



TURNING HURTS INTO HALLELUJAHS

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





Turning Hurts Into Hallelujahs

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Turning Hurts Into Hallelujahs

SERMON REFERENCE: Romans 8

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2061

The resurrection of Jesus Christ is what turns every hurt into a hallelujah. And that same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead now dwells in us.

Adrian Rogers says, “It is Easter that turns every tear to a pearl. It is Easter that turns every midnight to a sunrise. It is Easter that turns every Calvary to a resurrection.”

If we want to turn our hurts into hallelujahs, we must first consider our guilt. In His love for us, God gave us free will. Because we choose to sin, we are condemned according to the law of the Bible.

But through Christ’s death and resurrection, we experience grace, instead.

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.” Jesus has freed us from the law of sin and death.

There is no more condemnation for our sin, nor can sin control us. However, though we have been freed from the curse of sin, we can still feel the hurt of it.

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.” 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 the curse of sin upon them.

And even though we have been saved, we still choose to do wrong and God must chastise us in love. 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.

Because of Easter, no foe or fault can condemn us, and no fear can conquer us.

LIFE APPLICATION

Are you facing suffering of any kind or hurt you want to turn into a hallelujah? Remember: because of Easter, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us in our pain. Spend time with God, and ask for His victory over your life.



Turning Hurts Into Hallelujahs

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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Instead of a “bill of rights,” the book of Romans contains the “gifts of grace.”
 - i) Rights are for people who think they own something.
 - ii) We own nothing but judgment.
 - (1) But, thankfully, God has given us His grace and the gifts of grace.
- b) God’s grace and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus will turn every hurt into a hallelujah.
- c) People everywhere are hurting.
 - i) There’s a heartache on every pew.
 - ii) There’s no home without its hush.
- d) Romans 8:11, 18
 - i) “Quicken your mortal bodies” means that He will give life to our dying flesh.
 - ii) “Reckon” is a bookkeeping term that means that the Apostle Paul has been doing some figuring.
 - iii) It is Easter that turns every hurt into a hallelujah.
 - (1) It is Easter that turns every tear into a pearl.
 - (2) It is Easter that turn every midnight into a sunrise and every Calvary to a resurrection.
 - iv) In this passage, the Apostle Paul says that if the Holy Spirit of God (the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead) dwells in us, then the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.
- e) There are several words that we will look at in today’s message as we think about Easter.

2) THE GUILT THAT WE EXPRESS (Romans 8:1-3)

- a) Romans 8:1-2
 - i) Condemnation, flesh, sin and death are descriptions of the world today.
 - ii) We are living lives according to the flesh, not the Spirit, and we find ourselves under the law of sin and death.
 - (1) Romans 6:23
 - (2) Ezekiel 18:20
- b) What about this thing called sin?
 - i) For many people who are not believers in Christ, their problem is not a scientific problem.
 - (1) They’re not wrestling with ideas such as evolution or creation.
 - ii) Instead, their problem is history.
 - (1) They question that if there is a God and if God is a good God, then why do we have sin and suffering?
 - (2) Their argument is that if there is a God, then He would be the author of everything.
 - (a) Evil is something, so then God would be the author of evil.
 - (3) Therefore, they reason that God must not be a good God, if He is a God at all.



