

More Than Conqueror Through Him That Loved Us

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 22 March 2021

Preacher: Tom Holland

[0 : 00] Well, we're within a couple of lessons of completing our study of the perseverance of the saints.

! And then we'll come to the last characteristic of the order of salvation.! That's glorification. We started this almost three years ago.

This evening we're going to focus on one verse of Romans chapter 8. That is verse number 37. And that passage, if you just took it alone, might not make complete sense, but it makes more sense when you back up and read the previous verse as well, which was part of our study last week. So I did back up. And here's verses 36 and 37 of Romans 8. It is written, For your sake we are being killed all day long.

We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

[1 : 21] Verse 36 actually starts out with the words, As it is written. Paul is making a reference there to the fact that these words appear in another area of Scripture.

And he's quoting these words. Specifically, Paul is giving an exact quote from Psalm 44.22. That particular psalm was written by the sons of Korah, who served as musicians for King David.

And it was written as a maskel. I looked that up, and depending on what dictionary you look at, you get a different definition. But the best I can come up with, first of all, we are not fully aware of just what a maskel is.

It's a Hebrew word. But it appears to be related to the fact this is a contemplative psalm. You're supposed to read that and then just contemplate that or reflect on it or meditate on it.

It's a contemplative psalm that followed a significant battle where Israel suffered a great loss. They got it handed to them in this battle.

[2 : 41] And the only answer that Israel can come up with for suffering this defeat is that it was the sovereign will of God for it to happen. So Paul quotes this psalm of being defeated.

But in the next verse, we find an amazing turnaround. And again, Paul says this, and obviously in the New Testament, Romans chapter 8, in verse 37, No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.

Now, we don't think of sheep as conquerors. Lions conquer. Bears and wolves conquer. But we never associate sheep with conquering anything.

More than likely, they're the ones who will be conquered by a wild animal. So obviously, Paul is employing here figurative language. And although figurative, it does have a specific meaning for the followers of Christ.

If we contrast the world and its power, we see that Christians appear to be weak and despised.

[4 : 04] As Paul says, we appear weak and helpless as a flock of sheep. But then he goes on and says, but in reality, we are conquerors.

That is a startling thought, but it doesn't end there. There is something even more startling.

Obviously, writing by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Paul says that we are more than conquerors.

He adds the word more. The inclusion of those five words in English is quite interesting. In the Greek text, it is one word.

It is a compound verb. Hypernicomen. I may have got that wrong, but you don't know that. The middle part of that word comes from the Greek word nikeo, meaning to overcome or conquer.

The first part of the verb is hyper, which we, by the way, looked at a few weeks ago. But that means more than. From that word, we get the English word super.

[5 : 18] So in effect, Paul is saying that we are super conquerors. And it has been properly translated more than conquerors.

That phrase is interesting. In the Bibles that were translated into English, more than conquerors shows up in the King James Bible.

It showed up in the Geneva Bible, which predates the King James Bible. And it has also shown up in later translations, such as the New International Version and the English Standard Version.

And if you've never seen one, look at the pews Sunday. Bibles in those pews are the English Standard Version, as is this one, and I imagine Lee's got one. This leads to a question.

How can it be that we should be called super conquerors? I've already said we're despised, we're rejected, we're troubled, we're persecuted, we've been exposed to famine and nakedness and danger and sword.

[6 : 27] We looked at all those last time. Paul used all of those words to describe us, believers, down through the ages. So again, the question is this, how can people such as this be thought of as super conquerors?

And that's a question worth considering tonight, and that's what we're going to do. Now, I would hazard a guess that when you came here tonight, you probably weren't thinking of yourself as a super conqueror.

So why does Paul refer to us as super conquerors or more than conquerors in Christ? Well, I'm going to say, and there are a number of reasons. I think we should consider five of them.

The first reason we are more than conquerors has to do with who is arrayed against us. So reason number one, that we need to be more than conquerors, we war against supernatural forces.

We have supernatural forces out there doing battle against us. We are fighting an enemy who is more than human.

[7 : 46] One of Paul's 13 books in the New Testament is the book of Ephesians. When he was closing out the section on putting on the armor of God in chapter 6, Paul said this in verse 12, We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.

That is a reference to Satan. That is a reference to Satan and his vast host of demons.

We don't know how many fallen angels, and they're now known as demons, serve Satan. There are millions, perhaps billions.

In that regard, the Christian life is punctuated and even defined by spiritual warfare. If we are victorious in a supernatural battle, then the victory is also supernatural, and that victory belongs to the Lord.

