



## World Christian Fellowship

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### **Romans 80** **Longing for Glory!** **Romans 8:19-22**

**Romans 8:19-22**, *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. <sup>20</sup> For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; <sup>21</sup> because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. <sup>22</sup> For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now.*

Glorification of Christian is the culmination of everything.

We as Christians in our Christian faith, live in the hope of the glory which is to come. We all anticipate the time when we will be free of this fallen flesh, free of our sinful tendencies.

We all anticipate the time when we will be completely delivered from every taint of sin, when we will enter into the presence of Jesus Christ and be made like Him.

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.

This assurance of a no-condemnation status, despite our weakness, was indicated in chapter 7.

We don't do what we ought to do. We do what we ought not to do. We are weak, and we don't have the ability to secure ourselves. We don't have the ability to create our own safety. We don't have the ability to hang onto God, to hang onto Christ, to hang onto righteousness, to hang onto obedience on our own.

We are converted, and we are regenerated, and we are new creations, but we still have the flesh. We have a new creation, incarcerated in unredeemed flesh.

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 31-39**, we have the great paean of praise, or benediction, the great affirmation that nothing ever can separate us from God or Christ.

This is a result of the work of the Holy Spirit.

**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.

**Ephesians 1:13-14**, *In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,<sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.*

The moment you believe, you are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

The Holy Spirit is given to you as a seal for the fulfilment of God's promise of eternal life.

The Holy Spirit is given to you as a pledge, as a seal, as a down payment on the eternal promise that you will be fully and finally redeemed to the praise of His glory.

**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;*

The Lord will fulfil His promise, and the guarantee of that fulfilment is the Holy Spirit.

**Colossians 3:4**, *When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.*

Nothing can change that. When He comes in glory, we'll be with Him in glory.

**1 Thessalonians 5:23-24**, *Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>24</sup> He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it.*

The Lord will maintain your blameless status until the return of Jesus Christ so that when He comes, your spirit, soul, and body will be preserved, complete, without blame.

The One who called you to salvation is the One who will bring that to pass.

So, throughout Scripture, you have these kinds of promises.

The fulfilment of God's plan of redemption when He brings us into full glory. It will happen because the One who called us will be faithful to bring it to pass.

The One who began the work will be faithful to complete the work because when we first trusted in Christ.

We were given a seal, a guarantee, a pledge, a down payment, an engagement ring, namely the Holy Spirit, who will bring us to final glory.

Nothing can change our future. We are in a no-condemnation status.

### **What about sin?**

That sin has already been paid for in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. We are free from the law of sin and death, and we are covered in the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

The Holy Spirit is given to us then as the guarantee of our eternal glory.

*V 30, Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.*

- If you were chosen, you were called.
- If you were called, you were justified.
- If you were justified, you will be glorified.

Nothing can change that.

You are on the road to eternal glory, and nothing can alter that.

Salvation is not salvation at all that does not end in eternal glory.

**V 29**, *For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

We weren't predestined to the beginning of salvation.

We were predestined to the end of it when we are made like Jesus Christ.

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.

**V 14-16, "We have been adopted"**

We have become children of God. We as children of God, heirs of all that God possesses and joint heirs with all that Christ will be granted as the Son of God.

The path to that glory in verse 17 and 18, is suffering.

Suffering is a necessary part of glory.

We suffer here for righteousness's sake we gain the greater weight of eternal glory.

The purpose of suffering is to bring us eternal glory.

We can accept our suffering for righteousness' sake cheerfully.

Those are the incomparable gains of glory.

The Spirit of God is the guarantee that we will have a full inheritance as equal heirs with Jesus Christ. The incomparable gains of glory.

### **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.

This is a rich and fascinating section of Scripture, and it shows us, how unfulfilled this life is.

Everything is groaning.

Everything is waiting for what is to come.

The creation is waiting, the believers are waiting, and even the Holy Spirit is waiting in anticipation of what is to come.

Groaning because we must endure the effects of a fallen world, the effects of sin.

If you study the Scripture, you will find that there are five great themes in Scripture.

1. The character of God,
2. Sin and disobedience and its consequence.
3. The righteous law of God, obedience, and blessing.
4. Need for a Saviour, who came and provided salvation.
5. Coming kingdom, for which all groans.

That is the great culmination.

That is the great anticipation.

That is the great fulfilment that God has laid out.

The story is not complete unless we understand the great truths of eschatology.

You must understand that the story of redemption does not end with your conversion. Your conversion is only a small part of an unfolding saga of redemption that will not end until the glorious unfolding of the purposes of God as revealed in the eschatological passages of Scripture.

The story is not over when people get saved. That's not the end, and then we just hang around until Jesus gets us out of here in an exit, either through death or through His return. That is not how the thing ends.

Your conversion is not the end of redemptive history. It doesn't end with you.

