



HOW TO MAKE SENSE OUT OF SUFFERING

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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How to Make Sense Out of Suffering

SERMON REFERENCE: Romans 8:18-39

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #1980

If we live long enough on this Earth, we will know sorrow, disappointment, and pain in a personal way. Suffering is inevitable, and if we aren't careful, it can consume us.

If we want to make sense of our suffering, there are three words to consider from Romans 8:18-23: bondage, liberty, and hope.

We must first consider the bondage of yesterday's curse. Sin entered the perfect world God created because, in His love for us, God gave us free will to choose. Because mankind chose to sin, we are condemned according to the law of the Bible. God could not destroy evil without destroying freedom. Because there is evil, there is suffering. Though our suffering cannot be destroyed, God has defeated evil.

Romans 8:1 says, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit."

Liberty is tomorrow's conquest. Through Christ's death and resurrection, we are liberated from the curse of sin. There is no more condemnation for our sin; and when Jesus comes again, He will restore everything. However, though we have been freed from the curse of sin, we can still feel the hurt of it.

Our hope is our comfort for today. Romans 8:18 says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."

Adrian Rogers says, "The groans we endure are temporary, but the glory we expect is eternal."

All of creation groans as a symptom that there is something wrong with this fallen world.

Christians groan, for we are not immune to suffering, and there is a lot of it in our world today. We live in a cursed world with other sinners, in bodies that have not yet been redeemed.

But there is comfort in knowing the Comforter groans, too. God sees our pain, and the Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we hurt so badly we don't know what to pray for.

Finally, we must remember that we've been prepared, predestined, and preserved for glory—that is the Gospel.

LIFE APPLICATION

Are you facing suffering that doesn't make sense to you? Remember: the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in our pain. Spend time with God and ask for His victory over your life.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) In Romans 8:18, the word “reckon” is a bookkeeping term.
- b) There are some things that we need to get in perspective; otherwise, we will get into doubt and possibly rebellion.
 - i) When tragedy hits, we may lift a clenched fist to God in defiant rebellion and accuse Him of unfairness or lack of love.
 - ii) When in doubt, we may question the very existence of God.
- c) Paul, by divine inspiration, has already dealt with these questions for us.
- d) Bondage
- e) Liberty
- f) Hope

2) YESTERDAY'S CURSE - BONDAGE

- a) There is a curse on our world.
 - i) “Creature: Romans 8:20 refers to creation, everything God made.
 - ii) “Vanity” means senselessness, futility, that which does not add up.
 - iii) “The bondage of corruption” is all of the confusion, disease, war, strife and suffering.
 - (1) It is here because of sin.
 - iv) God made a perfect world.
 - (1) When Adam sinned, he dragged all of creation down with him.
- b) Why did God allow Adam to sin?
 - i) Why did God even create the potentiality or possibility of sin?
 - ii) God made everything and sin is something; did God make sin?
 - iii) Is God the author of suffering?
- c) God did make everything, and when He made everything, He made it absolutely perfect.
 - i) God made a perfect man and woman, placed them in a perfect environment, and gave them perfect freedom.
 - ii) God made them perfectly free because love is the highest good.
 - (1) What good is love if there is nobody to love, no love to give or receive.
 - (2) Love is not love until you give it and receive it.
 - iii) Forced love is not love.
 - (1) Forced love is a contradiction in terms.
 - (2) God must give us freedom so that we can love.
 - iv) In order to choose good, we must have the freedom to choose evil; or else the choice to choose good is no choice at all.
 - (1) God gave Adam and Eve the ability to choose, and they chose sin and evil.
 - (2) All of creation fell into the bondage of corruption.