Remember, we are more than conquerors through Christ Jesus. When it comes to Satan, we tend to make one of two mistakes.

[9 : 15] The first mistake that we make is that we overrate Satan, giving him too much credit when it comes to power and strength. Don't overrate him.

I'm always amazed when you ask a group of people, give them a trivial pursuit question, name the opposite of God. And very quickly, several will say, well, the opposite of God is Satan.

No. God has no opposite. He stands alone in the universe. God has no... Satan is not the equivalent of God, except in an evil sense.

He's not the opposite of God. Satan is not omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. Those are characteristics only of God. Overrating Satan is our first mistake.

The second mistake we make is underrating Satan. So there's got to be balance here, right? He is very dangerous. He is very crafty.

[10 : 26] He found that out in the Garden of Eden. Satan can conjure up more schemes in a moment than we can conceive of in a lifetime.

All of his schemes are directed at our destruction. The question we must answer in our war against supernatural forces is how can we stand against such a foe as Satan, let alone be a super conqueror?

The answer is not found in our own strength. It is only through him who loved us and died for us, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ.

One figure in history who stood against the spiritual forces of darkness was the great reformer, Martin Luther. He even wrote a hymn about his experiences known as a mighty fortress that is arguably the most doctrinally correct hymn ever penned by a man.

Now, there's no secret that I don't sing. I'm going to sing when I get to heaven, but it's going to take heaven to do it if that's even possible. But there are times when I will get a song book, and I actually have one that I got free from John MacArthur's ministry, and I will read great hymns because they're great devotions.

[12:03] And this is my favorite, A Mighty Fortress. Here's the second stanza. Thinking of our lesson tonight, More Than Cocker's. Did we in our own strength confide our striving would be losing?

Were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing? Does he ask who that may be? Christ Jesus.

It is He. Lord, salvoeth His name from age to age the same, and He must win the battle.

Great, great doctrinally correct Him by Martin Luther. There is not one of us that can stand alone against Satan and his hostile forces.

But in Christ Jesus, we can stand firm and fight until He achieves the victory. And I didn't put this in your notes, but so how are we going to be victorious over Satan?

[13:10] How do we battle Satan? Let me tell you how to do it, guys. Stay close to Jesus. He's beating. He's beating. Stay close to Jesus.

So we are arrayed against supernatural forces. Number two, we also face lifelong battles.

I like to say this, Jesus won the war, but the battle still rages. Satan hadn't read that yet. The war has been won, but the battle still rages.

It is necessary that we be more than conquerors because the warfare that we are engaged in requires a lifelong fight.

It's not going to end. It's not going to end in your lifetime. That's not true of human battles. Take World War II for an example.

[14:13] Thousands of battles were fought globally. Millions of soldiers and civilians of all sides died. But it finally came to a time when the guns were silent and the battles were over.

the Italians surrendered, later the Germans surrendered, and later still the Japanese surrendered. And the war was over.

To my knowledge, the last Japanese soldier to surrender was in the Philippines in 1979. He came walking out of the jungle and he thought the war, they had to get the Japanese ambassador to the Philippines out there to convince him the war was over.

And they flew him home to a hero's welcome. But they surrendered. War was over. This is not true of spiritual warfare.

The spiritual battles, there is no armistice. There is no truce. There's not even a brief interval of peace. There's no tranquility. As our text said this evening, when we started out, for your sakes, we are being killed all day long.

[15:36] The sun never sets on Christians being pursued, persecuted, or killed. Not in this life. Guys, there's men and women died today because they wouldn't say the words, I deny Jesus.

They were put to death today somewhere in the world. What about someone who says, well, I've never been pursued, persecuted, I've certainly never been killed for my faith. Perhaps it is possible they haven't been in the fight because they aren't real believers.

But true believers are in the bullseye. And the more vocal you are, the more active you are, the bigger the bullseye on you. our conquest is more than a conquest.

And therefore, we must be more than conquerors. But there's a third reason. And that is because there are eternal results.

In this spiritual warfare, there's eternal results. The third reason why Christians are more than conquerors is that the spiritual victories achieved by God's people are eternal.

[16:58] This is perhaps our most important point and it is one that we need to be constantly mindful of. I want to point out two truths that are apparent to all of us.

First, we are living in time. The seconds roll by. For some of us there's been a lot of seconds. For others, not as many.

But the seconds keep ticking off. Second, we live in a perishing world. As it says in 1 Corinthians 7, for the present form of this world is passing away.