- (a) But this is not straight thinking.
 - iii) The truth of the matter is that God is the author of everything.
 - (1) God made everything perfect.
 - (2) God made man perfectly free.
 - (a) Man's free will is the origin of evil.
 - (b) God did not create evil; He created perfection, and He made man perfectly free.
 - (c) Freedom, therefore, gave rise to this evil.
 - (i) This is what makes us moral creatures.
 - iv) If God had made us to where we couldn't sin, then He could have no more fellowship with us than we could have with any inanimate object.
 - (1) God made us moral creatures.
 - v) Love is the highest good, and God wants us to love Him.
 - (1) Matthew 22:37-38
 - (2) Mark 12:30
 - vi) But forced love is a contradiction in terms.
 - (1) Forced love is not love at all.
 - (2) In order to love, we must be free to love and to choose to love.
 - vii) In order to choose to love, we must be able to choose not to love.
 - (1) So, God gave us perfect choice.
 - (2) Adam chose in the Garden of Eden (and the sons of Adam have chosen after him) to sin.
 - (a) This is where the heartache and pain come from.
 - c) Why doesn't God just destroy evil?
 - i) Why doesn't God just obliterate the devil and cause all sin to be eradicated?
 - (1) Why doesn't God take away the curse from nature?
 - (2) Why doesn't God make it impossible for people to sin?
 - ii) If God were to destroy evil, then He would destroy every opportunity for choice.
 - (1) If God were to destroy every opportunity for choice, then He would destroy every opportunity for love.
 - (a) Therefore, God would destroy the highest good.
 - iii) Therefore, for God to destroy evil would be evil.
 - d) God does not destroy evil; God defeats evil.
 - i) God defeats evil through Calvary and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - e) Romans 8:18
 - i) God is not finished yet.
- 3) THE GRACE THAT WE EXPERIENCE (Romans 8:1-4)
 - a) Romans 8:1-4
 - b) There is no more condemnation for sin.
 - i) Romans 8:1
 - (1) There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
 - ii) God wants us to be saved and has given us many illustrations of salvation.



- (1) One illustration of salvation is Noah's ark.
 - (a) The Bible teaches that Noah's ark is an illustration, a type, of the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - (i) 1 Peter 3:20-22
 - (2) To know what it means to be "in Christ Jesus," we need to know what it was for Noah to be in the ark.
 - (a) God was going to judge the world, and He told Noah and his family to come into the ark.
 - (b) The Bible says that God shut the door.
 - (i) Genesis 7:16
 - (c) The ark was waterproof.
 - (i) God told Noah to put pitch on the inside and outside of the ark.
 - 1. Genesis 6:14
 - 2. Pitch was a black, sticky substance.
 - (ii) Water was an emblem and a symbol of judgment.
 - (iii) Not one drop of water could come through that pitch.
 - 1. The Hebrew word for pitch is exactly the same word that is translated "atonement" when Christ died on the cross.
 - 2. Not one drop of judgment can come through that atonement.
 - (3) We are in Christ as Noah was in the ark.
 - (a) The storms of God's wrath beat upon the Lord Jesus and upon the ark.
 - (i) But we are on the inside, and not one drop of judgment can come through that atonement.
 - iii) Because we are in Christ, there is no more condemnation for sin.
 - c) There is no more control of sin.
 - i) Romans 8:2
 - (1) We are sinners by birth, by nature and by choice.
 - (a) There is a downward pull on us that the Bible calls the law of sin and death.
 - (2) Because of the empty tomb, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death.
- 4) THE GROANS THAT WE ENDURE (Romans 8:18-22)
- a) Romans 8:18-22
 - i) The word "creature" in this passage literally means "creation."
 - (1) It is referring to all nature.
 - ii) "Vanity" in this passage means that it is not living up to its original intention.
 - b) There is the groaning of creation.
 - i) Romans 8:22
 - (1) If we do not understand this verse, then we will stumble in our Christian walk.
 - ii) The whole creation groans.
 - (1) This means pain, moan, groan, crying, dying and sighing.
 - (2) Decay and corruption are on everything in creation, including ourselves.
 - (a) What Darwin called the survival of the fittest is really the bondage of corruption.



