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HOURLY OF POWER OF 01.06.2008

PROGRAM OPENING/TRUMPET FANFARE/V.O.

VO: Today on the Hour of Power: Shirley Dobson, wife of Dr. James Dobson from Focus on the Family, calls attention to our National Day of Prayer.

SHIRLEY: Nineteen fifty-two, president Truman, along with the joint resolution of congress, signed into law that we would have a national day of prayer annually, but no one ever knew what it was going to be.

VO: Then the incredible Children of the World Choir, from nations around the world.

CHOIR: And I sing a global hallelujah! A global hallelujah!

VO: Are you ready to conquer the circumstances of your life? Let Pastor Schuller hand you the keys.

RAS: Who's got the most volume this morning? Okay, we are! More than conquerors! Okay, let's see. You think you guys can beat them? So let's stand up, okay? You ready? We are! More than conquerors! How are they doing choir?

VO: Join us today for the best hour on television, the Hour of Power with Robert Schuller.

HYMN - "Joyful, Joyful.."

Joyful, joyful, we adore You, God of glory, Lord of love; Hearts unfold like flowers before You, opening to the sun above. Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; Drive the dark of doubt away; Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day. Amen! Amen! Amen!

GOOD MORNING/OPENING SENTENCE/INVOCATION

RAS: Isn't it marvelous to be in the house of God, to feel the warmth of His love here, because I know many of you are coming today with a heavy heart, and you're struggling with various trials of life. And the good news I have for you today is that we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ, who loved us. And that's why we're here today, because the love of Jesus Christ has gathered His people into this place today, for a reason and for a purpose. And so I want to allow you right now to let that love of Christ flow through you as you greet those who are standing next to you and behind you and share with one another God loves you and so do I.

And with that, why don't you please join me. We're going to have a moment of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, we thank You that You're a God of tremendous power and love and grace, and faithfulness. And so as You have been forever faithful to us, help us to be faithful to You. And so we thank You Lord for bringing us here, for gathering us together, for collecting Your people to this place, so fill our hearts with Your love. May we feel Your presence always, Amen.

HYMN - "Medley – All Creatures/How Great Thou Art"

All creatures of our God and King lift up your voice and with us sing, Alleluia, Alleluia! The burning sun with golden beam, the silver moon with softer gleam, O praise Him, O praise Him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Let all things their Creator bless, and worship Him in humbleness, O praise Him, Alleluia! Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son, and praise the Spirit, three in one, O praise Him, O praise Him, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia!

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee;
How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

O Lord my God, when I in awesome wonder consider all the worlds Thy hands have made, I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art!
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to Thee; How great Thou art, how great Thou art!

SCRIPTURE – Sel. Verses from Psalm 8 - RHS

RHS: Thank you, orchestra, fantastic. The choir! You've never been this big. So, have a seat, sit down and hear the word of the Lord. If you're visiting from somewhere in the world and you really don't know what this is, this is a church. That's where people gather who share a faith and come together once a week to embolden each other, to encourage each other, to hear a lesson that will inspire their Christian living and life and to leave with a sense of hope and a nearness to God.

And so always, the central part of every Christian church service is reading from a book that you've heard about, it's called the Bible. And this morning I'm reading from Psalm 8. It's the Old Testament written by a shepherd boy named David. Hear these words:

O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth. You who set Your glory above the heavens. When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars which You have ordained. Who are we that You are mindful of us and that You visit us? For You have made us a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned us, you have crowned us with glory and honor. You have made us responsible over the creation and care for it for future generations. Oh Lord, our Lord, how excellent is Your name in all the earth.

This is the word of the Lord.

ANTHEM - "The Majesty & Glory of Your Name"

When I look into the night skies and see the work of Your fingers; The moon and stars suspended in space. Oh, what are we, oh, what are we, oh, what are we that You are mindful of us?

O Lord, our God, the majesty and glory of Your name transcends the earth and fills the heavens. O Lord, our God, little children praise You perfectly, and so would we, and so would we.

Alleluia, Alleluia! The majesty and glory of Your name. Alleluia, Alleluia! The majesty and glory of Your name. Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia! Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia.

RHS THANK YOU TO CHOIR, ORCHESTRA, ORGANIST

RHS: Thank you choir, thank you orchestra, than you organist.

