



# Links Players

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## Trash-Talk and Victory

*Death swallowed by triumphant Life! Who got the last word, oh, Death? Oh, Death, who's afraid of you now? (1 Corinthians 15:55-57)*

Trash-talking is a big part of our weekend game at our club. The competition doesn't get started until someone starts predicting a victory. We are not above personal attacks as a strategy either.

Mocking and heckling are part and parcel. Bad haircuts, skinny calves, and less-than-fashionable golf attire are all in play. Thick skin is required.

You might be surprised to know that there is a fair amount of victory declarations and trash talk in the Bible. Elijah taunts the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18:27 (ESV): "Cry aloud, for he is a god! Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself...."

David proclaims victory in Psalm 44:5-7 (MSG):

You're my King, O God—command victories for Jacob! With your help, we'll wipe out our enemies; in your name, we'll stomp them to dust; I don't trust in weapons; my sword won't save me—But it's you, you who saved us from the enemy; you made those who hate us lose face. All day, we parade God's praise—we thank you by name over and over.

And in Corinthians, Paul mocks death itself: Death swallowed by triumphant Life! Who got the last word, oh, Death? Oh, Death, who's afraid of you now?

Is there ever a time to claim victory in Jesus' name? To mock our enemies and even death?

Several weeks ago, my mother-in-law passed away unexpectedly. It was tragic. Heartbreaking. The pain has been overwhelming. The tears flow endlessly. As many know, shadows are dark and long in the valley of death.

Though laid low by the weight of our grief, our family and community have pushed back. We have lifted our heads and raised open hands to the heavens. We have worshiped in the face of tragedy. We have declared victory in Jesus over this world and the curse of death.

On Thursday, January 25th, 400 people gathered in the sanctuary at 10:30 AM in San Antonio, Texas. There, we celebrated the life of Pam Pierce May. We wept and worshipped, sang victory

songs, and blessed each other. We mocked death with the living hope we have in the resurrected Christ.

We sang out...No power of hell, no scheme of man  
Can ever pluck me from His hand 'til He returns or calls me home! Here in the power of Christ, I'll stand!

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8kvFtXphmMU>)

To one another, we declared, "May His favor be upon you, And a thousand generations, And your family and your children, And their children, and their children, May His presence go before you, And behind you, and beside you, All around you, and within you, He is with you, He is with you, In the morning, in the evening, In your coming, and your going, In your weeping, and rejoicing, He is for you, He is for you, he is for you, he is for you. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zp6aygmVzM4>)

The last paragraph of Pam's Eulogy read:

Could it be that our sweet Pam, who is in Christ, will be given a new body at the resurrection and is now in the presence of the One who saved her with unspeakable love? With unwavering confidence and trust in the words of Jesus—"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die" (John 11:25)—our answer as a family is a resounding; "Yes!" We are confident we will be with our beloved Pam, Mom, and 'Nama' again. Jesus Christ has conquered death and has made a way.

Full Eulogy: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tlcrCPdYwROINf7ksFqPCvv-uaHzAP-Y/view?usp=sharing>)

And those trash-talkers from the golf course were there too. My Links brothers, the body of Christ. They consoled, blessed, and worshipped in unison; death their enemy and victory their song.

**Prayer: Lord! May all who read this devotional know the faith that conquers death.**

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Boo Arnold

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