

St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church
Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz
March 5, 2017
1st Sunday in Lent
WELS Series B.
Romans 8:31-39



More Than Conquerors

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Children of our Heavenly Father~precious in His sight for Jesus’ sake:

I was driving through Lannon the other day when I went past a Church sign for St. John’s Evangelical Lutheran Church. St.

John's Church sign quotes The Five Man Electrical Band 1971 hit! The sign said: "And the sign said, "Long haired freaky people---*come inside!*" I like that! Come inside! Church is intended for everyone! You are blessed if you are an infant – in your little onesie – with your blankie – in your little car seat! Come to Church when you are that small – to receive God's blessing – **the LORD bless you and keep you – make his face shine upon you, and be gracious unto you, look upon you with favor and give you peace!**" How precious and priceless is that? How blessed are you – when your parents bring you to Church – and you come to the children's devotion and see literal ✠ s and literal Bibles – and be shown again and again how much Jesus loves you! Come to Sunday School and learn Bible history – Bible stories. I can still remember the pictures – huge pictures of the Bible history. I still remember as if it was a photograph – Jesus before Pontius Pilate – with one hand pointing to Jesus and one had beseeching the crowd – who were crying out, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" The picture of Jesus on the ✠ a thief on one side – a thief on the other – one promised paradise today! I remember Jesus – the risen and living Christ talking to Mary – Jesus going up and up until a cloud hid Him from their sight! Come to Sunday School and learn Bible History! So you know the difference between Abraham, Isaac and Jacob – Moses and Aaron – Elijah and Elisha. How blessed are you – if you have a Mom and a Dad who bring you to Church and Sunday School – then talk about the Sermon while you eat Sunday dinner! Today God's Word reminds us:

We Are More Than Conquerors!

- 1. Jesus won the victory for us**
- 2. Nothing can separate us from Jesus!**

Again the little green book from our Publishing House says *Romans 8 is so powerful – that the mere reading of the text might be the*

high point of the sermon – that much explanation will only be distraction. Why not keep exposition to a minimum and simply offer the truths in a practical way? I was in Glenn's the other day getting some baked beans with hamburger and bacon and brown sugar – and a little grandpa was waiting next to me. He had on one of those baseball caps that said, "United States Navy". I said, "Thank you for your service!" He said, "You are welcome!" I said, "My Dad was in the Navy. He served off the Philippines and in Japan as part of the occupation force." He said he did 6 tours off the coast of Vietnam! I said, "Thank you again for your service!" I thought to myself – somehow – that wasn't enough! I should have done something more! I don't know – what? Buy him some rib eyes – some prime rib – some bacon? 6 tours! I can only imagine the sacrifices he made for his country – for me – by his service! Then think what Jesus did – so that I might know His grace and mercy. How can we thank Jesus in concrete ways – that show my gratitude and appreciation? What?

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? When I was in Northwestern College I lived in the Prep dorm. There was a first year student who lived on my floor who was very big and strong. From time to time he would pick me up by the armpits – to look me in the eye and say, "If he was misbehaving in any way – if there was something/anything he needed to do better, I would tell him – and so?" I assured him I would! For sure – *yes for sure*. Then and only then did he put me down! I was never afraid for my physical safety when this "little" freshman was around. When I would go down town I used to go down town with my friend Beck Goldbeck the III. Pastor Goldbeck was over 6'7" tall. We had matching old fashioned storm coats. When we went downtown – there was no mistaking who my friend was. Nobody

ever gave me a hard time on the mean streets of Watertown! Spiritually speaking – not if – but *since* Jesus is always with me – who can be against me? Who can do me harm – when Jesus’ angels are camped all around me? We have nothing to fear – since God is for us! **If God is for us, who can be against us?** ³² **He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all – how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?** If you took Prof. Gosdeck’s philosophy class – you learned about Logic! Paul’s argument here is called an argument from the greater to the lesser! If God has already sacrificed his one and only Son to redeem us – the greatest sacrifice of all – the innocent Lamb of God-died to redeem me. How will he not also along with Jesus give me everything else I need? If we have the “gold bars” of forgiveness, faith, an inheritance incorruptible – then we don’t have to worry about the pennies of daily bread, clothes and warm shelter for today!

³³ **Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.** ³⁴ **Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died – more than that, who was raised to life – is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.** If you were blessed to see the live stream chapel from Luther Prep on Monday you heard President Crass read a quote from Martin Luther. *So when the devil throws your sins in your face and declares that you deserve death and hell, tell him this: I admit that I deserve death and hell, what of it? For I know one who suffered and made satisfaction in my behalf. His name is Jesus Christ, son of God, and where He is, there I shall be also!* We don’t deny our sins – we confess them – and know by grace through faith from Scripture – and all our sins are forgiven! Have you read Isaiah lately? Isaiah 43:25 **"I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your**

sins. Have you read Hebrews lately? **For I will be merciful to their wrongdoing, and I will never again remember their sins.** Hebrews 8:12 Hollman Christian Standard Bible. Do you have a mind – a memory – like a DVD player – that from time to time – it’s like you hit the play button – and there is this film in your mind – of some terrible painful mistake you made in the distant past? And you can remember it – like it just happened? The devil loves to try to plague us with the sins and failures of the past that you cannot undo – though you would in an instant if you could. It’s at time like that we need to remember – who condemns us? Jesus died and rose again to forgive every mistake – every single sin.

