

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 7TH - 8TH, 2021 // BOOK OF ROMANS

NO COMPARISON (ROMANS 8:18-25)

A NEW WAY OF LIVING

The whole premise of chapters 6-8 is that the follower of Jesus is given a "newness of life" because of God's Spirit in them. The second part of Romans hammers this home.

- The new life we've been given is based on the promises of God (V18-25), the purpose of God (V26-30), and the protection of God (V31-39).

"NOT WORTH COMPARING"

Paul reminds us that God has promised to prepare a place for us after this life (Jn. 14:3).

- The Bible calls us foreigners in this world (1Pt. 2:11) which tells us this world is temporary.
- The Bible also tells us that we will suffer, especially for Jesus' name, but **the suffering of this life is nothing compared to the glory of heaven.**

WE HAVE BEEN UNDER A CURSE

Since Gen. 3 the world and all of the people in it have suffered under the "futility" of sin. One day Jesus will return and lift that curse and we will live in perfection with Christ forever.

- Those with eyes to see **notice and feel the "groaning...labor pains" of a broken world and Christians "eagerly waiting...the redemption of our bodies."**

THERE SHOULD BE A LONGING

If one claims to have a relationship with Jesus but fails to not only see the futility of this life but is also absent of a longing for the next life, their relationship with God is superficial.

- **The state of humanity should bother us! The pain that the world experiences should drive us to our knees for the lost! Where is our sense of urgency?**

THE SPIRIT IN US IS A TASTE OF THE FUTURE

Not only the Spirit in us, but the fruit and giftings of the Spirit of God give us a sample of the power and perfection of an eternity with Jesus.

- Yes, we will "groan" in this life, but because we have the Spirit we can be "pressed down but not crushed" (2 Cor. 4). **A relationship with Jesus gives us peace and joy amongst chaos and despair.**

"...IF WE HOPE FOR WHAT WE DO NOT SEE"

Paul encourages us to hold on! In the middle of such evil it is sometimes hard to see the Light, but He is present and in us if we follow Christ, and He will give us the patience to "eagerly wait" until this mess is over.

- **Are we looking up waiting for God's return, or have we become too entrenched in this culture?**

PURPOSE (ROMANS 8:26-30)

NOT JUST A PROMISE, BUT A PURPOSE

Jesus gives us the promise of a better afterlife, but He also gives us purpose and strength in this life.

- The hope we have in Christ sustains us in hard times. In the same way, **the Holy Spirit in us gives us the ability and purpose to stay strong and help others as well.** We grow stronger through prayer.

"BECAUSE HE INTERCEDES FOR THE SAINTS"

God knows that we will not always have the correct words or even the ability to formulate our thoughts, so the Spirit that lives in us "intercedes," or intervenes on our behalf so we get the help we need from God.

- We must have prayer and Bible time. **When we live connected to Jesus, He fills in the gaps and gives us strength.**

"WE KNOW ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR THE GOOD OF THOSE WHO I LOVE GOD..."

This famous and often misunderstood passage doesn't mean that all things that happen are God's will, but for people that have a relationship with Jesus, whatever happens in their life will eventually bring God glory, and **when He receives glory, believers benefit.**

IT HAS TO BECOME LESS ABOUT US

V28 also doesn't mean that we get what we desire (our will), but that God's desires (His will) will eventually be fulfilled. This means God's overall plan cannot be thwarted.

- This doesn't mean we can't live out of God's will; we can. But, **to the true Christian, our desires evolve into God's desires and we know that His way always triumphs.**

"FOR THOSE HE FOREKNEW HE ALSO PREDESTINED"

God's purpose is to conform willing people to the "image of His Son." His method is our adoption into His family through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross.

- We can easily fall into the trap of trying to understand a God that is beyond our comprehension. **What we must know is that God is sovereign and He is good.**

MISSING THE POINT

V29-30 have been the center of debate for centuries, but the point isn't arguing over what "foreknew" and "predestined" mean, but to focus on the fact that God has a purpose.