- d) The entire creation now has the curse of sin upon it.
 - i) Why does God not just step in?
 - ii) Why does God not just kill the devil?
 - iii) Why does God not just destroy evil?
 - (1) God could not destroy evil without destroying freedom.
 - (2) If God destroyed freedom, then God would destroy love.
 - (3) If God destroyed love, then God would destroy the highest good.
 - iv) If we are not free to choose good, then we are not free.
 - (1) There must be, therefore, the freedom to choose evil.
 - v) For God to destroy evil would be evil.
 - (1) Because God would be destroying the capability for the highest good, which is for us to choose to love and serve Him.
 - e) God is not going to destroy evil and suffering; God is going to defeat it.
 - i) There were two gardens:
 - (1) There was the Garden of Eden and the first Adam.
 - (2) There is the Garden of Gethsemane and the second Adam.
 - (a) Ultimately, God through Christ triumphs over it all.
 - f) Yesterday's curse is upon everything.
 - i) A curse on the animal kingdom.
 - (1) Not only was the serpent cursed, but the entire animal kingdom was cursed.
 - (a) God did not put the animals in the Garden of Eden with the law of tooth, fang and claw; that is the result of the curse of sin.
 - ii) A curse on the mineral kingdom.
 - (1) This is the problem for all of the ecological problems on the Earth.
 - iii) A curse on the vegetable kingdom.
 - (1) This world that was meant to be like the Garden of Eden, became a garden of weeds.
 - iv) A curse on the human kingdom.
 - (1) Man was meant to have dominion upon this Earth.
 - (2) Man does not have dominion because of sin.
 - (3) Man is morally depraved.
 - (a) His mind is a garden of weeds.
 - (b) His imagination is evil.
 - (4) Man is emotionally disturbed.
 - (a) Psychoses and neuroses are there because of sin in his life.
 - (5) Man is physically diseased.
 - (a) Our bodies wear out.
 - (6) As a Christian, your spirit is saved, but your body is not yet redeemed.
- 3) TOMORROW'S CONQUEST - LIBERTY
- a) There is a better day coming.
 - i) The whole creation is moaning, groaning and sighing with grief and distress.
 - ii) When Jesus comes, He is going to change it.



- (1) This is called the earnest expectation of the creation.
- b) When Jesus comes:
 - i) The animal kingdom will be changed.
 - ii) The mineral kingdom will be changed.
 - iii) The vegetable kingdom will be changed.
 - iv) The human kingdom will be changed.
 - (1) Our bodies will be redeemed.
 - (2) We will be like Jesus.
- 4) TODAY'S COMFORT - HOPE
 - a) The groans that we endure are temporary; the glory we expect is eternal.
 - b) The groaning of creation.
 - i) Everything God made is full of pain now because of sin.
 - c) The groaning of the Christian.
 - d) The groaning of the Comforter.
 - e) The believer who is saved cannot escape the groaning of creation.
 - i) Being saved does not make us immune to suffering.
 - (1) Our bodies are not yet redeemed.
 - f) The groans we endure are temporary.
 - i) Creation has a curse on it, and the Christian's body is not yet redeemed; but the Holy Spirit of God knows our infirmities.
 - (1) He groans with intercession and prayers that cannot be uttered.
 - g) The glory we expect is eternal.
 - i) We are predestined for glory.
 - (1) Every blood-bought child of God is going to be like Jesus.
 - (a) All Hell cannot stop it because it is predestined.
 - (2) Paul is speaking of these things in the past tense.
 - (a) The glory is yet to be revealed, but God says that it is as good as done.
 - (b) What has been decreed by Heaven cannot be annulled by Hell.
 - ii) We are preserved for glory.
 - (1) No fault can condemn us, and no foe can destroy us.
 - (2) Paul does not deny these sufferings; he faced them all.
 - (a) In all of these things, we are super-conquerors.
 - iii) Paul does not say that we will not suffer.
 - iv) We know that we know that nothing can separate us from God's great love.



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Find Romans chapter 8. And in just a moment, we're going to read verses 18 and 19. Let me ask you this question: do you know sorrow? Suffering? Pain? Disappointment? Fear? Frustration? Confusion? If you don't, just wait a while. You will! You will not escape. The age in which we live is filled with sickness, war, hate, riots, sorrow, and confusion. And man doesn't seem to be able to do anything about it. He longs for a better day, and it gets worse. Man's golden dream turns to rust. Man's millennium turns to pandemonium. What does the Bible have to say about all of this?

Well, look if you will now in Romans 8 verses 18 and 19. The apostle Paul has been doing some figuring. The word reckon here is a bookkeeping term. And he says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."

Now there're some things you'd better get in perspective, because if you don't get them into perspective, you're going to get into trouble. You may get into doubt, or you may get into rebellion. When tragedy hits you, and things don't work out the way you think that they ought to work out, when that person who is dearest on Earth to you is being consumed by some greedy malady, you may lift a clenched fist in the face of God in defiant rebellion and accuse God of unfairness or lack of love. Or rather than being filled with rebellion, you just may be filled with doubt, and you say, "Where is God? I mean, if God cares, doesn't He have any power to do anything about it? Or could it be that He has the power and He really doesn't care. Or could it be that there is no God at all?"

