

From Frustration to Freedom (Part 2)
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.

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. Jesus came to deliver us from the suffering and groaning and from the bondage and frustration that are caused by sin. 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.

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

- Paul assumed that the children of God will suffer for their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 2 Timothy 3:12 – "...everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted..."

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 on the issue (2 Corinthians 11:23-29).
 - Paul 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.
- His Model was the Lord Jesus Christ Himself (Hebrews 12:1-3).

19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

- "To watch with outstretched neck." (*New King James Study Bible, p. 1893*)
- Paul attributed human characteristics to God's creation to stress the indescribable joy and glory that believers will experience when they and all of God's creation are set free from the devastating consequences of sin.
- Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Bible says believers are already the children of God "but the full manifestation of all that this means will not come until the end." (*NIV Study Bible, p. 1717*)
- "This will occur at the second coming of Christ when he returns for his people. We will share in his glory (8:18) and receive our complete redemption (8:23)." (*The Life Application Bible Commentary*)
- Today, we can live in confident expectation of the complete fulfillment of what the Lord has promised us in His Word.

20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it...

- This is the frustration that we and all of God's creation experience because of the consequences of sin in all its many forms in our lives and in the world around us.
- It is the manifestation of God's curse on His creation due to sin. (Genesis 3:6-19)
- This is the same word that is used in the Greek translation of the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes where it is translated, "vanity of vanities, all is vanity!" It speaks of the meaninglessness and emptiness of life "under the Sun".
- Frustration is that feeling of dissatisfaction, discouragement and unfulfillment when we are unable to reach a desired goal or to fulfill an intended purpose.
- This frustration includes:
 - 1) Spiritual death and separation from God.
 - 2) Fear, shame and humiliation.
 - 3) The breakdown in our relationships with one another.
 - 4) For women, pain in childbearing.
 - 5) The struggle for power and control that takes place between husbands and wives.
 - 6) God's cursing of the ground (the earth).
 - 7) Physical death and all its related suffering.

...in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

- God's creation is enslaved to death and characterized by decay because of Man's sin.
- But God's creation, and we ourselves, have the hope that one day we will be liberated from this bondage and be brought into the place of glorious freedom.
- "The physical universe is not destined for destruction (annihilation) but for renewal...And living things will no longer be subject to death and decay, as they are today." (*The NIV Study Bible, p. 1717*)
- 2 Peter 3:10-13; Revelation 21:1-5

When God created the universe He called it a Good Creation (Genesis 1:31).

When sin entered and corrupted God's creation it became a Groaning Creation (Romans 8:22).

When God creates the new heaven and earth it will be a Glorious Creation (Revelation 21:1).

--Adapted from *Warren Wiersbe, Be Right, p. 102*

Today's frustration will give way to eternity's freedom and our earthly groaning will quickly fade away in heaven's glory! (2 Corinthians 4:13-18)