- iii) But there is a better time coming.
 - (1) All of creation is waiting for the manifestations of the sons of God.
 - (a) Romans 8:19
- iv) The worst thing that could happen would be for a sinful creature to live in paradise.
 - (1) So, God took Adam out of paradise and put him in a world that has the curse of sin upon it.
 - (a) Genesis 3:17-19
 - (2) God wanted Adam to see that there's something deadly wrong in this world.
 - (a) All of the pain and sorrow that we see in creation is the fever of the infection, which is sin.
 - (i) If we didn't have a fever, then we wouldn't know that we had an infection.
 - (ii) The fever is a symptom of the deeper problem.
- v) God didn't make this world with the pain and groaning.
 - (a) He made the world perfect.
- c) There is the groaning of the Christian.
 - i) Romans 8:23
 - ii) Our bodies are not yet redeemed.
 - (1) Our spirit is redeemed, but the body is not yet redeemed.
 - (2) We are waiting for the promise of Easter.
 - iii) We live in a body that has the curse of sin in it; therefore, we are not immune to suffering.
 - iv) Why do we have suffering in the world?
 - (1) We live in a creation that has a curse upon it.
 - (a) Matthew 5:45
 - (b) That's the way nature is; that's where we live.
 - (2) We live with other sinners.
 - (a) There are other people in this world who would harm us.
 - (b) There are people around us who make choices.
 - (3) We live in bodies that have the curse of sin upon them.
 - (a) Our bodies are not yet redeemed.
 - (b) We are sons and daughters of Adam, so we were born out of a polluted gene pool.
 - (i) Sooner or later, people get sick.
 - (c) Romans 8:18
 - (4) We still choose to do wrong, and God has to chastise us.
 - (a) Psalm 119:67
 - (b) Hebrews 12:6
 - (5) There are also mysterious reasons why people suffer.
- d) There are the groanings of the Comforter.
 - i) Romans 8:26
 - (1) The Greek word for "Comforter" means someone who is called alongside of you, like a doctor alongside a sick bed, like a fireman alongside a fire, or like a lawyer alongside a person who is accused.
 - (2) John 14:16



- ii) The Holy Spirit comes alongside us in all of our sorrow.
 - (1) One Bible translation of Romans 8:26 states that His Spirit within us is actually praying for us in those agonizing longings which can never find words.
 - (2) When we hurt so much that we can't even pray and all we can do is groan, the Holy Spirit groans with us and prays for us.
 - iii) The Holy Spirit makes intercession for us, and the Lord Jesus is on the throne making intercession for us.
- 5) THE GLORY THAT WE EXPECT (Romans 8:18)
- a) We have been prepared for glory.
 - i) We've been prepared for glory by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - (1) That is the Gospel.
 - ii) We're not prepared by simply trying to be better people.
 - (1) Salvation doesn't come by learning lessons from the life of Christ but by receiving life from the death of Christ.
 - b) We are predestined for glory.
 - i) Romans 8:28-30
 - (1) The author puts it in the past tense; it's as good as done.
 - (2) "Predestined" means "settled."
 - ii) In the heart and mind of God, it is settled.
 - iii) What has been decreed in Heaven cannot be annulled by Hell or by humanity.
 - iv) We are predestined for glory by the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 - c) We are preserved for glory.
 - i) Romans 8:31-32
 - (1) If God loved us enough to give us Jesus, then He'll give anything else we need.
 - ii) Romans 8:33-35, 37
 - (1) There is nothing that can condemn us.
 - (2) No foe can conquer us, and no fault can condemn us.
 - (3) The seven enemies that Paul mentions have been the enemies of Christians from time immemorial.
 - (a) Paul had experienced each of these seven enemies.
 - (i) He said that they can't separate us; all they can do is draw us closer.
 - iii) No foe can condemn us because of Easter.
 - iv) No fear can conquer us because of Easter.
 - v) No fault can condemn us because of Easter.
 - d) Romans 8:38-39
- 6) CONCLUSION
- a) In Roman times when a person was judged guilty of a crime, that person was put into prison, and the list of crimes he had committed was nailed to the prison door.
 - i) When that person had paid for his crimes against the state, the judge would take that certificate of debt and write "Tetelestai" across the top of it.



