

We are on the road to Easter with a new series of sermons. Our series is **More Than Victors: living in the power and hope of Jesus’ resurrection**. We will look at Romans 8 over three Sundays.

Next Sunday we will be celebrating salvation in Jesus Christ – there will be a baptism service.

To help us consider Easter carefully and celebrate joyfully what Jesus has accomplished, Focus on the Family Canada has provided an 8-day devotional, [Words From The Cross](#) for Holy Week.

Please plan to be part of the shared Good Friday Services (Apr 3) and Easter Sunday breakfast (Apr 5).

Proposition

Today we discover that through Christ, God has makes us **victorious over condemnation**. The guilt and shame of our sinful nature need not define us. In fact, because of our new life Christ, we can be **more than** conquerors. This theme was part of the first logo for the Christian & Missionary Alliance: *εν Χριστω υπερνικωμεν* – “*in Christ we overwhelmingly conquer*”. To get this phrase “*hyper*” is combined with “*nike*” (“to be victorious”). In Romans 8:37, we read, “*in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us*” (NASB). The current Alliance logo is meaningful.

Pitcher – Jesus is our healer – Isaiah 53:4-5

Cross – Jesus is our saviour – John 3:16

Cup – Jesus is our sanctifier – I Thess 5:23-24

Crown – Jesus is our coming king – Acts 1:11

Are you a conqueror? Are you experiencing spiritual victory over doubt, fear, or temptation? That is what we want to explore in Romans 8:1-17. Before we explore this text, let’s set the scene in two ways.

- ***The Gospel is powerful and personal – Romans 1:1-2, 6, 12***
- ***The Gospel is hard yet hopeful – Romans 7:21-25***

As Paul articulates the Gospel throughout Romans, he does not root the believer’s victory in one’s personal performance. There is a far different foundation for our victory. It is furnished by Jesus! In Romans 8 there are three times in which the resurrection of Christ is featured as foundational to the victory we can experience. So we are wrestling with who we **are** compared to who we **were**. Let’s consider **three changes** that take place in the believer, which provide victory over condemnation.

[1] From captivity to liberty – vv. 1-8

When we repent of sin and receive the gift of God’s forgiveness in Christ, we are changed from a state of captivity to one of liberty. Though we are highlighting the way in which the resurrection of Jesus accomplished this, the Holy Spirit is central to how we live in this liberation. Christians who were once captive to the sinful nature are now welcomed to live according to the Holy Spirit – see verses 5-6.

Remember Paul’s wrestling in Romans 7. The human conundrum of being under moral condemnation is addressed by the death **and** resurrection of Jesus, as Paul explained in Romans 5:9-11. Tragically, part of our sinful nature is to default to erroneous thinking. This plays out in two ways. [a] ***I am not as bad as...*** [b] ***I can change if I just...*** Such thinking ignores our sin and the saving work of Christ.

Aleksandr Isayevich Solzhenitsy...was a Soviet and Russian author and dissident who helped to raise global awareness of political repression in the Soviet Union, especially the Gulag prison system. He was awarded the 1970 Nobel Prize in Literature. [READ MORE](#) [He wrote:] “If only it were all so simple! If only there were evil people somewhere insidiously committing evil deeds, and it were necessary only to separate them from the rest of us and destroy them. But the line dividing good and evil cuts through the heart of every human being. And who is willing to destroy a piece of his own heart?”

We all must come honestly to face the fact that humanity is in captivity to sin. The solution is in the resurrection. Followers of Jesus are daily “*dying to what once bound us*” (Romans 7:6). Can you imagine being brutally invaded by a foreign power? Try to imagine being liberated. How silly it would be if you continued to live according to the tyranny from which you had just been set free! Yet this is the way many live out their Christian life – forgetting that they have been changed from captivity to liberty.

[II] From death to life – vv. 9-11

Another stark description of our spiritual condition is the change from death to life (see Ephesians 2:1-5). “*If Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness*” (Romans 8:10). Consider the powerful roles of the Trinity behind this experience.

- The Son has **accomplished** our salvation by His death, burial, resurrection. “*Christ is in you*” (v.10)
- The Holy Spirit **activates** of our new life, transforms our inner life (see Galatians 5:16ff). “*The Spirit of God lives in you*” (v.9).
- The Father is the **author** of our new life. He is the One who has raised Jesus from the dead *and* in a similar miraculous way, He “will also give *life to your mortal bodies*” (v.11).

This process is further explained in **Romans 6:7-11**. What assurance and certainty we have of our salvation in Jesus. Next week we will celebrate this gift, as new life in Christ is portrayed by baptism.

[III] From slave to heir – vv. 12-17

The third change that impacts victory over condemnation is status. The slave has none; no freedom, only fear. However, the heir has all rights and privileges. Consider two important implications. First, all Christians must **live out** their new spiritual status. Paul states it as a **moral obligation** or **debt** (v.12). Living according to our new status as a son or daughter of God means living in the desires and power of the Holy Spirit. Notice also that the death/life metaphor is mingled into this section.

Second, we must **value** their new spiritual status. We must cherish being a child of God (v.14). But deeper, we have been adopted by God (v.15a). This intensifies when we recognize “Abba Father” relationship (v.15b). Finally, our new status comes with the rights and privileges of being an heir (v.17).

Conclusion – see *Digging Deeper*

Are you accessing the power of the resurrection and experiencing the victory that God offers? In his book ***Seeking the Face of God*** (Harvest House, 1999), Gary Thomas shares the dilemma we face.

If I faced a temptation, I could give in and that would be a sin, or I could not give in, become proud, and still end up sinning. How could I win. I had to learn that in one sense, I couldn't win. My problem was that I was making myself, my actions, my thoughts, and my attitudes the measurement of my faith. The holiness God wants is a holiness rooted in Christ's death and resurrection, a holiness that changes our hearts, not just our actions. (62)

We can ask many valuable questions about the facts and historicity of the resurrection. But once we have examined those questions, much more penetrating considerations come into play. Consider two:

- ***To whom does my life belong? Romans 6:3-4 and 7:4***
- ***By whose power am I living? Ephesians 1:18-20***

What are the challenges you are facing today? Are you aware of the power of Christ's resurrection? Are you accessing His victory for those challenges?