



LIFE IN THE SPIRIT MAKES US ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND ENDURE SUFFERING

1. (Romans 8:18) Paul's analysis of the present suffering and our future glory: they cannot be compared to each other.
 - a. **For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared:** Paul was not *ignorant* or *blind* to the sufferings of human existence; he experienced more of them than most any of us today. Yet he still considered that the future glory far outweighed the present **sufferings**.
 - b. **The glory which shall be revealed in us:** Without a heavenly hope, Paul considered the Christian life foolish and tragic (1 Corinthians 15:19). Yet in light of eternity it is the wisest and best choice anyone can make.
 - c. **Revealed in us:** This coming glory will not only be revealed *to* us, but it will actually be **revealed in us**.

2. (Romans 8:19-22) All of creation is awaiting and anticipating this coming glory.
 - a. **The earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits:** Paul considers that creation itself is eagerly awaiting the **revealing of the sons of God**.
 - b. **Him who subjected it in hope:** Only God could subject creation **in hope**. This was not ultimately the work of either man or Satan.
 - c. **The glorious liberty of the children of God:** This benefits not only the children of God themselves, but also all of creation. Until that day, creation **groans and labors with birth pangs**.
 - d. **The revealing of the sons of God:** Certain groups with a "super-Christian" mentality take the idea of the **revealing of the sons of God** to say that all creation is waiting for their particular group of super-spiritual Christians to be revealed in an incredibly powerful fashion. This is a purely egotistical fantasy.
 - e. **The whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now:** "Creation is not undergoing death pangs... but birth pangs." (Morris)

3. (Romans 8: 23-25) We also groan and wait with perseverance for the coming glory.
 - a. **Who has the firstfruits of the Spirit:** This means we have a taste of the glory to come. Can we be faulted if we long for the *fulfillment* of what we have received in the **firstfruits**?
 - b. **Eagerly waiting for the adoption:** We are waiting for our **adoption**. Although there is a sense in which we are already adopted (Romans 8:15), there is also a sense in which we wait for the consummation of our adoption which will happen at **the redemption of our body**.
 - c. **We eagerly wait for it with perseverance:** The fulfillment of our redemption is something still distant, yet we **hope** for it in faith and **perseverance**, trusting that God is faithful to His word and the promised glory will be a reality.