Now we might as well be honest. A lot of people are facing these kind of questions, and let's ask ourselves: how are we going to deal with this? Well, the apostle Paul has already dealt with it for us by divine inspiration. And Paul has been doing some divine calculation, and so he says in Romans 8:18, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us." It's a bookkeeping term. Over here is the suffering. Over here is the glory. And Paul says, "I'm not in the red. I am in the black."

Now take your Bibles, and I want you, if you don't mind writing in your Bible, to underscore or circle three words. Look in Romans 8 verse 21, and find the word bondage. He says, "For the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." Circle the word, if you don't mind. I've circled it in red in my Bible, the word bondage. And then go down a little further, and circle the word liberty. "Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." And then go over if you will to Romans 8 verses 24 and 25, and circle the word hope. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." You see the word hope?

Alright, now take these three words. Get them in your heart. The first one is bondage. Say it. All right, the second one is liberty. Say it. The third one is hope. Say it. Alright now keep those



three words in your mind: bondage, liberty, and hope. And then you're going to understand about suffering. And you're going to learn to make sense out of suffering. And you're going to find out that there is a God, and that this God is a good God.

Now let's think first of all about the word bondage, and bondage deals with yesterday's curse. Have you got that? Yesterday's curse. Folks, look around. There is something desperately wrong in our world! And what is it? There is a curse on our world. Begin in Romans 8 verses 20 and 21, "For the creature," and that literally means the creation, everything God made, "was made subject to vanity." The word vanity means senselessness, futility that which does not seem to add up. "For the creation was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." Now that's speaking of God who, who made it all where it seems to be filled with confusion. "Because the creature itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption."

Now what is, "The bondage of corruption?" And how did it come? What causes all of this confusion, this disease, this war, this strife, this suffering? Why is it here? Well, because of a curse that's on mankind. It's here because of sin, because of sin. You can't give it any other word than that one short little three-letter word, sin. God made a perfect world, but sin entered into that world. Adam sinned, and when he did, he dragged all of creation down with him.

Now that brings us a real question. Why did God allow that? I mean, if God is a good God, why did God even allow Adam to sin? Why did God even create the potentiality, the possibility of sin? People say, "If God is a good God, why doesn't He do something?"

Now you think about it. God made everything, right? Sin is something. So somebody says, "God made sin. God is the author of everything, suffering is something, so God is the author of suffering." You see how our minds work?

And when we say that, we get ourselves into a problem. We say, "Before God, there was nothing. Sin is something. All things have come from God. Sin has come from God. Before God there was nothing. Now there's evil and pain and pang and moan and groan and woe. Then it must've come from God. How could a good God allow such things?"

Now look up here and be honest. Isn't that a hard question? That, my friend, is a hard question. That is what the apostle Paul is dealing with here, so that we can make sense out of our suffering.

Now let me back up and tell you that God is the author of everything, that God did make everything, and when God made everything, God made it absolutely perfect! And He made a man and a woman, put that man and woman in a perfect environment, now listen carefully, listen, and the perfect God gave to man and woman perfect freedom. That's what God made. God made everything perfect. He made a perfect man; He made a perfect woman, put them in a perfect place, and gave them perfect freedom.

Now why did He make man perfectly free? Because what is the highest good? Love. God is a God of love. Now what good is love if there's nobody to love, no love to give, and no love to receive? "A song is not a song until you sing it. A bell is not a bell till you ring it." Love is not love until you give



it and receive it. So God wants love. So God created two creatures, Adam and Eve, that He could love and so they could love Him.

Now why did God make them free? Because forced love is not love. Forced love is a contradiction in terms. God has to give us freedom so that we can love. In order to choose good, we have to have the freedom to choose evil, or else the choice to choose good is not a choice at all.

Now so God made man perfect and God put man in a perfect environment, and God gave that man perfect freedom and that woman perfect freedom. He gave them the ability to choose, but they chose sin, they chose evil. And when they did, all of creation fell into a bondage that the Bible calls, "The bondage of corruption."

Dr. M.R. DeHaan the third was watching television. He tells about this, it was when there's a disastrous earthquake that hit Mexico City in 1985, and the live cameras were there, and they were showing the devastation of this earthquake, and down at the bottom were these words: Courtesy S-I-N. Courtesy Sin. Well, that was the Spanish International Network. But this earthquake brought to you by the courtesy of sin. That's what is happening in our world. We live in a sin-sick world, and sin is like a virus.

