



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 81 Believers Groaning for Glory! Romans 8:23-25

Romans 8:23-25, *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.* ²⁴*For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?* ²⁵*But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.*

Glorification of Christian is the culmination of everything. The hope of glory is the theme of this passage, starting in verse 17 all the way down to verse 30.

V 1, *"There is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."*

If you are a Christian, you will never be judged. "Condemnation" is another word for "judgment."

You are in a no-condemnation status with God.

This is security for us.

This is safety for us.

Romans Chapter 8 then defines for us the special ministry of the Holy Spirit by which He does what we cannot do.

V 2&3, Holy Spirit frees us from sin and death through the wonderful work of imputation. Whereby our sins are imputed to Christ, and Christ's righteousness is imputed to us. He has delivered us from the law of sin and death because Christ has paid the penalty.

V 4, Holy Spirit enables us to fulfil the law.

He enables us to fulfil the law by granting us the righteousness of Christ.

V 5-11, Holy Spirit changes our nature.

V 12-13, Holy Spirit maintains our no-condemnation status by empowering us in that new nature for victory.

We are able to put to death the deeds of the body and live.

V 14-16, Holy Spirit confirms our adoption, that we are indeed the children of God.

V 17-30, Holy Spirit here confirms our no-condemnation status by guaranteeing our glory.

The freedom we enjoy from sin's dominion as Christians, the ability to do what is truly righteous, the desire to mind the things of the Spirit, the power to overcome the deeds of the flesh, the sense of belonging to God as beloved children, all these culminate in the wonderful work of the Spirit by which He guarantees our eternal glory.

That goes from verses 17 to 30.

V 17-30, we are going to come to understanding our future as Christians.

We are on the road to glory.

We begin to look at the glorious future of the believer, and it is the work of the Holy Spirit to guarantee our eternal glory.

The great theme of verses **17 to 30**.

Three things describe our future glory, three things that unfold for us these verses.

The incomparable gains of glory,
The indescribable groans of glory, and
The Perfect guarantees of glory.

The incomparable gains of glory are defined for us as inheriting all that God possesses and all that is reserved for Christ, His own beloved Son.

The indescribable groans for glory.

V 19-22, The creation groans.

V 23-25, The believer groan.

V 26-27, The Holy Spirit groans.

V 19-27, Inexpressible groans for glory.

- The creation groans,
- The believer groans,
- The Holy Spirit groans.

The groaning of creation.

That great unveiling is consummate with the restoring of this earth to its original or nearly original condition.

V 20, the creation presently is subject to futility.

It is cursed.

Not of its own will, not because of some sin it committed, but subjected by God.

Universe is cursed not because of any sin it committed because animate and inanimate objects, non-rational cannot sin but because God has subjected the whole created order to the effects of sin.

Isaiah 24:6, *Therefore the curse has devoured the earth, And those who dwell in it are desolate. Therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, And few men are left.*

Jeremiah 12:4, *How long will the land mourn, And the herbs of every field wither? The beasts and birds are consumed, For the wickedness of those who dwell there, Because they said, "He will not see our final end."*

All the animals die.

All the plants die.

All the grass dies.

All the death in the universe is a direct effect of sin.

Nature's destiny is inseparably linked with man's.

V 21, the whole creation is in slavery to corruption and waiting to be set free into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

So that when Christ brings his own back, He takes us to glory.

Then Christ establishes us back to His kingdom.

When He does that, the earth is rejuvenated.

He restores paradise. That glorious manifestation of the children of God and that restoration of creation is what the creation now groans for.

V 22, the whole creation groans and suffers, like the pain of childbirth.

The childbirth pains are very strong. They are very powerful but at the same time they are very anticipatory. There are many pains in life that anticipate nothing but death.

The pain of the creation is the pain in anticipation of the glorious life that will come at the glorious manifestation of the children of God when the Lord comes back to establish His kingdom.

V 22, ends with a note of hope because it says we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

There is a future.

This is not a permanent curse.

There will be an ultimate deliverance at the glorious liberation of the children of God.

When we read the Old Testament passages on the new earth and the new order, some of them refer to that restored earth and its millennial conditions. Some of them refer to the new heaven and the new earth in its eternal perfection.

The Greek term and that term is the word "groan" or "sigh."
Stenaz is the verb form and **Stenagmos** is the noun.

In the Greek lexicon defines it is as groaning because of an undesirable circumstance.

Groaning in the sense that,

- you want to be delivered from your present dilemma.
- because of unfulfillment.
- because of suffering and pain that needs to be relieved.
- because of an undesirable circumstance.

