

Cornerstone Bible Church

Groaning with Creation (2)

In Hope of the Resurrection

(Romans 8:18-25)

Survey of Romans part 27

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How do I know I am saved? Birthmarks of being a Christian

Paul expands on the subject

Text: Romans 8:13-17

Outline:

1. Living in the Spirit (verse 12-13)

a) The mortification of sin

2. Guided by the Spirit (verses 13-14)

a) To Freedom from a slavish fear

b) To Intimacy with God

3. The Witness of the Spirit (verses 15-17)

a) Of our Adoption, in Christ

b) Of our Inheritance, in Christ

c) Of our Hope even in suffering, because of Christ

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In the following verses (18 to 25) Paul expands on the subject of hope in suffering, as part of the overall theme of **Living in the Spirit**

Groaning with Creation in hope of the Resurrection

Text: Romans 8:18-25

¹⁸ [Because] I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

¹⁹ [because] the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

²⁰ [because] the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it,

²¹ in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

²² [because] we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

Groaning with Creation in hope of the Resurrection

Text: Romans 8:18-25

²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

²⁴ [because] in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. [because] who hopes for what he sees?

²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

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Introduction: “earth is not disposable?”

- We cannot destroy what is not ours. Psalm 24:1 “The earth is the Lord’s and everything in it. The world and those who dwell in it.”
- We do not worship earth, but God who created it.
- However, creation is presently under a curse.
- We live in a fallen world, because of sin.
- Yet it is that **fallenness which breeds our hope** in the Spirit, as we wait for the resurrection and renewal of creation.
- **Thesis:** Creation Groans and so do we, but in hope

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18 Hopeful realism

¹⁸ [Because] I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us

- Hopeless fatalism => Determinism
- Biblical Christianity is realistic and hopeful
- Hebrew Parallelism: present sufferings vis-a-vis the glories to come.

19 The Longing of Creation

[because] the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

- Figure of Speech: “Personification”, Paul ascribes personal qualities to creation i.e. “longing”
- The “Apocalipsis” of the children of God *avpoka,luyin apo / kalupto*
- The public manifestation and unveiling of the children of God comp Matthew 13:43, Daniel 12:3, 1 Corinthians 6:2, 1 Corinthians 15:42-43

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20-21 The Fall and its consequent curse on creation.

²⁰[because] the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, ²¹in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

- Today, creation is accursed because of Adam's sin
- The Theodyssey dilemma.
- Why does an Omnipotent and Loving God allow suffering?
He is neither omnipotent nor loving.

22 An undisputable reality.

²²[because] we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

- Creation groans from the beginning
- Atmospheric Calamities, Telluric Disasters, Ecological Disruptions, Man-made Wrecks in Nature.

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22 An undisputable reality.

²²[because] we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

- A note on environmental protection:
 - ✓ Adam was charged to tend a garden and rule the earth.
 - ✓ It is morally upright to be a good steward of creation.
 - ✓ Proverbs 12:10 “A righteous man has regard for the life of his beast, But the compassion of the wicked is cruel.”
 - ✓ It is wicked to act cruelly - even to beasts - for the sake of greed
 - ✓ It is wicked to destroy God’s creation and harm our posterity resources for the sake of sordid gain.
 - ✓ **Leviticus 26:33-34** The deportations prophesied in judgment for Israel’s greed, not letting the land rest

We stopped here last week

A note on the legitimate use of earth animals and resources:

- ✓ Mining and forging were legitimate uses of earth resources from the beginning.
- ✓ God gave Noah Plants and Animals of the earth to eat.
- ✓ The Angel of the Lord “ate” with the Patriarchs.
- ✓ The Priests were allowed to eat from the altar.
- ✓ Meat, fat, cheese and butter are not proscribed dietary items.
- ✓ Jesus enabled the miraculous catch.
- ✓ Jesus broke bread and fish for the people.
- ✓ Jesus fed fish to the disciples after the Resurrection.
- ✓ God commanded Peter to kill and eat. (yes it had a context)
- ✓ Paul said “eat of anything that it is sold in the meat market”

Groaning with Creation in hope of the Resurrection

23 Believers also groan with creation.

²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies

- Believers do not escape the effects of the curse.
We work, grieve, toil, suffer, get sick, hunger, thirst and die.
- Believers are not spared from human sufferings.
- Ecclesiastes 9:2 “It is the same for all. There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked; for the good, for the clean, and for the unclean; for the man who offers a sacrifice and for the one who does not sacrifice. As the good man is, so is the sinner; as the swearer is, so is the one who is afraid to swear. ³This is an evil in all that is done under the sun, that there is one fate for all men.”

