

# Romans 6... 7...8

DEVOTIONAL STUDIES FROM THE  
MEN'S MORNING FELLOWSHIP

**Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

**Romans 8:19** For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

**Romans 8:20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope;

**Romans 8:21** because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

**Romans 8:22** For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

Whenever the apostle Paul discusses **sufferings** I think it's a good idea to refresh our minds with the trials he endured. In Second Corinthians 11:23-28 he wrote,

**2 Corinthians 11:23** Are they ministers of Christ? - I speak as a fool - I *am* more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often.

**2 Corinthians 11:24** From the Jews five times I received forty *stripes* minus one.

**2 Corinthians 11:25** Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep;

**2 Corinthians 11:26** in journeys often, *in* perils of waters, *in* perils of robbers, *in* perils of *my own* countrymen, *in* perils of the Gentiles, *in* perils in the city, *in* perils in the wilderness, *in* perils in the sea, *in* perils among false brethren;

**2 Corinthians 11:27** in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness -

**2 Corinthians 11:28** besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches.

He wrote those words in 56AD and would live another ten years before being martyred. He wrote those words before being almost beaten to death in the Court of the Gentiles; before the shipwreck on the Island of Malta; and before being bitten by a poisonous snake.

It is thus with awe we read,

**Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Sufferings are the dominant feature of **this present time** in which we are living. He'll explain why in verse twenty. We should **consider**, or *judge*, them as not even **worthy** of comparison to the **glory that shall be revealed in** you. In other words, rather than getting all worked up over our sufferings we should simply accept them as par for the course and keep serving the Lord.

How different is our attitude! We make such a big deal over our sufferings, but even more over the sufferings of others. We feel as though we are not very Christian if we tell others to endure, persevere, or tough it out.

Let's use Paul as an example of a more biblical way to treat sufferings. When on his way to Jerusalem Paul was repeatedly told by prophecy that imprisonment and sufferings awaited him there. The believers along the way begged and pleaded with him to not go there. Their begging and pleading was a greater trial than what awaited him! It was par for his course to go to Jerusalem, be imprisoned, and suffer. He accepted it as part of his necessary service to the Lord.

With compassion we must adopt the attitude of Paul – even towards others.

When **shall glory be revealed in us**? Certainly the Lord glorifies Himself through our suffering. But this looks forward to the future, as we next read,

**Romans 8:19** For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

**Revealing** is from the same Greek root word that is used of the revelation of Jesus Christ. It is looking forward to our **revealing** in our new bodies that will be fit for eternity.

God's **creation** was good until Adam and Eve sinned. Then it began to feel the effects of their sin. Now it awaits the unfolding of God's plan of redemption.

I like to point out that the universe only exists as a place for God to meet with mankind. It's pretty elaborate; it's extravagant; it's all there only to reveal God's great love for us.

It's good to be reminded that we live in a fallen world. When people wonder why God allows so much suffering the answer is that man sinned. The state of the universe is our fault. God is moving to correct what we have distorted. One day creation will be renewed.

**Romans 8:20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected *it* in hope;

**Creation** was tied to our decision in the Garden of Eden. When we fell into sin, sin affected all of creation. God made it that way. But He **subjected it in hope**. Things won't always be as they are. The future is full of hope. I'd say that the only hope, really, is the future redemption of creation once God is through dealing with the sin issue.

I think we ought to be good stewards of God's creation and even more so in light of its fallen condition. But ultimately only God can resolve the issues of nature and the environment.

And He will:

**Romans 8:21** because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Jon Courson:

Creation is hurting. Julie Andrews notwithstanding, the hills may be alive with the sound of music - but they're singing in a minor key. Why? Because all creation was cursed when man sinned in the Garden of Eden. Consequently, the more you study nature, along with its beauty, the more you see its cruelty. We enjoy the delicate flower, but shudder at the devastating flood. Earthquakes and tornadoes, thunder and avalanche are as much a part of nature as gentle streams and peaceful meadows. That is why nature groans and waits for the day when the King comes back and for the day when the trees of the field will clap their hands.

Once we receive new bodies we enjoy **the glorious liberty** God intended for our first parents and their offspring. We will be free to

love God and fellowship with Him forever. We will be free to enjoy His created universe as children enjoy an amusement park. Everything will be an E-ticket ride and there will be no lines!

**Romans 8:22** For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.

You may have encountered the phrase, “the throes of death.” Even though fallen, creation is not in the throes of death but rather **in labor with birth pangs** to be delivered!

The worst is yet to come. You can read about it in the Revelation. But just like the birth of a baby, once delivered the pain gives way to joy.

**Until now** means during the current age in which we live and until the Lord returns. The underlying assumption of these verses is that you and creation will suffer more-and-more until the coming of the Lord.

The horrible tragedies, both natural and those men inflict upon other men, are not God’s fault. They are not even God’s judgment. They are the inevitable result of sin entering God’s creation by our choice.

Yes, it was our choice – mine and yours. Adam and Eve represented each of their offspring. They chose for us and we reap what they sowed. - being changed to bring change -

But Jesus chose for us, too. He chose obedience and to die on the Cross in our place. In Him we have redemption. Wait for it patiently.