Groaning used in the following passages.

Acts 7:34, *I have surely seen the oppression of My people who are in Egypt; I have heard their groaning and have come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send you to Egypt."*

The people of God who were in Egypt were under oppression by the Egyptians. They were forced to be their slaves and to make bricks and life was very difficult. The Lord said I have heard their groans and I have come down to deliver them.

The verb refers to the groaning of Israel under the Egyptian bondage.

Mark 7:34, *Then, looking up to heaven, He sighed, and said to him, "Ephphatha," that is, "Be opened."*

Here our Lord was groaning, same word, because of the painful effects of sin, a circumstance very undesirable to Him.

Hebrews 13:17, *Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

Don't make your leaders groan.

Don't make life miserable for your leaders, elders, and shepherds.

The sighing of a longing soul, desiring to be relieved from present painful circumstances. Precisely how the word is used in this text.

Romans 8, we see groaning.

V 22, the whole creation would like a change in its condition.

V 23, *"we ourselves groan within ourselves."*

V 26, Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

In all these cases, there is a discontent with present circumstance.

- The creation wants a change.
- Believers want a change.
- Even the Holy Spirit longs for a change.

The Holy Spirit wants the fulfilment of God's intended and ultimate, final purpose for us. We sum these up as the groans for glory.

Believers groan for glory.

Believers also lament their cursed condition.

The earth is groaning because it is in an undesirable condition and believers are also groaning because they too are in an undesirable condition.

The earth and its environment in the universe, all the created order groans because of the impact of the Fall. Believers also groan because of the impact of the fall.

For us it's a real groaning and not a personification.

It's a real groaning because we personally feel the impact of sin.

David groaned that his iniquities were too heavy for him.

He couldn't carry them. They were too much for him to bear.

Psalm 38:9, *Lord, all my desire is before You; And my sighing is not hidden from You.*

David groaned under the weight of his iniquity. Any sensitive believer does.

Romans 7:24, *O wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?*

The man groaned his whole Christian life because he saw in himself such wretchedness. He saw his sin and he groaned about it.

2 Corinthians 5:4, *For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.*

We are burdened with sin. It is a heavy burden, and we are weary of it and tired of it and it is an undesirable condition because it drains us. It steals our joy and our usefulness.

John 11:33-35, *Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. ³⁴ And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept.*

Jesus empathetically, sympathetically identifying with the pain of sin. He sees all this weeping and realizes the burden that sin is. It has taken the life of Lazarus.

Because the wages of sin is death. Death is here because sin is here. Sin is the culprit. He was deeply moved. He was troubled.

According to the Greek Jesus was wailing. He was crying loudly with sympathy for those who had to endure the curse. He showed such a holy indignation that He shuddered, or He trembled.

Romans 8 the same kind of attitude believers have about sin that is in them.

We groan ourselves.

We feel this pain.

Having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves.

- We have the first fruits of the Spirit,
- We have the guarantee of the Spirit,
- We have the presence of the Spirit and that makes us groan.

V 23, *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body*

We have the first fruits of the Spirit.

What is that?

The down payment on our eternal salvation.

We have the resident Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit has taken up residence in our life.

He is one with us. He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit. It is because of that that we groan.

If He wasn't there, we wouldn't groan because we would be in sin and in sin alone.

But once we have been converted and transformed and the Holy Spirit takes up residence and we possess the first fruits or the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit as a guarantee of future glory. That creates the conflict.

It is the power and presence of the Spirit of God in our transformed lives that gives us holy longings and holy desires which are so hampered by the presence of sin and that's why we groan.

Unbelievers don't groan. They just have a great time. They may groan under the consequence of their sin, but they don't groan because they sin. They live to fulfil their lusts.

But we, having the first fruits of the spirit, find ourselves groaning within ourselves, because there is a conflict now.

- ✓ We possess the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ We are the temple of God.

He has taken up residence in us. We are new creations.

What are we groaning for?

Waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons.

V 14-16, it said we are already adopted.

But our adoption is not yet complete.

We are not yet fully manifest sons of God. We have not yet been openly revealed as the sons of God.

We won't be until the glorious manifestation or the glorious liberation of the children of God. That hasn't happened.

We have been adopted, technically, legally. We have been made in every sense children of God but it is not yet clear what we shall fully be. We have not yet been conformed to the image of Jesus Christ because we haven't seen Him yet.

1 John 3:2-3, *Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. ³And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

We are already called children of God. Now we are the sons of God. We have the right to be declared sons of God. But the full disclosure of that sonship is not yet a reality.

