

Romans, pt.13, 8.18–30, 12.10.06

Living In The Spirit, pt.2, “Suffering that Sanctifies”

Intro

1. Review last week’s message: **The primary reason the Holy Spirit is given to me is to make it possible to live like Jesus (8.1–4).**
2. Read the text
3. Define suffering – anything less than what God wanted mankind to experience in the garden...What did Adam & Eve experience in the Garden & what do we experience today?...death, rejection, loneliness, brokenness, sickness, poverty...think about all Adam & Eve had in the Garden...if we experience anything less that is suffering...don’t associate suffering solely with severe hardships...the angels know what life is like in Heaven & they see what it’s like on earth and I guarantee they would say we are suffering.
4. Main Idea: This message is how God imparts to us hope through the Holy Spirit in the midst of suffering.

We suffer because:

- All creation is under the curse (8.20, 22)
 - This is referring to the Garden of Eden event
 - Which includes – war with Satan; struggle with a sinful nature; division in the home; separation from God on earth; pain; hard labor; death; incompleteness
 - Current evidence of the curse’s impact on creation: hurricanes, earthquakes, drought, floods, climate change
 - Creation (including mankind) is presently: waiting eagerly (v.19) – it means to wait with head raised and eyes fixed on a point on the horizon from which the expected object will come...like standing on your tiptoe & leaning forward to make out an object.: looks forward (v.21), groaning as in the pains of childbirth (v.22) for the full revelation of the children of God.

- V.20 – “subjected to frustration” – it isn’t existing at the level for which it was created.
 - V.21 – “creation itself will be liberated from decay” – Nature is currently enslaved to an unending cycle – conception, birth, growth, then decay, death & decomposition.
 - It will be, “rescued from the tyranny of change & decay.”
 - The book of Isaiah & Revelation have much to say about the liberated planet.
 - We live on a beautiful planet that is stunning...think about what it will look like when it renewed once the children of God are revealed and sin is banished.
 - Ill. – The difference between going in a garden with a few weak plants and one that is lush & full.
 - Creation’s pains will intensify as the Lord’s return draws near. Based upon Jesus’ own words in the Book of Revelation & in the gospels, the eco-system of the planet will be convulsing – extreme weather patterns, water scarcity, floods, increased earthquakes, pestilence, plagues, etc. The earth is vomiting up the sins of the planet and anticipating its full restoration at the return of the Lord.
- **We still wrestle with our sinful natures (8.23)**
 - “We long (groan) for our bodies to be released from sin & suffering”
 - Look at all the areas were sin impacts your life – relationships, sinful habits, limited understanding
 - PTL there is victory in this life over the sinful nature, but it still haunts us as a phantom in the night. Jesus destroyed its dominance in my life, but it’s like those

pockets of resistance after a war is over. Consider how one person's sin impacts a whole family

- **Our bodies are decaying (8.21, 23)**
 - We look forward to the glorious day of freedom from death & decay
 - How many look forward to the day when you don't have to put on make up or whatever to hide something? There are no mirrors in heaven! (there's a sea of glass)
 - The body is good and will be completely renewed in the next life. Just as he'll bring a new heaven & earth at the end of the age, so he'll provide us with a new body at the end of this life.

We have hope because:

- Introductory comment. V.24 - we were given hope at the time of conversion...the closer we get to the Lord both in Christian maturity & chronologically should result in greater hope for today & the future... Have you been saved?
- **We have been given the Holy Spirit as a foretaste of our future glory (8.23)**
 - The HS is a deposit guaranteeing we belong to God
 - First fruits - the best of the best
 - He is also working in us to reveal how life is being lived in eternity. When we experience His activity through peace, wisdom, love or hope, we are benefiting from it now, but we're also experiencing a snap shot of heaven...it's a tap on the shoulder about what life is like just around the corner. We can walk in a degree here, but fully in eternity.
 - It's a foretaste not a full meal.
 - Personal experiences of walking under God's blessings
- **We anticipate one day receiving our full rights as adopted children (8.23).**
 - This is the activity of the HS (8.16)

- Today, we're like the poor, beggar child that has the same last name as royalty. You bear the resemblance of the King, but you're a little too afraid to believe that the story is real.
- Think about what it means to be a child of God...we have incredible value to God and the incredible position he has given him.
 - The build up to Christmas is so great and it's just about receiving & giving stuff...ponder the experience of entering into God's presence and discovering the storehouse of treasure and truth that are ours in Christ.
- If you think you're worthless or God is finished with you...it isn't the HS who is speaking to you. The HS reveals God's deep pleasure and joy. He's not into condemnation & judgment. He brings conviction that leads to restoration not condemnation that leads to isolation. He wants you to know who are in Christ!
- **The Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. He assures us that -**
 - **When we don't know what to pray, God hears His prayer's for us (8.26-27)**
 - I don't believe this is referring to tongues though I believe in the gift of tongues; rather, it's looking at suffering and feeling frustration over our half-saved condition and the incompleteness of creation.
 - It probably has broader application to anything that we are unsure of. We can be assured that the HS is interceding on our behalf. We are not left w/o an advocate; he's sending a constant signal to the Father.
 - **God is answering His prayers by working everything together for our good (8.28).**
 - Just as the HS is asking prayers in line with God's will, God is answering those prayers. He is working everything together for good for those that love him. There's a qualification - "those that love him." He doesn't guarantee that for who don't love God.

- We don't know what to pray, but the Spirit does; we don't know what to do, but God answers the Spirit's prayers and turns it all for good.
- Appl – Do you not know what to pray or what to do? Rest. The HS's praying for you and God is working everything out for good. Rest is an act of faith, rather than a point of desperation. **He's able to remove the obstacles outwardly.**
- **God will form us into His Son's image (8.29–30)**
 - He chose us, called us, justified us & glorified us. I am conformed into the image of Jesus & I'm being conformed. It's already happened in his mind & eternity; he's just working out the details now.
 - You may find it difficult to believe, but he's doing that work in your life...wayward child's life...backslidden believer.
 - Your responsibility is to cooperate with the activity of the HS in your life or with what he wants to do in another's life.
 - The deal is done. WE are Jesus' brothers & sisters and we do have his nature. As Jesus' brothers & sisters, the Father is making sure we reflect the image of his Son.
 - Some think it's up to them to make all the transitions, but as we pursue Jesus He makes the adjustments in our lives. God will work out all that junk in your life and work into you the virtue of Jesus. **He's able to remove the junk inwardly.**

Conclusion:

Isn't this good news?! Eventhough we are suffering, God not only gives the ability to endure it, but to both overcome it and live above it, so that it has minimal impact on our lives.

8.18 – What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory that is to come. 1 john 3.2

We must wait “patiently & confidently” (v.25)