That is a tragic thing. That would be like reading a book and stopping before you got to the end to find out how it all ended.

God just as He revealed the account of creation, He also revealed the record of what will happen in the future.

### **The groaning of creation.**

Paul is looking at creation, and he is painting a picture that really any Jew would recognize and understand.

He is talking about this present age, and another age to come, the glory age.

The Jews saw time divided into two sections:

- Present age, and
- Age of the kingdom of God.

This present age was bad, wicked, sinful, subject to sin and death and decay.

As the Old Testament revealed the Jews believed, someday there the Lord would come, that would be the Lord's Day. There would be a tremendous Day of Judgment, and the world and the universe would be shaken to its foundations and shattered.

But out of that, there would come a new earth, and there would come a new life and a new kingdom.

**Isaiah 65:17**, *“For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.*

- There was this great anticipation that there was coming renewal on the earth, and the reign of the Messiah.
- A spiritual revival and a great prosperity for the nation, Israel.

- All who turned to the true and living God would be in a new heaven and a new earth.

In the days between the testaments, the 400 years we call the inter-testament period. During this period the Jews were oppressed, enslaved, and persecuted. God didn't reveal anything. He broke the silence finally with the coming of Jesus Christ and the New Testament.

But as you read in that literature of the Jews in the inter-testament period, they talked and wrote often about the dreams of a new world, the dreams of the kingdom, the dreams of a renovated earth, the dreams of when the curse would be reversed, and paradise would be regained.

The Jews understood this longing for a new creation.  
Paul understood it.

He understood it because it had been promised in the Old Testament, and he knew that it was coming.

Paul here sort of personifies nature. He thinks of nature itself longing for the day when sin's dominion over it would be broken, when death and decay would begin to be conquered, and God's glory would come.

**V 19**, *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

Creation personified.

**V 22**, *The whole creation is groaning.*

Paul was not talking about angels, though they are created, because they are not subject to corruption.

There's nothing for angels to hope for because the holy angels always have complete fulfillment in the presence of God.

He is not talking about demons because there is nothing for demons to hope for. They are never going to share in glory. They are never going to share in the glorious liberation of the sons of God.

Paul is not talking about believers because he distinguishes believers from the creation.

**V 23**, *"Not only this, but also we ourselves groan."*

- He is not talking about angels.
- He is not talking about demons.
- He is not talking about believers.
- He is not talking about unbelievers.

**V 20**, *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;*

Sinners have been subjected to futility by their own will. They voluntarily transgress the law of God. Furthermore, sinners, unbelievers, don't live with hope.

Paul is not talking about angels, demons, believers, or unbelievers.

That leaves us only the inanimate creation, the non-rational creation.

Paul is talking about the material heavens and the material earth and everything in them.

- Heaven,
- Earth,
- Planets,
- Stars,
- Water,
- Land,
- Grass,
- Flowers,
- Animals,
- All the rest.

This is a somewhat poetic way to look at creation.

**Isaiah 35:1**, *The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, And the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose;*

Isaiah personifies the joy of creation when it enters that glorious new earth.

**Isaiah 55:12**, *“For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands.*

It was common for the prophets in poetic license to personify creation as groaning or praising God for the glories of newness to come.

**V 19**, *For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.*

*“The earnest expectation”* means to sort of stretch your head up, stretch up your eyes, stand on your tiptoes.

Move and cast your gaze as far as you can. This is what creation is doing. It is looking longingly, waiting eagerly with readiness, with preparedness.

We can't tell who the sons of God are just by looking at a crowd. We can't sort the wheat from the tares can we, and Jesus said don't try to do that.

The glorious manifestation of the sons of God has not yet occurred. The reason we can't tell is because you haven't received your glorified Body.

You have a body that looks like everybody else's. There's no real way to tell at this point because the glorious manifestation of the children of God has not happened. We are still subject to futility. We are suffering in this present time and have not yet entered.

**V 18**, *"into the glory that is to be revealed in us."*

It is not yet manifest what we are.

We wander around wherever we are, at school or work or in the neighbourhood, and they have no clue who we are.

They don't know that, in the truest and spiritual sense, we are extra-terrestrials. We are citizens of heaven!

We do not belong in this world, but it is not yet manifest what we shall be.

**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. <sup>3</sup>And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.*

The world doesn't know. The time comes in God's redemptive plan when He reveals who we are, and we are transformed by the rapture and the resurrection, and then we come back to this world with Christ, according to Revelation, in full blazing glory, and we reign with Him on the earth for 1,000 years!

That's what Scripture promises. Revelation 19.

We come back in full blazing glory, coming out of heaven in blazing, glorious white. We come back to earth, and here we are fully manifest.

So, it is our return with Christ in full glory that is the time in which He establishes His millennial kingdom, and so the connection is made here very clearly.

