

Romans 8 Church-wide Study

Small Group Session 5 – *The Hope of Glory*

GATHERING

Last week we talked about the incomprehensible love of God that led Him to adopt us into His family in response to our entering into a relationship with Jesus and claiming Him as Lord and Savior over our lives. Today we are going to talk about the glory that is promised to all who have been adopted into God's family. It's a glory that far surpasses any suffering we will face on this side of eternity. So as we read these verses from Romans 8 today, listen for the words of hope that God has written for you.

READ ROMANS 8:17-25

“¹⁷ Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His suffering in order that we may also share in His glory. 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 sons and daughters 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 glorious freedom 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 as sons and daughters, 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 he already has? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.” (Romans 8:17-25 – NIV)

OPENING PRAYER

During this prayer, ask God to open our hearts and minds to the richness of His provision both in this life and in our life to come.

WATCH THE PANEL DISCUSSION VIDEO

1. What did you hear in the video that really spoke to you?

Paul begins this section of Romans 8 with the statement: *“Now if we are children, then we are heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His suffering in order that we may also share in His glory.”* (Romans 8:17)

2. What is Paul getting at when he says that we are heirs of God and co-heirs with Jesus if indeed we share in His suffering in order that we may also share in His glory?

- **What does it mean to “share in His suffering”?**
- **What does it mean to “share in His glory”?**
- Bill Muske suggests that we read 2 Corinthians 11:23-28. Take a moment to read that passage.
 - **What do you hear in that word to the Christians in Corinth?**
 - **Of course none of us will likely experience the kind of suffering Paul experienced, what can we learn from Paul by his testimony in 2 Corinthians 11?**
 - **Ask the members of your group to take a moment and write in their journal about suffering they have experienced that they look forward to shedding.**

In verse 20, Paul writes, *“For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the One who subjected it...”*

3. Spend some time with that verse. What do those words say to you about suffering?

- Paul says that creation was “subjected to frustration... by the will of the One who subjected it.” This is saying that God subjected creation to suffering.
 - **How have you seen creation subjected to frustration through suffering?**
 - Read Genesis 3:14-19. **How are we experiencing the consequences of these verses today?**

The beauty of this passage is found in the fact that Paul doesn’t see our suffering as an end point, but as a passageway into something gloriously wonderful. Let’s spend the rest of our time talking about this glory-filled future that is promised to every believer.

In verse 18, Paul writes, *“I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.”* In verse 19, he says that *“creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.”* And in verse 21, Paul says that there is an underlying hope *“that creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.”* In verse 23, he says that we *“wait eagerly for our adoption as sons and daughters, the redemption of our bodies.”* Finally, in verse 24, Paul says that *“in this hope we were saved.”*

4. What do you hear Paul saying in all of these verses?

- In the panel discussion, Bill Muske said that Paul considered that *“the rewards of his ministry would far exceed the consequences of what he had to endure.”*
 - **How do you think Paul was able to see past his suffering like he did?**
 - **Why is it hard for us to see our circumstances like Paul saw his?**
 - **Do you agree that we can live with the same hope that Paul had without having to live in his time and experience the same things Paul experienced? How do we do this?**
- Have someone read 2 Corinthians 4:7 – 5:7
 - **How does this compare to the verses we are focusing on today from Romans 8?**
- In the panel discussion, Bill Muske said that Paul’s understanding of hope was not a “hope so” kind of hope, or a hope that thought “I hope it happens.”
 - **How would you characterize Paul’s hope?**

5. In verses 22 and 23, Paul talks about groaning (by creation and by us). Why does the groaning occur?

6. There is a glorious future that we are groaning for. Consider the scene when our resurrected bodies are united with our souls and our temporary “clothing” is cast off. Imagine what it will look like to see wheel chairs, hearing aids, dentures, glasses, and walkers all falling to the ground while the blind will see, the lame will jump, and youthful healthy bodies will be taken into glory. This is the hope that we KNOW is going to be reality.

- **How does that shape your hope?**

7. What is your takeaway from today’s discussion?