

Walking Through Romans to Christ

Romans chapter 8, part 2 “The Christian and Suffering”

Righteousness by Faith Series

Opening/REVIEW: Is suffering something the Christian can expect? (v.17). This is something that’s very important for us to understand. I once met a woman, going door to door, who said, **“I don’t believe in God.”** “I don’t care about Him. He doesn’t love me or care about me because he let my little brother die. I don’t want to hear anything about Him.” I quickly tried to share a few ideas with her, but didn’t have too much of a chance before she was ready to close the door. Certainly, God doesn’t like to see these terrible things happening either, but they do happen because we live in a sinful world. Someday soon, God will put an end to these things. As for now, we must consider that times of trial will be sure to come in this world. And just before the return of Christ, we’re sure to see a great time of trouble. Let’s see what the Bible presents to us on this topic of “the Christian and suffering.”

1. Suffering and Character. Why do the Children of God suffer? (v.17-23)

- a. **First, it’s to be expected:** “all who live godly in Christ Jesus shall...” (2 Timothy 3:12). Moses chose “rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to...” (Hebrews 11:25, 26). (He suffered reproach and persecution).
- b. **Suffering Reveals Character and causes us to grow** (v.17,18) Whole creation is waiting to see God’s “glory” (character) reproduced in His people. Heaven is proud of God’s faithful children who live by the Spirit in times of Trouble (**Job 1:8**)
- c. We get to be free of the bondage to sin, so does the Creation (man’s sin created suffering in this world in the first place).
- d. **(v.23)** “Firstfruits of the Spirit”—(the first fruits are the early signs of the coming harvest and often tell how great it will be). “Waiting for the adoption”—We may be legally adopted (purchased), but the **adoption isn’t final until the parents come to pick up their new children.** So, it shall be when Christ comes!

2. Hope, Help, and God’s plan through it all (v.24-30)

- a. **Hope** and Faith go together. (you believe that deliverance is coming)—**Don’t ever give up.** If the Christian life gets hard, if you feel discouraged....don’t ever give up. KEEP AT IT. The Lord is real! He’s there for us! We can spend eternity with Him. **Hope keeps you going when things get hard.**
- b. **HELP:** We don’t know how to pray as we should. God helps us. (v.26, 27)
 - i. **“he remembers that we are dust” (Psalms 103:14)**
 - ii. The whole Trinity helps us (v.27)
 - iii. Christ our Mediator, w/Holy Spirit minister before the Father (**Rev. 8:3, 4**)
 - iv. The **CONDITION** is that we are SEEKING His Help. “Call upon me and I will answer...” (**Psalm 50:15; 91:15**). “Seek me, and ye shall find” (Luke 11:9).
 - v. **(v.28) God will bring good things out of bad things (for those who trust in Him)**
 1. JOSEPH—Bad day when put into a pit by his brothers, stripped, and sold as a slave. Then later accused of Adultery and imprisoned. (but God

- brought the best for him out of every situation—taught leadership skills in prison, etc., and finally brought him peace) (Gen. 37-41)
2. Paul and Silas in Prison—brought good out of it—whole family baptized (Acts 16:27-33).
 - c. **God’s FOREKNOWLEDGE and Plan.** (knows us before we’re born)
 - i. **Ex. Cyrus**—(Isaiah 45:1-5) God’s plan is for our salvation—to be made like Christ. “if haply...” we’d seek and find Him. **(Acts 17:26, 27)** Predestined to be made like Christ.
 - ii. **“God is not willing that any should perish...” (2 Peter 3:9)**
 - iii. **Foreknowledge does not cause.** (ex. Auto accident—you’re watching 3 cars at an intersection—one running a red light, one sitting beside another and cannot see the speeding car, then the car pulls out.
 - iv. God calls all men **(Rev. 22:17)**. But he knows who will be responsive. “glorified,” rather, “will glorify” (see v.18). Some ask, “did He only call certain ones?” No, many are called, few chosen” **(Matt. 20:16)** because not everyone responds.
 3. **Does pain and suffering mean that we are separated from God’s Love and concern? (v.31-39)**
 - a. God is not sparing any efforts to save us—He’s giving it all—even Jesus, so you know!!
 - b. God’s “elect”. “Ye are a chosen generation...” **(1 Peter 2:9)** (those who receive Him)
 - c. With Christ working as our High priest—Satan can say nothing against us. **(Rev. 12:10)**
 - d. (v.35) Just because we may suffer, does that mean we are separated from God’s Love? No way. **(think of Job)**—only Satan would have us to “curse God...”
 - i. **Job 2:10 “shall we receive good...and shall we not receive evil”** (By the way, who causes the suffering?—not God, though He does allow to an extent)
 - ii. Physical suffering? Having to die for Christ? Pain? **What is that? He still loves me!** (We had better remember this!!!)
 - e. Many have DIED for Jesus. **(If they did it to Jesus, they’ll do it to His followers)**
 - f. **JESUS SUFFERED (He knows what it’s like)** “a man of sorrows, acquainted w/grief” (Isaiah 53:3)
 - g. In suffering, perhaps we may wonder, “Lord don’t you love us???” Yes, He does. We may feel pain, or hurt at some time, but by FAITH (not by feeling), we shall overcome. Christ, the most beloved, felt separation in His suffering, because of sin (Matthew 27:46). But Stephen felt God’s peace and comfort in the moment of death (Acts 7:54-60).
 - h. We’re promised persecution **(Mark 10:30) “w/persecutions”**, then eternal life in the world to come. Let us “rejoice and be exceeding glad” for great is our reward in heaven (Matthew 5:10-12). It may seem like Satan is winning when we perish, but he’s not. (Nothing can separate us from God’s love)

Today’s Appeal: Will you seek to learn to Trust God today, so that we can trust Him in any situation? ____