

Romans Session 129
The Ultimate Security 7
The Hymn of Security 5

Romans 8:36-39 (KJV)

³⁶ *As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*

³⁷ *Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*

³⁸ *For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,*

³⁹ *Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

In our last study, we said that we can only love God because He first loved us, we can only hold on to God because He holds on to us.

We can survive any threatening circumstance and overcome any spiritual obstacle that the world or Satan puts in our way because **in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.**

Overwhelmingly conquer is from *hupernikao*, a compound verb that literally means to hyper-conquer, or to over-conquer, to conquer, as it were, with success to spare.

Those who **overwhelmingly conquer** are supremely victorious in overcoming everyone and everything that threatens their relationship to Jesus Christ.

They do so entirely through His power, and the power of **Him who loved us** so much that He gave His life for us that we might have life in Him.

Because our Lord both saves and keeps us, we do much more than simply endure and survive the ominous circumstances Paul here mentions,

First of all, we **overwhelmingly conquer** by coming out of troubles stronger than when they first threatened us.

Paul has just declared that by His divine grace and power, God causes everything, including the very worst things, to work for the good of His children;

Romans 8:28 (KJV)

²⁸ *And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*

Even when we suffer because of sinfulness or unfaithfulness, our gracious Lord will bring us through with a deeper understanding of our own unrighteousness and of His perfect righteousness, of our own faithlessness and of His steadfast faithfulness, of our own weakness and of His great power.

Second, we **overwhelmingly conquer** because our ultimate reward will far surpass whatever earthly and temporal loss we may suffer.

With Paul, we should view even the most terrible circumstance as but “momentary, light affliction”

2 Corinthians 4:17 (KJV)

¹⁷ *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;*

This produces for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison.

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 cause, 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 sufficiency 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,

2 Corinthians 12:9a (KJV)

⁹ And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

And we should respond with Paul;

2 Corinthians 12:9b (KJV)

“Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Paul probably wrote this letter to Rome during a winter in Corinth, and it is not likely that either Paul or the Roman believers realized how short the time would be before they would stand in need of the apostles comforting words in this passage.

It would not be many years before they would face fierce persecution from a pagan government and people that at this time tolerated them with indifference.

It would not be long before the blood of those to whom this epistle is addressed would soak the sand of Roman amphitheaters.

Some would be mauled by wild beasts, some would be slain by ruthless gladiators, and other would be used as human torches to light Nero’s garden parties.

Consequently, the true and false believers soon would be easily distinguished. Many congregations would be saying of former members,

1 John 2:19 (KJV)

¹⁹ They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

But those whom the world looks upon as the overwhelmed and conquered, are in reality, overwhelmingly conquerors. In God’s scheme of things, the victors are the vanquished and vanquished are the victors.

So, what is the conclusion to all of this?

The Conclusion By Paul

Romans 8:38-39 (KJV)

³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

These chapters close with a beautiful summary of what has just been said.

The Apostle assures his readers that he was not teaching them anything about which he himself was not fully **convinced**.

He was convinced, **first of all**, because of the nature of salvation, which God had revealed to him and which he presents so clearly in these first eight chapters.

His counsel is also a personal testimony. He was convinced because he had experienced most of the things mentioned and they did not separate him from Christ.

Both revelation, and experience convinced him.

Paul was saying to believers in Rome the same thing he would say some years later to Timothy;

2 Timothy 1:12 (KJV)

¹² For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

Paul begins his list with **death**, which in our early life, we experience last.

Romans 8:38-39 (KJV)

³⁸ For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

³⁹ Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Even that supreme enemy cannot separate us from our Lord, because He has changed death's sting from defeat to victory. We can therefore rejoice in the psalmist's affirmation that;

Psalm 116:15 (KJV)

¹⁵ Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints.

And we can testify with David that;

Psalm 23:4 (KJV)

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

With Paul, we should be confident and say;

2 Corinthians 5:8b (KJV)

⁸ we are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Because that will mean we are finally **“at home with the Lord”**

Donald Grey Barnhouse told a personal story that beautifully illustrates death's powerlessness over Christians.

“When his wife died, his children were still quite young and Dr. Barnhouse wondered how he could explain their mother's death in a way their childish minds could understand. As they drove home from the funeral, a large truck passed

them and briefly cast a dark shadow over the car. Immediately the father had the illustration he was looking for, and he asked the children, would you rather be run over by a truck or by the shadow of a truck? That's easy daddy, hey replied. We would rather get run over by the shadow, because that wouldn't hurt. Their father then said, well, children, your mother just went through the valley of the shadow of death, and there's no pain there either."

The **Second** supposed hindrance does not seem like a hindrance at all.

We think of **life** as something positive. But it is in our present earthly **life** that spiritual dangers lie.

Not only does death itself hold no harm for believers, but it will bring the end of all harm.

It is while we still have this **life** that we face tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword and the many other trials that Paul could have mentioned.

But because we have eternal life in Christ, the threats during our present **life** are empty.

The **Third** supposed threat is **angels**.

Because the next danger on the list (**principalities**) doubtless refers to fallen angels, it seems likely that the ones mentioned here are holy angels.

Paul's reference here to angels presupposes a purely hypothetical and impossible situation, just as did the one of his warnings to the Galatians. He told the Galatian believers to stand firm in their salvation through Christ's shed blood on the cross and to refuse to accept any contrary gospel, even if preached, if that were possible, by an apostle or an angel from heaven.

Galatians 1:8 (KJV)

⁸ But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

The **Fourth** supposed threat is not in the least hypothetical.

As already noted, **principalities** seem to refer to evil beings, specifically demons.

Like the Greek term (*arche*) behind it, **principalities** indicate, neither good nor evil. But the obvious negative use of *arche* in such passages as Ephesians 6:12 (rulers), Colossians 2:15 (rulers), and Jude 6 (own domain) as well as its apparent contrast with the term that precedes it here (angels) seems to indicate fallen angels, the demons.

If so, Paul is saying that no supernatural created being, good or evil, can sever our relationship to Christ.

The phrase **Things present** and **Things to come** represent everything we are experiencing and will experience.

Powers translates *dunamis*, the ordinary Greek word for power but in its plural form, as here, it often refers to miracles or mighty deeds.

It was also used figuratively of persons in positions of authority and power.

Regardless of the specific meaning Paul had in mind here, **powers represent** another obstacle that Christians need not fear.

Paul may have used **height** and **depth** as astrological terms that were familiar in his day, *huspsoma* (**height**) referring to the high point, or zenith, of a star's path, and *bathos* (**depth**) to its lowest point.

If so, the idea is that Christ's love secures a believer from the beginning to the end of life's path.

Or perhaps he used the terms to signify the infinity of space which is endless in every direction, in either case, the basic meaning is that of totality.

To leave no doubt the security is all encompassing, Paul adds **nor any other created thing**. Since only God Himself is uncreated, everyone else and everything else is excluded.

There is nothing anywhere at any time that **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is Christ Jesus our Lord**.

Our salvation was secured by God's decree from eternity past and will be held secure by Christ's love through all future time and throughout all eternity.