

Romans 8:18-27 - The Gospel of Hope!

Scriptures:

Galatians 6:17 - From now on let no one trouble me, for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.

Colossians 3:4 - When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.

2 Corinthians 4:17-18 - For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this

G3049 – deem or reckon to be.

G3804 – misfortune.

present time are not worthy *to be compared*

with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Notes:

Chapter eight began with the liberty from the law and the flesh we experience thought the working of the Holy Spirit. The rest of the section we looked at last time told us what the Holy Spirit gives us as He is liberating us. That took us to the amazing exclamation that we can call Almighty God our Abba Father.

Paul then focused on the fact that life is not always easy. Sometimes it is hard, really hard.

[verse 18]

It is a remarkable thing for Paul to say that the suffering we experience in this life doesn't compare to the glory that will be revealed in us. It is hard to imagine anyone in the first century experiencing more suffering than Paul did. You can read about some of the things Paul suffered in 2 Corinthians 11. He even said he bore the scars of his suffering ([Galatians 6:17](#)).

Paul is pointing to a hope every Christ-follower should cling to and rejoice in, especially in times of suffering ([Colossians 3:4](#)). As Christ-followers, through faith in Christ, we are promised eternal life in heaven. The glory of heaven is so great that all human language is inadequate to give a comparison. A moment of glory in heaven is exceedingly greater than a lifetime of suffering in this life.

"We can compare a thimble of water with the sea, but we cannot compare our sufferings with the coming glory." (Hughes, 1991)

Our ability to persevere in the face of suffering is dependent upon our faith that God is working for our glory in the trial ([2 Corinthians 4:17-18](#)). It is during trials, tribulations, and suffering that our faith is tested and purified. It is not pleasurable, but we should be thankful that God never wastes pain or suffering – He works it for our good.

Paul then goes on to describe the groaning response to this majestic hope.

Scriptures:

¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creation

G603 - eager desire, excited expectation.
"eager anticipation n. — an intensely desired expectation with a high confidence of fulfillment."

G2937 - universe, the totality of what was created.

Notes:

[verses 19-22]

The creation is the universe, all created things. Here Paul suggests a conscious response of animate and inanimate things and creatures. The Bible often attributes human characteristics or responses to things that we know are incapable of them. This symbolism to mean to emphasize the importance of what Paul is saying.

eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of

G553 – "to await eagerly v. — to expect or hope for something expectantly or eagerly."

G602 - ἀποκάλυψις (apokalypsis) – "revelation n. — communication of knowledge (previously hidden) to man by a divine or supernatural agency; especially communications that proceed from God or Christ."

God.

Scriptures:

Genesis 3:17-19 -

Then to Adam He said,
"Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it':

"Cursed is the ground for your sake;

In toil you shall eat of it
All the days of your life.

18 Both thorns and
thistles it shall bring forth
for you,

And you shall eat the
herb of the field.

19 In the sweat of
your face you shall eat
bread

Till you return to the
ground,

For out of it you were
taken;

For dust you are,

And to dust you shall
return."

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility,

G5293 - bring under control, put in subjection.

G3153 – emptiness.
"futility n. — uselessness as a consequence of being purposeless or incapable of producing results."

Notes:

Turn to **Genesis 3**. When God created the universe, it was good. The universe and everything in it existed on purpose and with a purpose. It was good and was immensely productive. But then came the Fall ([Genesis 3:17-19](#)).

not willingly, but because of Him who

G1635 - voluntarily, by one's own choice.

subjected *it* in hope;

G1680 -

Scriptures:

Isaiah 65:25 - The wolf
and the lamb shall feed
together,

The lion shall eat straw
like the ox,

And dust shall be the
serpent's food.

They shall not hurt nor
destroy in all My holy
mountain,"

Says the LORD.

²¹ because the creation itself also

will be delivered from the bondage

G1659 – set free,
liberated.

G1397 – slavery.

of corruption into the glorious liberty of the

G5356 – decay.

G1657 – freedom.

children of God.