The whole creation is waiting eagerly for the unveiling of the sons of God because that's the time when the curse will be removed.

Inanimate and animate creatures are seen as if they were standing on their tiptoes, straining to catch a glimpse of the unveiling of the sons of God in their full glory because they know what that means.

That means that the curse is removed, and the earth is restored to Edenic wonder and that all that we have hoped for and longed for has come to pass.

**Daniel 12:3**, *Those who are wise shall shine Like the brightness of the firmament, And those who turn many to righteousness Like the stars forever and ever.*

When we come back, it's not going to be us as usual.  
We are going to shine brightly like the expanse of heaven.  
We are going to radiate the glory of God.

The time when the saints come back to radiate that glory that the whole creation is wonderfully transformed, and there will be a renovated earth during the millennial kingdom. At the end of the millennial kingdom, that renovated earth will be uncreated. God will create the final state, which is a new heaven and a new earth, in which there will be no sin.

In the millennial, restored earth, there still will be unbelievers. As we know during the millennial kingdom and even a time for Satan to lead them in a great rebellion, as the book of Revelation points out.

But nonetheless, that millennial kingdom will feature a restored earth. The prophets are very clear about many of the features.

Natural enemies will become friends. If a person dies at the age of 100, they will die like a child. Life will be prolonged.

- ✓ The glory of the Lord will fill the earth.

- ✓ Truth will fill the earth.
- ✓ Peace will fill the earth.
- ✓ Wisdom will fill the earth.
- ✓ Righteousness will prevail.
- ✓ Christ will reign and rule, we along with Him.

All those features are delineated in the Scripture as part of that glorious kingdom.

Creation groaning, there are four features that help us understand it.

*V 20, For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;*

**a) The creation was subjected to futility or vanity.**

The whole creation has no ability to reach the goal of its intended design.

It cannot achieve what it was intended for.

It is not able to fulfil its purpose.

It can't be what God intended it to be.

**b) What did God intend it to be?**

All of creation was made by God in six days to demonstrate and fully reflect His glory. It was able to do that, initially, and God

looked at everything that He had made and said it's good, everything. It was a pure and complete and fulfilled vehicle to manifest God's glory.

But it was, according to **V 20**, "*subjected to futility.*"

Something happened that deterred this great creation from its intended objective.

Something happened to cancel out its fulfilment.

Something definite happened in past time at a point in history to bring creation into subjection, decay, corruption, and frustration.

### **c) Involuntary victim.**

Whatever subjected creation to its aimlessness,

Whatever cancelled out its ability to do its fulfilling task of perfect reflection of the glory of God,

It was not something that creation chose.

Creation is an involuntary victim.

### **d) What caused it?**

**V 20**, *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope;*

God who subjected it.

God did it.

At some specific point, God cancelled out the created universe's capability to fulfil its intended created purpose.

At some point, God subjected the whole creation to its futility.

In other words, the condition of the world, as we know it today, is a result of the judgment of God.

All things have not continued as they were from the beginning, quite the contrary. The earth, right now, is under a condition imposed upon it by the judgment of God.

### **What event brought this about?**

**Genesis 3:17-19**, *Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': "Cursed is the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life. <sup>18</sup> Both thorns and thistles it shall [bring](#) forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. <sup>19</sup> In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return."*

God judged this earth. God judged the whole universe. As part of the curse on man. Man would have to face every day of his life in the battle for bread and the threat of natural disasters.

**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."*

The curse on the earth is a punishment.

As beautiful as this earth is, you can only imagine what it was like before it was cursed.

Nature's destiny was inseparably linked with man's, and because man sinned and fell into a cursed condition, so did man's domain. It is now, this whole earth, in the bondage of corruption.

**V21**, *"a slave to corruption."*

The universe and the world in which we live experiences things like suffering, vanity, bondage, corruption, groaning, travailing, pain. Those are the terms used to describe that condition.

There is an intimate connection between man's sin and the decay to which the whole universe is liable.

We can't save man by moral enterprises, and we can't save the cursed universe by ecological ones. The earth is in bondage.

**V 21**, It is in bondage to corruption.

### **What does that mean?**

It means that it can't free itself.

It doesn't matter how hard we try. It cannot free itself from its corruption. It is impossible. All efforts to remove its decay are futile.

Environmentalists can't rescue this cursed earth.

We are not moving upward. We are moving downward. We are not on the way up to perfection. We are on the way down from perfection to final destruction.

The second law of thermodynamics is that 'Everything tends toward decay and disorder'. Because man sinned, he was punished by not being allowed to enjoy the full benefits of this glorious creation.

Man was not allowed to enjoy the full rights as regent and king of the earth and lord of creation. God cursed his entire environment so that it reluctantly yields to man as he applies all his skills by the sweat of his brow. The whole creation is cursed.