- (1) In the Greek language, “tetelestai” means “paid in full.”
 - ii) This document was then handed back to the prisoner.
 - iii) If anyone ever tried to bring the prisoner into double jeopardy, he could show that certificate of debt on which was written “paid in full.”
- b) Jesus Christ took our sins to the cross.
 - i) Jesus took what was against us and nailed it to His cross.
 - ii) When He bowed His head and died, He said, “It is finished;” “Paid in full.”
 - (1) This is the same Greek word, “tetalestai.”
 - (2) John 19:30
 - iii) It is paid in full.
 - (1) No foe can condemn us.
 - (2) No fear need control us.
 - (3) No fault can separate us.
 - (a) Romans 8:18
- c) If God destroyed evil, then we wouldn’t have a choice.
 - i) Instead, He defeats evil with the cross and the resurrection.
- d) Do you have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
 - i) Romans 3:23
 - ii) Romans 10:9-10
 - iii) Romans 10:13
 - iv) Acts 16:31
 - v) John 3:16



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Would you be finding Romans chapter 8. In our journey through Romans we've come through chapter 8. We've called Romans the constitution of Christianity. I was in Washington, D.C., and saw the original Constitution of the United States. And in the Constitution of the United States there is a Bill of Rights. But in the book of Romans there is no Bill of Rights. We have no rights. In the book of Romans we find the gifts of grace, better than a Bill of Rights. Rights are for people who think they own anything and own something; we own nothing but judgment. But thank God, by the grace of God and by the gifts of grace, we are what we are, Amen?

Now I want to talk to you today about how that grace, how that resurrection, how what happened on that Easter morning will turn every hurt into a hallelujah. Now there are people who are hurting. As a matter of fact, there's a heartache on every pew, if you'll think about it, and there's no home without its hush. And we look around, and everywhere there's death and disease and confusion and pain and pang and moan and groan and sickness and sighing and crying and dying, everywhere! And that's the reason this day is so very important.

I want to show you two verses from Romans 8. Look if you will in Romans chapter 8 and verse 11, "But if the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies." That means give life to your dying flesh. He will, "quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth in you." And then look if you will in verse 18 of this same chapter. Paul 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."

Now he's talking about Easter, and he's talking about hurts and he's talking about hallelujahs and he uses a term that's a bookkeeping term. He's been doing some figuring and he says, "I reckon, I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not even worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us." And he says in verse 11, this is true because of Easter.

You see, it's Easter, listen, it's Easter that turns every hurt into a hallelujah. It's Easter that turns every tear to a pearl. It is Easter that turns every midnight to a sunrise. It is Easter that turns every Calvary to a resurrection. Paul is talking about the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead. And he says, "If that Spirit, the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit, that raised Christ from that grave, if He dwells in you, then, 'The sufferings of this present time are not even worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.'"

Now there're several words that I want us to think about. And the first is the word guilt, guilt. Think of that word guilt, just jot it down on a piece of paper. Guilt! The guilt that we express. Look if you will how Romans 8 begins in verses 1 through 2, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," underscore the word condemnation, "who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit," underscore the word flesh, "for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Underscore the word sin and death. And think of those



words: condemnation, flesh, sin, death. That's a description of the world today. We are condemned, we are living lives according to the flesh, not the Spirit. And we find ourselves under law that the Bible calls here the law of sin and death. "For the wages of sin is death and the soul that sinneth, it shall surely die." Romans 6:23.

And that brings up an interesting question. What about this thing called sin? Did you know that there're many people who are not believers and their problem is not a scientific problem, they're not wrestling with ideas like evolution or creation. Their problem is the problem of history. They say, "If there is a God and that God is a good God, then look at all of the suffering. Why, if God is good, why do we have sin, why do we have suffering?" And they have a little argument, a little syllogism and here's the way the syllogism goes: "If there be a God, He would be the author of everything; evil is something, so God is the author of evil. What kind of a God is it that has created evil?" And so they say, "I can't believe in a God who made everything and He made it like He did and so, therefore, He must not be a good God if He is a God at all."

But that's not straight thinking. Let me tell you the way it truly is: God is the author of everything, God made everything perfect, and when God made man God made His creature perfectly free. Free will, then, man's perfect free will, is the origin of evil. God did not create evil; God created perfection, and God made man perfectly free. And freedom, therefore, gave rise to this evil. You see, this is what makes us moral creatures.

