



World Christian Fellowship

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Romans 79 Suffering brings Glorification! Romans 8:17-18

Romans 8:17-18, *and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. ¹⁸ 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.*

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 any taint of sin when we will enter into the presence of Jesus Christ and be made like Him.

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. ³ And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

We live in the light of this great hope.

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

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.*

From verse **17 to 30** covers the future glory of the children of God.

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, in spite of our weakness, which 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 defines for us then 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 of 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 to 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, 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.

When we are completely delivered from sin, when we are given a redeemed body, like the resurrection body of Christ, and we are made like Jesus Christ.

This is the goal of our salvation.

Because we have been adopted, verses 14 to 16, because we have become the children of God by adoption in which we can cry, "Abba! Father," because we belong to Him as the Holy Spirit witnesses to us.

We are God's children.

We have been adopted into His family.

We have all the rights and privileges of His true children.

Consequently, as we enter into verse 17, here are the incomparable gains of glory that come to His children.

First, we are heirs, he says in verse 17. If we are His children, and we are also heirs.

Since we are the children of God, every one of us is a son of God by faith in Jesus Christ.

John 1:12, *But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:*

So, since we have become His sons, we have, therefore, become His heirs.

We are heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.

We are fully adopted into God's family with all the rights and privileges, and with the full inheritance, the full inheritance.

What is that inheritance?

We will inherit everything that belongs to God.

He will pass on His possessions to us.

- ✓ He will give us His joy.
- ✓ He will give us His peace.
- ✓ He will give us His power.
- ✓ He will even give us likeness to His own Son.
- ✓ He will give us access to everything in His entire new heaven and new earth.

We will have every right to call it our very own. He will grant us all that belongs to His everlasting and eternal kingdom to be ours forever and ever. We inherit everything that God possesses. We even have the privilege of sitting on His throne with Him.

We know the source then of our inheritance is God. We will inherit everything that Christ inherits.

In the book of Revelation, Jesus Christ, the Lamb slain, as it were, coming out of the throne of God in **Revelation chapter 4 and 5**. Jesus appears. In His hand a scroll, and that scroll is the title deed to the universe.

Christ has the right to possess it. It's sealed seven times like a Roman will. **Revelation chapter 6** the Lord begins to break those seals, all kinds of events take place as He unfolds the title deed to the universe. Step by step breaking the seven seals which unleash the seven trumpets which unleash the seven bowls. That describes Christ taking over the universe that belongs to Him.

It is His inheritance.

It is His by right, because He is truly the sovereign and supernatural and divine Son of God.

Everything that He takes as He unrolls the title deed to the universe and takes back the universe. Ultimately creates a new heaven and a new earth, everything that He receives, everything that He inherits, we are inheriting, as well, because we are fellow heirs with Christ.

So, we are heirs. We are heirs of God, who is the source of our inheritance. We are heirs to such a great extent that we will inherit everything in the universe that belongs to Jesus Christ by right.

Before we enter into the fullness of being heirs, and we receive an inheritance at its fullest extent so that it is equal to the inheritance that Christ Himself receives, there is some preparation.

V 17-18, *and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.* ¹⁸ *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.*

There is a preliminary preparation for that, and the preparation is suffering.

This, too, is part of the work of the Holy Spirit.

We are fellow heirs with Christ since, indeed, we suffer with Him. Now that could be talking about our being united with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection, but that's not the intent here.

V 18 makes it clear that he is talking about sufferings of this present time.

He is talking about issues of life, sufferings of life, and we, who will be glorified, will also suffer.

Suffering is a necessary part of our preparation for glory.

In John's gospel when the disciples were worried all the time about suffering.

Finally, when He went to the cross, they were in a state of disarray because they really had very little anticipation of suffering. Even though Jesus had explicitly outlined for them in **John 15 and 16** that they would suffer. He had outlined it to them from the very beginning.

"Don't expect to be treated any differently than I have been treated. If they have treated Me this way, they will treat you this way."

John 16:1-2, *"These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble.² They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.*

He had warned them.

Yet, it seems as though they were oblivious to that reality of inevitability of suffering.

James and John sent their mother to Jesus to ask if they could please be granted the right to sit on His right hand and His left hand in the kingdom.

Matthew 20:23, *So He said to them, "You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father."*

Jesus was telling us that greater glory in eternity is related to suffering in this life. It's not related to achievement, human achievement, or even church achievement. It's related to suffering.

Suffering is a necessary part of the preparation for glory.

We are talking about all manner of suffering for the sake of Jesus Christ.

Sometimes it is in the family.

It may involve the workplace.

It may involve your relationships at work or at school.

It may involve several alienations relationally in life.

Christians all over the world, as we know today, are suffering greatly at the hands of anti-Christ people who are in power.

But suffering is a necessary part of the preparation for glory, and the degree of glory is somehow related to the degree of suffering here.