If some of the more liberal Green New Deal people in Congress knew what was really going to happen to this planet someday, and Jesus is going to do it. Apart from spiritual victories, everything we accomplish will pass away.

You hear that? Apart from spiritual victories, any other kind of victory we've had is going to pass away. It doesn't matter how great the earthly victories may seem in the world's eyes or even in our own eyes.

[18:11] those victories are going to pass away and be remembered no more. This is certain.

One reason it's certain is because the day comes when the heaven and earth is going to pass away and be no more. It's going to be the great uncreation and then a new creation.

that is precisely what Matthew 24 verse 35 is saying if I can get there that the world's passing away. someday every monument built by man or for man will crumble. Every tomb at Arlington National Cemetery is going to melt from fervent heat.

Every galaxy, star, and planet will be uncreated by the Creator. It is all passing away.

[19:12] Great human triumphs will be forgotten but not true when it comes to spiritual victory. Spiritual victories impart meaning to the history of the cosmos.

I'm going to tell you a true story and then I'm going to try and relate it to all of us in here. On June 30, 1993, I left the position of Barfield Police Chief.

The next day, I started working at Phyllis Petroleum Company as the manager of corporate security worldwide. Within two weeks, I found myself in Chicago at the annual gathering of the American Petroleum Institute, also known as API.

Thousands of people, many of them high profile, attended that convention. Well, in 1993, the chairman of the Board of Phillips, Pete Silas, was the head of API.

API. And as was customary, whatever company provided the head of API, their security manager provided security for the attendees. So I'd been there two weeks and now all of a sudden I'm responsible for like 15,000 people and there's demonstrators and they hate oil companies and, you know, and I had available to me security personnel from a host of energy companies throughout America.

[20:39] dozens and dozens of guys. Well, on the last day of the convention, there was a large banquet for those in attendance. The speaker that day was Dick Cheney, future vice president of the United States.

He would be accompanied by Pete Silas, who would then introduce him to the audience. I was standing watch right outside the banquet hall with other security guys.

there was a slight commotion and I looked up and I saw Pete Silas and his entourage approaching. Pete was easy to spot. He was 6'6", an All-American basketball player from Georgia Tech.

I had known Pete since I was 11 years old. He had worked for my father in New York City. And the entourage consisted not only of Dick Cheney, but the chairman of most American oil companies and companies from around the world.

As they drew near, and I kind of was the wallflower, you know, I'm leaning up against the wall here, staying out of the way, but I heard Pete tell them, you all go into the banquet hall, I want to stop and say hello to my security manager.

[21:57] So I was kind of puffed up over that. You know, Dick Cheney had to leave future vice president of the United States because he wanted to talk to me. And he did that.

And the first thing he asked, he said, how are your parents? Because he was good friends with my mom and my dad. He asked if I had settled into the new job, things like that.

We shook hands and he started to leave. And then he turned back and he said, do you remember that weekend I spent at your home in New Jersey? And started laughing.

I did and I'm sure I turned red and started laughing. Pete was a bachelor in those years. And he spent the weekend at our house because he knew my mom could cook.

He wanted to have some home cooking. So dad brought him home. I couldn't sleep. I couldn't figure out where does Pete put his legs in the small bed of our guest room.

[22:56] So I got up at 1 a.m. Everybody was asleep and I snuck into his room. His feet were dangling off the end of the bed. I related that story to my dad years later and dad told Pete Silas.

And that's what he was referring to at API. So does this have anything to do with us tonight? I hope so. I really do. There's nothing spiritual in that thing.

That's all going to pass away. That's all going to pass away. picture yourself years from now in heaven.

And you're out for a stroll. I think we can stroll in heaven, certainly on the new earth. And you look and there's an entourage some distance away.

But as you look, you see one of them you know for sure. It's the Lord Jesus. And he has with him this entourage and you spot Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

[24 : 08] And there's Peter and James and John and Paul. there are others. Well, you step off the path.

You won't allow them to pass by. Don't interfere with them. So you step off the path to make room for Jesus.

But Jesus stops. And he tells the group, you guys go on, I'll catch up with you. He wants to talk to you.

Put your name in there, guys. Every one of you in this room, put your name in there right now. He wants to talk to you one on one. And so you're standing there having a chat with the God of the universe.

And before the Lord leaves to rejoin the group, he says to you, do you remember what you did on May 12, 1999? I just randomly picked that.

[25 : 19] You don't remember. Jesus says that was the day. And he goes on to relate something that was far in the past.

