

# *Right in God's Sight*

## Studies from the Book of Romans

### Lesson 12

Romans 8:18–39

#### **Romans 8:18–25**

#### From Suffering to Glory

*“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together”* (Romans 8:16–17). These verses are inextricably linked to verse 18, where Paul looks beyond the experience of suffering to the glory that awaits every believer in the next life. In the latter half of chapter 8, Paul will reveal that God works all things to the good in our lives in order that we reach our ultimate goal: becoming like Christ; and we will come to better understand the Holy Spirit’s role in bringing this about.

Read Romans 8:16–39.

1. Compare Paul’s statement regarding the suffering of this present time with that of our future glory. v. 18

Paul was no stranger to suffering. Following his conversion experience on the Damascus Road, Jesus said of him: *“For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake”* (Acts 9:16). There are many instances recorded about Paul’s own suffering in his missionary work for the Lord. His letters often reflect the fact that suffering is very much a part of the believer’s life: *“We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God”* (Acts 14:22b).

#### *Look Closer:*

In order to appreciate Paul’s perspective here, take a moment to look up and reflect on the New Testament verses that speak of Paul’s suffering: 2 Corinthians 1:8–9; 2 Corinthians 4:8–12; 6:4–10; and 11:23–28. Briefly summarize what you find.

- ❖ Given all that Paul endured, what belief took hold of his soul that allowed him to remain confident that everything was worthwhile? See 2 Corinthians 4:16–18.

2. For what does Paul state that all of creation is waiting? vv. 19–22

The curse of which Paul speaks is probably a reference to God cursing the ground in response to man's sin (Genesis 3:17–19). The curse will be lifted when God's people inhabit the new heaven and earth (Revelation 22:3). Presently all of creation reveals the results of sin, groaning with birth pangs to be delivered from its effects. In the future all of creation will be liberated from the effects of sin and will reveal God's glory.

3. Why does Paul say the future will be glorious for the believer? v. 23
- a. What does Paul have to say about the Holy Spirit? 2 Corinthians 1:22 and 5:5
- b. What else does Paul say about this in Ephesians 1:13–14 and 4:30?

The Holy Spirit is our *guarantee—down payment*—the assurance we have from God that in the coming future we will enter into our full inheritance as God's children!

*Selah . . .* Pick which of the following applies to you and record your thoughts below:  
(a) I'm currently focusing on the circumstances and the toll sin has taken; (b) I'm so comfortable in this world that I've forgotten that I am not longing for what God has prepared; (c) I *groan inwardly, eagerly awaiting* all that God has provided for me.

4. According to verses 24–25, what one thing is required of us if we are to live in a way that pleases God?
- a. We are saved by faith that “sees” nothing. What is faith according to Hebrews 11:1?
- b. When we *hope* for what we do not see, what happens to us? Romans 8:25

It is the Holy Spirit *in you* that makes it possible for you, like Paul, to be hard-pressed, yet not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed. Don't allow yourself to lose heart . . . *for **your** light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for **you** a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory—praise God!*

### *Memory Verse:*

*"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."* Romans 8:28

### *Word Wealth:*

Using the resources you have on hand (i.e., additional Bible translations, dictionary, Bible dictionary, concordance, etc.), write a definition for the words below.

**perseverance** (8:25) \_\_\_\_\_

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**predestined** (8:30) \_\_\_\_\_

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**persuaded** (8:38) \_\_\_\_\_

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## **Romans 8:26–30**

## **The Helper**

God promises that ultimately we will understand His purpose in all things. For now it is not for us to know all things. Instead we cling to the hope that behind the scenes of our lives God is working providentially to bring about His perfect plan.

Read Romans 8:18–30 for review, focusing your attention on verses 26–30.

Paul has just stated that it is *hope* that will sustain us through our times of suffering. Next he makes clear that the Holy Spirit sustains us in our weakness.