Somebody says, "Well, why didn't God just make us where we couldn't sin?" Well, if God had made us where we couldn't sin, He could have no more fellowship with me than I could have with that pulpit or that speaker. Because God made us moral creatures. Love is the highest good, and God wants us to love Him. Matthew chapter 22 verses 37 and 38, "This is the first and great commandment: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, with all thy mind."

Love is the highest good, but forced love is a contradiction in terms. Forced love is not love at all. In order to love, we must be free to love, to choose to love, and in order to choose to love, we have to be able to choose not to love. And so God gave us perfect choice. And Adam chose in the Garden of Eden, and the sons of Adam after him, to sin. And that's where the heartache and the pain and the groan and the moan come from, as we're going to see in a moment.

Well, that brings another question. Why doesn't God just destroy evil? I mean, if He were all powerful, He could. And if He were all love, He would! So why doesn't God just step in, obliterate the devil, cause all sin to be eradicated? Why doesn't God just go into every cancer ward and empty every cancer ward? Why doesn't God just take away the curse from nature? Why doesn't God just destroy evil and make it impossible for people to sin? We're right back to the original question. If God were to destroy evil, just destroy evil, God would destroy every opportunity of choice, and if God would destroy every opportunity for choice, then God would destroy every opportunity for love, and therefore God would destroy the highest good, and therefore for God to destroy evil would be evil.

No, God doesn't destroy evil, friend, God defeats evil, God defeats evil. And how does God defeat evil? Calvary and the resurrection! And God turns every hurt to a hallelujah! And God says in Romans



8 verse 18, “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us.” You see, God is not finished yet.

All right, there’s the guilt that we express, verses 1 through 3. Oh, but friend, there’s the grace that we experience. Again, look in chapter 8 verse 1 to verse 4, “There is now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit, for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned to sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.” Now what does this mean, what kind of grace do we experience?

Well, number one, no condemnation for sin, hallelujah. No condemnation for sin, look at it in Romans 8 verse 1, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are,” what “in Christ Jesus.” Now what does it mean to be in Christ Jesus? Well, God wants us to be saved, He’s given us so many illustrations of salvation.

One of the illustrations of salvation is Noah’s ark. Noah’s ark, the Bible teaches us in Second Peter 2 verse 5, is an illustration, a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so, if you want to know what it is to be in Christ Jesus, know what it was for Noah to be in that ark. And God was going to judge the world, and God said to Noah and his family in Genesis 7:1, “Come thou, into the ark.” And Noah went into that ark and then the Bible says in Genesis 7:16, “And God shut the door.”

Now the ark was waterproof. How do you know it was waterproof? Well, God said to Noah, “Noah, put pitch on the inside and on the outside.” Pitch was a black, gooey, sticky substance, and Noah got a broad brush and he and his helpers, whoever it was, they put pitch all over the outside of that ark. And then they put pitch all over the inside of that ark. That was to waterproof it.

Now water was an emblem, a symbol of the judgment of God, the wrath of God; that flood. But not one drop of water could come through that gooey pitch. Do you know what the word pitch is? It’s the Hebrew word kaphar, and it is exactly the same word that is translated atonement, atonement, when Christ died on the cross, he made an atonement for our sin, and God says, “Put atonement on the outside, put atonement on the inside.” Not one drop of judgment can come through that atonement. You see, we are in Jesus as Noah was in that ark. And because we are in the Lord Jesus Christ, the wrath, the storms of God’s wrath beat upon that ark! And the storms of God’s wrath beat upon the Lord Jesus! But I’m on the inside and not one drop of judgment can come through.

You see, because we’re in Christ there’s no more condemnation for sin, and there’s no more control of sin. Notice, what he says in Romans 8 verse 2, “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.” Remember our illustration last week? We said there are two laws in the natural world; there’s the law of gravity and there’s the law of aerodynamics.

The law of gravity is constantly pulling on us, pulling on us, pulling on us, it’s holding you in your seat. It’s causing you to stick to the earth rather than flying off. But there’s another law, the



engineers call it the law of aerodynamics, and you can take a great airplane and that thing begins to rev up those engines and it begins to roar and suck in air through those great engines and squirt that air out the back, and that thing begins to rumble and roar and vibrate and then suddenly, it's aloft, it's flying! Ten thousand, twenty thousand, thirty thousand feet, three, four, five hundred miles an hour, going through the air. There is a greater power than the power of gravity; it's the law of aerodynamics.

