

## WE HAVE THE PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE

Scriptures: Romans 8:18-30 NIV

Series: "Good News Changes Everything! A Study of the Book of Romans"

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In our passage today Paul highlights the ongoing condition of a fallen world, and our waiting for God to redeem and restore what has been broken.

**18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.**

Paul himself was suffering, he wasn't ignorant of the sufferings of the church.

Suffering is a part of life in a fallen world, but it won't matter when we experience the Glory to come.

Satan wants you to look at what's wrong in your life and question where God is. But Paul says take a step back look at the whole picture.

Paul then goes on to say that all of Creation is suffering and looking forward to that same glory that will be revealed.

**19 For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that<sup>[a]</sup> the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.**

Paul wants the Christians in Rome to understand that the suffering they feel is not just limited to them, but even creation. The physical world is suffering waiting for the glory to be revealed.

Paul is making the point that the physical world even though it did not commit the sin, (that came into the world through Adam) has been infected and caught up in sin's curse .

Creation is waiting for the final fulfillment of Gods plan, that will liberate creation ***“from its bondage to decay and ... into the freedom and glory of the children of God.”***

Even though that day is coming we are still in a season of suffering.

### **RIGHT NOW EVERYTHING IS “GROANING”**

Paul describes creation and the Christian as “groaning” as we wait in anticipation.

**<sup>22</sup> We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.**

Paul makes a connection to the pains of childbirth probably bringing attention one of the conditions of the curse when God said to the woman **Genesis 3:16 “I will make your pains in childbearing very severe; with painful labor you will give birth to children.** I also see a metaphor to express the hope we have in the coming glory.

Childbirth is an incredibly painful even. However, when the new mom carries that baby, she quickly forgets the pain and only see the blessing of that child.

Why is that? Because the suffering endured doesn't compare to the joy experienced when you hold that new baby in your arms!

Paul is encouraging his listeners.

Right now, it's painful. There is suffering. But it won't compare to the glory to come.

### **WE GROAN AS WE WAIT FOR OUR ADOPTION / REDEMPTION / “THE GLORY”**

**<sup>23</sup> Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. <sup>24</sup> For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.**

Paul says we who have the first fruits grown inwardly.

The language “first fruits” was common in Bible times. This term was used to describe the best parts of a harvest and it’s from this that a sacrifice would be given.

Paul says The Holy Spirit, given to those who have placed their hope in Jesus, is a foretaste, a first fruit of the coming inheritance.

The holy spirit gives us the ability and desire to live holy lives, but we still “groan” because these earthly bodies are still under the effects of our sin.

In 2 Corinthians 5:4-5 (NLT) Paul also wrote <sup>4</sup>While we live in these earthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it’s not that we want to die and get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put on our new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up by life. <sup>5</sup> God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives us hope for heaven where we will enjoy the fullness of God’s glory, the fullness of being his sons and daughters, and we will receive new heavenly bodies free from our present suffering.

And not only does the Holy Spirit give us confidence in what’s to come but it also comes to our aide and helps us in our spiritual weakness.

**THE SPIRIT HIMSELF HELPS US HANG ONTO OUR HOPE; IN FACT, HE TOO GROANS FOR US AS HE INTERCEDES FOR US TO THE FATHER WHO WORKS FOR OUR GOOD**

<sup>26</sup> In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. <sup>27</sup> And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God’s people in accordance with the will of God.

The Holy spirit was given to us to Helps us in our weakness.

One of the ways it does this, is when we don’t know what to pray for, it intercedes for us.

When you struggle to put your emotions into words, when your situation leaves you feeling like you're without answers or direction the spirit intercedes.

There are several interpretations of this passage, but the best way I know to explain this is by my own experience.

Paul reminds us that we are not alone, and that God helps us through the Work of the Holy spirit. And then...

### **THE FATHER WORKS OUT ALL THINGS FOR OUR GOOD AND OUR GLORY**

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

God's promise to us is that he will bring good consequences out of all circumstances, not just the good but even the bad. Including persecution and even death itself.

With the main good being the future glory that will be revealed to us.

29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Here's what the Bible says is true:

- 1) God foreknew all.
- 2) God controls all.
- 3) But God chose to give humans free will.

God, somehow, in his power created a world where he knew exactly what would happen every second of this world's existence. He was ultimately in control of everything that happened. But he allowed free will. He allowed us to receive or reject his offer of forgiveness.

And those who choose Jesus... who received the pardon, he predestined to be conformed into his image and glorified in heaven. He planned this before the beginning of time.

## APPLICATION

### 1. In your suffering... wait eagerly.

You will experience hardship in this world.

Paul didn't just grit through he was focused on the prize, he was excited, he eagerly awaited what was to come and that gave him strength to endure.

In your suffering wait eagerly with your eyes on the Glory to come.

### 2. In your suffering... remember you are not alone.

It is never pleasant to navigate hard times.

Remember that you are not alone in your suffering.

Christ suffered. Therefore, God knows first-hand what we are enduring.

Our fellow believers suffer. Because of that we should encourage each other through times of suffering. **1 Thessalonians 5:11 "encourage each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing."**

God gave you his Spirit to help you in your weakness. To intercede for you. When you don't know what to do, when you suffer, when life is tough, be encouraged by the Holy spirit with you.

### 3. In your suffering... remain confident in God's plan.

**28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.**

In your suffering remember that God is at work, and he has a plan. That plan includes you and all who have been called according to his purpose.

## CONCLUSION

God wants good for all people. If you haven't put your faith in Jesus know that he wants good for you and he's calling you.

I hope that encourages you to put your faith in him today. Those who do are promised his future glory, freedom from suffering in heaven, redeemed bodies, and a confidence that allows his children to endure the sufferings of this world.