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- However, Paul is referring to deeper and greater sufferings than those caused by natural circumstances.
- **The longing for our final redemption!**
- We will be delivered from “this body of death.”
- The longing for having our **salvation completed**: the redemption of our bodies at the resurrection.

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23b-24 the believer's hope.

“We wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴[because] in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. [because] who hopes for what he sees?”

- We groan while waiting for our adoption as sons ...
 - ❖ => wait, aren't we adopted?
 - ❖ Yes, but we have not received the inheritance yet.
- This is a reference to the release of creation from the curse, bondage and consequences of sin.
- The Bible calls it “New heavens and new earth.” or “The Regeneration”

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“We wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴[because] in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. [because] who hopes for what he sees?”

- New heavens and new earth.
 - ✓ A Renewed material creation. Matthew 19:38 – the Regeneration
 - ✓ The Glory of God displayed in creation without a veil.
 - ✓ Renewed Order, Beauty and Bliss in the material creation. Isaiah 66
 - ✓ Righteousness dwelling on earth. 2 Peter 3:13
 - ✓ The knowledge of the Lord covering the earth. Isaiah 11:9
 - ✓ The purpose for which we were created restored. Isaiah 43:7
 - ✓ Finally home. No more longing, no more weeping, or clamoring. Revelation 21:4
 - ✓ The second Adam restoring what the first Adam lost.
 - ✓ Paradise recovered. Revelation 21 & 22.

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“We wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴[because] in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. [because] who hopes for what he sees?”

- Animals in eternity?

Why not?

- ✓ Who filled the earth and the oceans with animals? The devil or God?
- ✓ Why are there even celestial creatures with faces of animals?
- ✓ What does Isaiah 11 mean then?
- ✓ Why is Isaiah 11 figurative but Revelation 21-22 not?

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25 Hope breeds perseverance

²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

- If it is hope, it is still “unrealized gain”. It is ours, but we don’t have it yet.
- “The Already but Not Yet” of the Kingdom.
- We do not live for the rewards of an accursed world.
- Persevering and enduring hope is a hallmark of faith.

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CONCLUSION

We live in the shadow of this crucifixion dialog (Luke 23)

³⁹ And one of the criminals who were hanged there was hurling abuse at Him, saying, "Are You not the Christ? Save Yourself and us!"

⁴⁰ But the other answered, and rebuking him said, "Do you not even fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?"

⁴¹ "And we indeed justly, for we are receiving what we deserve for our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong."

⁴² And he was saying, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!"

⁴³ And He said to him, "Truly I say to you, **today you shall be with Me** in Paradise."

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CONCLUSION

Heaven is Jesus.

- The Wedding feast of the Lamb

Revelation 19: 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

⁸And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

⁹And he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me,

"These are true words of God."

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CONCLUSION

Heaven is Jesus.

- The Wedding feast of the Lamb
- The Tabernacle of God with man → Emanuel

Revelation 21: 22 And I saw no temple in it, for the Lord God, the Almighty, and **the Lamb, are its temple.** ²³And the city has no need of the sun or of the moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God has illumined it, and **its lamp is the Lamb.**

Groaning with Creation in hope of the Resurrection

CONCLUSION

Heaven is Jesus.

- The Wedding feast of the Lamb
- The Tabernacle of God with man → Emanuel
- The Temple of God with free access to His people

Revelation 22:3 And there shall no longer be any curse; and the **throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it**, and His bond-servants shall serve Him;

⁴and they shall see His face, and His name *shall be* on their foreheads.

⁵And there shall no longer be *any* night; and they shall not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God shall illumine them; and they shall reign forever and ever.

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