



Romans 8:18–28

¹⁸ I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. ¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the good children of God; ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. ²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³ and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it and patience. ²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes as sighs too deep for words. ²⁷ And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.

Discuss

You're reading part of a letter written from a church planter named Paul to the church in Rome, the capital of the Roman Empire and full of people who had just become Christians. Thus the book is called, "Romans". Paul was explaining the suffering of this world and how to live in it as God's children. The good news of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection allows people to become God's children and gives them God's Spirit living inside them.

- 1) Paul is familiar with suffering. With powerful metaphors of birth (v. 22) and adoption (v. 23) in the context of groaning and suffering how does Paul interpret this present pain and trouble?
- 2) What actions do you see God taking in this passage? What does the Holy Spirit do?
- 3) What is Paul's hope for the future, hope that helps him and his present suffering any troubles?

Apply

- 1) Even though we do not know how to pray, the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness and is interceding for God's people "with sighs too deep for words", according to the will of God. Share some current situations where you don't know how to pray and where you feel weak.
- 2) Name the "groaning" in creation that you see in the world currently - both locally and globally. Paul writes how God redeems all circumstances for people who love God. Together, name the situations where you want to invite God to work together for good. Pray for each other.
- 3) Ask the Holy Spirit to name 2+ people in your relational network that you should connect with this week and offer to pray with them.