

LOOKING FORWARD TO GLORY

MAY 28, 2023

WORSHIP

One Way, Everlasting God,
Yet Not I But Through Christ
In Me, Hymn of Heaven

WELCOME

What are some things that
you are looking forward to
this week, month or year?

WORD

ROMANS 8:18-27

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly 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 also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now. ²³ And not only this, but also, we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, through perseverance we wait eagerly for it. ²⁶ Now in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; ²⁷ and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

In **Romans 8**, we are winding down the focus on sanctification that we see in **Romans** chapters **6** to **8**. In verses **18-27**, we will discover what the motivation ought to be for us to endure sufferings. The Greek word for “**sufferings**” used in this chapter is **pathēma** (externally, a suffering, misfortune, calamity, evil, affliction). **John 15:19-20** tells us that this suffering is related to the persecution, even hatred, of the world towards those who follow Jesus. It is not the normal struggle and hardships we go through because of our own wrongdoing, or the difficulties we encounter as a result of living in an imperfect world.

Are you going through persecution or discriminated against because of following Jesus? Or experience pain and obstacles as you seek to obey Jesus in everyday life in your marriage, at work or school, etc.? Suffering is part of the journey of following Jesus but is incomparable to the glory that will be revealed to us (**v.18**). Paul is encouraging the readers of his letter to endure. Stephen’s example of looking forward to the glory awaiting him in heaven as he was being stoned for proclaiming Christ is something that gives us a picture of what Paul talks about here. So, what does this “**future glory**” (**Gk: doxa**) look like?

1. FUTURE GLORY IS DECAY-FREE (Romans 8:19-21)

When Adam and Eve sinned against God (**Genesis 3**), they were not the only ones who suffered the consequence of their rebellion against Him. All creation was placed under a curse—subjected to “**futility**” and corruption (**v.20**). Amazingly, **Romans 8:19** tells us that all of creation longs for this coming glory so that it will be set free into the glory of God’s children! This future glory means that we and all of creation will no longer experience death and decay. This future glory will transform our bodies into glorious, decay-free bodies (**Philippians 3:21**)! We may not have all the answers to our problems now, but we have a future glory that we can look forward to.

2. FUTURE GLORY IS INEXPLICABLE JOY (Romans 8:22)

Childbirth is pain with relief—it results in an inexplicable joy. This is the picture that is Paul uses to describe how all creation (trees, oceans, animals, etc.) groans in its suffering now, in anticipation of the redemption that it will share with God’s children in this future glory.

3. FUTURE GLORY IS A PROMISE OF SO MUCH MORE (Romans 8:23)

God, through the Holy Spirit has given us a foretaste of what this future is going to be like. In fact, we are told to “**taste and see that the LORD is good...**” (**Psalms 34:8a**). One of the best ways to experience today the glory that awaits us in the future is through the relationships we have with our Dgroup family. As we disciple others towards Christlikeness, as we serve God together, go through life together in worship, we have a taste of what heaven will be like. Have you tasted this glory?

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Someday, we will be given “**full rights**” as God’s adopted children and though we may not know now exactly what that means, here is what we do know we will have:

- New bodies
- Freedom from sorrow and pain (**Revelations 21:4**)
- Dwelling with God (**Revelations 21:3**)
- Being with the King of Glory (**Revelations 5:11-13**)

More than any other blessing there may be in this future glory, the one that matters the most is the fact that we will be with Jesus, the King of glory, to give Him all the praise and worship He deserves!

4. FUTURE GLORY GIVES US HOPE (**Romans 8:24-25**)

Finally, future glory gives us hope. In the Greek, this word is “**elpis**”. It means **absolute certainty**; we can be 100% sure of this glory! It has been observed that people who tragically commit suicide are those who have lost all hope. That’s why we need hope to endure suffering for righteousness.

When we already know what the glorious ending will be for us who are in Christ, what happens before then will not worry us, or cause us to lose hope because we know how it will all end—in victory! So, when you’re in a compromising situation at work, school, etc. and you choose to stand firm for your faith and convictions, you might be persecuted or suffer financially, relationally for it. But we can endure with hope because of the glory that awaits us. We end our study of **Romans 8:18-27** with a “bonus” that the Bible tells us. As we look forward to glory, the Holy Spirit helps us (**Gk.: synantilambanomai**). God is saying, “**I’ve got you, journey with Me...I’ll take you through!**”. But before we can experience a life empowered by the Holy Spirit, we need a new heart (**Ezekiel 36:26-27**). It’s not our ability or experience that will cause us to endure suffering or be able to look forward to glory. It is the Spirit of God who will enable us. To experience future glory, you must have Jesus. Give your heart to Christ today, and let God give you a new heart and a new spirit through the Holy Spirit!

The longest-serving monarch in modern history, Queen Elizabeth II recently passed away at the age of 96. In the book “**The Servant Queen...and the King she serves**” (where God is the King referred to), she said this:

“I know just how much I rely on my faith to guide me through the good times and the bad. Each day is a new beginning. I know that the only way to live my life is to try to do what is right, to take the long view, to give my best in all that the day brings, and to put my trust in God...I draw strength from the message of hope in the Christian gospel.”

Those who are in Christ are all God’s children, and servants of the King. Look forward to glory as we endure suffering for Christ!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have I been suffering for Jesus lately?
2. How have I dealt with these sufferings/challenges?
3. In what ways can I “look forward to glory” to better respond to and endure these sufferings/challenges?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for those who are losing hope or have lost hope for the future because of their sufferings. Find ways to reach out to them and share about your hope of a future glory with Him. Spend some time with them; be with them in their suffering and share the gos-pel to them that they too, may share in this hope and look forward to glory.

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

II. Country and the World

- War in Ukraine to end; peace and order restored; lives be rebuilt, and people come to Christ in their suffering.
- Upright and moral governance of public servants and a God-centered Philippines and Canada.
- Repentance and salvation for government leaders, citizens.

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends

MEMORY VERSE

ROMANS 8:18

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.”