

Text: Romans 8:38-39

Theme: We Are the Champions

July 30, 2017

How many of you recognize the song, "We Are the Champions"? Whether you know who originally sang it or not, most of us recognize the song because it has been included in several videos and played at numerous championship events. As we look at today's text, it would seem that the song should have originated back in the New Testament. Although the song has no connection, our text encourages us to realize who we are, to acknowledge that we are more than conquerors, that we truly are the champions.

I. Christ has declared us to be more than conquerors. A. However, we often feel defeated. 1. We feel defeated because things don't work out as we intended. Paul says, "All things work together for good," yet so often we think, "Maybe for you, but not for me!" How many projects have you attempted only to have them fail? How many times have you tried to do something right and it turned out wrong? When we try and try and we seem to fail and fail, we get discouraged because life's not supposed to work that way. Things are always supposed to be good for us, so we think. As the list of things that don't work as we planned gets longer, we feel defeated instead of victorious.

2. We feel defeated because our best efforts never seem to be good enough. Have you noticed the change in our world? Along with all the other changes, there's the change in expectations. Today, we're all about productivity and efficiency. Paul tells us that all things work together for good, but the world's definition of good means that we need to do a little more, that what we did last year isn't enough this year. We're so focused on productivity, that we feel like what we do is never enough. With every performance review, we tell ourselves that we must do more. The mindset of more leaves us defeated because we never arrive, because our best is never enough.

3. We feel defeated because God seems distant. Paul says that nothing can separate us from the love of God, but we sometimes feel separated. Go back forty years. Would you say that God seemed closer then than He does now, that He appeared more involved than He is today? Today, we often feel like God has moved, that God has become more distant, less involved, that God has become so busy with other things that He doesn't have time for us. Truth be told, it's the other way around, but whichever way you view it, God seems to have forsaken us, forgotten us, and as we allow that feeling to exist, we feel defeated when we should be champions.

B. Although we feel defeated at times, what makes us champions? 1. We are champions because God says so. What does God call you in our Old Testament lesson? Just another nobody in a sea of nobodies? You are His treasured possession. You're part of His family. As a member of His family, you're part of the family of champions because God and losers can't co-exist in the same place at the same time! When you remember that you belong to God, can you be anything less than a champion in His sight? If you hesitate, add the word "treasured" to "possession" and you will have indisputable proof that you are a champion in His sight.

2. We are champions because God loves us. In our Old Testament lesson, God said that He chose us because He loves us. Why does that make us champions? The God who keeps the planets in orbit every day, who arranges for spectacular sunrises and sunsets, who cares for the needs of over seven billion people every day, this God says, "I love you. You are precious to Me. You are My most valued creation." With that knowledge, can you be a loser or anything less than whatever God is? God sent His Son out of love. Because of His amazing love for us, we can be nothing less than God declares. We can be nothing less than His champions.

3. We are champions because nothing can separate us from our God. Paul makes a list to impress this truth upon us. As he does so, he leaves no loopholes. Whatever we face, God will be with us. Remember His words from Matthew, "I am with you always"? We can do something we think will push God over the edge or push us over the edge and out of God's sight forever, but it never happens because God says, "nothing can separate us." No matter how defeated we may feel, no matter how many times we try and things don't work out, God still loves you. God still says of you, "You are My champion and don't you forget it!"

4. We are champions because God is for us. Remember Paul's words in our text, "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Is Paul saying that there's a possibility God might be against us? Not for a moment! "If", as it is used here, is clearly meant to say, "Since" because God cannot be against us or He isn't God! Look at the impact of that statement. Since God is for you, since God is on your side, since God is working all things for good, since God is always looking out for your best interest, since God is kind, loving, and caring toward you, by the time we finish that list, defeated must disappear because champion is the only conclusion possible.

5. We are champions because we have been justified. Paul says, "Those whom He called He also justified." At the moment, you might think, "So? I don't even know what the word means!" Justified is one of the greatest words we can add to our vocabulary because justified is the broader term that we often translate with the word "forgiven." Now, does it look different, more meaningful? Guilt - unnecessary. Carrying a heavy load also unnecessary. Why? Because you are already forgiven, because God has already forgotten! Today, in this moment, your past is forgiven. You are a champion because God has declared, "I forgive you!"

6. We are champions because the kingdom is waiting for us. What do we possess that the majority of people in our country don't possess? So many want to say, "Look at me, world. I've got it all," but they don't have anything! You can have nothing by the world's standards. You can live a life of simplicity, a life that the world criticizes as the life of a fool, but they are the fools because the Kingdom of heaven, the promise of eternity, your mansion in heaven - that's what you possess and they lack. If everything else were taken away, the knowledge of the kingdom, that alone would enable us to declare that we are the champions.

7. The song may have left its impact on our world and it may be used to celebrate particular events. Even so, at the end of the day, it's just a song, but for us, it's reality; it's fact, because, in the sight of God and by the power of God, we are the champions. Amen.