You fed somebody. You gave them a drink of water. you bought a young evangelist in North Vietnam a bicycle because the authorities seized his because he was passing out tracks, going village to village on a bicycle.

people. I got to participate in that once. You did some kindness. Didn't even mean that much to you at the time. And you say, Lord, I'm sorry, I really don't remember that.

And Jesus puts his hand on your shoulder and he says, I remember it. I'll never forget that. Now, brothers, here's my question for you.

When you are in heaven, what spiritual victory is Jesus going to remember about you? That's what I want you to look at inside and just ponder that.

[26 : 43] What have you done spiritually? What have I done that Jesus will never forget? That's an interesting question.

There's a fourth reason why we are more than conquerors. And that is the fact that it has with it eternal rewards. Eternal rewards.

We struggle in this earthly life. victory far surpass anything ever attained anything ever attained by earthly conquerors.

Throughout human history, earthly kings have gone to war. They usually go to war for three primary reasons. First, the king wants to expand his territory, so he tries to take over neighboring lands. Second, the king desires the wealth of the countries nearest to him. Third, the king wants the glory often given to a conqueror.

[27 : 55] Rome would often allow its soldiers to settle on lands they'd captured from others.

Napoleon said that soldiers were willing to fight for mere trinkets, and by that he was referring to medals, titles, promotions, things like that.

The Romans used to give the triumph to the general that conquered a foreign land, and he would go before the Caesar with this entourage parade, and there were thousands of people throwing flowers, but you've probably heard the story, that's where the slave stood on the chariot with the conqueror, and held a golden crown over his head, and whisper in his ear, all glory is fleeting.

All glory is fleeting. The people of God look to the Lord who hands out heavenly rewards.

Listen to Paul in 1 Corinthians chapter 9. Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize?

so run that you may obtain it. Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

[29 : 22] The crown we get will never wear out. On earth the followers of Christ may wear a crown of thorns. In heaven the crowns that the Lord Jesus dispenses are imperishable and incorruptible.

We have an inheritance that will never pass away. Well, there's a fifth reason. It's our final reason tonight.

There's no greater cause. We should strive to be more than conquerors because it's the greatest cause in the universe. The goal of engaging in spiritual warfare is the glory of God.

We fight spiritual battles for the glory of God. The goal is infinitely more worthy and massively superior to anything else.

crowns. I spoke a few moments ago about heavenly crowns. I don't want there to be any mistakes concerning the disposition of our crowns.

[30 : 37] And by the way, let me say this, I'm convinced that every believer who enters heaven will receive a crown. There's a number of different crowns. I think every believer is going to have at least one.

Some may receive multiple crowns. But there is a scene in heaven that is recorded for us in the book of Revelation. It takes place in the throne room where the Father dwells with Christ seated at His right hand.

And also present are the 24 elders, I believe representing the people of God saved from every nation and in every age.

Listen to this description in Revelation chapter 4 and I won't give you the verses, it's the whole chapter. After this I looked and behold a door standing open in heaven and the first voice which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet said come up here and I will show you what must take place after this.

And at once I was in the spirit and behold a throne stood in heaven and one seated on the throne and he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald.

[32 : 10] around the throne were twenty four thrones and seated on the thrones were twenty four elders clothed in white garments with golden crowns on their heads.

From the throne came flashes of lightning and rumblings and peals of thunder and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire which are the seven spirits of God and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass like crystal and around the throne on each side of the throne are the four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind the first living creature like a lion the second living creature like an ox the third living creature with the face of a man and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight and four and the four living creatures each of them with six wings are full of eyes all around and within and day and night they never cease to say holy holy holy holy is the lord god almighty who was and is and is to come sound like isaiah chapter six and whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne who lives forever and ever now listen to this the twenty four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever they cast their crowns before the throne saying worthy are you our lord in god to receive glory and honor and power for you created all things and by your will they existed and were created any crowns that we may receive in heaven rightfully belong to the lord jesus christ they are our crowns he gives them to us but we lay them at the feet of jesus to show they were one for his honor and by his strength great title of a book someone needs to write it for his honor and by his strength the lord jesus is the super conqueror we are to be more than conquerors but only through him so you try to do it on your own strength you'll fall flat through him and only through him if we try to be conquerors in our own strength or for the sole purpose of winning a crown we will fail it is in and through the strength of christ that we can be conquerors his conquerors let's close with a word of prayer father we thank you for the day your grace your mercy the hope we have a settled hope lord we look east awaiting that trumpet awaiting that voice come up here and we would see christ blessed savior holy son of god creator sustainer and redeemer hasten the day lord may this church be ready for your appearing we pray in jesus name amen you