

How Do We Then Live?

Week 8 - Romans 8:18-39

? What show/concert/event (past or present) would be your dream ticket to see in person?

Objectives:

- Understand how to interpret the suffering and pain we experience in this world we live in.
- Rest in the truth that nothing can separate us from the love of God and that God is currently working for our ultimate good.

In this section, Paul dives into the truth we experience that in this world there are present sufferings we experience as Christians. However, we can be comforted because God works all things for good purposes and He is for us. The Holy Spirit and Jesus Christ help us and intercede for us. He finishes the chapter with the all-important truth that nothing can separate us from the love of God.

Groaning for Glory

Romans 8:18-30 NIV

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

²⁶ 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 through wordless groans. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

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. ²⁹ For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

? What do verses 19-22 tell us about sin?

Possible answers: Sin has caused creation to fall from the perfect state in which God created it to decay. One day the world will be liberated from sin and decay.

? What two points does Paul make about the future glory?

Possible answers: (1) It is the climax of God's plan for the world and for his people (vv. 18-25). (2) God provides the means for us to attain that glory (vv. 26-30).

? What does verse 28 mean? How could it be misinterpreted?

Possible answers: God is not working to make us happy, but to fulfill his good and perfect purpose. It does not mean that everything that happens to us will be good or that we will live comfortable lives.

? Even though it is clear this present life and suffering will not be easy, how are we comforted by this passage?

Possible answers: God promises to be with us and in us every step of the way. He has a firm hold of us and doesn't promise that there will be no suffering on this earth but He does promise to carry and sustain us through everything. Additionally, He promises that his Spirit will help us in our weakness and intercede for us.

God is For Us

Romans 8:31-39 NIV

³¹ What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? ³³ Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. ³⁴ Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. ³⁵ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

³⁶ As it is written:

“For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”

³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. ³⁸ For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, ³⁹ neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

? What judicial language is used in the courtroom scene described in verses 31-34?

Possible answers: God is the justifier/judge (v. 33), Jesus intercedes for us (v. 34). An accuser is condemning us but God is defending us and no one can overcome such a defense.

? What does it mean that Christ is interceding for us in heaven?

Possible answers: Even after his salvific work on the cross, Jesus advocates for our defense and stands at God's right hand to present our case. You can also read Hebrews 4:14-15 for more on this topic.

? How is it possible that those who “are considered as sheep to be slaughtered” (v 36) are also “more than conquerors” (v 37)?

Possible answers: We will suffer many hardships in this life (Paul himself suffered many of the hardships he lists in verse 35), but no hardship will be able to take us away from the love of Christ. If we have God, we have everything even if we lose everything else.

For Discussion and Accountability

? What was God telling you through this passage this week? What did you need to hear?

? Are there times currently or in your past that you’ve come face to face with the present suffering Paul mentions in verses 18-30? How are you comforted and encouraged by Paul’s words in these verses?

? What does the reminder that *God is for us* mean for you this week?