Now we are sinners, sinners by birth, sinners by nature, sinners by choice, and there's that downward pull that the Bible calls the law of sin and death. But hallelujah, hallelujah, I say, hallelujah, because of that empty tomb, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. So there's the guilt that we exhibit, but there is the grace that we experience.

But now watch, pay attention. The third thing, there are the groans that we endure. Continue to read. Look if you will in Romans verses 18 through 22 of this same chapter here. And he says this, "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," and for the word creature you may write in your margin creation, because that's what it literally means, "for the earnest expectation of the creation," he's talking about all nature, "waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity," that means, it is not living up to its original intention, "not willingly, but by reason of Him," that is, God, "who has subjected the same," that is, the creation, "in hope. Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know." Now listen, here's a key, if you don't understand this, are you paying attention? If you don't understand this, you're going to stumble in your Christian walk. "For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now." Now what does he mean by that? "The whole creation groans." That means pain and pang and moan and groan and crying and dying and sighing. Look at nature. Bloody tooth, sharp fang, claws, decay, corruption, everything that you see is dying and crying and sighing. The foul breath of decay, the gnawing tooth of corruption, it's on everything and it's on you. It's in creation. Now, what Darwin called the survival of the fittest is really the bondage of corruption.

But there's a better time coming, there's a better time coming. All of creation is standing on tiptoes waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. And God, when, when Adam sinned, God said the worst thing that could happen to a sinful creature would be to live in paradise. So God took Adam out of paradise and God put Adam in a world that has the curse of sin upon it, thorns and thistles shall it bring forth unto thee. You're going to earn your bread by the sweat of your face. Why? Because I want you to know there's something deadly wrong in this world, and all of the pain and all of the sorrow that we see in creation, that's the fever of the infection which is sin.

Aren't you glad that God gives you fever when you have an infection? You see, if you didn't have a fever, you wouldn't know you had an infection, would you? So the fever's the symptom of the deeper problem. And so there's the groaning of creation. Look around at the world today. God didn't make the world this way, God made the world perfect. But we see a world that is marred and scarred and



all of creation is groaning. Listen even to the wind as it goes through the trees; it's in a minor key. Everything is groaning and sighing and dying.

There's the groaning of creation. Now watch this very carefully, there's also the groaning of the Christian. Notice in Romans 8 verse 23, look at it, this is talking about you, "And not only they," what, the creatures, "but ourselves also which hath the first fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body."

Folks, your body is not yet redeemed. Your spirit is redeemed, but your body is not yet redeemed. You are waiting for the promise of Easter, and so therefore you live in a body that has the curse of sin in it and because you live in a body that has the curse of sin in it, I hate to tell you this but I need to tell you this, you are not immune to suffering. And if you walk down this aisle and think if you give your heart to Jesus Christ that suffering is all behind you and it's going to be all honey and no bees, I'm sorry to tell you, friend, that's wrong. And I don't want to put any fine print in the contract or fail to tell you that there's the groaning of creation and there's also the groaning of the Christian.

Now you want me to tell you why we have so much suffering in the world today? I'm talking about those of us who are saved. Well number one, we live in a creation that has a curse upon it. What happens to people when a tornado comes? Are they wicked people? No, "God makes it to rain upon the just and the unjust." Matthew 5 verse 45. We just live in a world that has the curse of sin on it. Friend, it's just here, that's the way nature is, and that's where we live.

And also, not only do we live in a world that has the curse of sin on it, we live with other sinners. There're other people in this world and there're other people who would harm us, there're other people who make choices, and we suffer because not only do we live in a world that has the curse of sin upon it, but we live in a world with other sinners.