- This passage is about God, not mankind. **The key element is God. He knows, He calls, He justifies (declares innocent), and He gets all the glory.**

BUT PASTOR, I CAME TO ARGUE!

If one continually asks if Christians can lose their salvation or if they debate that holiness is a staple of the Christian life, one could also argue that their relationship with Jesus is shallow if it really exists at all.

- **If we are honoring God with our mind, body, and soul, we need to rest in His understanding, not ours.**

PERSUADED (ROMANS 8:31-39)

"WHAT THEN ARE WE TO SAY ABOUT THESE THINGS?"

Not only does God promise a perfect future and have a purpose for us, He also protects us until this life is over.

- Paul's simple and profound declaration, "If God is for us, who is against us?" should be at the core of those that have a relationship with Jesus. **If we're with Him, nothing can tear us away from the hope He gives.**

HE HAS GIVEN US HIS BEST

Paul says that God didn't even spare His Son, but "offered Him up for us all." If God was willing to do that, why would He not give us "everything" we need in this life in preparation for the next life?

- The problem is **too many people aren't humble enough to admit we need saving, or they're too entitled to live selfishly.**

"GOD IS THE ONE WHO JUSTIFIES"

Because all people have fallen short, only God can declare us good or bad. It is a world that is fallen to sin that creates a self-righteous standard and accuses others based on it.

- Because we are forgiven and set free from sin's claims, **we are justified by Jesus. We should still acknowledge evil and lovingly share the solution: Jesus.**

"WHO CAN SEPARATE US FROM THE LOVE OF CHRIST?" (V35-39)

This is another famous and debated passage in Romans. This passage isn't about losing salvation, but the fact that God's people will always have all of hell against them. 1 Jn 5:19 says, **"We know that we are of God, and the whole world is under the sway of the evil one."**

LET'S NOT MISS THE POINT

If we have fellowship with God, nothing can tear us from Him and His promises.

- No affliction, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger or sword can detour the Christian **because true followers of God have always been "put to death" and "counted as sheep to be slaughtered" and they willingly do so for Jesus' name.**

"NO...WE ARE MORE THAN CONQUERORS."

Regardless of what comes, if we are walking with Christ we will conquer the world because He already has (Jn. 16:33).

- This doesn't mean we don't struggle or occasionally fall, but that **we can get back up and move forward by the power of the Holy Spirit in us.** True faith overcomes a life enslaved to evil.

THE 3 MOST IMPORTANT WORDS IN THE BIBLE

It is impossible to step into a genuine Christian life without the 3 most important words in scripture, "I am persuaded.

- **We must trust and live like neither "death nor life, nor angels or rulers, nor things present or to come, nor powers...or any created thing" can separate us from God's love.**

IT IS A QUESTION OF DIRECTION

- IF we have a true relationship with Jesus, we have no fear of our pasts, the present evil in the world, or a future of hardships.
- We also have no fear of hell or a "loss" of salvation IF we are living a life dedicated to Jesus. The Christian life isn't perfection, but direction.

OUR TITLES WON'T SAVE US

- Regardless of our public façade or what theological camp we subscribe to, it is a relationship with Jesus that saves our souls. Remember, "a tree is known by its fruit."
- We can fool everyone except for the One that created us and knows us inside and out. Are we what we claim to be?

IT BOILS DOWN TO PERSUASION

- Are we truly persuaded that God is everything He says He is? If so, why do we run to so many other things?
- Are we persuaded that we can be overcomers of the evil in our lives?
- Have we become lovers of the world? Or, do we have a "groaning" for the life to come?
- If we are persuaded that He is good, then we must know there are consequences for evil. Are we addressing the evil in us?
- Are we persuaded that we are invited to be made into the image of God's Son? Do we know that we are not alone, that we are loved, and nothing can separate us from God's love?