2 Timothy 2:11-12, *This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. ¹² If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us.*

2 Timothy 3:12, *Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*

There will be a measure of hostility if you desire to live godly in Christ Jesus. Don't look at it as a negative. It's really a positive because it is part of the preparation for your glory.

1 Peter 5:10, *But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.*

In other words, you want to look at your suffering and look at that alienation that persecution. You want to look at that as the path to glory.

The more faithful you are here, the more bold you are here, the more you pursue godliness here, the greater will be the hostility of those around you who reject the truth. Consequently, the greater will be your capacity for glory in heaven.

Paul rejoiced in his suffering, because when he was weak, he was strong.

In other words, when he came to the end of himself, then he was at the beginning of God's power.

When he had nothing to offer but could throw himself only on the power of God, that's when he was most useful to God.

Paul was willing to suffer in this life. He was willing to be weak, because it released the power of God, but it also gained for him a greater weight of glory in the life to come. He was willing.

2 Corinthians 4:8-11, *We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; ⁹persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed— ¹⁰always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. ¹¹For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus' sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.*

He was indomitable.

- You could bend him, but you couldn't break him.
- You could pound on him, but you could crush him.

Because his resilience was built into the fact that he knew that when he was at the end of his own resources, he was at the beginning of total commitment to God.

Paul also knew that, when he was without strength, and when he was being most severely maligned, assaulted, and persecuted, he was therein attaining a greater weight of glory. He understood that.

2 Corinthians 4:17, *For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory,*

Paul knew that his light affliction in this world was producing for him a great, heavy weight of glory, far beyond all comparison. That's what motivated him.

1 Peter 1:6-7, *In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, ⁷that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honour, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,*

Do you have a little trouble in this life?

- You are misunderstood.
- You are hassled because of your faith.
- You are maligned.
- You are rejected.
- You are alienated.
- You have been distressed by these various trials.

These trials have tested your faith.

Therefore, they are more precious than gold which perishes, because these things tested by fire won't perish, but will result in praise and glory and honour when Jesus comes.

This suffering is connected to your union with Jesus Christ. You don't want to come up with the idea that any suffering at all is somehow gaining you a greater way to glory. When you suffer for your own stupidity or your own sin, that doesn't count. That has no spiritual benefit. This suffering is related to your union with Christ.

It is not just simply earthly pain.

- My husband doesn't understand me.
- My kids are a trauma to me most of the time.
- Life is really hard.
- We can't make ends meet.
- I have got an illness or a disease

That isn't really what it's talking about.

Life delivers trouble to everybody. Everybody dies, and so everybody gets something. Everybody deals with the lack of fulfilment. Everybody deals with the difficulty of relationships at the most intimate level. We all understand that.

But what kind of suffering we are talking about, and Paul is talking about, is that kind that is related to the reproach of Christ.

You may think that because someone suffers for years and years in this life with some devastating disease or illness. Somebody suffers from a malady of some kind, or somebody has terrible suffering from cancer or whatever it might be. Somehow just that pure physical suffering is gaining them an eternal weight of glory, that's not the case.

What Paul is talking about is that suffering which is ours because of our oneness with Jesus Christ. That is the issue.

It is because we identify with Jesus that we suffer, that we feel reproached, that we feel the alienation.

It is not that we go through life miserable about that, because we have on the other side the tremendously rich, fulfilling, enjoyable, comforting, and encouraging fellowship of believers to offset that hostility.

John 15:18-19, *“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.*

You should be expected to be resented by the world.

I don't understand how Christians ever got the idea that whole world to like them. Nothing could be further from the truth.

If we do what we are supposed to do in confronting the ungodly world with the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, either they believe or they become antagonized.

But that's where you lose your life. That's where it doesn't matter. The more you lose your life here, the more you find the fullness of glory there.

This is a short time to gain an eternal weight of glory.

2 Corinthians 1:5, *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also abounds through Christ.*

Any of these things that we endure at the hands of unbelievers who reject our Christ and reject our message, any of these experiences which Paul calls the fellowship of His sufferings.

Colossians 1:24, *I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,*

They can't harm Christ. He's not here, so they harm those who are Christ's.

Any of those kinds of things which we endure, any of those kinds of things which we suffer should cause us.

1 Peter 4:13, *but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.*

Someday we will receive glory from Him.

These sufferings are not useful.

They are not in themselves honourable.

They are not some human means of earning things.

They are God-appointed, and when we respond rightly to them, they are preparations for eternal glory. They follow the path of the Messiah.

Luke 24:26, *Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?"*

Philippians 2 talks about the incarnation, Christ making Himself a servant, taking on the form of a man, being obedient unto death.

