



The Spirit and Our Suffering

Lesson 11 | Romans 8:18-39

As believers we face two primary threats to our faith – the *internal* threat of our own sin and the *external* threat of our suffering. Paul has addressed the problem of our sin in the first half of chapter 8, and now he turns to the problem of our suffering.

Creation's Groaning (8:18-22)

The _____ of sin on creation (8:18-20)

The suffering we feel is part of a much bigger problem than our own sorrow. Because of man's sin, the entire universe has been subjected to death, decay, pain, and misery.

The _____ from sin for the creation (8:21-22)

But the curse is not the final fate for the creation. Paul here says that all of creation is eagerly awaiting the day that it is set free from its bondage to corruption, that is, its captivity to death and decay. When Christ returns and sets up His kingdom, all will be set right.

Our Groaning (8:23-30)

After beginning with the big picture of what is going on in the world, Paul focuses on believers specifically. The groaning of the world is not just something around us; we also find ourselves struggling with the emptiness and suffering of life on a sin-cursed world.

The _____ in our suffering (8:23-25)

We hope with confidence for the day when we receive our full sonship, which Paul explains will happen when our bodies are redeemed. As believers, we look forward to the day when God will set



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all things right and will end suffering once and for all. Our hope through suffering is that God will end suffer and that the glory at the end of life will be far greater the suffering we face now.

The _____ in our suffering (8:26-27)

But God does not just leave us alone to suffer until the day He rescues us in dramatic fashion. While we must go through suffering now, we are not forced to go through that suffering alone. The Spirit of God feels deeply the pain and misery that we experience, and He goes before God the Father on our behalf.

The _____ of our suffering (8:28-30)

God is sovereign and has a plan through the terrible things that happen to us. Scripture never says that everything that happens to us is good. But it does say that God uses all things *for our good!* And that good is that we look like Jesus. God wants a host of men and women who act, talk, and think like Jesus, and He uses suffering to that end.

God's Love (8:31-39)

_____ of God's love in the gospel (8:31-32)

Paul makes a startling claim here "if God be for us, who can be against us?" **God is for us!** If we're honest, we often find ourselves uneasy and unsure of what God *really* thinks about us. Paul knows the truth that God is for us will be hard to accept, so he argues for it by looking to the cross. The most extravagant gift ever given in the history of the world was when God gave His Son. If God did that for you, what could possibly separate you from His love?

_____ based on God's love in the gospel (8:33-39)

Some worry "God can't love me because of all I've done" while others wonder "How could God love me after all He's allowed?" But God gave His only Son for us? Believers battling with the guilt of past sins can confidently say, "I have been forgiven!" While believers battling with unimaginable suffering can say, "No matter how bad what I'm going through right now might be, God has demonstrated clearly that He loves me!"

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