

A few points and questions to consider:

Suffering is inherent to life – although some suffer more than others. We suffer physically due to various medical conditions; some severe, others not so severe. We suffer emotionally as we go through various trials of life. Some suffer spiritually as they are persecuted for their faith.

In our current study, Paul first mentions suffering in Romans 5:3 then again in 8:17-18.

Romans 5:3-4

Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope.

Romans 8:17-18

And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

In your own words, describe the “work” of suffering in each of these passages.

Several translations insert a heading / title just before Romans 8:18. A few of those are:

- Present Suffering and Future Glory
- Future Glory
- From Groans to Glory

We’ve clearly seen in Paul’s writing his frequent “looking ahead” to the future glory that awaits the redeemed children of God when we are delivered from our physical bodies and this world that are tarnished with and by the effects of sin. But how often do we think about the same longing by all of God’s creation? Paul reminds us of this in Romans 8:19-22. Take a few minutes to re-read the creation account in Genesis 1 and 2, imagining the perfect existence of all creation before Adam’s sin. Then read the Biblical accounts of the future glory that awaits all of creation. A few of those passages:

- Isaiah 11:6-9
- Revelation 21 & 22
- Isaiah 65:17-19

Consider the perfect existence that awaits us in eternity. Worship, praise and thank God for this great hope we have been promised.

In verses 22-27 Paul reminds us that we are blessed with the indwelling Holy Spirit who helps us as we await this future glory. Describe in your own words His work that Paul writes about in these verses and reflect on how you’ve seen His interceding ministry in your life.

This week's study closes with a reminder of God perfect plan that He has written and is completing in each of our lives. At least two cross-references for this passage are verses from Pastor Greg's current sermon series from Philippians:

Philippians 1:6

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 2:13

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Are there similar promises from scripture that come to mind? If so, jot those down below.

Combining these passages, thank God for His sovereign and providential work in your life and the peace His work has provided and will continue to until His work's "completion at the day of Jesus Christ."

Once again, we encourage you to dig a little deeper into this passage by preparing a HEAR Report. As noted in previous weeks, HEAR is an acronym for Highlight, Explain, Apply, Respond.

- Read thru this passage and HIGHLIGHT a verse(s) that you found especially powerful.
- EXPLAIN the verse. What was the context and purpose for what was written and when it was written.
- APPLY the verse to yourself
- Lastly, RESPOND to the verse. Maybe there are changes God wants you to make in your life w.r.t. the verse. Or your response may be a prayer to God. It may be praising Him. However you feel led to respond.

As has been pointed out by others, the goal isn't for you / me to jot down a "profound truth" but to note the "truth you found."

Please email us and let us know how this passage spoke to you. Also let us know if you have any general comments, suggestions, etc. for this midweek Bible study program. *We want and need to hear from you.* Email address: connect@madisonavenuebc.org

Name: _____

H.E.A.R. REPORT for _____ (Bible passage).

Highlight a verse(s)

Explain what the text means.

Possible questions to consider: *Why was this written? To whom was it originally written? How does it fit with the verses immediately before and after it? Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book? What is He intending to communicate through this text?*

Apply "the significance of these verses to you personally"

Possible questions to consider: *How can this help me? What does this mean to me? What would the application of this verse look like in my life? What does this mean to me? How does this apply to my family, my church family, my community? What is God saying to me?*

Respond

Matthew 7:7 (ESV), "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Source: Growing Up, Robby Gallaty