



“INVICTUS!”

2 Corinthians 4:7-12

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1875, William Ernest Henley wrote his famous poem, “Invictus.” It is a literary piece that has been quoted and memorized by many for its focus on resilience and determination in the face of difficulty and even death. Henley wrote this poem while, arguably, on his deathbed. He was stricken with a rare form of tuberculosis of the bone when he was just 25 years old. This poem was written after doctors told him that if they did not amputate his leg below the knee, then he would die. Doctors ultimately amputated Henley’s leg, and many suggest the great unknowns of life during this period inspired this work. Yet, “one-legged Henley” embodied Invictus, which means “unconquerable” or “undefeated” in Latin.

The apostle Paul lived centuries before Henley but was familiar with the meaning of Invictus! 2 Corinthians 11:24-27 says, “From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness...” Many of our African American pioneers for freedom, namely Martin (Rev. Dr. King, Jr.), Malcolm (X), Marcus (Garvey), and (Nelson) Mandela had being “unconquerable” or “undefeated” in their DNA! Today’s message parallels Paul and Mandela and focuses on why we too, through Jesus Christ, are “**Invictus!**”

II. TREASURE!

- A. The Holy Spirit lives inside us!
- B. Our hearts are the domiciles for our treasures!
- C. Is your life hiding the light of the gospel?

1 Corinthians 3:16-17
Matthew 6:21
v. 4; 1 John 1:5

III. TRIBULATION!

- A. Trials are existential realities!
- B. Expect trials to come!
- C. We glory in tribulation!

vv. 8-9
1 Peter 4:12-13; John 16:33
Romans 5:3-6

IV. TRANSFORMATION!

- A. Transformation begins in our minds!
- B. We die to live!
- C. Be on the decrease!

Romans 12:1-2
vv. 10-11; Philippians 1:21
John 3:30-31

V. TRIUMPH!

- A. Emit the sweet smell of victory!
- B. We are triumphant through trouble!
- C. The Resurrection is God's answer to all things!

2 Corinthians 2:14
Exodus 17:11-14

VI. CONCLUSION

27 years of imprisonment for any cause, especially a just one, will certainly test one's internal and spiritual fortitude. Nelson Mandela's unbreakable spirit inspired and mobilized a global movement for human rights. He would have been 103 years old this July 18. While he would have been well within his rights to be hardened by the systemic apartheid around him, his Invictus allowed him to go from a prison cell to South Africa's first president of a democratic country! Because we are in Christ, we are a new creation! Through the Holy Spirit, God has placed within us the spirit of Invictus: "unconquerable," "unbreakable," and "undefeated!"

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