

Groaning and Glory

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August 31, 2016

(Romans 8: 17, 18) Now if we are children, then we are heirs-heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

I. The groaning of creation.

(Romans 8: 19-22) For the creation waits in eager expectations for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

A. What this groaning is not.

B. What this groaning is.

(Genesis 3: 17-18) To Adam he said, "Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it,' "Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.

(Matthew 19:28) Jesus said to them, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

(Isaiah 35: 1) The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom.

II. The groaning of the Christians.

(Romans 8:23) Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

A. Three negative reasons for our groaning.

1. We groan because of the presence of sin in the world.

2. We groan because of the power of sin in our bodies.

(Romans 7:24) What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?

3. We groan because of the practice of sin by those around us.

B. Three positive reasons for our groaning.

1. We groan because we have been given the Holy Spirit to guarantee our glory.

2. We groan because we look forward to our adoption being final.

3. We groan because we anticipate the redemption of the body.

III. The groaning of the comforter.

(Romans 8: 26-27) In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God.

A. What this groaning is not.

B. What the groaning is.

(2 Corinthians 4: 17-18) For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

