
Our Present Suffering and Future Glory

Romans 8:18-30

We all live in a world full of suffering and Christians are not immune from it (Job 4:1, 1 Cor 10:13), whether the sufferings come through persecution (John 15:20; Luke 6:22) or simply because we belong to Christ (Phil. 1:29; 3:10; 2 Cor. 1:5; Rom. 8:17; 1 Pet. 2:21; 4:1).

In our text, however, Paul amazingly links our sufferings with glory. That though our sufferings, we can and will experience incomparable glory. Paul brings to us the blessed message that because God sustains us in our sufferings, we must live in hope by appropriating the help and encouragement that comes from Him.

1. *Because God _____ our suffering as the pathway to glory, we must resolve to _____ in our walk with Him.*

Paul particularly has in mind the suffering that comes because of the believer's faith (v. 17). And when sufferings come, we must have the right perspective. This right perspective comes through the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, who testifies that we are God's children (Rom. 8:16), destined for glory. In view of this truth, our present sufferings pale in comparison to the glory that awaits us (2 Cor. 4:16-17). Paul illustrates this coming glory through the groaning of creation (vv. 19-24) and the believer himself (vv. 23-25)

2. *Because God _____ His Spirit to aid us in our suffering, we must remain _____ upon Him.*

Paul takes our weakness as a given, and he makes it clear that even in that weakness, God ministers to us by His Spirit. Paul does not say that the Spirit removes our weakness or our sufferings. Rather, he says that the Spirit helps our weakness. He is the promised comforter (John 14:16,26; 16:7). The Spirit intercedes for us by taking our inexpressible feelings and brings them into God's throne of grace, where we are assured that God would not only understand, but that He will also respond in grace and mercy. Therefore, when you go through the pressures of life and when you feel helpless because we could not seem to find the right words to say to God, take comfort because God, through His Spirit still hears you!

3. *Because God _____ our ultimate deliverance and glory, we must rest our _____ in Him.*

Paul says in verse 28, that all things will work together for the believer's ultimate good. God uses all things, even evil, even pain, even suffering for the good of the believer. God never wastes our sufferings. God can guarantee that all things work together for the believer because that is His ultimate purpose and plan (vv. 28-30). This is possible only through the Lord Jesus Christ, who purposed to glorify us from the foundation of the world. The golden chain of God's work of salvation are all expressed in the past tense (predestined, called, justified, glorified) as though there are already completed.

The glory that we have is incomparable. We are going to inherit an incomparable glory that makes anything in this life of pain fade into utter insignificance. Yes, we will experience various trials and sufferings in this life. But we can take heart because God has a plan and His purposes for us are for our ultimate good. He can guarantee that because He is in charge. He is in control and He is trustworthy.