We have possession of the past elements of salvation, the present elements of salvation, but not yet the future elements.

Romans 13:11, *And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.*

There are elements of our salvation, and that being our fulfilment, our full manifestation, our full glory, our Christ likeness, our holy perfection that is yet, future.

We wait for the final adoption when we are fully revealed before the whole world as the sons of God.

What does that involve?

V 23, *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body*

It involves the redemption of our body. This is a very important statement here and unlocks all kinds of things doctrinally for us.

- We are waiting, not for the redemption of our souls. That's already been done.
- We are waiting for the redemption of our body. That hasn't been done.

The redemption of our soul is what triggered the conflict. Because now we are in Christ, now we have the first fruits of the Spirit. First fruits meaning the down payment, the deposit, the guarantee, the Spirit has taken up residence and pledged to us our future glory.

- We have been changed.
- We have been transformed.
- We become new creations, but we are still locked in this unredeemed flesh.

The redemption of our body connects back to chapter 6 and 7.

Since our salvation, we are new creatures in the soul, the inner man is all new.

2 Corinthians 5:17, *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

We have become partakers of the divine nature.

We have become creatures for eternal glory.

The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us and thus we are fit for heaven.

But we are still in bondage in this body and the true self cannot fully express itself. We have not yet been revealed and we are battling this prison we are in called human flesh.

Body here means our corruptible mortality, our disease prone, sin prone, death prone humanness. Paul is very consistent with his terms.

We are not waiting for the salvation of our souls. We have already received that.

We are not waiting for the salvation of the inner man. We have already received that.

All we are waiting for is a new body so that we can fully manifest our sonship.

Galatians 2:20, *I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.*

I am a new creation.

I am crucified with Christ.

The old life died.

The new life has come.

It's Christ's life in me. I am now living this new life in my soul. I am not waiting for the salvation of my soul.

My soul belongs to Him.

He has regenerated me.

He has planted his Spirit within me.

I am His but I am waiting for the salvation of my body.

That has not yet been accomplished. It is guaranteed to us by the promise of God.

Philippians 3:20-21, *For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ,²¹ who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.*

We are going to have the transformation of the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory.

He is going to do it by His power. So, we are waiting for the redemption of the body.

Romans 6:5, *For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,*

Spiritually we died in Christ, and we rose in Christ, as far as our soul and spirit is concerned.

Romans 6:6, *knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.*

We literally died and we have been freed from the dominating control and power and penalty of sin.

We died in Him.

We have risen to walk in newness of life.

The old man has been crucified.

We are not an old man and a new man.

The old man is dead.

The new man lives.

You are not both an old man and a new man.

You are a new man.

You are a new creation.

The old man is gone. We are not exhorted to put off the old man. The old man has been put off. We are new creations.

The old man has been destroyed. What we were is gone. It died. It was buried.

Now we have risen.

Romans 6:11-12, *Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

¹²*Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.*

You still have the mortal body and there is going to be a battle and you need to win it. The old man, the old entity of sin is gone. You are not what you used to be. But sin is still there.

The old man is simply a phrase referring to what you were. The body of sin is referring to the same thing, that entity that you were in an unconverted state. That is gone but sin has taken up residence not in the eternal part of you but in the temporal part of you, in your humanness, in your flesh, in your mortality.

Romans 6:13, *And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.*

Sin takes up residence in your unredeemed humanness. You have been changed on the inside, but you haven't been changed on the outside.

Romans 6:17-18, *But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered.¹⁸ And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.*

But you know trying to obey righteousness is a real battle!

Romans 7: Paul explains the struggle from verses 24 and ends with this crescendo.

Romans 7:25, *I thank God—through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.*

Someday we are going to get delivered from this. But until then on the one hand, with my mind, I serve the law of God and the other, with my flesh, the law of sin and that's the battle.

That is why we groan.

You are a new creation with holy longings coming out of that transformed new creation, but you must battle your way through that incarceration of your unredeemed flesh.

V 23, *Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body*

You want a new body. You want to get rid of this fallen flesh, with its tendencies toward disease, death, and sin.

2 Corinthians 5:4, *For we who are in this tent groan, being burdened, not because we want to be unclothed, but further clothed, that mortality may be swallowed up by life.*

We want what is mortal to be swallowed up by life. We want the real life, the complete life, the full life of God. We are tired of this battle. We want a body like unto His glorious body.

We want a body described in 1 Corinthians chapter 15.

What kind of body?

The best we can say about it is that it's a heavenly body.