³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: “For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.” ³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. “We face death all day long; we are considered sheep to be slaughtered!” My family lives .7 of a mile from Watertown Regional Medical Center. Every day we hear sirens – as pudgy ruby red trucks go through our neighborhood on their way to the Emergency Room. Every few days we quote Radar O’Reily “Choppers! Choppers!” I am more and more persuaded you can’t go across Watertown without going past a cemetery! Our phone rings – and there is a pause before someone with pain in their voice and a hole in their ♥ says someone they love has died. We were watching TV the other day – Mrs. Schultz said, “That guy does not look well!” Two days later in was on the news – he had died! Again one is reminded of one of the Scriptures we read at the graveside! **“Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed – in a flash, in the twinkling of an**

eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: "Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O Death, in your victory? Where, O Death is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my dear brothers, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. This is not in vain! Preaching sermons and teaching Bible Class and praying and talking to your neighbor about Jesus is not a waste of time! This is not pointless. This is not useless! God's Word works powerful miracles in the hearts and lives of people who are saved!

³⁷ **No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.** ³⁸ **For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,** ³⁹ **neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. More than conquerors...** When you know that – you have to share it! You have to share the Gospel of sins forgiven and heaven won. We had supper the other Thursday – *Bread and Roses*. It's a wonderful thing...to serve supper to people who humble themselves only to this degree – they come down into the Church basement for supper completely free – like Jesus' amazing grace. We had curry chicken – some cheesy hash browns – with some zing – sharper than you anticipated if you thought the hash browns were going

to taste more like mac and cheese – they didn't! There were mixed vegetables – corn and peas and carrot cubes and some nice little Lima beans – and then if you preferred lasagna warmed up! There was a cup of fruit or apple sauce and then all kinds of desserts! When there was a pause in scooping – we went and sat down for supper – with some of our guests! God's Word says, **"Do not muzzle the ox while he is treading out the corn!"** Deuteronomy 25:4 It says that in 1 Corinthians 9:9, too! When you serve supper – you can have some supper, too! So – you sit down where your guests are! Good evening! How are you! How's the hash brown – pretty good zip, and so? Now for the most important part. So – where do you guys go to Church? Can you just say that? Sure! Where do you guys go to Church? One guy said one Church – the other said another. So what's your Pastor's name? One guy said, "I don't know! I haven't been there for a long time! The other guy knew his Pastor's name. I did, too! He could come to church, more often, too! I told them, "Jesus loves you both very much! It would be wonderful if you could come to Church – to hear God's Word and to come to Holy Communion! They said, "I know!" And I said, "I know you do!" Here comes dessert! I'm supposed to avoid concentrated sweets – maybe you shouldn't come too close! I got a little Styrofoam bowl of torte' about the size of one bite! That was just right! Live your faith! Share your faith! Tell anyone who will listen that nothing will separate them from Jesus' forgiving love – nothing!

³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. By the grace of God – we have 10 grandchildren – 9 boys and 1 girl – Hannah banana who used to be literally from Indiana. We love all our grandchildren – more than life itself. I can confidently tell you I love Hannah no matter

what. There is nothing Hannah could do that would make me stop loving her. If she was as naughty as possible – I don't know – set all my sermons on fire and burned them all up! If she burned up my inheritance from my Great Uncle Charlie – my over 100 year old – golden eagle I would still love her. If Hannah said, "Grandpa I hate you!" I would say, "Hannah, you're killing me! But you can't stop me from loving you!" Jesus loves you and me – a million times more than that! If we have sinned 10,000 times – failing to fear, love and trust in God above all things. If we have curse and sworn and used God's saving name in countless thoughtless and careless ways. If we have neglected worship – despised preaching and His Word – and stayed away from Lord's Supper for decades – it cannot stop Jesus from loving us. Jesus never stopped loving Simon Peter who denied Him. Never stopped loving Judas Iscariot who sold Jesus for 30 silver coins. Jesus never stopped loving Thomas who demanded to touch Jesus' hands and side before he would believe he was risen from the dead. Jesus never stopped Saul of Tarsus – who held the cloaks of those who threw stones at Stephen until he was dead! And Jesus never stopped loving you and me! He always did and he always will! Nothing will be able to separate us from Jesus' forgiving love!

To God alone all glory!

Rev. Anthony E. Schertz