INTERVIEW – SHIRLEY DOBSON

RHS: ROBERT H. SCHULLER SD: SHIRLEY DOBSON

RHS: My guest today is the chairperson of the National Day of Prayer task force, Shirley Dobson. I first met Shirley and her husband, and my wife was with me when we were in a little bus that was taking us to the Olympics in 1984. Shirley Dobson's never been here. Jim's been here but every year more than 35,000 prayer gatherings, repeat: every year more than 35,000 prayer gatherings are organized under the national day of prayer and several million are inspired to pray because of her leadership. Now I do want to say to all of you who are listening to us in Russia or China, or in the rest of the world, we are as a country often praying for you, wherever you are. And I've been in all of your countries. And we need your prayers. And America is criticized often, sometimes wisely, sometimes promiscuously. If you love people, pray for America wherever you are, while America is praying for itself.

So on this National Day of Prayer, we will sense and feel many people around the world, are praying for this country that really needs to be what God wants it to be. About Shirley – she's received numerous honorary doctorates, achievement awards, is the wife of Dr. James Dobson from Focus on the Family. So welcome with me Shirley Dobson.

SD: Thank you, Dr. Schuller. It's a pleasure to be here today.

RHS: You are as beautiful as you were 34 years ago.

SD: Well I wish I could say the same for you.

RHS: Well God keeps me humble. Oh I'll tell you..

SD: No you look great. You haven't changed.

RHS: And I wasn't dying my hair then.

SD: Is that right?

RHS: Yeah I've since decided white would be pretty so every week I die my hair white.

SD: Well I've decided that I'm going to die with two things: blonde hair and a dog.

RHS: Tell me, we all know your famous and courageous and intelligent husband, but do you have children?

SD: We do. We have a son that lives in Colorado Springs and a grandson named Lincoln, and his wife Laura. And then we have a daughter that lives right here in California, in Pasadena.

RHS: Fantastic.

SD: And they're both serving the Lord in their spheres of influence and we're very proud of them.

RHS: That's fantastic. How did you get involved with the National Day of Prayer? Tell us about Vonette who's been with us here.

SD: Okay. Vonette Bright was the co-founder of Campus Crusade for Christ with her late husband, Dr. Bill Bright, and she had been the chairman for about eight years, and she decided that the Lord was taking her in a different direction. So we were having lunch and she wanted to pass the baton of the chairmanship to me. And my first reaction was oh no Vonette; I could not ever take on anything of this magnitude. Just being the wife of James Dobson and in leadership with Focus on the Family, that's a very full cup. So I basically just slammed the door. And I was driving home in the car, and the spirit of God began dealing with me. And He didn't say this in audible words, but it seemed to

impress upon my spirit ‘Shirley, you didn’t talk to Me about that. You didn’t pray about that.’

So I committed to prayer and I laid out two conditions so that I would definitely know this was of the Lord. Now I know we’re not supposed to put God in a box, but I had to know whether this call was really from Him. And the two conditions were one: that my husband would say yes when I told him about the request, and two: is that Vonette Bright would ask me again. And I went into Jim’s office and I’ll never forget his reaction. He leaned back in his chair, he put his hands behind his head, he looked me squarely in the eyes and he said, “Shirley, what more important ministry could you be involved in than calling the nation to prayer?” Well that wasn’t what I wanted to hear. And then a few weeks later, Dr. and Mrs. Bill Bright invited us out for dinner and while we were having dinner, Vonette leaned around her husband and said, “Shirley, Bill and I’ve been praying about this and we feel that you’re the one to take over the National Day of Prayer.” And so I said, “Vonette, I’ll call you in a week” but I knew right then that this was of the Lord. And so here I am, 16 years later.

RHS: Now what started it in Vonette’s mind and heart?

SD: Well I think Vonette felt that there was a great need for a day of prayer. You know in 1952, President Truman, along with the joint resolution of congress, signed into law that we would have a national day of prayer, annually, but no one ever knew what it was going to be. It was at the whim of the President, or if we had a national disaster. But in 1988, a wonderful thing happened under President Ronald Reagan. He signed into law that the first Thursday of May would always be our nation’s day of prayer. And Vonette had a great dream that this would happen and helped to make it happen.

RHS: Wow. Fantastic. What’s the theme and the mission this year?

