

From Frustration to Freedom (*Part 1*)
From Groaning to Glory
Romans 8:17-25

Thought for the Day: No amount of suffering and persecution that we may experience because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can even come close to comparing with the joy and blessings that we will experience for all of eternity in the presence of God.

Freedom and Independence are a great cause of celebration! In the observance of the Lord's Table, we remember Christ's sacrifice on our behalf. We celebrate our deliverance from the *penalty* of sin and the freedom we have from the *power* of sin that Christ won for us in His death and resurrection.

In Romans 8:17-25 the Apostle Paul takes us from suffering and groaning to patience and hope, from bondage and frustration to freedom and glory. Through His death and resurrection, Jesus delivers us from suffering and groaning and from bondage and frustration. As we put our faith in Him and as we walk with Him through our daily life, we can begin to experience the patience and hope, and the freedom and glory that He came to give us.

17 Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ,

- As co-heirs with Jesus Christ, everything that belongs to Him, belongs to us!
- We're not looking forward to just a postage stamp of real estate in heaven; in Christ, the whole kingdom belongs to us to enjoy forever.

... if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.

- From the time of Jesus down to the present time, suffering and persecution have been the normal experience of most Christians (John 15:20; 1 Thessalonians 3:4; 2 Timothy 3:12).
- Matthew 5:10-12 – Jesus encouraged His followers to *look beyond the persecution* to the joys and rewards that await them in heaven.
- Philippians 3:10 – Paul's passion to know the Lord Jesus Christ was so great that he even desired to share with Him in His sufferings.

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

- Paul was an "expert" on suffering for the Lord. With his background and experience, he could write with authority (2 Corinthians 11:23-29).
 - Paul had learned how to endure by looking beyond the hardships of the present suffering to the joys of the future glory. (2 Corinthians 4:17-18).
 - In the midst of the temporal he kept his eyes on the eternal. In the midst of the suffering he kept his eyes on the glory.
- For a model and a pattern worthy of imitation, Paul looked to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Hebrews 12:1-3).
- "There is a great want about all Christians who have not suffered. Some flowers must be broken or bruised before they emit any fragrance." (*Scottish pastor, Robert Murrey McCheyne, quoted by Dr. John MacArthur in Glory Through Suffering*)

- Am I willing to suffer persecution so that others might come to know the Lord Jesus Christ?
- No amount of suffering and persecution that we may experience because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ can even come close to comparing with the joy and blessings that we will experience for all of eternity in the presence of God.

"Christ's followers cannot expect better treatment in the world than their Master had."

--Matthew Henry