Philippians 2:9-11, *Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, ¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven,*

and of those on earth, and of those under the earth,¹¹ and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

1 Peter 1:11, *searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.*

It is a matter of being willing to live your Christian life in a sinful world. It's just a matter of not being ashamed and speaking the truth in love.

You should look at that as a great opportunity to secure not only the honour of Christ, but the joy that comes in eternal glory when you receive your reward.

Luke 6:20-23, *Then He lifted up His eyes toward His disciples, and said: "Blessed are you poor, For yours is the kingdom of God.²¹ Blessed are you who hunger now, For you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, For you shall laugh.²² Blessed are you when men hate you, And when they exclude you, And revile you, and cast out your name as evil, For the Son of Man's sake.²³ Rejoice in that day and leap for joy! For indeed your reward is great in heaven, For in like manner their fathers did to the prophets.*

How should you respond?

Be glad in that day and leap for joy.
For your reward is great in heaven.

There is an effect between suffering here and being glorified there. That is all in the economy of God to unfold to us when we enter into His presence.

How far is this from the health-wealth doctrine?

The health-wealth viewpoint says the whole idea of the Christian life is comfort and riches here and now.
What lies.

Christianity is not escapism.

Christianity is not materialism.

Christianity is not selfish indulgence.

Such Christians who pursue that kind of stuff limit their potential for eternally reflecting the glory of God.

So, Paul shows us our inheritance.

- We have seen the heirs. All who have been adopted into the family of God.
- We have seen the source, God, who gives us this inheritance.
- We have seen the extent, the extent of our inheritance is equal to the inheritance of Christ, who inherits all that God possesses.

- We have the preparation for inheritance, which is suffering.

Your eternal glory will be, in some way, related to your willingness to suffer the reproach of Christ in this life.

Paul knew what it was to set his affections on things above and not on things on the earth. He really knew what it was to live with heaven in view.

He could say, "*For, to me, to live as Christ and die is gain,*" far better to depart and be with Christ. If the Lord wants me to stay, I will stay. But if I had my choice, I would get out of here."

He was heavenly-minded.

He got a grip on eternity.

He was not all wrapped up in time.

He was on his way to glory and couldn't wait to get there.

V 18, *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.*

Letter to **2 Corinthians** Paul chronicles repeatedly the measure of the suffering which he endured. He talked about it in chapter 1 and 2.

He talked about it at great length in chapter 4.
He talked about it again in chapter 6.
He talked about it again in chapter 7.
He talked about it again in chapter 10.
He made a major statement about his suffering in chapter 11.

It was so much a part of his life.

Apostle Paul suffered so immensely.
Going from prison to prison.
Immense hostility and having to escape for his life. Knowing that every day could be his last day.

Any day the plots of the Jews or the hostilities of the Gentiles could erupt, and he could be executed.

On one occasion, he was stoned and left for dead in a dump, and God was gracious to him and revived him, and he went from there on to preach.

Paul knew what it was to suffer.
He knew the physical suffering of all of those who hated Christ and wanted to inflict it on Christ, but couldn't get to Christ, because He wasn't here, and so they got to His main agent, who was Paul. He knew that.

Paul is speaking from large and broad experience.

He is saying, "I don't think our present sufferings for Christ are at all surprising. Nor are they at all inconsistent with our being sons of God. If you think that when you become a son of God, you just go breezing through the rest of life, you have got it all wrong." All wrong.

There are a lot of Christians today who think that somehow our society ought to recognize Christians and treat them in a manner that they deserve to be treated.

The fact of the matter is that's not going to happen, because all the ungodly in the world belong to the kingdom of darkness, which is totally hostile to Christ, and it is Satan himself who generates cultural norms. His hostilities are passed through society.

I don't think our present sufferings for Christ are inconsistent with being sons of God. They are not inconsistent with living in an ungodly, Christ-rejecting world.

- I expect that hostility.
- I expect hostility from all those who reject the gospel.
- I expect hostility from all those who reject the categories of sin, which the Bible so clearly defines.
- I expect that kind of hostility from all those who resist Jesus Christ's claim on their life and who resist the Word of God.

The term for suffering used particularly of persecution and of the sufferings of Christ.

It is used of the sufferings of Christ.

Hebrews 2:10, *For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*

It is used of persecution.

1 Peter 5:9, *Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.*

It talks about hostilities against the gospel, hostilities against Christ. We expect it in this present age.

It is not abnormal.

The idea that somehow, we can get the world to treat all Christians kindly is foolishness.

The more a society resists the gospel, the more it's going to resist the people who represent that gospel.

The gospel is a severe offense. If you, as a church or as a minister or as a Christian, decide that you are going to try to make friends

with the whole world, you will destroy the gospel. Once you have taken the offense out, you don't have the gospel.

It doesn't mean that we are supposed to alienate people by having an ugly personality. Quite the contrary; we speak the truth in love, but we speak the truth.