Now somebody says, "Okay, that's what caused it. Adam sinned. He drug creation down with him. The entire creation has now the curse of sin on it. But why doesn't God now do something? Why doesn't God just step in? Why doesn't God just kill the devil? Why doesn't God just destroy evil? I mean, after all, if He's God, He could."

Now listen to me carefully. God could not destroy evil without destroying freedom. And if God destroyed freedom, God would destroy love. And if God destroyed love, God would destroy the highest good. God could not destroy evil without destroying freedom! If we're not free to choose good, then we're not free. There must be, therefore, the ability to choose evil. God could not destroy evil without destroying freedom. He could not destroy freedom without destroying love. And if God destroyed love, God would destroy the highest good. Now listen to me. For God to destroy evil would be evil, because God would be destroying the capability for the highest good, and that is for His creatures to choose to love Him and to serve Him.

Well then, what is God going to do about evil? What is God going to do about suffering? God is not going to destroy it; God is going to defeat it!. You see, there were two gardens. There was the Garden of Eden, and there was the first Adam. And there is the Garden of Gethsemane and the second Adam. And the Lord Jesus, the very Son of God, took that sin upon Himself and carried that sin to a cross and on that cross died for it, and therefore ultimately God, through Christ and that amazing grace will triumph over it all.

Now we're thinking about the word bondage, yesterday's curse. When Adam sinned, I said he drug all of creation down with him. What is this bondage that we talk about in verses 21 and 22? Let me tell you what happened to creation. You want to know why today's newspaper reads like it does? There's a curse. Yesterday's curse is upon everything. For example, there's a curse on the animal



kingdom. Now write these Scriptures down, Genesis 3 verse 14, "And the Lord God said unto the serpent, 'Because thou hast done this, cursed art thou,' or, "thou art cursed, above all cattle."

Now the idea is that not only was the serpent cursed, but the cattle, the animal kingdom is cursed. You look at the animal kingdom, and what some call, "The survival of the fittest," is really just creation groaning under the curse. When God made creation, when God put the animals in the Garden of Eden, He did not put them in there with the law of tooth and fang and claw. That's the result of the curse of sin. The animal kingdom was cursed.

There's a curse on the mineral kingdom. Listen to Genesis chapter 3 verse 17, "And unto Adam He said, 'Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, 'Thou shalt not eat of it.' Cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life.'" That's the reason that we see all of this ecological problem that so many are worried about in politics. The desert, the waste places, the barren land, all of this is because God says, "Cursed is the animal kingdom. Cursed is the mineral kingdom."

Cursed is the vegetable kingdom. Genesis 3 verse 18, "Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field." This world, that was meant to be like the Garden of Eden, has become a garden of weeds. Have you ever noticed how much easier it is to grow weeds than vegetables?

Not only that, but there's a curse upon the human kingdom, mankind. Man was meant to have dominion upon this Earth. Why did God make Adam and Eve, and how did He make them? Genesis chapter 1 verse 26, "And God said, 'Let us make man in Our image, after Our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the Earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the Earth.'"

But man doesn't have dominion today. Why? Because of sin. Man is morally depraved. His mind, like the Earth, has become a garden of weeds. His imagination is evil. Look at the newsstands. Not since Manhattan Island was sold for \$24 has so much dirt been sold so cheaply. Man is emotionally disturbed. Psychoses and neuroses are there because of sin in his life. He is morally depraved, emotionally disturbed, physically diseased. Why do our bodies wear out? Romans 5 verse 12, "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin." You have a polluted gene pool. You have the seeds of death in you. You are dying. I am dying. We all have a terminal disease. It's death. It's caused by sin. And none of us is immune.

Look if you will in Romans 8 verse 23, "And not only they," he's talking about the creatures now, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body." Folks, my spirit is saved, but my body is not yet saved. It is not yet redeemed. Not yet. Neither is yours. We're waiting for that.

Now I have the firstfruit of the Spirit in my heart. When I received Jesus Christ as my personal Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit came into me. But I live in a body that groans, and so do you. There is a curse on the animal kingdom. There is a curse on the vegetable kingdom. There is a curse on the mineral kingdom. There is a curse on the human kingdom, and the Bible calls this curse, "The



bondage of corruption.” Now do you have that? That is yesterday’s curse. It happened in the Garden of Eden, and what we’re doing is just reaping the bitter fruit of it today. Yesterday’s curse: bondage.