1 Corinthians 15:48, *As was the man of dust, so also are those who are made of dust; and as is the heavenly Man, so also are those who are heavenly.*

We will bear the image of the heavenly.

1 Corinthians 15:50, *Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does corruption inherit incorruption.*

So, it must be an imperishable, immortal, non-flesh and blood, heavenly body.

1 Corinthians 15:44, *It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.*

We have a body that is perishable.

1 Corinthians 15:42, *So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption.*

It will be like the resurrection body of Jesus Christ.

1 Corinthians 15:52, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

The dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

The only change left to happen to you is that redemption of your body.

This perishable must put on the imperishable and this mortal must put on the immortal.

1 Corinthians 15:53-54, *in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.* ⁵⁴ *So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."*

Death is swallowed up in victory. That's the day of redemption, the end of these vile bodies of flesh.

So, none of us is wholly redeemed yet.

Our bodies remain unredeemed. Even the believers who died up until now and up until the rapture of the church, their spirits are in the presence of the Lord, but their bodies have not been raised. They are not raised until the rapture and then they will receive their glorified body.

Now they don't have the imprisonment of their unredeemed flesh. They are free from that but they have not yet received the body, which God is preparing for them to give them at the resurrection of believers for the fullest expression of their sonship throughout all eternity.

So, the world doesn't know who we are and truthfully. We don't know the fullness of what we are going to be like. It's veiled to the world, and it's veiled even to us.

They didn't see Christ for who He was because He was veiled in His perfect humanness. It's little wonder they don't understand that we are the children of God because we are veiled in a sinful humanness.

If you were to go up to an unbelieving person and say I would like to introduce myself to you.

I am -----

I am a son of God.

I am a citizen of heaven.

I have my family there.

My Father there,

My treasure there,

My home there.

I live in the very house where God lives.

I have been assigned the responsibility of ruling the world with Christ someday and not only that, will I rule men, but I will rule angels, too.

They will conclude that you need to go mental asylum.

We are imperfect humanity. They can't tell who we are.

We will rule over eternity.

We will rule over the restored earth.

Someday we will inherit the entire universe.

There will come a day however when the whole world will see. One of the features of the millennial kingdom is of course you have these believers taken to glory, both New Testament believers and Old Testament believers, all taken to glory, given glorified bodies.

They come back to earth to reign with Christ, and they are all resurrected individuals with a glorified body like the resurrection body of Jesus Christ. It will be clear to everybody who are these manifest children of God. Then you have, at the

time of the earthly millennial kingdom, the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven.

That indicates at the end it comes down out of heaven and takes its place in the eternal state.

We already have the guarantee for this in the granting of the Holy Spirit as we noted who is the first fruits, which is just another word for guarantee, the pledge that God is going to in fact bring our ultimate salvation to pass.

V 24, *For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees?*

Hope is a major ingredient inseparable from salvation.

We have been saved in the hope of glory.

We aren't all we are going to be, and we haven't received all we are going to get.

For why does one also hope for what he sees?

If you see it, you don't hope for it.

If it's there, it's not something you hope for.

Salvation is in hope.

We have not yet entered the fullness of our salvation. This is not the end. This is only a small, small part.

Hebrews 6:19, *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,*

The thing that just anchors us is the pledge and the promise of our eternal hope in Jesus Christ.

1 Thessalonians 5:8, the helmet of salvation, which protects us from the blows of Satan is called the helmet of the hope of salvation.

Satan hammers and hits and hacks away trying to cause us to doubt the promises of God and we hold fast to the hope of salvation.

Colossians 1:5, *because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel,*

The gospel comes and it says this is for here but for now and for eternity.

This is a message of hope for eternity.

Titus 2:13, *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ,*

We live in hope. We haven't yet entered the fullness of our salvation. This is one of the great truths.

We were saved in hope.

Can you lose your salvation?

Of course not.

One of the components of salvation is the hope of what God has for us in the future.

We haven't seen it.

If we saw it, it wouldn't be hope.

V 25, "If we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance, we wait eagerly for it."

When you really hope for something, you don't have, you persevere. You wait eagerly.

There is an unseen element of salvation, and it really is the great element of salvation, glorification.

It's not wishful thinking.

It's not guessing.

It's a confident assurance.

It's an absolute hope based upon the word of the living God.

Philippians 1:6, *being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;*

We are confident that what the Lord began, the Lord will complete. We live in hope.

We never despair.

We are not fatalists.

We are not pessimists.

We live in hope, and we groan until the redemption of our bodies.

For us the history is from a child of Satan to a child of God.

From a son of hell to a son of heaven, that's our pilgrimage and we groan for that future glory.