

The Hope of Grief

(Romans 8:18-30)

Yearly Theme: "Patience is..."

Series Title: "Good Grief"

November 20th, 2022

Something to think about:

Today we come to another passage from the Apostle Paul that explores the idea of suffering. Paul spends a lot of time on this subject due to the nature of the culture in which the early church took root. It was a culture that was not kind to Christians or Christianity. So Paul writes on this subject quite a bit for the purpose of encouraging fellow believers to stay strong in the Faith and to know that there is hope in the journey through the pain and trials we experience.

In his letter to the Roman believers Paul talks about the groanings that are experienced through the trials and tribulations that we now suffer, but he points us to the One through whom all hope is found: GOD.

Let's take a look at Paul's words today:

Romans 8:18-30 (NLT),

¹⁸ Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. ¹⁹ For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. ²⁰ Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, ²¹ the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. ²² For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. ²⁴ We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. ²⁵ But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

²⁶ And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. ²⁷ And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. ²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.¹

Here's the takeaway this morning:

Key Point: "We grieve with hope knowing that our pain is temporary compared to our future glory with Christ."

Again, in this short passage, Paul writes that there are three different "groanings" that are taking place in these Last Days before Christ's return. Let's take a closer look at each of them and explore the temporary nature of these specific groanings:

- **All of _____ groans.**

Romans 8:22 (NLT), For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

- **_____ in Christ groan.**

Romans 8:23 (NLT), We believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering.

- **The _____ groans.**

Romans 8:26b (NLT), ...The Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.

Something to take home:

"One night at dinner a man, who had spent many summers in Maine, fascinated his companions by telling of his experiences in a little town named Flagstaff. The town was to be flooded, as part of a large lake for which a dam was being built. In the months before it was to be flooded, all improvements and repairs in the whole town were stopped. Why repair anything when the whole village was to be wiped out? So, week by week, the whole town became more and more bedraggled, more gone to seed, more woebegone. Then he added by way of explanation: 'Where there is no hope in the future, there is no power in the present.'²

Paul Achtemeier writes, "...We can have confidence in our future with God only because that future is in God's hands, not ours. If it depended on us, we could expect more of the same botching of human chances with which history is replete. Only because God has taken control of our future is our future redemption secure."³

As believers in Christ, we grieve the suffering, the pain, and the loss we experience in this life, but we do not grieve as ones who have no hope. And the reason is...

Key Point: "We grieve with hope knowing that our pain is temporary compared to our future glory with Christ."

¹ Tyndale House Publishers, *Holy Bible: New Living Translation* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2015), Ro 8:18–30.

² Halford E. Luccock, *Unfinished Business*.

³ Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans, Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta, GA: John Knox Press, 1985), 143.