- ✓ The comfort of the children of God is not because they are loved by everybody in the world.
- ✓ The comfort of the children of God is not because they are treated the way they ought to be treated.
- ✓ The comfort of the children of God in the darkest hour of pain in the midst of trial and persecution.
- ✓ The comfort of Christians has always been the hope of eternal glory.

Christians are being persecuted today all around the world. They are being persecuted in this country, and that persecution will continue to escalate.

Christians are reacting by demanding that the society make them comfortable here and now instead of hanging on with the hope of eternal glory.

Our Lord suffered in this world undeservedly because He was sinless, but He committed Himself to a righteous God and entrusted Himself to God.

God lifted Him up to glory and gave Him a name which is above every name.

V 18, *"The sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."*

Nothing that happens to you in this world for the cause of Christ, no difficulty, no suffering, no persecution in this life should even be compared to what is to come and the glory which shall be revealed in us!

The suffering here would only be a little, tiny, small dose of what they will endure forever in hell. But the little bit of suffering that we have here for the cause of Christ is all we will ever have.

When the world suffers, there is no hope.

But for Christians, we can take even the physical suffering of this world, because we know it's temporary and someday we will enter into a world where there is no sorrow and no tears and no crying and no death. That's called heaven.

We gladly will bear the reproach of Christ and suffer for His name because, whatever we suffer here will be returned to us in a greater weight of glory, which we will enjoy forever and ever and ever and ever as part of our eternal reward.

We considered two things.

- ✓ Our suffering comes at the hands of men.
- ✓ Our glory comes from God.

Whatever we may suffer at the hands of men will be rewarded eternally from God.

- Our suffering is brief.
- Our glory is eternal.

- Our suffering is earthly.
- Our glory is heavenly.

- Our suffering is a light affliction.
- Our glory is a heavy weight of glory.

- Our suffering is in this body.
- Our glory is in a body like unto His glorious body.

No comparison.

So, when we consider the sufferings of this life, we have to consider them in the light of eternal glory and face gladly the reproach of Jesus Christ.

If somebody rejects us for our faith in Jesus Christ, God promises that secures glory in the life to come.

- It will enrich your fellowship with Christ here and now.
- It will break the back of your self-confidence and make you most useful to Him.
- It will bring to you the pledge and the promise of eternal glory.

That's how we as Christian's view suffering.

2 Timothy 1:12, *For this reason I also suffer these things; nevertheless I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day.*

I don't mind the suffering, because I am waiting for the day when I see Him face to face.

We long for that incomparable glory. There's nothing in this world that's going to last.

There is nothing in this world that ultimately will satisfy. We are looking for the glory to be revealed yet in us.

Do you really love His appearing?

Paul defined it, as loving His appearing.

The average Christian, certainly in our modern times, thinks that Jesus is a ticket to a happy life. He is, only it doesn't start until you die.

We need to understand that this world is going to be filled with trouble. It's the nature of a fallen world, fallen people.

If we are going to be bold and live for Jesus Christ and live godly, we will suffer persecution to one degree or another.

How in the world can Christians not understand this?

Look at some suffering or look at some hostility from somebody else as breach of their rights.

Christians today appear to be sort of preoccupied with the desire for a happy life. Fix my life. Make it more comfortable, happier, more fulfilling, more satisfying.

Being preoccupied with creature comforts is the main reason why many Christians, live lethargic Christian lives spiritually indifferent.

If you are seeking to be comfortable in this world, you have missed the whole point.

A godly life will be invariably persecuted to one degree or another. It may be your own family that are hostile to you. It's

always sad and painful, and you may be branded with the marks of Jesus.

Some people will even be martyred, but even that is not worthy to be compared with the glory that will be someday revealed in us.

Ask yourself if you are willing to be bold, faithful, clear in your Christian testimony, so that no one at all is in the dark about where you stand. Willing to speak the truth of Jesus Christ in love.

If need be, suffer humiliation, hostility, alienation, and not be bothered by it at all, but rather embrace it as the purpose of God is unfolding, which will yield for you an eternal weight of glory.

2 Timothy 4:6-8, *For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.*

I fought the good fight.

The whole deal was a fight.

I ran the race.
I finished the course.
I don't mind the discipline.
I don't mind the exertion.
I don't mind fighting the fight.
I don't mind the hostility.
I don't mind engaging the enemy because there's laid up for me
a crown of righteousness.

Paul always had that heavenly view. He pressed toward the
prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

So, the Holy Spirit guarantees to us our eternal glory, but the
path to that glory, that wonderful inheritance from God equal
to the inheritance of Jesus Christ.

We will be joint heirs with Him. That wonderful inheritance laid
away for us, in its full expression, will be defined by our
willingness to bear the reproach of Christ in this world.

If we truly are Christ's, we will suffer, and by that suffering, gain
by the grace of God, glory.