And then I'm going to tell you something else; we live in bodies that have the curse of sin upon them. Your body is not yet redeemed. You are a son, a daughter of Adam, and you were born out of a polluted gene pool. I'm telling you, folks, you have a polluted gene pool, and so sooner or later you're going to get sick. Sooner or later it's going to get you. Sooner or later the doctor's going to thump on your chest at \$50 a thump and say, "You've got a problem." Now I'm telling you this, sooner or later, just sooner or later, it's coming! You say, "Is this Easter or what? It's bad news, Pastor." Well, listen, it's the bad news that makes the good news good.

Romans 8:18, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us." And I'll tell you something else. Not only do we live in a world that's cursed, not only do we live with other sinners, not only do we have a corrupted body, but sometimes we still choose to do wrong, don't we? And God has to chastise us. I was reading Psalm 119 verse 67, where David said, "Before I was afflicted, I went astray." And Hebrews 12 verse 2, "Whom the, the Lord loves, He chastens." And then, friend, there are just mysterious reasons why people suffer. I mean, if anybody comes to you and they say, "Well, I just have all the answers," just walk on, friend, they don't have all the answers. I'm telling you that there are mysteries in this world today.

But put it down big, plain, and straight, there's the groaning of creation, there's the groaning of the Christian, now here's the good news, there's also the groaning of the Comforter. Look if you



will in Romans 8 verse 26. We're talking about groanings, now, look at this. "Likewise, the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities," that's our weaknesses, "for we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercessions for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

Now, what does the word Comforter mean? Jesus said, "I'll send you the Holy Spirit," and He said, "He is the Comforter," that's the Greek word *paraclete*, that means somebody who's called alongside of you like a doctor alongside a sick bed, like a fireman alongside a fire, like a lawyer alongside a person who's accused. The Holy Spirit comes alongside of us in all of our sorrow. Phillips translates this verse this way, "His Spirit within us is actually praying for us in those agonizing longings which can never find words."

Have you ever hurt so bad you couldn't even pray? I have. All you can do is just groan. But you know, it's the Holy Spirit who says, "I will groan with you and I will pray for you and I will intercede for you before the Father." And so we have the Holy Spirit making intercession for us to the throne, and we have the Lord Jesus on the throne making intercession for us.

And so, listen, are you following me? There is the guilt that we exhibit, there is the grace that we enjoy, but still there are the groans that we endure; the groaning of creation, the groaning of the Christian, and, thank God, the groaning of the Comforter.

Now, now we come to what I'm trying to say about Easter, where Easter turns every hurt into a hallelujah, every tear into a pearl, every midnight into a sunrise, every Calvary to a resurrection.

Go back again, now, to Romans 8 verse 18 and look at it. Now remember, Paul is doing some figuring, and Paul says, "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us." So now, the guilt we exhibit, the grace we enjoy, the groans we endure, now here it comes, the glory we expect. That's verse 18. "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, folks, that's what the eighth chapter of Romans is all about. There's not a greater chapter in all of the Bible than the eighth chapter of Romans.

Now you see, folks, we've been prepared for glory, we've been prepared for glory by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ; that is the Gospel, that is the Gospel. Not just simply by trying to be better people. Salvation doesn't come by learning lessons from the life of Christ but by receiving life from the death of Christ, do you understand that?

And so, we are prepared for glory, but watch this, look in Romans 8 verses 28 to 30, not only are we prepared for glory, but we are predestined for glory, "And we 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 foreknow 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. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called, and whom He called, them He also justified, and whom He justified, them He also glorified." He puts it in past tense, it's as good as done.

Do you know what predestined means? It means settled. You're looking at a man that's glorified. You say, "Well you don't look glorified." Well you're just seeing through your eyes. You haven't seen me through God's eyes. In the heart and mind of God, it is settled. And friend, what has been



decreed in Heaven cannot be annulled by Hell. And it cannot be annulled by humanity, because predestined means it's done.

