

Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

March 26, 2023

S.C. Brown, Pastor

Series: Romans

Sermon title: Assurance of Future Glory

Scripture reading: Romans 8:18-30

Introduction:

One of the great joys of my life has been to be in the delivery room for all of my 5 kid's births.

I'll spare you the details but instead of hanging out in the lobby, I've always wanted to be there for the whole process.

I was able to cut the umbilical cord for all 5 of our kids. But for 2 of the kids, I was actually allowed to partially deliver the babies. That was in the USA.

Such a great experience. FOR ME.

For Amber that was a whole different story.

You wait for weeks and weeks and then as it comes close to the time, you are wondering, "*Is it time?*"

When the time comes, it is so difficult to see your wife in so much pain and suffering.

And although the labor pains are so severe, one of the good things about labor pains is that they mean that something is happening.....that a new birth is *actually* coming.

And just like that, the pain is gone and all you experience is the joy of this new life. The suffering and pain point to the glorious joy of a new life.

Well, in **Romans 8**, Paul likens life on this planet to the pains of childbirth.

We all face suffering and even the planet suffers.

But the Christian has hope in the face of suffering because we know that a far better life is coming, one in which creation shares and even waits for- a glorious future with the One who created it all and who will transform it all.

Let's pray.

Our text today, **Romans 8:18-30**, begins and ends with glory.

This whole passage hinges on **Romans 8:17-18** where we see suffering contrasted with glory.

17 If children, then heirs- heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided that we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. **18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not

worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Last week we saw that Christians have assurance because of the indwelling Holy Spirit. Even though we sin, we are not condemned because of what Jesus has done for us. You could say last week was- Assurance for the sinner. This week we could say these verses give us - Assurance of future glory in the face of suffering.

Main idea:

Christians can suffer in hope because of the assurance of future glory that is theirs in Christ Jesus.

This future glory that awaits believers is so significant that all creation itself is waiting for it to happen. In fact, we'll see that humans and the earth are more closely connected than we might imagine.

I. CREATION GROANS

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Creation here means the whole earth, all that is created. Animals, fish, birds, trees, rivers, mountains.

Creation is described as having an '*eager longing*', which means in Greek..'sticking it's neck out to see'....to wait for believers to be glorified....for them to have new bodies, for Jesus to come back and bring the new heaven and new earth..for him to make all things new.

Why does creation even care?

I mean, what does creation have to do with the sons of Adam and the daughters of Eve?

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope

Genesis 3:17-18

And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it', cursed is the ground because of you; for in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you"

So, creation was subjected to 'futility' and corruption at the fall. But there is a hope....

The...*'in hope'* here refers to the hope spoken of first in **Genesis 3:15** of one who would come and stomp on the sergeant's head- Jesus Christ.

19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Note: It's a sermon for another day, but let's just say that human beings' connection to the planet is something to take seriously. Creation shared in our fall and creation will share in the glory of believers.

So, creation groans...waiting for the sons and daughters of God (believers) to be glorified. And the suffering and corruption that creation endures now will not be close to the new creation.

But it's not just creation that suffers, groans and waits.

Christians also groan.

II. CHRISTIANS GROAN

23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. **24** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

What do we groan for?

We groan for our glorification....our salvation to be complete.

Verse 23 says, 'we who have the firstfruits of the Spirit' this means that we have the Spirit as a deposit, a first taste if you will but we groan for God..to see him face to face.

We groan for our new bodies because we have bodies that decay and get sick and sin and die.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

16 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. **17** For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all

comparison, **18** as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

We groan to experience the culmination of our salvation that Jesus has already purchased for us. This groaning is the outward manifestation of our inward hope.

And we hope in suffering. We patiently endure this life looking with faith to our future glory.

2 Corinthians 5:2,4,5

2 For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling,...**4** for while we are still in this tent [body] we groan being burdened...**5** he who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

Philippians 3:20-21

20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

Christian, are you groaning in hope as you look forward to that day?

Well, creation is going through a kind of suffering and corruption because of the fall and it groans while it waits for the sons and daughters of God to be glorified.

We also groan as we endure suffering, corruption and sin in this world while we wait to be glorified.

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT GROANS.

26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. **27** And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

The '[likewise](#)' here I think refers to..."We groan and likewise the Spirit groans".

What a comfort this verse is!

There is always 2 who are praying for you. Here, we see the Holy Spirit intercedes for us and **verse 34** says that Jesus is interceding for us.

Some of you need to hear that today because you may feel like no one cares about you. That's not true.

Are you weak? Yes, we are all weak.

the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. **27** And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

What does this mean?

I think what it means is that God the Holy Spirit who indwells believers....and who is just as much God as the Father is and God the Son is...communicates from within us to the Father about what we need.

We can't hear it.

We don't know what he says to God.

Or do we?

Verse 27 says that the Spirit intercedes and groans for the saints according to the will of God.

Well, what is the will of God for believers?

"This is the will of God, your sanctification."

1 Thessalonians 4:3

I think we have some insight in **verses 28-30**

IV. WHAT DOES THE SPIRIT GROAN FOR?

28 And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. **29** For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. **30** And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

I think what this means is that the Holy Spirit is groaning in prayer for believers; [*those who love God and are called according to his purpose...those whom he foreknew before time began...those whom he predestined and called to himself and justified*].
...that the will of God might be accomplished in their lives...that they may be sanctified...conformed to the image of his Son, Jesus Christ, and that they may be ultimately glorified.

In **verse 30**, "*glorified*" is in the past tense. This is odd. But it's on purpose.

What it means is that your future glory is so certain that you could consider it as already done.

Application:

Christians can suffer in hope because of the assurance of future glory that is theirs in Christ Jesus.

Are you suffering today?

Is the toil and burden of life in this physical body and a world full of sin gotten you down?

Take heart. The glory that awaits you in heaven so far exceeds the suffering in this life that you won't even be able to compare them.

Believers, you will make it.

Nothing will keep you from the heavenly city!
You will be glorified.

Are you discouraged?

Be encouraged Christian.

God the Holy Spirit is interceding for you.

God the Son is also interceding for you.

Lastly, if you are not a Christian, your suffering will not be replaced with glory but more suffering.

Don't reject Christ. Embrace Christ.

Christ bids you to come to him. He died for your sins.

He rose from the dead to give you eternal life.