

## ROMANS 8 (PART TWO)

### Future Glory, More Than Conquerors

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#### *God's Wrath on Unrighteousness*

<sup>18</sup> For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and lawlessness of men, who by their lawlessness suppress the truth. <sup>19</sup> For what is known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. <sup>20</sup> For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal po

us, called to be saints, to obey the gospel of God, which he has beforehand through his Son, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Scriptures, <sup>3</sup> concerning his Son, who descended from David<sup>2</sup> according to the flesh<sup>4</sup> and was declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness

## ROMANS 8 (PART TWO)

Future Glory, More Than Conquerors

Last time in the first half of Chapter 8 we saw that the Holy Spirit is to be in charge of the mind, motives, and members of the believer. Paul also pointed out the earmarks of true sonship.

Now in the second half of Chapter 8, the Apostle turns his attention to the *future glory* awaiting believers.

## Future Glory

### Romans 8:18

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

In this passage, Paul is discussing our *adaptation* for the family of God. First there is *adoption* into sonship. Then there is *adaptation* during which time we are prepared for a glorious future.

And since adaptation can be a painful process, *groaning* is mentioned three times in the next few verses. The first “groaning” are mentioned in vs. 19-22:

### Romans 8:19-22

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

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

First, Paul speaks of the *groaning* of the creation.

The fall of man involved the whole creation, at least as far as planet earth is involved. The vegetable world was involved since the temptation centered around a tree.

The brute creation was involved since the temptation was introduced by a serpent. And, of course, the human creation was involved since the temptation was presented to man.

The curse which followed the fall involved all. Paul says, “*The creature (creation) was subjected to vanity (futility, frustration), not willingly, but by reason of him who has subjected the same in hope.*”—vs. 20

The word “vanity” used in vs. 20 in the KJV is used only here, in Ephesians 4:17, and in 2 Peter 2:18. It means “disappointing misery” in this passage in Romans.

It describes something that does not measure up to that for which it was intended. The word is used in Ecclesiastes repeatedly to describe the frustration of life without God, or “under the sun.”

Clearly there was a time when the whole creation neither groaned nor travailed in pain. But now creation groans. The incredible promise of God’s created world, the high expectations and delights that accompanied it have been blunted and frustrated by the entrance of sin into the world.

So “...the earnest expectation of the creature (creation) waits for the manifestation of the sons of God.”—vs. 19

The Phillips translation puts it: “the whole creation is on tiptoe to see the wonderful sight of the sons of God coming into their own.” Brighter days lie ahead for the whole creation.

Isaiah the Prophet wrote of this:

### Isaiah 11:6-9

<sup>6</sup> The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. <sup>7</sup> The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup> The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. <sup>9</sup> They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

In light of this, Paul puts suffering in perspective:

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

In 2 Corinthians 4:17 he states the same thing:

### 2 Corinthians 4:17

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

Keep in mind that what Paul calls “light afflictions” would overwhelm most modern Christians! Yet his eyes were fixed on the soon coming “eternal weight of glory.”

Next, Paul addresses the *second groaning*—that of the Christian, because he has not yet received his glorified body.

### Romans 8:23-25

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, 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 he already has? <sup>25</sup> But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Notice that Paul says we are “saved by hope.” This can at first be confusing, as it is not hope but faith in the shed blood of Christ that saves us. But Paul is not talking about the salvation of the soul, but is addressing the redemption of the body.

“We eagerly wait for...the redemption of our bodies.”

Elsewhere in scripture, Paul calls this “the blessed hope” (Titus 2:13).

The word “HOPE” in the New Testament is not some wishy-washy, maybe so—maybe not attitude. HOPE has to do with the certainty that *something good is coming in the future*.

At this stage in our Christian experience, we groan because of the limitations of the body and the temptations of the flesh. But the day is coming when we shall have this body of humiliation changed by the Lord “*who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.*”—*Philippians 3:21*

This is part of our redemption; and though we are still hoping for it, it is as certain as the resurrection of Christ.