SD: Well I always go before the Lord, Dr. Schuller and I ask Him, “God what’s on Your heart for our nation this year?” And I think He gave me a very appropriate theme this year. It’s Prayer: America’s Strength and Shield. And we took it from Psalm 28:7, which says “The Lord is my strength and shield. My heart trusts in Him and I am helped.” You know in the scriptures it tells us that the shields of the earth belong to the Lord. It is God that is our protector and our defender and our sustainer. And you know we’re living in very uncertain times, in fact I wrote a little book called “Certain Peace in Uncertain Times,” which gives four simple steps to prayer that will enable us to experience a sense of God’s peace, although we’re living in very anxious days. And Dr. Schuller, you know, people out here in your congregation and around our nation and around the world, they’re concerned. They’re concerned for their families, they’re concerned for national security, they’re concerned about our economy, we’re concerned about our elections, we’re concerned about our wonderful men and women in Iraq and Afghanistan. And yet there doesn’t seem to be any answers, but we know that on our knees God has the answer. And if we will inquire of Him, if we will meet with Him, He will give us that peace and direction that we’re looking for.

RHS: Shirley, what are some of the creative ideas people are doing to celebrate the national day of prayer?

SD: Dr. Schuller, I am amazed at our creativity, these coordinators out there in our nation. Of course we’re hoping that everybody will pray around their dinner table, driving back and forth to work, but also there are prayer gatherings across this nation and Dr. Schuller you mentioned 35 but actually I think we’re expecting between 40-50,000 prayer gatherings this year.

RHS: Wow.

SD: And let me just tell you about some of the creative ones. Up in Alaska, there's a three hundred mile train ride. They're going to be praying the whole three hundred miles. And in Dallas, they are chartering tour buses and prayer groups are going to be getting on those buses and they're going to be stopping at the centers of power in their city and praying. I heard yesterday that 191 federal prisons are going to be participating in the national day of prayer. Two hundred and twenty thousand prisoners will be praying for our country, and for those that lead us. And I think one of the most creative one that I heard was prayer in the air, where private pilots that have planes are going to be circling their state capitals, praying for their states, praying for the nation and for those that lead us and we have 39, so if you want to find out..

RHS: Oh.

SD: ..what state is not covered, log onto nationaldayofprayer.org and you can see the states that we're still trying to cover with these planes, and if you have a plane, here you go. Take off on the National Day of Prayer.

RHS: Tell me now, I know the answer but I want to hear it from you and you need to tell the world of listeners how you have seen the power of prayer in your own life.

SD: I'd be glad to. Well, Dr. Schuller, I have prayed many prayers in my lifetime. Sometimes God said yes, sometimes God said no, and sometimes God has said wait. But I think one of the most dramatic prayers that I have seen has been the growth of the National Day of Prayer. I took over this ministry with six thousand dollars, and one volunteer. And I was, you know it's easy to say yes to something but I was home one night all alone and about three weeks after I had accepted this responsibility, and I literally got down on my face in the carpet, in my bedroom, and I began praying and saying Lord, where do I begin to call a nation to prayer with six thousand dollars and one volunteer. And here we are 16 years later; we have probably between 40 to 50,000 prayer gatherings, every governor for the last three years has written a proclamation to proclaim a day of prayer in their state..

RHS: Wonderful.

SD: ..and of course our president for the last seven years has observed our nations day of prayer in the White House. So I think to see the growth of prayer has been a remarkable answer to my prayers and many others.

RHS: Wow. A lot of people are listening. How do they get involved?

SD: Well I think the best way is to go to our website, nationaldayofprayer.org, it will tell you where there is a prayer gathering near your community, and if there's not one, you might check with your church or your pastor and see if they're participating in the National Day of Prayer, and I want to thank you because I know you and your congregation every year do participate in our nations day of prayer, and I want to thank you for that. But you know if you can't find anything, I heard of a neighbor, she's going to load five friends into her SUV and they're going to go to the city hall, to the school board, to the police department, to the hospitals, and they're going to pray over them. You can pray around your dinner table. You can pray on your way to work or on the drive back. Prayer is available at any time, but the most important thing is to pray for this great nation and for our friends around the world and their countries, and also to pray for those that lead us.

RHS: This church will be open all day on the day of prayer. I think its open every day anyway but that's special, so come anytime. Shirley, will you pray for us?

SD: I'd be glad to. Would you take the hand of the person next to you? Our gracious heavenly Father, we humbly come before You in prayer today. We thank You for the blessings that You have bestowed on this land. We thank You Lord for Your protection. We thank You Lord that we can come before You right now in prayer. We don't need to go through a secretary; we don't have to make an appointment because You are always available. You hear us when we call. And Lord, we thank You that You also are the sustainer of our nation and the nations around the world. And we pray for peace. We pray that You would bring peace in the hearts of men. And we pray, oh Lord, that we would turn our hearts back to You. We know in many ways that we have disrespected Your word, we have not honored Your name, and we ask You to forgive us for that, Lord. And we pray in keeping with Your word, that You said if My people, who are called by My name will humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven. I will forgive their sins and I will heal their land. And oh Lord, may it be so for we ask it in the name of Christ our Savior, Amen.

