

Encouragement

Published by **Barnabas International** • PO Box 11211 • Rockford, IL 61126 • Volume VIII • No. 12 • December 1994

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Good Morning Friend,

It's football season in North America. About two weeks ago there was an exciting football game between the Minnesota Vikings and the New England Patriots. At half-time the Vikings were leading the Patriots by the score of 20-0. I can imagine the hilarity and excitement in the Vikings' clubhouse during half-time. In contrast, the mood in the Patriots' clubhouse must have been subdued and grim. But wait for the "the rest of the story." During the second half of the game the Patriots came from behind to get 26 points and the Vikings remained at 20 points to end up losing the game. That's right. The final score: Patriots 26, Vikings 20.

I was reminded of a quotation from one of Barbara Johnson's recent books. . . *God did not promise that we'd be leading at the half-time but that we'd win the game.*

Life is certainly more than a football game, but there are some significant analogies. For example. . .

- We often, like David in Psalm 73, are perplexed when the ungodly prosper while the godly suffer. We ask, who is winning?
- We are puzzled to see the sin and filth of Satan all around us as godliness and holiness is in short supply. We ask, who is winning?
- We watch humanism invade and influence the political and educational systems of our countries as Christianity seems to be losing its impact on the marketplace. And we ask, who is winning?

Both corporately and personally, it so often appears that the forces of evil are overwhelming the forces of good. Often in our personal journeys, too, we wonder if we will cross the finish line victoriously.

None of us has yet finished the game of life. We are somewhere between the start and the finish. Maybe around the half-way mark. And candidly, we are having a tough time. Again hear the words of Barbara Johnson. . . *God did not promise that we'd be leading at the half-time but that we'd win the game.*

I am reminded of the Christian farmer and the ungodly farmer. The ungodly farmer had a great harvest. The Christian farmer had a very meager harvest. The ungodly farmer taunted the Christian with these words: "My crops did better than yours this year. It didn't help for you to be godly. Nor did it hinder me to ignore God." The Christian farmer wisely and accurately responded with these words: "God doesn't settle all of His accounts in October."

Questions crowd into our minds. *Am I on the right team? Is God in control? Am I going to make it into the victors' circle?* The Bible assures us with a clear and certain **YES**. Jesus Christ is the declared Winner. He boldly says, *I have overcome the world*. He is the Overcomer because He is the Overcomer, we, too, shall be overcomers (Romans 8; Revelation 2-3).

We are heading toward the end of the game. Victory has been declared. ***There is no doubt about it... Victory is Hisis ouris yours***. Soon it will be time to celebrate. The band is warming up. The choir is rehearsing. The crowns are getting polished. The mansions are being completed. All Heaven is stirring. The King is coming. Hallelujah.

Be encouraged,

Lareau Lindquist