



Links Players

10 WHO AM I?: A VICTOR

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:37, NIV)

THOSE WHO LOVE COMPETITION often say that the best happening in sports is a Game 7. Two teams battle through a series of games until, with their having claimed three wins each, the seventh game will decide the champion. As a golfer, I may suggest that the 72nd hole in a closely contested major is even better, but I won't argue with the sentiment. The moments before a winner triumphs can be some of the most exciting we'll ever watch.

And yet I see this: The path to victory is not always victorious. The team who wins Game 7 has lost three games in the series before finding their way to celebration. The golfer who hoists the trophy has made bogeys and doubles and slept restlessly throughout the week.

Paul saw this, too, but not in the limited sense of an athlete. He saw it in all of life—namely, the life of those who dared to walk the way of Jesus.

Consider the lines in Romans 8 that lead up to Paul's expression that we are "more than conquerors" through Christ:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered" [Psalm 44:22].

Then Paul wrote that it is "in all these things" that Christ makes us conquerors. *In* these things, not *after* these things. A victor in Christ is victorious all along the way, just as a team can be "winning" even while they are behind on the scoreboard.

This is, friends, a deep dive into the question of identity. When our identity is fixed in Christ, the events that surround us do not change who we are. Though Paul was locked up in a prison cell, he did not lose his freedom in Christ, nor did he surrender his fearlessness in witnessing for Christ. All of these (and more!) were a part of him, no matter what troubles he faced. And now to the Romans he was saying that even the worst of life's hardships could not steal the victory he had in Christ. Excuse me—the victory *we* have in Christ. With Paul, we are more than conquerors through Christ. We can never be separated from our Savior's love.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2019 Links Players International. An introductory video for this study is available here: <https://youtu.be/pesL45Gb2LQ>.

Opening questions As a sports fan, what is the most exciting finish to a game, tournament, or series you can remember watching? In life, what troubles tend to knock you off course, and against which troubles do you maintain confidence for overcoming?

READING Psalm 18:30-36; Romans 8:31-39; Ephesians 1:18-23

Pictures of victory (Psalm 18)

What expressions of strength and victory did David include in this psalm? To whom did he credit his resources and strength? How do these pictures of earthly victory ignite your confidence in spiritual victory through Christ?

Christ, empowered by the Father (Ephesians 1)

What evidences does this passage give us of the full strength of the god-head, on display to us through the Son, Jesus Christ?

Christ, who forges our victory (Romans 8)

Reflecting on this whole passage, what assurances do you find most powerful here? If you are in Christ, how does your identity as a victor give you both present and future hope?
