

“The Ultimate Winners” – Pr Jim Sprengle – Pentecost 9

July 26, 2026

- I. **Romans 8:37** - ³⁷No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.
- II. **Whenever I fly**, I try to pick a movie that's about the same length as my flight.
 - a. It's a little harder to choose a movie when the flight goes over 4 hours, but this last one gave me a chance to watch *Saving Private Ryan*, with Tom Hanks.
 - i. This depiction of the Normandy invasion on D-Day, and especially Omaha Beach, was very intense and violent.
 - ii. It gave a view of the soldiers on the beach and the overwhelming enemy fire from above in fortified bunkers... it looked like a massacre rather than the victory we remember.
 - iii. In fact, on the 50th anniversary of the allied invasion of Normandy, they interviewed a veteran who experienced the landing at Omaha Beach, and he recalled looking around him at all the carnage and concluded, “We’re going to lose!”
 - iv. However, the next interview was with a U.S. Army reconnaissance pilot who had flown over the whole battle area.
 - 1. He saw the massive casualties on the beaches, but he also witnessed the successes of the Marines... the infiltration of the paratroopers... and how effective the aerial bombardment was... and he said to himself, “We’re going to win!”¹
 - v. The view from above was far different from the soldiers mired under heavy machinegun fire and mortars – but the view from above told a different story.
 - b. In most every epic like the Lord of the Rings or the Chronicles of Narnia, the great battles seem like they are lost when the tide turns and the battle is won... but for the moment... it looks very grim.
- III. **In the Christian faith, we also go through a battle... all our lives.**
 - a. I suppose that's why we are called the Church militant – or the ones who fight against the forces of evil in a world of sin, death, and the devil.
 - i. From the moment we are conceived.... sin, death, and the devil are at work, trying to take us out of the Father's hand.
 - ii. We know that nothing can separate us from His love in Christ Jesus, but we can also face incredible loss and tribulation during our earthly journey.
 - b. Sometimes it is the broken world that causes us trouble.
 - i. We were praying last week for people who had a wildfire cause all kinds of damage to their property and burned the hay to feed their cattle... and natural disasters are always causing pain and suffering.

- ii. We pray almost every week for people with cancer, broken bones and falls, surgeries and infections.
 - iii. Other times it's vehicle breakdowns, job layoffs, appliances and air conditioners that stop working, financial shortfalls and unsure housing situations, broken relationships, or family disputes and estrangement.
 - iv. In fact, I could go on and on about the things that go wrong for us in the world because it's constant trial and tribulation from sin.
- c. There is also another kind of brokenness that causes us trouble too – and that is the spiritual attacks.
 - i. Satan is the father of lies, and what better lie is there than Scripture is not really God's own Word.
 - 1. He started this whole problem of sin by asking Eve if God really meant what He said... and she ate from the forbidden fruit.
 - 2. Just the same today, the devil has a huge group of people who believe the lie that God's Word doesn't mean what it says, and we are free to take or leave whatever we like or don't like.
 - ii. The spiritual attacks also come from our trials, because when we suffer it's easy to blame God... or at least wonder... why me?
 - 1. For many people, God is the reason they are going through bad times... but what about satan? What about sin?
 - 2. These spiritual battles introduce doubt and cause us to question the goodness of God.
- d. Another constant struggle is death – whether we face our own mortality, or we go through the loss of another.
 - i. The death of a loved one is one of the hardest things we face, and all of us have gone through this loss and grief.
 - ii. It's hard not to think of our own lives when someone passes away suddenly – and the older we get, the more we realize that every day is a gift.
 - iii. Death is a constant reminder of our frailty and weakness.
- e. Unfortunately, we see things from the ground level, like the soldiers storming Omaha Beach... and it can seem like all is lost.

IV. **Our reading in Romans is just the encouragement we need from God.**

- a. Yes, we might be in the thick of it... struggling to see a way out... even wondering where God is in the middle of our difficulties.
- b. The first question that makes us pause is, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (v. 31)
 - i. This reminds us of the many stories of God's redemptive work throughout history... like when He brought the Hebrews out of Egypt with His mighty power.
 - ii. How about all the other battles that seemed impossible, but God's hand made all the difference?

1. When Gideon was called to fight the Midianites in Judges 7... and the enemy was 32,000 men, while God had Gideon go into battle with just 300... and it was a miraculous victory.
2. Another time was in 2 Kings 6 as the Aramean army threatened Israel and found out that Elisha the prophet was helping the king.
 - a. A large force of horses, chariots, and soldiers went to capture Elisha, and his servant panicked when he saw the massive force... but Elisha prayed that the servant would see God's army – and God opened his eyes, “behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.” (2 Kings 6:17)
 - b. We may not always see it, but God is working for good.
3. Many other times God's people faced overwhelming odds... from David and Goliath to Joshua and the walls of Jericho... but God sustained and delivered His people – in fact, Exodus before the Hebrews crossed the Red Sea and the Egyptian army was coming at them, Moses said, “Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which He will work for you today... the LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be silent.” (Ex 14:13-14)
- c. The great promise we have from a God who is faithful and loving is this... Nothing can separate us from His love in Christ Jesus our Lord. (v. 39)
 - i. No matter how bad it seems, we are not seeing the whole picture from God's perspective, or the greatness of His power.
 - ii. In fact, God promises that we have (even right now!) an overwhelming victory by His hand... we are the ultimate winners because He is so good.
- d. The phrase, “more than conquerors” in verse 37 is actually just one word in the Greek, and it is basically the word hyper-victory... we are the ultimate victors because Jesus went to battle for us and won.
 - i. Yes, our Lord faced every trial, tribulation, and temptation that sin, death, and satan could throw at Him... and that included a sacrificial death on the cross for us.
 - ii. But the victory in Christ came with His resurrection – against overwhelming odds, Jesus rose from the dead.
 - iii. When I say victory, it means that we who believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior have no fear of sin, death, or the devil because none of those things can ever separate us from our God in Jesus... none of those things have real power over us!
- e. The next time you feel overwhelmed, or you are questioning what God is doing, just consider that He has already given you His promise that we win.

- i. Sometimes I record a sports team so I can watch the game later... and sometimes I find out they won before I watch my recording... which makes me feel so much better, knowing that no matter how bad things look, my team wins.
- f. I'm here to tell you that God's team wins... you are the ultimate winner through the power of God's love and mercy...
- g. We have nothing to fear, because we are more than conquerors through Him who loves us... Amen.

¹ Source: Leith Anderson, *Leadership That Works*, (Minneapolis, Bethany House, 1999), pp. 164-165