

Sermon Title: Victoriously Secured by the Eternal Love of God, Part 2

Sermon Text: Romans 8:35-37

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to a stable mindset of an overwhelming conqueror, as a result of the love of Christ, in spite of circumstances.

Sermon Proposition: There are 9 life and faith threatening circumstances, that Christ's love overcomes.

Introduction: Scripture's testimony on the believer's suffering.

Matthew 5:12-13; Hebrews 11:34ff

Children of Israel: Jeremiah, Daniel, 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Timothy 4:6-8; Acts, Revelation, 1 Corinthians 4:9-13; 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

Question: What circumstance or situation has the power to separate the true believer from the love of Christ?

1 John 4:9 In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. **10** In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins.

1 John 4:17 Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

I. The 1st threatening circumstance is tribulation.

This word refers to the outside pressure coming at you. Tribulation from (thlipsis) in the Greek, carries the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure from outside circumstances. In Scripture the word is perhaps most often used of outward difficulties, but it is also used of emotional stress. Severe adversity common among all men. (**Revelation 2:8-11**)

2 Corinthians 2:14-16 Now thanks *be* to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?

II. The 2nd threatening circumstance is distress.

This word refers to inside pressure, or pressure from within, due to circumstance. It is a translation of the compound Greek word (stenochoria), which is composed of the terms for narrow and space. The idea is similar to that of tribulation and carries the primary meaning of strict confinement, of being helplessly hemmed in. Sometimes we are caught in situations and circumstances, where we are continually confronted with temptation, trials, and troubles as a result of following Jesus Christ, that we cannot avoid. (**Philippians 1:19-26**)

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God *is* faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear *it*.

III. The 3rd threatening circumstance is persecution.

This refers to affliction suffered for Jesus Christ's sake. (**Matthew 5:10-12; Philippians 1:27-30**)

IV. The 4th threatening circumstance is famine.

This word "famine" often is a direct result of persecution, when Christians are discriminated against in employment and cannot afford to buy enough food or are not allowed to buy enough food to eat. Sometimes famine is a result of oppression, judgment or imprisonment.

V. The 5th threatening circumstance is nakedness.

This word does not necessarily refer to complete nudity, but refers to destitution in which a person cannot adequately clothe themselves. It can also suggest of being vulnerable and unprotected.

VI. The 6th threatening circumstance is peril.

The word “peril” is the idea of being exposed to danger in general including danger from treachery and mistreatment.

VII. The 7th threatening circumstance is sword.

The “sword” refers most likely to a large dagger that was often used by assassins because it was easy to conceal. Often relates to the context of murder or execution.

VIII. The 8th threatening circumstance is death. V.36

Psalm 44:22 Yet for Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

A. Israel suffered

Hebrews 11:36-38 Still others had trial of mockings and scourgings, yes, and of chains and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn in two, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented-- of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, *in dens* and caves of the earth.

B. Disciples suffered

Matthew 10:37-39 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. "And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it.

C. Church suffered

2 Timothy 3:12 Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.

Revelation 2:8-9 "And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, `These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: "I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and *I know* the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but *are* a synagogue of Satan.

If someone professes to be a Christian and turns their back on the things of God or lives a life that is a persistent lifestyle of willful sin, they are providing proof that they never belonged to Christ at anytime. (**Luke 9:57-62**) Such people have never received peace with God, and therefore cannot experience or demonstrate the peace of God. Paying the cost of discipleship is always a mark of true salvation, but the cost and sacrifices are often too high for many.

Calvin states, “it is no new thing for the Lord to permit His saints to be undeservedly exposed to the cruelty of the ungodly.”

IX. The 9th threatening circumstance is overwhelming victory. V.37

The “but” or “yet” connects this verse with verse 35. This assumes a negative answer to the question of verse 35 and here proceeds to go even further: not only are such things as demonstrated in that verse unable to separate us from Christ’s love, but on the contrary, we are “more than conquerors” with respect to these things. We can survive and thrive in any of these threatening circumstances, that the world or Satan puts in our way. The phrase is actually overwhelmingly conquerors from (hupernikao) a compound verb that literally means hyper-conqueror, to over conqueror, to conqueror with success to spare.

How is this accomplished? Through Christ who loves us. The victory is not of our own doing, but the victory in these circumstances is through and by Jesus Christ.

Secondly, because of the ultimate reward that awaits us (**8:17-18**), which far surpasses whatever temporal earthly and any temporal loss we may suffer. (**2 Corinthians 4:17**)

Illustration:

1. Providence
2. Entreaties
3. Assurance
4. Comfort
5. Expectations

Things Don't Just Happen

Things don't just happen to us who love God,
They're planned by His own dear hand,
Then molded and shaped, and timed by His clock,
Things don't just happen – they're planned.
We don't just guess on the issues of life;
We Christians just rest in our Lord,
We are directed by His sovereign will,
In the light of His holy Word.
We who love Jesus are walking by faith,
Not seeing one step that's ahead,
Not doubting one moment what our lot might be,
But looking to Jesus, instead.
We praise our dear Savior for loving us so,
For planning each care of our life;
Then giving us faith to trust Him for all
The blessings as well as the strife.
Things don't just happen to us who love God,
To us who have taken our stand;
No matter the lot, the course, or the price,
Things don't just happen – they're planned.

-Esther Fields, quoted in Barbara Johnson, *Fresh Elastic for Stretched Out Moms*

Conclusion: From the human perspective, of course, the over conquest God promises often seems a long time in coming. But when, as true believers, we go through times of testing, whatever their nature or course, we come out spiritually refined by our Lord. Instead of those things separating us from Christ, they will bring us closer to Him. His grace and glory will rest on us and we will grow in our understanding of His will and of the suffering of His grace. While we wait for Him to bring us through the trials, we know that He says to us what He said to Paul, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” And we should respond with Paul, “Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me.” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

Quotes from: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary Romans 1-8, pp. 514-515