Notes:

The world is now bound in corruption. That is why there are 'natural disasters', famines, pestilence, storms, floods, earthquakes, and volcanoes. The animal kingdom was in harmony with humanity but now has been cursed with fear and aggression. Death and disease are also byproducts of the Fall. That is all a product of the curse of corruption that is on the creation.

Mankind's abusive of creation makes things worse. If God didn't have a different plan for the end of this world, I am certain mankind would eventually destroy itself and all life on this planet. Being a student of God's Word I could never be convinced that climate change was going to end all life on the planet. The Bible teaches clearly how this world will end, and it won't be because of a hole in the ozone layer or global warming or nuclear war or any other way mankind might negatively influence creation.

That doesn't mean we shouldn't do our human best to be good stewards of God's creation.

After Christ returns to establish His kingdom, He will remake the creation and restore it to what it was like before, uncorrupted. Even the nature of animals will be changed (Isaiah 65:25).

Scriptures:

²² For we know that the whole creation

G3956 – all.

G2937 -

groans and labors with birth pangs together

G4959 – groans
together.

G4944 -

until now.

Notes:

I am sure that most of you won't relate to this, but I have noticed the older I get, the more frequently I make involuntary sounds when I move certain ways. Creation is like an old man or a woman who is close to giving birth, groaning and hoping to be delivered from the suffering into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Paul then turns his attention to the church.

Scriptures:

Romans 7:24-25a - O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? 25 I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord!

1 Corinthians 15:50-57 -

Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. 54 So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory." 55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"

56 The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law. 57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Scriptures:

23 Not only *that*, but *we* also who have the

firstfruits of the Spirit, even *we ourselves*

groan within *ourselves*, eagerly waiting for

G4727 – "to await eagerly v. — to expect or hope for something expectantly or eagerly."

G553 -

the adoption, the redemption of *our* body.

G629 - deliverance, redemption, a ransom, a release.

24 For *we* were saved in this hope, but hope

G4982 – "to be saved (state) v. — to be or become delivered or rescued from sin (and consequential judgment)."

G3588 – basis for hope, that which is the cause or reason for hoping.

that is seen is not hope; for why does one still

hope for what he sees?

Notes:

[verses 23-25]

Not only does creation groan, but we, as Christ-followers, who have the firstfruits of the Holy Spirit, groan for last aspects of our salvation. As Christ-followers, we have been adopted into the family of God through faith in the finished work of Christ on the cross. And while the Holy Spirit dwells within us, our sin nature persists, and we are not complete. That was the primary focus of the last part of chapter seven which Paul concludes with a desperate cry and then a declaration of hope ([Romans 7:24-25](#)).

We are eagerly waiting to be delivered from our sin nature, this body of death. Turn to **1 Corinthians 15**. These bodies and our nature to do what our flesh wants cannot go to heaven. A change must happen first. **1 Corinthians 15:50-57**

As our faith grows, the more we long for the redemption of the body. We become less attached to this world and long for heaven.

Notes:

Scriptures:

25 But if **we** hope for what **we** do not see, **we**

Notes:

We are eager for heaven, but at the same time we are patient. No one knows the day of their departure to heaven. In the meantime, you are here for a reason. Seek the Lord and let the Holy Spirit guide you to what He is calling you to do.

eagerly wait for **it** with perseverance.

G5281 – “steadfast
endurance n. — the power
to withstand hardship or
stress; especially the inward
fortitude necessary.”

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helps

G4878 – comes to our aid.

Notes:

So far, creation is groaning, waiting for the revelation of the glory of Christ-followers.

[verses 26-27]

Christ-followers are groaning waiting for the redemption of the body for glory. Now we see the Holy Spirit is groaning in His prayers for us.

in our weaknesses. For we do not know what

G769 - incapacity, a state of weakness or limitation.

In the life of every believer there will be times when you cannot pray. It could be you don't know what to pray. Or it could be that your suffering is so intense that you can't find the time to pray. It might even be that you might be afraid to pray, because you are afraid of how God is going to respond. Personally, I have been so discouraged that I didn't want to pray. In those times, this verse is an encouragement to me. I may not be able to pray, but the Holy Spirit does. The Holy Spirit, God living in us, knows every detail of what is going on in our lives. He takes our thoughts, hurts, and emotions and then translates them into perfect prayers to our Abba Father in heaven.

we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit

Himself makes intercession for us with

G5241 – intercedes.

groanings which cannot be uttered.

