

**From Frustration to Freedom (Part 3)**  
**From Groaning to Glory**  
***Romans 8:18-25***

**Thought for the Day:** No amount of suffering or 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.

**Vs. 16** – The Holy Spirit dwelling within gives us the assurance of our salvation. When we are grieving the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30) through ongoing sin, we can lose that assurance in our hearts. Our sin hinders His ministry of assurance.

**Vs. 17** – Everything that belongs to Jesus Christ as the Son of God also belongs to us!

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

Jesus suffered because He was fully committed to doing the will of His heavenly Father. If that is our ambition and commitment, we too are likely to suffer some measure of persecution.

(2 Timothy 3:12)

**Vs. 18** – In heaven, all the sufferings of this life—physical, mental, emotional, relational—all of it will fade away into the distant past as we continually delight in the glorious presence of God.

**Vss. 19-21** – Paul attributed human characteristics to God’s creation to stress the indescribable joy and glorious freedom that believers will experience when we and all of God’s creation are set free from the devastating consequences of sin.

- Vs. 20 – All of God’s creation has been subjected to frustration (futility, vanity).
  - “Meaningless! Meaningless!” says the Teacher. “Utterly meaningless! Everything is meaningless.” (Ecclesiastes 1:2)
  - “Vanity of vanities... All is vanity”—useless, absurd; nothing is worthwhile without God.
  - “Vapor of vapors and futility of futilities... All is vanity and emptiness.” (*Amplified Bible*)
  - James 4:14 – “What is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.”
- We were created with eternity in our hearts (Eccl. 3:11) but our sins have caused us to be subjected to frustration.
- The message of the entire Bible is that we will only find true meaning and purpose, joy and satisfaction, in a personal relationship with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.
- All of God’s creation and every aspect of our daily lives is adversely affected by the consequences of sin—and it’s frustrating!
  - “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pain: [suffering] is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” (*C. S. Lewis*)
  - God uses suffering and the frustrations of life to draw us to Himself. And if we will draw near to Him in the midst of our suffering, by His grace and mercy, He will reveal Himself to us and fill that which is empty, meaningless and frustrating in our lives with purpose and glory.

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

- The “pains of childbirth” here are not anticipating the birth of a baby but rather, the revelation or manifestation of the children of God (vs. 19).
- “We will undoubtedly be surprised to discover some among the saints we thought to be pagan, and others, who were admired as spiritual giants, missing!” (*Charles Swindoll, Insights on Romans, p. 168*)
  - We all assume we’re going to be there—but we’d better make absolutely sure! Our regular appearance at church is no guarantee that we have a personal, saving relationship with Jesus Christ. (Matthew 7:21-23; John 6:39-40; 6:29)
  - The only work that saves is faith; but the faith that saves, works! (James 2:14-26)

**23 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.**

- The presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives is the guarantee (downpayment, pledge) of all that is to come when we reach heaven. (Ephesians 1:13-14)
  - If we do not have the Holy Spirit in our lives, we do not belong to Jesus Christ. (Romans 8:9)
- What is the “redemption of our bodies” and when is this going to take place?
  - For those who are members of Christ’s body, the Church, it will take place at the Rapture of the Church. (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 2 Corinthians 5:1-9; 1 Corinthians 15:50-55)

**24 For in this hope [confident, assured expectation] we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.**

- Titus 2:11-14.
- Hebrews 12:2-3.

“Our salvation is both present and future. It is present because the moment we believe in Jesus Christ as Savior we are saved (3:21-26; 5:1-11; 6:1-11, 22-23); our new life (eternal life) begins. But at the same time, we have not fully received all the benefits and blessings of salvation that will be ours when Christ’s new kingdom is completely established. While we can be confident of our salvation, we still look ahead with hope and trust toward that complete change of body and personality that lies beyond this life.

“Waiting for things patiently is a quality that must be developed in us (see Rom 5:3-4; James 1:3-4; 5:11; Rev 13:10; 14:12). Patience is one of the Spirit’s fruit borne in our lives. It includes fortitude, endurance, and the ability to bear up under pressure in order to attain a desired goal.”

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