RHS: Thank you Shirley. God loves you..

SD: Thank you.

RHS: ..and so do we.

SD: Thank you. Thank you Dr. Schuller. God bless you and the good work you're doing here.

RHS: Thank you.

RHS INTRODUCES CHILDREN OF THE WORLD CHOIR

RHS: Now we have the privilege of welcoming back to the Crystal Cathedral, some extra ordinary children. The Children of the World International Children's Choir is here. And these children come from many countries, have faced profound challenges in their own young lives, many of them are survivors. Wow. Many of them are orphans. But they've come together through world helps child sponsorship and to remind all of us that there's a great world out there that needs our prayers, too. Children of the World, welcome back.

MUSICAL GUEST – CHILDREN OF THE WORLD CHOIR – “Global Hallelujah”

Nkosi sikelel' iAfrica: Nkosi sikelel' iAfrika maluphakanyiswu phondo iwayo. Yizwa imithandazo yethu Nkosi sikelela; thina lusapho lwayo.

From the islands to Iceland God is touching the nations bringing faith, hope and love for in His people He delights. Let our worship abound, hear the joyful sound. All around the world let the song begin, our God is worthy of praise. In every language, it means the same thing. Let us sing a global hallelujah. A global hallelujah.

From Africa to Asia, God is gathering His people surrounding our hearts by His Spirit and His Love. Let the whole earth rejoice, lift up one voice. All around the world let the song begin, our God is worthy of praise. In every language, it means the same thing. Let us sing a global hallelujah, a global hallelujah. Ha, ha, le, le, lu, lu jah. Ha, ha, le, le. A global hallelujah, a global hallelujah.

All around the world let the song begin, our God is worthy of praise. In every language, it means the same thing. Let us sing. All around the world let the song

begin, our God is worthy of praise. In every language, it means the same thing let us sing a global hallelujah, a global hallelujah, a global hallelujah.

RAS THANK YOU TO CHILDREN OF THE WORLD CHOIR

RAS: Wow! I can listen to you guys all day long! You are terrific. Yeah, I love you guys. Aren't they wonderful? Thank you! Yeah, thank you. You guys are terrific. You know, the director's are wonderful people. Their names are Mike and Christa Hahn, and this is of course the Children of the World Choir, and so thank you boys and girls for coming and for singing for us.

PREP FOR OFFERING - RAS

RAS: At this time, I want to invite the ushers to come forward to collect our morning tithes, our gifts and our offerings. And I want to tell you in advance that God will bless you for what you're able to give and so at this time we're going to hear some music and I want to ask you to just pray about what you're doing, and ask God to really bless your act of faith by giving to His church.

INSTRUMENTAL – PAUL LOREDO & SEAN GROOMBRIDGE –
“Rock of Ages, Cleft for Me”

PRAYER/THANK YOU - RAS

RAS: Dear Heavenly Father, only You know the sweat and the labor, the stress and the difficulty that took place in our lives so that we'd have the ability to be able to give these gifts. You know what this costs us. Yet at the same time, You've been faithful to Your promises, always. You've never let us down and You never will. And so we know that Your promises are true, that they're real. That as we continue to give, that it is impossible to out give You. And so as we give these tithes, this gift as an expression of our faith and love for You, so may they be used to lift our spirits with the good news of Your message of hope, may they be used to reach out to people around the world to make a difference in individuals' lives. And so we thank You Lord, that we can be connected through this act with the entire world in acts of grace and mercy. And so we love You Lord and we praise Your name, Amen.

Thank you Paul for playing the horn for us, and Sean for being at the organ. Appreciate you very much.

MESSAGE/PRAYER - ROBERT A. SCHULLER

"United Forever in God's Love"

RAS: And last week we talked a little bit about overcoming our fear with faith. And I think we learned a new verse. I have not given you a spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and a sound mind. Well I am convinced that God wants us to understand more of His scriptures, and as we understand these scriptures, we will be encouraged and uplifted and renewed by the facts that His promises are true and real, and that we cannot fail holding on to the promises and the word of Jesus Christ.