I have been prepared for glory; the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus did that. I am predestined for glory; the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus did that. And, friend, I, therefore, must be preserved for glory. Look if you will now in this same chapter, beginning in verse 31 through verse 37, "What shall we say to these things? Friend, if God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, how shall he not also, not with Him also freely give us all things?" If God loved us enough to give Jesus, He'll give anything else we need. And now you ask this question, "Who shall lay anything 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." Notice, "it is" is in italics. Read it this way. Italics mean that's been supplied by the translator to make it read more smoothly. In this case it doesn't make it read more smoothly. He's asking a rhetorical question. "Who is he that condemneth? Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us?" He says, do you think my lawyer is going to condemn me? No! No, listen, he is saying that there's nothing that can condemn us. Listen, "Who, who shall separate us from the love of Christ shall," he mentions seven enemies, "tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we're more than conquerors." Not just conquerors, we don't kick a field goal the last three seconds and win. Super conquerors!

What he is saying is no foe can conquer us. And friend, no fault can condemn us. These seven enemies that Paul mentions have been the enemies of Christians from time immemorial. Paul had experienced every one of these seven enemies: persecution, trial, peril, all of these. He said, "They can't separate you. Why, all they can do is draw you closer."

Listen, folks, no foe can condemn us because of Easter. No fear can conquer us because of Easter. No fault can condemn us because of Easter. Look in Romans 8 verses 38 and 39. Paul says, "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," and in case he left anything out, "nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." That's the message of Easter, friend.

Do you know what they would do in Roman times? When a person would be adjudicated guilty of a crime, they would put that person in prison and then they would nail on the prison door a list of the crimes he'd committed. And they would put under there the number of days, months, years that he must stay in prison to pay the debt. It was called a certificate of debt and it was nailed to the prison door.

When that man had paid for his crime against the state, they would take that certificate of debt, the bailiff would go to the judge and say, "Here is John Doe prisoner. John Doe prisoner has paid in full his crime against the state." The judge would take that thing called a certificate of debt and he would write across it "Paid in full." One word in the Greek language, tetelestai, "Paid in full!" He would



hand it to the condemned prisoner and then if anybody ever tried to bring him into double jeopardy, he could show that certificate of debt, written, "Paid in full."

Jesus Christ took my sin and your sin to the cross. The Bible tells us in Colossians 3 that Jesus took the handwriting that was against us and nailed it to His cross. Nailed it to his cross! And then in John 19 verse 30, He bowed His head and He died and He said, "Paid in full." "It is finished." That's exactly the same word, tetelestai, "I have paid that sin debt! It's paid, it's paid in full." He took your certificate of debt and said, "It's paid, paid in full." No foe can condemn us. No fear need control us. No fault can separate us. And, Romans 8:18, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not even worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us."

There's the guilt, there's the grace, there's the grief, and thank God for the glory. That's what Easter's all about. God doesn't destroy evil! If He did, you wouldn't have a choice! God defeats evil with a cross and a resurrection, isn't that good? I don't mean the preaching, I mean, that's good stuff. Friend, that's what Easter's all about and that's why you need to be saved.

Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Would you begin to pray for those round about you who may not know the Lord Jesus? And if you're certain that you're saved, just pray, "Lord, bless that brother, that sister, that friend, that neighbor, whatever they need today, if they're not saved, Lord, that they might be saved." And if you'd like to be saved, I don't know of a better day than this day, what a wonderful day to be saved. Why don't you pray a prayer like this, "Dear God, I know that You love me," and friend, He does love you. "And I know, Lord, that You want to save me," and friend, He does. "I am a sinner, I acknowledge my sin," and friend you won't be saved unless you acknowledge your sin. "For this is the faithful saying and worthy of all accept patiently that Jesus came into the world to save sinners." "I acknowledge my sin, my sin deserves judgment, but I need mercy. Lord Jesus, I turn from sin to You. And right now by faith I receive You into my heart, right now, right now I receive You. I'm not asking for a special feeling, I just put my faith in You, Lord Jesus. I trust You right now. Oh, Lord Jesus. I turn from sin to You, I receive You now into my life as my Lord and Savior. Thank You for saving me, I receive it as the gift of Your love. Thank You for saving me. And now, Lord Jesus, I will follow You all the days of my life and help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your holy name I pray, Amen."



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