G215 – inexpressible.

Scriptures:

Psalm 23:4 -

Yea, though I walk
through the valley of the
shadow of death,
I will fear no evil;
For You are with me;
Your rod and Your staff,
they comfort me.

27 Now ~~He~~ who searches the hearts knows

G2045 -

Notes:

Maybe you noticed a word that was repeated several times in this text, the word 'hope'. There were also phrases like 'eagerly waiting' or 'eager expectation' which also speak of hope.

Hope: a looking forward to in confident expectation.

Hope looks ahead in time and expects some good to come.

At the same time, the text began talking about the suffering that we endure in a fallen world. Three times groaning is described, by the creation, by believers, and by the Holy Spirit. Hope is one of the things that enables us to endure the suffering that comes to everyone in this fallen world.

When we think about suffering, we might associate it with persecution or some sort of physical pain. Suffering is not limited to pain or loss. Suffering is the consequence of sin. Wherever sin exists, some amount of suffering also exists. Suffering is the fruit of sin. Any unpleasantness in our life could be suffering. I say could be because sometimes our wicked hearts will interpret something as suffering that is not. If the barista misspells your name on your coffee order, that is not suffering. Everyone experiences suffering differently and in different aspects of their life. Suffering can be physical, but it can also be emotional, relational, financial, spiritual, or any other way we interact with this world.

As long as there is sin in the world there will be suffering. Paul started this text by saying that no amount of suffering in this life even comes close to comparing to the glory that awaits us in heaven. Paul is telling us not to focus on our suffering. That doesn't mean we ignore it, but we look past it to the glory that is beyond it – that is our hope. God is going to bring us through to the other side. There is a verse in Psalm 23 that ministers to me about that (Psalm 23:4). We suffer as we walk through the valley. But notice, we don't camp out in the valley, we don't build a house in the valley, we walk through it. Our hope is in the promise of God's presence in the valley. He will bring us through to the other side of the valley. One of the reasons we encourage you to read your Bible every day is because the Bible is filled with promises from God to you. The foundation of our hope is the promises we find in God's Word.

what the mind of the Spirit ~~is~~, because

~~He~~ makes intercession for the saints

G1793 -

Turn to **2 Corinthians 1**. Suffering is a part of life in a fallen world. Next week, we look at the promise that God will use everything, including suffering, for some kind of good. Paul gives us a sense of that here in **2 Corinthians 1:3-7**.

Humans are not static creatures. Everything that touches our life has the possibility of changing us in some way, either for the good or for the worse. It is faith that will determine if suffering makes you weaker or stronger.

This text ends with a statement that ought to give us great comfort in our suffering. We are told that the Holy Spirit makes intercession for the saints. If you are a Christ-follower, you are one of the saints. God, the Holy Spirit lives in you. He knows everything there is to know about you. He knows your suffering. He knows why you are suffering and where it is coming from. He knows why God has allowed this suffering into your life and what God is working to accomplish through your suffering. And He knows what you need so that you can endure the suffering as you walk through the valley. Knowing all of that, the Holy Spirit intercedes, or petitions God on your behalf. He is speaking to your Abba Father in heaven about what you need, even when you have no idea how to pray. Because is one with God the Father, the Holy Spirit always prays the will of the Father.

In our suffering, whether it is small or great, our part is to trust, believe, and obey. As we walk through the

according to ~~the will of~~ God.

valley of the shadow of death, we must choose to take comfort in the presence of God, the Holy Spirit in our life. We must trust in His Word and watch for His directions.

Suffering is inevitable while living in a fallen world. All suffering is temporary, even if it lasts for the rest of our lives. It cannot follow us to heaven. And compared to the glory of heaven, it is nothing. In this life it is something. Take comfort in God the Holy Spirit's presence, in the promises of God's Word, and the hope we have of a future free from suffering.

If you find yourself in the valley of the shadow of death, cling to the Holy Spirit and just keep walking.

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