Now here’s the second thing I want you to see. First of all, the first word was bondage. What’s the next word? Liberty. Alright, that, my friend, is tomorrow’s conquest. Yesterday’s curse; tomorrow’s conquest. Now remember, God does not destroy evil; what God does is, God defeats evil.

Now look if you will in Romans 8 verses 21 through 23 again. Look at it, “For the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves,” watch it now, “waiting for the adoption, to wit,” that is, “the redemption of our body.” There is a better day coming. The whole creation is moaning and groaning and sighing, pressed down with grief and distress, and to try to save this old world with ecology and politics would be like rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic.

But when Jesus comes, He’s going to change it. And this creation is waiting with outstretched arms. It is called, “The earnest expectation of the creation.” When Jesus comes, the trees of the field will clap their hands. The hills will skip like little lambs. And Habakkuk 2:14 says, “The Earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as waters that cover the sea.”

When Jesus comes, the animal kingdom will be changed. Listen to the prophet Isaiah. Isaiah chapter 11 verses 6 through 9, “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; and their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like an ox. And the suckling child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice den. And they shall not hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain: for the Earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as waters that cover the sea.” We sing about it, “When the beasts of the wild shall be led by a child, there shall be peace in the valley for me.” The animal kingdom is going to be changed.

The mineral kingdom will be changed. Isaiah 35 verse 1, “The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as a rose.”

The vegetable kingdom will be changed. Isaiah 55 verses 12 through 13, “For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the Lord for a name, and for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”

And the human kingdom is going to be changed. Our bodies are going to be redeemed. Look in Romans 8 verse 23. We’re waiting for the redemption of the body. Old Dr. Vance Havner used to say, “You’re not going to be towed into Heaven by a wrecking crew. You are going to have a body like unto His glorious body.” And that’s why Romans chapter 8 verse 18 says, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed



in us.” Because we’re going to be like Jesus. That’s the reason the psalmist said in Psalm 17:15, “I shall be satisfied when I awaken in thy likeness.”

And this dear great God who has redeemed us is going to turn every hurt to a hallelujah and every tear to a pearl and every Calvary to an Easter and every sunset to a sunrise when Jesus comes. When Jesus comes. Yesterday’s curse, tomorrow’s conquest. And that’s why, my friend, we ought to be praying, longing for, looking for, waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

But now what’s our third word? First word: bondage. Second word: liberty. Third word, what? Hope. Okay now watch it. Yesterday’s curse. Tomorrow’s conquest. Today’s comfort. Today’s comfort, that’s the hope. Today’s comfort. You see, remember this, that the groans that we endure are temporary, the glory we expect is eternal. If you’re making notes, write that down. The groans we endure are temporary. The glory we expect is eternal. That’s the reason he says in Romans 8:18, “I reckon,” I’ve been figuring, “that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Now there’re three groanings that are mentioned here. Look if you will in Romans 8:22, and you have the groaning of creation. Look, “For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain.” Everything God made is full of pain now because of sin. There’s the groaning of creation.

Then look if you will down in Romans 8 verse 23. There’s the groaning of the believer. “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves.”

The groaning of the creation; the groaning of the Christian, and now look if you will down to Romans 8 verse 26, and you have the groaning of the Comforter. “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities.” Three groanings.

The groaning of creation: all of creation has a curse on it. Moan and groan and pain and pang, woe. And the believer who is saved cannot escape. Being saved does not make you immune from suffering. Our bodies are not yet redeemed. Even we ourselves, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we groan. The groaning of the creation, the groaning of the Christian, but, oh, the groaning of the Comforter, the Holy Spirit. He is there with us. Jesus said, He is one called alongside of us, just like an attending physician beside the bedside of a patient. Jesus calls the Holy Spirit, “The Comforter;” that means one who is called alongside to help. Yes, we know suffering. Yes, we know sorrow. But that’s not the end of the story. “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.”

Now listen. The groans we endure are temporary. Notice what he says. The groanings of what? This present time. This present time. Creation has a curse on it. The Christian’s body are not yet redeemed. And so creation groans. The Christian groans. But the Holy Spirit of God knows our infirmity, and He groans with intercessions and prayers that cannot be uttered. Now listen, listen to me now. The groans we endure are temporary. The glory we expect is eternal.

Now look if you will now in Romans 8 verses 28 and 29. Look at it, “And we know,” K-N-O-W, know, “that all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His



purpose. For whom He did know, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He," God's Son, "might be the firstborn among many brethren."