So we have the groaning of creation, and the groaning of the Christian. But there is yet another “groaning” mentioned in Chapter 8—the *groaning of the Holy Spirit*.

### **Romans 8:26-27**

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 with groans that words



cannot express. <sup>27</sup>And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

The Bible teaches that we have an Advocate in heaven—the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 2:1). And we have an advocate living within our hearts who can lay bare before the eye of God the deepest needs of our souls—the Holy Spirit.

The vast majority of us struggle at one time or another—usually more often than not—with our prayer life. At times our minds wander. At other times we cannot think of what to pray for. And still other times our hearts seem strangely cold and lacking in fervor when we really ought to be praying.

This is why we stand in such deep need of the Holy Spirit to help our infirmities in this crucial area. The word for “helps us” is found in only one other place in the New Testament—Luke 10:40:

**Luke 10:40**

But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, “Lord, don’t you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!”

Martha had been doing all of the practical cooking, cleaning and preparation in order to entertain Jesus in her home. What she asked him for was that he would urge her sister Mary to “help her” in these practical undertakings.

This is the very idea behind the use of “**HELP**” in 8:26. What we need in prayer is the practical, down-to-earth, everyday kind of help that Martha needed in the kitchen.

The very name **COMFORTER** that Jesus used when describing the ministry of the Holy Spirit once He returned to heaven means literally, “one called alongside to help.”

The kind of help He gives is the help a doctor gives when he is called alongside the sick bed; the kind a fireman gives when he is called alongside a burning building; the kind of help a lawyer gives when he is called alongside to undertake our case.

**HELPER** is His name!

The help He brings comes in the form of “groaning which cannot be uttered.” One commentator says, “His Spirit within us is actually praying for us in agonizing longings which never find words.”

The groanings of the Spirit spring from three crucial sources. First:

- God knows and searches our hearts as only He can
- He knows the Spirit’s mind: “knows what is the mind of the Spirit”
- He prays according to the will of God

One day this *groaning* will give place to *glory* as we, who have been *adopted* into the family, are finally *adapted* for that family and receive our glorified bodies and enter into God’s new creation.

## Five Powerful Words (8:28-30)

Paul winds up this awesome chapter with a reminder:

### Romans 8:28

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.

We may not always be able to see it, but this verse is a promise that God’s purposes cannot be thwarted. Everything will one day fit into His plan for us and the world.

### Romans 8:29-30

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of



his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. <sup>30</sup>And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

The five key words in this passage—foreknew, predestined, called, justified, and glorified—are difficult but powerful!

Foreknowledge—God knew of your salvation before it happened.

Predestined—God pre-decided that those who turn to His Son would henceforth be molded into His likeness (of character).

Called—invited, summoned us to partake of His salvation through Christ.

Justified—having received his invitation, God acquitted us of all charges through the shed blood of His Son.

Glorified—In God’s eternal counsels, we are already glorified, it is a done deal.

These five powerful words embrace eternity past, the present fleeting moments of this current world, and the eternity that is coming!

## Secure in Him (8:31-39)

Having laid out God’s redemptive purpose in verse 30, Paul poses a question:

**Romans 8:31**

What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?

His answer provides the grandest sweep of assuring verbiage in the Bible!

First, our assurance is based on the heavy investment that God has already made in our redemption:

**Romans 8:32**

He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?

If God did not withhold His very own Son in order to redeem us, there is nothing He won't give!

Second, our assurance is based on God's acquittal and Christ's continuing intercession for us:

**Romans 8:33-34**

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. <sup>34</sup> Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.

Third, our assurance is based on God's love for us in Christ, which guarantees that nothing will be able to separate us from Him:

**Romans 8:35-36**

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? <sup>36</sup> As it is written: "For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."

After listing these various calamities that have assailed God's people (vs. 35-36), Paul makes the grand pronouncement:

**Romans 8:37-39**

Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. <sup>38</sup> For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities

nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, <sup>39</sup> nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Let's say together, "I am signed, sealed and delivered to heaven's gates through the shed blood of Jesus Christ!"

