

Romans 8:18

GROANING NOW, GLORY THEN

Intro: Romans **chapter 8** is one of the richest chapters in the Bible. This chapter is a passage of **hope, blessing, encouragement** and **comfort**.

Verse 1 sets the tone for the rest of the chapter when it says, ***“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*** ***“No condemnation!”*** Let those words sink in for a moment! They remind us that the child of God is **no longer under God’s wrath or in danger of God’s judgment**. The believer has forever been **delivered from the threat of Hell and from the eternal punishment of sin**. The believer is **no longer separated from God by a wide gulf of sin, but is “made nigh by the blood of Christ,” Eph. 2:13.**

As **Romans 8** unfolds, the weight of our blessings in Jesus Christ becomes abundantly clear.

- Believers are the sons of God - **vv. 14-15.**
- Believers are joint-heirs with Christ - **v. 17.**
- Believers will be glorified with Christ - **v. 19.**
- Every event in the believer’s life is being worked out for good by God - **v. 28.**
- Believers are actively being transformed into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ - **v. 29.**
- Believers are eternally secure in their salvation - **v. 30.**
- Believers enjoy the Lord’s support against every adversary they face in life - **vv. 31-37.**

- Believers will never be separated from the perfect, boundless, unconditional, eternal love of God - **vv. 38-39**.

Those truths should be enough to cause us to humble ourselves before the Lord in worship and praise. The text that I have read today adds another layer of blessing that should encourage the hearts of every child of God. This verse contains a precious promise to every believer who suffers in this life. We are promised in **verse 18** that while there may be groaning here, there will be glory there. That is the thought I want to magnify today: ***Groaning Here, Glory There***. Notice some ***words*** of comfort that present themselves in this verse.

I. **THERE IS A WORD ABOUT BATTLES**

Paul uses the word “***sufferings***.” This is an expressive word that refers to “***that which one suffers; suffering, misfortune, calamity, evil, affliction; the afflictions believers must go through because of their association with Christ and His kingdom work.***”

As we all know, everyone endures suffering to some degree. We all know about the sufferings of Job, Paul and the Lord Jesus, and we also know that we will experience our share of these things as well.

- Every hospital reminds us that there is suffering now.
- Every cemetery stands as a vivid reminder that suffering and pain attends our earthly lives.

- Every siren we hear reminds us that this world is a place of pain, suffering, loss, death and heartache.

The Bible makes it crystal clear that suffering is a part of earthly existence, **Job 14:1; John 16:33.**

- We suffer at times because we make foolish decisions, **Gal. 6:7.**
- We suffer at times because those around us make foolish decisions, and we get caught up in the tragedy of their error, **Hos. 8:7.**
- We suffer at times because of our association with Jesus, **2 Tim. 3:12.**
- There are times when we suffer physically, emotionally and spiritually. We may think it, but we are never alone in our sufferings, **1 Pet. 5:5-10.**
- Paul knew what it was to suffer - Ill. **2 Cor. 11:23-28.**
- Jesus Christ knew what it was to suffer - Ill. **Isa. 53:11** - Ill. ***“travail” - “to labor as in child birth.”***
- We know to varying degrees what it is to suffer.

As long as we live in this world, there will be battles. As long as we are here, there will be suffering. That is the nature of life in a sin-cursed world.

I. There Is A Word About Battles

II. THERE IS A WORD ABOUT BLESSINGS

Paul mentions next “*the glory that shall be revealed in us.*” This looks forward to the day when we are home, with the Lord in Heaven. It looks forward to the time when this earthly life with all its problems, pain and suffering will end and the child of God will go to be with the Lord in Heaven. The phrase “*revealed in us,*” anticipates a time when we will be made like Jesus Christ. Let’s explore this line of thought for a few minutes today.

For the child of God, the best is yet to come! Jesus Himself promised to prepare a place in Heaven for each of His children, **John 14:1-3**. Paul reminds us that to leave this world and go to be with Jesus “is far better,” **Phil. 1:21-23**.

While the Bible does not give us all the information about Heaven we would like to have, it does give us plenty of insight into that place that will be our home some day. Consider the following:

- Heaven will be a land of music - **Rev. 5:9**.
- Heaven will be a land of praise and worship - **Rev. 4; 7:9-12**.
- Heaven will be a land of perfect service - **Rev. 7:13-15; 22:3**.
- Heaven will be a land of rest - **Rev. 14:13**.
- Heaven will be a land of rejoicing - **Rev. 19:7**.
- Heaven will be a land where the sufferings of this life will not be permitted to follow us - **Rev. 21:1-6; 27**.
- Heaven will be a land of intimate fellowship with God - **Rev. 22:4**.

All of that is wonderful, but when Paul refers to “***the glory that shall be revealed in us.***” He is not merely speaking about a change of place; he is speaking about a change of person. He is not merely talking about our position; he is talking about our composition. What I am trying to say is that address will be altered, and so will our appearance.