God had a Son He loved so much, He said, "I'm going to make a lot more like Him. I'm going to make a lot. I'm going to make a family in His image. And I'm going to take those people, and I have determined it, I have predestined it, that they're going to be like Jesus." Every blood-bought child of God sitting in this building today, you can put it down. Everybody in the choir, all this orchestra, listen to me, they're going to be like Jesus. I'm going to be like Jesus. He's going to be like Jesus. And all Hell can't stop it, because it is predestined.

You know he speaks of these things in the past tense. Look at it if you will. Oh, how wonderful, Romans 8:29 and 30, "Whom He did foreknow, them He did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son." Now look if you will, verse 30, "Whom He did predestinate, them He also called," past tense, "and whom He called, them He also justified," past tense, "and whom He justified, them He also glorified." Now wait a minute. I thought you said the glory that will be revealed. Yes, but God says, "It's as good as done. It's as good as done. In My mind, in My heart, I don't speak of it as something going to happen. It's done. It is done. It is finished." God has predestined it. And what has been decreed in Heaven cannot be annulled by Hell. It's done. It's done.

We're predestined for glory. And therefore we're preserved for glory. Look if you will now in Romans 8 verses 31 to 34, "What shall we say to these things?" What things is he talking about? Suffering. Pain. Pang. Moan. Groan. "What shall we say to these things?" I'll tell you what we'll say to them, "If God be for us, who can be against us? And He that spared not his own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also," along with the Spirit, "maketh intercession for us." Friend, we are predestined for glory. We are preserved for glory. Listen, no fault can condemn us, and no foe can destroy us.

Now think about these sufferings. Paul doesn't deny them; he faced them all. Look in Romans 8 verse 35 to verse 39, "And who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For Thy sake we're killed all the day long: we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things," he doesn't say that you're going to escape all of these things; he says, "In all of these things, we are more than conquerors." Doesn't mean that we kick a field goal the last three seconds. It literally means we are super-conquerors. "In all these things, we're more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Hey, folks, he doesn't say that you will not suffer, but he says you are predestined for glory, you are preserved for glory, and the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.

First word is what? Bondage: that's yesterday's curse. Next word is what? Liberty: that's tomorrow's conquest. Third word is what? Hope: that's today's comfort. We know. We know that we



know that we know that we know that we know that nothing can separate us from His great love. Aren't you glad you're saved? Hallelujah.

Father, thank You for Your Word. Oh God, seal it to our hearts. And I just pray, dear God, today for those who may not be saved, that today they will say an everlasting, "Yes," to Jesus and receive Him as their Lord and Savior.

Now while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, I think it's time that you did business with God. I believe there're some today who would like to receive Jesus Christ into their heart as their Lord and Savior. It is my duty to tell you that you're a sinner by nature, by birth, by practice, by choice. You've broken God's holy law. And a holy and a righteous God must judge your sin. And if you die not being saved, you will face an eternity in Hell, eternally separated from Almighty God.

But God doesn't want that to happen, and God has sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, to be your sin-bearer, and He's taken your sin to the cross. "Him who knew no sin," that's Jesus, "God made to be sin for you," that is, He's your representative, He's your substitute. He took your sins to the cross, and there with His blood He atoned for your sin. And your sin debt has been paid for in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. And because He died for you, if you will receive His atoning death, receive Him into your heart by faith, I can promise you on the authority of the Word of God, He will save you, and He will predestine you, and He will preserve you for glory.

Would you pray this way? "Dear God, thank You for loving me. Jesus, You died to save me, and You promised to save me if I would only trust You. I do trust You, Lord Jesus." Tell Him that. "I do trust You, Lord Jesus. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe You died for my sin on that cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. I believe it. And now by faith like a child, I now receive You as my Lord and my Savior. Right now I receive You. Now, I open my heart, I turn from my sin, I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me, Lord Jesus." Would you pray that prayer? "Save me, Lord Jesus." Just pray it from your heart. "Save me, Lord Jesus." Just ask Him. "Save me, Lord Jesus."

And if you prayed that prayer, I want you to thank Him for saving you. By an act of sheer faith, just say, "Lord, thank You. I don't look for a sign. I don't ask for a feeling. I stand on Your Word. You cannot lie. Thank You for saving me, because I turn from my sin to You with childlike faith. And now, Lord Jesus, because You died for me, because You have forgiven me, because You've made me Your child, because You have glory for me, help me never to be ashamed of You. Help me never, Jesus, to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



PO Box 38300 | Memphis TN 38183-0300 | (901)382-7900