And so this morning I want to share with you another promise, another pledge. It begins with Romans 8; in fact I'm going to read part of Romans 8 for you today. I'm going to start with verse 31, it says "If God is for us, who can be against us? 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? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? Who can separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or

danger, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither present nor the future, nor the powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Powerful words.

You know I went to school at Fuller Seminary. Charles Fuller was a radio evangelist and a very successful man and he used his radio show to help fund and develop and build Fuller Seminary and today its one of the finest seminaries in the nation, with a couple thousand students nationwide. And I went there and I took my hermeneutics, which is a biblical interpretation class from his son Dan Fuller. And what Dan Fuller did is he had this concept and this way of interpreting scripture, which boiled down to finding out the key word in any phrase, passage, chapter and book of the Bible.

And so what we did is we actually did that with the entire gospel of Mark, where we came down and we said this is the central word of Mark. And then that word relates to this word, so we'd draw lines from those. And those words relate to this word, so we put lines over those, and eventually what he called arcing, arced the entire gospel of Mark in his class. So we came to the realization how it all came from that very central core word. It's called arcing. I haven't heard of it anywhere else, I don't think it's caught on in any form of theological interpretation or biblical studies, however that was his thing and that's what the class was and that's what I was required to do. The question is why am I telling you about it? The reason I'm telling you about it is if you were to apply that process to the passage I just read, where would we come down to, what would be the key word? You know what it is? Conquerors. That's the key word. And do you know what the phrase is? The phrase is we are more than conquerors. That that whole passage circles and is founded around this one simple phrase, we are more than conquerors. That's powerful, isn't it?

And it makes me think of some of my pep rallies in high school. That was just a couple years ago, you know. And some of you may remember some of your pep rallies in high school. In high school, we would have a pep rally and what would happen is the coach would get everybody all excited. And the way to get them all excited he'd say we are and then we'd say the mighty saints, because that was the name of, that was our ascot that we were, which isn't bad for me you know. I can deal with that. We are the mighty saints.

Well today, I want to have a little pep rally in church. Its kind of fun. This is how we're going to remember what we're all about. But the pep rally is, we are.. do you remember the rest of the phrase? More than conquerors! And so here's what I want you to do. I'm going to say we are, and you're going to say more than conquerors. Don't do a fist that doesn't have the right connotations. Okay? Use a finger, point to heaven. Okay, because that's going to be important for interpreting the scripture. Are you ready? We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) This is very good, I like this. Now in pep rally's what they like to do is they like to get people real excited, so they have competitions. All right?

So we're going to have a competition this morning. Are you ready? This side of the church, the balcony's stay seated, but this side of the downstairs stand up, you ready? We're going to see who's got the most volume this morning. Okay? We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) Okay let's see. Think you guys can beat them? Let's stand up, okay? Ready? We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) How are they doing, choir? They got them beat? Okay, balcony's let's stand up. Let's see how we're doing here? You ready? Okay, we are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) Now wait a

minute, you guys cheated. You helped the balconies. Yeah, just the balcony's now, you ready? We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) That's pretty good, isn't it? Okay, one more time. Ready? We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) We are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) Now I bet you thought I left you guys out. Stand up choir. In harmony. More, more, more, more. We are! (CHOIR – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) Yeah, give yourselves applause. We all win. We all win. You may be seated.

Now, you have now memorized a bible verse in the bible so if anyone asks you what's one of your favorite verses, you can sound it right off. We are more than conquerors. Let me explain what we're conquerors of. In all these things, we are more than conquerors through Jesus Christ who loved us. In all these things. That's the important part. What are all these things that we have conquered, that we are conquerors of? Well let's go back to what I read earlier. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" What's interesting is Paul writes with a bunch of rhetorical questions, you know? A rhetorical question is a question that has an obvious implied answer. You ask a question; you're not really asking for the answer, you're making a statement. Because the implied answer is so strong that it isn't a question at all, it is a statement. And the statement is obvious. And the question he asks is, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" And the implied answer is obvious. It's a rhetorical question. The answer is no one. If God is for us, nobody can be against us. It's obvious. But as soon as I ask the question, take this question out of the scriptures, take it out of the context and I ask you who can be against you, all of a sudden you can make a pretty long list, can't you? And in fact, if you're listening on the I-Pod right now, or if you're listening on a DVD, or if you're listening with some kind of a recording device, where you can pause this, I want you to pause it right now and actually make a list of everybody who you believe can have something against you. And today in our society, that's numerous. People facing cancer and eviction notices. We start listing the reality of things that are against us, and we realize that there's a long list of fears that we have. But we learned something about our fears last week, didn't we. That God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and love and a sound mind. And with power and love and a sound mind, we are (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) And we have to realize that no matter what we face in life, that we are (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) If God is for us, who can be against us? No one.