1. How does the Holy Spirit sustain the believer in times of need? v. 26
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. In what additional way does the Spirit make intercession for the believer? v. 27

Do you at times have difficulty discerning the purpose of God in a situation? Whenever you don't have the answer to your need the Holy Spirit is your Advocate, praying for you with groans that words cannot express. God knows exactly what you need and He searches your heart to hear the Spirit's prayer on your behalf.

### ***For Group Discussion:***

The role of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life was promised by Jesus. Look up the following verses and record what you learn about Him.

- a. John 14:16–17
  - b. John 14:26
  - c. John 15:26
  - d. John 16:7
3. Personal: What is the request on your heart today? Please note it in the space below. If you are willing to place God's will above your own, the Holy Spirit will pray the Father's will and you can be assured of His answer. Lift that prayer to Him now.

The believer's new life in the Spirit is grounded in God's purpose which, Paul says, involved suffering. It is that suffering as well as the Spirit's intercession that moves Paul to write what has become known as the greatest Scripture in the Bible.

4. What is this great promise in verse 28? The promise is not for everyone; who may claim it?

The bottom line is this: nothing happens in the life of the Christian that God does not turn into good when we are devoted to Him. This does not mean that all things that take place are good, rather that all things turn out for the good. Behind everything that takes place in our lives is God's good purpose. This promise is a true faith-builder for those who put their trust in Him.

5. Verses 29–30 reveal God's call to salvation and how it is accomplished.

- a. What is God's purpose? v. 29
- b. What are the three steps involved in God's plan? v. 30

## Romans 8:31–39

## Forever In His Love

These verses have stimulated much controversy over the years, particularly regarding the words *foreknew* and *predestined*. The meaning behind them involves a relationship between God and believers that has an intended goal: to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. Since He sees the end from the beginning, He knows those who will respond to the message of salvation but the choice is ours to make. God's plan of predestination begins the moment we accept Christ into our heart and the goal is reached when we become like Him (1 John 3:2).

Paul has discussed the experience of God's glory that awaits every believer in the next life. He has stated the ultimate goal of becoming like Christ and the Holy Spirit's role in bringing this about. In the remaining verses of chapter 8, Paul draws this section to a close by reflecting on the wonder of God's love behind it all. The Good News brings with it the assurance that God is with us and for us!

Read Romans 8:31–39.

In light of all that he has mentioned up to this point, Paul closes this passage by asking the reader: "*What then shall we say to these things?*" He poses five important rhetorical questions to underscore his point.

1. Write out those questions in your own words.

a. Question #1 (v. 31):

b. Question #2 (v. 32):

c. Question #3 (v. 33):

d. Question #4 (v. 34):

e. Question #5 (v. 35):

2. List the difficult examples Paul puts forth in verse 35?

In verse 36, Paul quotes from Psalm 44:22 to again remind believers that they will indeed have to deal with suffering but, despite all these difficulties, nothing whatsoever can separate us from God's love—the victory belongs to us!

3. Not only are believers never separated from God, how does Paul refer to them in verse 37? Are *you* standing firm under this banner?
4. What concluding word of assurance does Paul give in vv. 38–39?

### *Selah . . .*

The word *persuaded* literally means “I stand convinced”—there is no doubt! The matter is settled once and for all. The question to consider today is: Are **you** fully *persuaded*?

*“The Christian life is essentially life in the Spirit, that is to say, a life that is animated, sustained, directed and enriched by the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit true Christian discipleship would be inconceivable, indeed impossible.” John Stott*

# *My Roman's Road*

Listen . . . Learn . . . Live . . . God's Truth!

Take a look back at this week's lesson. Briefly recap what you learned this week and how you intend to live it out.

1. What lesson in your study became real to you this week?

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2. How do you intend to apply this lesson to your daily life?

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## *Memory Verse:*

Write down what you learned about God from this week's memory verse.

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Write out the verse from memory.

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## *Prayer Request:*

Write out your most earnest prayer request and lift it to the Lord.

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## Notes

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