

Are You Groaning for the Right Reasons?

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ROMANS 8:18-27

Core Competency:

Eternity- I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

“Your heart must not be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in Me. In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if not, I would have told you. I am going away to prepare a place for you. If I go away and prepare a place for you, I will come back and receive you to Myself, so that where I am you may be also. You know the way to where I am going.”
(John 14:1-4)

Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

❸ LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God’s word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFEGROUP.

Introduction

No one believed that Mitch Unrein would play in the National Football League. When he graduated from high school, colleges overlooked him. He was a “walk-on” at the University of Wyoming where he earned a spot playing defensive end. NFL coaches overlooked him again when he entered the NFL Draft. Eventually, the Broncos signed Unrein to their practice squad.

He spent the entire 2010 season adjusting to the speed of the game, working hard, and gaining stamina. He trained for long hours lifting weights, working to improve his strength and agility. He changed his diet so that he could put on extra weight. He studied the game and looked for ways to play smarter. He suffered through this grueling training regimen because he was focused on a goal. In 2011, Unrein was rewarded with a spot playing nose guard for the Denver Broncos.

Unrein maintained a winning perspective. For him, all the hard work and long training sessions were not worth comparing to the rewards, the excitement, and the glory of playing in the NFL. There was no contest.

In Romans 8, Paul says a similar thing. “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed in us.” Paul’s key insight, which does not come easily to our minds, requires a shift in perspective. Our current difficulties are relatively insignificant when compared to the glory that is to come. Our immediate experience seems to contradict this truth. We see, we hear, and we feel the pain of living in a broken world. Consequently, Paul’s talk about a future glory can seem very far-off and vague to us. However, the bible assures us that, beyond this life, there is a greater and truer reality. If we could see across all of eternity, it would radically alter our outlook. It would our perceptions, our desires, and our prayers.

This Week

This week as you study, ask God to lift your eyes off of your current difficulties. Fix your eyes on the joy that is found in Christ both now and in the life to come. Seek out your eternal Father, in whose presence you will find an unconquerable love from which no trouble or hardship can separate you.

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? The words God uses to communicate matters so pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage:

Read Romans 8:18-27

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

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

21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan

within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?

25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. (NASB)

② DISCOVER His Word

What does God MEAN? Answer the following questions and then bring to your COMMUNITY GROUP to discover and discuss with others.

1. Underline the word “groan” or “groaning” each time you see it used in this passage.
 - a) Groaning is a verbal expression of what emotion(s) or sensation(s)?
 - b) According to Paul, who is groaning and why?
2. How was creation subject to frustration? As part of the creation, give specific examples of how you experience some of the “frustration” to which Paul is referring?
3. Compare Romans 8:15-16 and Romans 8:23. How can adoption be both past and future at the same time? How does this relate to our groaning and/or hoping?

4. Circle “glory” or “glorious” each time you see it in the text. What is the relationship between groaning and glory?

5. The term “first fruits” comes from the Old Testament and indicates the first part of a harvest. With this in mind, what does “we who have the first fruits of the Spirit” mean in verse 23? (See 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 for help).

6. a) Why are we, as believers, instructed to pray?

b) According to verses 26-27, what role does the Holy Spirit play in the life of a believer? What do you find that encourages you about this?

c) What are barriers to (your) prayer life and what steps might you take so that your prayers are more effective?

7. Many consider verse 18 to be the thesis statement for this passage. Rewrite this verse in your own words or explain what it means to you.

8. According to the following verses, what value is found in suffering?

Romans 5:3-4

2 Corinthians 4:17

James 1:3-4

9. a) How are you allowing your current difficult situation to eclipse God's promise of future glory?

b) What are some practical ways that you, as a believer, can persevere in suffering?

③LIVE His Word

How does this truth FIT? God's word is lived in real life so engage with truth in your LIFE GROUP.

Who do you know that is going through a hard time or is suffering? What might your life group do to relieve that suffering?

Sermon Notes:

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away God's Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away God's money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.