And so I think it becomes critical for us to literally make a list so when you go home today, literally make a list of everyone that you're concerned about, who can be against you. Make the list. Fold it up, put it in an envelope, write today's date on it, but for the year, advance ten years from now. Because I promise you that ten years from now, every single concern on that piece of paper will have vanished. That'll happen to every single one who goes through this exercise. It'll happen because the truth is we are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) If God is for us, who can be against us? No one.

Rhetorical question number two: How will He not also graciously give us all things? Wow. What a fabulous answer. The rhetorical response is of course He'll give us everything we need. It's a rhetorical question. How will He not also graciously give us all things? What we have to remember in this is that God doesn't give us our greed, He gives us our need. Did you hear that? The lilies of the field, they don't worry. For God clothes them. The birds of the air don't worry, because God feeds them. And as we go through life, we don't have to worry because we are! (AUDIENCE – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) And we

must realize that as a result of being more than conquerors, God will give us everything we need. Everything. Without question.

Yesterday my wife went to the beach, it was a beautiful day, a perfect day to go to the beach. And I wasn't able to go with her because I had to prepare for today. And so she went down there alone and she'll do that occasionally, and she went down to the beach and it was a gorgeous day and she laid her towel out on the sand and all of sudden she saw these mothers with their little babies. Little infants. Two, three, four years old. And then she saw a grandmother over someplace else with other little babies, two, three years old, little babies. And then she saw some couples sitting together, chatting and talking, and she was sitting there all by herself, and she started getting really lonely. She started thinking of remembering when our kids were little like that and she would take them to the beach and she could play with them and care for them, but now they're all grown up and they're big and they're gone and they don't care to hang out with this old wrinkly people anymore, you know. And then she saw the grandmothers, we don't have any grandbabies but there's the other grandparents playing with their grandbabies and we don't have any grandbabies to play with so she's sitting there all by herself and all lonely and there's the other couples with their husbands and she was lonely and as she's laying there, she hears somebody go watch out! Watch out! Before she knew what was happening, a wave came and splashed all over her legs and about halfway up her back and her towel is all wet and a little frustrated, I suppose, but God is good. He supplies all our needs.

And as a result of that wave, she had to move her towel up much closer to everybody else, and as a result of moving her towel up close to the other people, pretty soon this little baby's about a year and a half old came walking over and stood on her towel, right above her head. And he just looked at her and she was thrilled. She looks at him, she starts talking to him and she wasn't talking with him too long and pretty soon the grandmother came along and so she started talking with the grandmother, before she knew it, she's invited to the party. And God met her need. And if that wasn't enough, she saw two handsome young men walking down the beach. And when she told me that, I got a little concerned. And she said you wouldn't believe it; all of a sudden I realized there was my son, Anthony. That was my son. And so like a wave God came in and pushed her up where the people were and He gave her what she needed when she needed it.

If God is for us, who can be against us? No one. How will He not also graciously give us all things? He'll give us everything we need. And it's followed with the final question, with who then can separate us from the love of Christ? And the answer again is absolutely no one. In fact, Paul goes and answers this one. It's one of the most beautiful medleys of words we have in the Bible; neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, just in case we might have thought maybe there might be something somewhere, there might be some evil forces or something that could pry us apart from the love of Jesus Christ. St. Paul made it absolutely, perfectly; abundantly clear that absolutely nothing could ever separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

We are! (AUDIENCE & RAS – MORE THAN CONQUERORS!) And we are. And so Lord Jesus, we thank You. We thank You that You are process right now of calling people into Your family and into Your fellowship. That because of You we are more than conquerors in life and in death. And so as we stand in Your presence today, we declare and we hold onto the promises that are true, that are real, and that are divine. And so we thank You Lord for everything, and we praise Your name always, Amen.

HYMN - "Rise Up, O Church of God"

Rise up, O Church of God! Have done with lesser things; Give heart and soul and mind and strength to serve the King of Kings.

Rise up, O Church of Christ! The world for you does wait to share your love and joy and faith. Rise up, rise up, be great! Amen!

BENEDICTION - RAS

RAS: And now may the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit fill your hearts, your minds and your souls with the power of His presence and His word. And may you take the conquering spirit of Jesus Christ with you everywhere you go today, tomorrow and always, Amen.