

SEEING BEYOND THE PAIN

Romans 8:17-25

8:28–Favorite/familiar passage: *“We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to his purpose.”*

Do we really believe it? Is it true? *What about...?*

Mother killed by hit-&-run driver leaving husband & newborn twins? **How's *that* good?**

All God's people eventually face hard times.

Sometimes due to illness—our own, or family member's.

—marital difficulties—divorce/separation—problem@work

—problem with friend at school, co-worker, or family

In hard times, question haunts us: *“Why?”*

God doesn't always give specific answer!

God *HAS* given general answers that apply to suffering.

Plan for our lives incl. purposes for all God's children

Paul has been presenting gospel: that people who trust

His Son *have* eternal life—& more!

6-8 Gospel produces changed life, godly living

Paul explains link between suffering & godly living

One way godly living shows itself:

Patient endurance in hard times.

16-18 *“The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. ¹⁷Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God & co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. ¹⁸I consider that our present sufferings aren't worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*

8:17 “if indeed we share in His sufferings”

Feels like condition—you’re a son, provided you suffer.

Paul describes accompanying condition of being a son:

Boa-Co-heirs share in glory same way heir achieves glory. If Son learns obedience by suffering (Heb. 5:8), so do *adopted* sons. True sons of God *will* suffer for His name— expect it! Suffering’s evidence we’re sons. In end, suffering leads to glory. We share in His glory

Therefore we hang in there. We look forward to glory.

[1st reason for patience in suffering:]

Present pain leads to future glory 18-25

Future glory will be greater than present suffering

Glory outweighs temporary difficulty we’re going through.

Paul isn’t seminary prof, in ivory tower, writing platitudes.

He’s speaking from experience! =>

2 Cor 11:23-28 *“I’ve worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, & been exposed to death again & again. ²⁴5 X I received from the Jews the 40 lashes - 1. ²⁵ 3 X I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, 3 X I was shipwrecked, I spent a night & a day in the open sea, ²⁶...I’ve been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; & in danger from false brothers. ²⁷I’ve labored & toiled & have often gone without sleep; I’ve known hunger & thirst & have often gone without food; I’ve*

been cold & naked. ²⁸Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches.”

Paul's story with struggles doesn't end there!

12:7-10 *“...There was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸3 X I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I'll boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰That's why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I'm weak, then I'm strong.”*

Paul speaks from experience when he affirms:

**Our future glory will be
greater than our present suffering**

Suffering we go through will seem insignificant!

Hard to imagine when going through stuff in our life!

[Principle illustrated in creation:]

All creation groans! 19-22 *“The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay & brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth to the present time.”*

God's Word shows **unity in God's purpose for creation**

Whole world endures consequences of sin.

Sin has contaminated *everything!*

God didn't create it this way.

God made it perfect. He called what *HE* made good.

Our sin contaminated God's perfect creation;
introduced pain & death.

That's why we struggle with ugly stuff in this world!

Sickness & suffering are result of man's sin.

Sin affects *everything* God made.

World *groans*; waits for God to remove sin & suffering

All nature awaits day God's sons will be revealed.

Nature's groaning will be over!

All creation waits for that day. *It groans; it waits*

[Along with creation, *We too groan!*]

God's children groan 23-25 *"Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan in-wardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*

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

We wait eagerly because God has given us His Spirit.

H.S. is evidence God will complete what He started!

Complete work includes salvation of soul AND redemption of body, which ends pain and death

We can't see what God's going to do, but presence of Spirit allows us to wait *confidently*.

**God will complete His work,
& eliminate pain & death!**

No more pain No more doctor's bills

No more parts wearing out!

Story doesn't end in groaning! It ends in glory!

=> We wait eagerly with hope!

**Our present suffering can't be compared
With our future glory**

We don't see it; –but, we hope!

GOD KNOWS WHAT HE'S ABOUT

When God wants to drill a man,

And thrill a man, And skill a man,

When God wants to mold a man To play the noblest part,

When He yearns with all His heart To create so great & bold a man That all the world shall be amazed,

Watch His methods, watch His ways--

How He ruthlessly perfects Whom He royally elects.

How He hammers him and hurts him,

& with mighty blows converts him Into trial shapes of clay

Which only God understands,

While his tortured heart is crying, & he lifts beseeching hands

How he bends but never breaks When His good He undertakes

How He uses whom He chooses & with every purpose fuses him

By every act, induces him To try His splendor out.

God knows what He's about!

All creation groans

God's children groan—know feeling?

Some day the groaning will stop!

Our groaning will be converted to glory

Glory that shall be, can't be compared to temporary, light weight of suffering we're going through.

Paul begins *"Our present sufferings aren't worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us!"*

Our present suffering

can't be compared to our future glory!

We can trust God in the dark!