it? If you are in Christ, you aren't thinking right. *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 rulers, 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.*