The principle of corruption is everywhere.

**Hosea** wrote about it.

**Joel** wrote about it.

**Isaiah** wrote about it.

**V 20**, *"in hope."*

God subjected it in hope. There is a little breath of good news!

You don't have to fix the earth.

You don't have to save the planet.

You don't have to save the world.

There is hope.

This is not a permanent curse. There is a better future ahead.

God has promised ultimate deliverance. There is coming a recovery.

**V 21**, *because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*

When the children of God are made manifest in the glorious coming kingdom of Christ on earth, the creation will also be set free from its corruption.

It will be delivered from the bondage of corruption. That is a promise, and all of creation, ever since the Fall, has been groaning in anticipation of that promise.

**Psalm 102:25-27**, *Of old You laid the foundation of the earth, And the heavens are the work of Your hands. <sup>26</sup> They will perish, but You will endure; Yes, they will all grow old like a garment; Like a cloak You will change them, And they will be changed. <sup>27</sup> But You are the same, And Your years will have no end.*

God never changes, but this creation is going to change. It is really going to change.

There is going to be a glorious restoration. There is going to be a regeneration.

**Matthew 19:28-29**, *So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. <sup>29</sup> And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My name's sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit eternal life.*

Jesus says there's coming a regeneration, and when it comes, I am going to be on My throne.

Isaiah says it is a time when

- The lion will lie down with the lamb.
- The desert will blossom like a rose.

- A great river will flow out of Jerusalem and water the desert.
- Israel will be saved.
- The Gentiles will come to the Messiah, ten of them hanging on the robe of a Jew, who will bring them to meet the Saviour.
- Time of great glory.
- Time of a transformed earth.
- Time of regeneration,
- Time of restoration.

**Isaiah 11:6-9**, *“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them. <sup>7</sup>The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox. <sup>8</sup>The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. <sup>9</sup>They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.*

The kingdom time, regeneration time and the restoration time.

**Isaiah 49:13**, *Sing, O heavens! Be joyful, O earth! And break out in singing, O mountains! For the Lord has comforted His people, And will have mercy on His afflicted.*

This is the salvation of Israel, and all the creation will rejoice in that glorious day.

**Isaiah 55:12-13**, *“For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. <sup>13</sup> Instead of the thorn shall come up the cypress tree, And instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree; And it shall be to the Lord for a name, For an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off.”*

All the thorns, all the thistles, all the weeds, everything we know associated with curse on this earth will be eliminated. This is the glory of the renovated creation, the regenerated creation.

This is the hope that creation has. This great doctrine of cosmic fall and this great doctrine of cosmic recovery, connects the first three chapters of Genesis with the last three chapters of Revelation.

### **When is this all going to happen?**

It is all going to happen at the time of the glorious manifestation or revealing or unveiling of the sons of God.

**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.*

When we reach the point of our glorious bodily redemption, that's when He establishes the kingdom. All creation is marvellously transformed, and that will go on for 1,000 years. In the book of **Revelation**, we see the full details.

***Revelation 20:4**, And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

That's the glorious manifestation of the sons of God.

Someday, Jesus will come. He will take us to heaven. Then there will be a fierce judgment on the earth, after which He brings us back. We are gloriously manifest at the establishment of His kingdom. The earth is incredibly renovated to become Eden-like for 1,000 years, after which it is dissolved, and, in its place, the new heaven and the new earth, which the prophets also spoke of.

***Isaiah 66:22-24**, "For as the new heavens and the new earth Which I will make shall remain before Me," says the Lord, "So shall your descendants and your name remain. <sup>23</sup>And it shall come to pass That from one New Moon to another, And from*

*one Sabbath to another, All flesh shall come to worship before Me,” says the Lord.<sup>24</sup> “And they shall go forth and look Upon the corpses of the men Who have transgressed against Me. For their worm does not die, And their fire is not quenched. They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh.”*

The story has a wonderful end, and even the inanimate creation longs for that end.

**V 22,** *For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now.*

Everything laments together because everything is touched by the curse.

How great is the evil of sin, that the sin that Adam and Eve committed in the garden, two people on a little tiny planet in a universe without boundaries, polluted the whole place.

The whole creation agonizes until it can be restored, regenerated. Spring leads only to summer. Summer leads to autumn, and autumn to winter.

Poor old nature tries every year to defeat the vanity, the principle of death and decay and disintegration that is in it, but it cannot do so. It fails every time. It still goes on trying, as if it feels things should be different and better, but it never

succeeds, so it goes on groaning and travailing in pain together until now.

**V 22**, *For we know that the whole creation groans and labours with birth pangs together until now.*

Like the pain of childbirth, the agony of wanting to bring forth something new and unable to do it, but in hope.

Christ Himself will do it.