



In Romans 8 Paul teaches about the four specific ministries that the Holy Spirit has in our lives: (1) He subdues our flesh (5-13), and (2) He witnesses to our sonship (14-17). Now in this passage He (3) guarantees our inheritance (18-25), and (4) helps our weakness in prayer (26-27).

WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Romans 8:18-27

¹⁸ I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. ¹⁹ The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ²⁰ For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope ²¹ that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

²² We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. ²³ Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴ For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

²⁶ In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. ²⁷ And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Verse 18. How does Paul compare our present sufferings to our future glory? (see also 2 Corinthians 4:17)

Creation "groans"

In **verses 19-22** Paul mentions "creation" 4 times. What does he mean by that term?


How was creation "*subjected to frustration*"? (see Genesis 3:17-19)

How is the "creation" frustrated now (vs 20)?


Why is the future of "creation" tied to our future?


Verse 22. How many times does "groan" occur in 8:22-27?

Look up the word "groan" in the following passages, where the same Greek word appears, and note how it is used:

 **Mark 7:34** ("*deep sigh*")

 **2 Cor. 5:2,4**

 **Hebrews 13:17** ("*burden*")

 **James 5:9** ("*grumble*")

 **Acts 7:34**







We "groan"

Read and compare **2 Corinthians 5:1-4** to verses 23-25 here:

Describe our "groaning" -

Word Study: “*firstfruits*”

“*Firstfruits*” has a rich meaning in the Bible. Using a **Bible dictionary** and **concordance**, answer these questions:

-  What does the word mean?
-  What Jewish feast focuses on *firstfruits*? (see Exodus 23:16, 34:22, Leviticus 23:15-21 - hint: the feast has 3 names)
-  When is that feast in relation to Passover?
-  How does that relate to what happens in Acts 2?
-  What does *firstfruits* mean in 1 Cor 15:20, 23 and in Proverbs 3:9?
-  So - what does *firstfruits* mean here in Romans 8?

Verse 23: How does 2 Corinthians 5:5 relate to the ministry of the Spirit?

Verses 24-25. Using this context, write a definition of “*hope*”:

The Holy Spirit “groans”

In your own words, explain the ministry of the Spirit in **verses 26-27**:

What truth does Romans 8:34 add to this picture?

Read John 17 for a glimpse of how Jesus prays for us.
What stands out the most to you?

“When we stumble over our words, the Spirit straightens out the syntax. When we pray with muddy motives, the Spirit purifies the stream. When we see through a glass darkly, the Spirit adjusts and focuses what we are asking until it corresponds to the will of God.”

The point is that we do not have to have everything perfect when we pray. The Spirit reshapes, refines, and reinterprets our feeble, ego-driven prayers.

*Richard Foster,
Prayer: Finding the Heart's
True Home*

LIFE RESPONSE: What Does it Mean to Me?

SUFFERING

What has been one of the most difficult times in your life?

Did you grow from it, or did you just experience the pain?

HOPE

“We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.” (Hebrews 6:19)

Sometimes life on earth actually seems to be pretty good, and we don't necessarily find ourselves “longing” for heaven every day. But what event or situation in your life has caused you to cling to hope like an anchor?

PRAYER

How do verses 28-29 encourage you in your prayers?

Have you ever gotten “hung-up” on having to pray a certain way, or according to a formula?

What have been some of your most meaningful experiences of prayer?

Guidelines for Sufferers

1. Follow Christ's example, entrusting yourself to God rather than hating those who cause you pain. (1 Peter 2:23-25)
2. Don't surrender to fear. (1 Peter 3:14)
3. Focus on the fact that Christ is Lord and ultimately He is in control. (1 Peter 3:15, 16)
4. Keep on doing what is right. (1 Peter 3:16, 4:19)
5. Rejoice, not that you are suffering, but that in suffering we participate in Christ's sufferings. (1 Peter 4:13)
6. Remember - we suffer for a little while. Our destiny is to share in His eternal glory. (1 Peter 5:10)

Revell Bible Dictionary