One day, we will end our earthly life here and we will fly away to glory. We will leave these bodies at the very moment of our deaths, **2 Cor. 5:8**. We will exist in some sort of a spiritual body until the day of the rapture. On that day, the Lord will come get His bride. The bodies of those who have died in Christ will be raised from the dead. Our spirits will be placed back in our bodies, and we will be changed.

In **1 Cor. 15:49-57**, Paul describes the changes that are coming to the children of God. **1 John 3:1-3** makes it clear that one-day, we will be like Jesus Christ. Think about it, these frail, weak, dying bodies will be replaced with bodies that are perfect, eternal and just like the Lord’s, Ill. **2 Cor. 5:1-8**.

So, our lives on this earth will be lives of problems, of pain, of suffering and of battles, but the best is yet to come! You will not remain here forever. You will not remain like you are forever. The future is a time of blessings because we will be delivered from the battles one day soon!

- I. **There Is A Word About Battles**
- II. **There Is A Word About Blessings**

III. THERE IS A WORD ABOUT BALANCE

Paul tells us that the glory to be revealed in us then will eclipse the sufferings we are called on to face here. When Paul says, “*I reckon*,” he is saying a mouthful. The word, “*reckon*” means “*to account*.” It has the idea of “*seriously studying a matter and coming to a firm conclusion*.” In other words, Paul is not saying that he hopes that life will be better than this lie; he is saying that he has considered the matter well, and he knows that the problems we have in this life can’t hold a candle to the glory we will experience when we get to Heaven.

No battle is pleasant when we are in it. No problem seems easy while it is happening to us. But, if we will take the time to consider what lies in our future, we should be able to see that our present problems only serve to increase our future glory, III.

2 Cor. 4:17. See Matt 5:11-12

Think about what lies ahead:

- The Rapture is just ahead - 1 Thes. 4:13-18.
- Your rewards are just ahead - Rev. 22:12.
- The perfect Kingdom of our righteous Savior is just ahead - Rev. 19.

So, while “*weeping may endure for a night, ...joy cometh in the morning*,” Psa. 30:5. As you walk through this life, there will be times when your heart will break. There will be times when the load of life will be heavy to bear. There will be times when

you will suffer because of your faithfulness to Jesus. There will be problems in your body, your family, your heart, and in your mind. There will be times when trouble will dog your steps. When you are in the thick of the battle, remember a couple of blessed thoughts.

- Your suffering will not last forever. You will be released. You are headed home. You will make it!
- Your suffering is working for you. Compare all you face now with where you will be, and what you will be then, and you will see.
- Your suffering here increases your glory there. Remember that whatever God is doing, He is doing for your good and His glory. Rest in His promises and trust that His will is going to be done. Praise Him in spite of what you face in life and remember that awaits you in His presence.

Conc: In his book *The Mute Christian Under The Smarting Rod*, the Puritan writer Thomas Brookes offers the following observation. *“God, who is infinite in wisdom and matchless in goodness, hath ordered our troubles, yea, many troubles to come trooping in upon us on every side. As our mercies, so our crosses seldom come single; they usually come treading one upon the heels of another; they are like April showers, no sooner is one over but another comes. It’s mercy that every affliction is not an execution, every correction not a damnation. The more the afflictions, the more the heart is raised heavenward.”*

- That is the purpose of our problems.

see "Worketh" for you...
2 Cor. 4:17

- They serve to remind us of the sovereign God Who controls all of life.
- They serve to cause us to look toward Heaven to find hope in a time of pain.
- They serve to make us more like Jesus.
- They serve to bring us to our knees in surrender to the perfect will of God.
- They serve to force us out of the comfortable places of life and into a state of deeper service to the Lord.

III. Suffering is your servant!

While our suffering bring pain and sorrow, they also serve to make us grow in the Lord. Thus, they are a gift, just as **1 Pet. 5:6-7** says they are.

- Have you thanked God for the gift of suffering in your life?
- Have you thanked God for sending you difficulties to help you grow to be more like Jesus?
- Have you thanked God for His sovereign care, His endless love and His abundant provisions?
- Have you thanked Him that, while there is groaning here, there will be glory there?

Once there was a man going through great physical problems and one of his legs had to be amputated. That did not arrest the course of his disease, and he ultimately died because of it. Just a few days before the man's death, a minister visited him in the hospital, and the patient said something that perfectly expresses what "***rejoicing in suffering***" means to a Christian: "***I never would***

have chosen one of the trials that I've gone through, but I wouldn't have missed any of them for the world!"

This man had the awareness that his suffering was something of value. He wouldn't have missed it! ~~He wouldn't have chosen it either!~~ That is rejoicing in suffering. Are you there yet? God may not let up until you are, Ill. **2 Cor. 5:7-11**.