



ROMANS 8:18-25

This guide will help you facilitate a study of the Bible passage with a focus on applying God's truth to our lives together. Look at the Big Idea and Takeaway for our CGs sections at the beginning of the guide to keep the discussion focused. For a deeper dive into the passage, refer to the [text notes](#) on the passage.

HEART CHECK: BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Our CG sessions are where we actively apply God's Word to our lives and urge each other to live out the Gospel in all areas of our lives. In preparing to facilitate a session, it can be tempting to view the CG session as an intellectual exercise where we transmit content and information to our members, instead of a session where we can love and serve those in our CG by edifying and strengthening their faith.

Here is our loving challenge to you: the spirit in which we prepare to lead the study is as important as the outcome of our preparation -- God is concerned with our hearts far more than the product we deliver. Before we seek for others to be encouraged and convicted by the text, let's first desire for ourselves to hear how God might be speaking and convicting us through His word.

For recommendations on how we can use these resources and facilitate the session prayerfully and thoughtfully, check out our ["How to Use the CG Resources"](#) note.

1. SERIES OVERVIEW

A. Goal of Series

Since the pandemic began, our church has added many new members and grown tremendously. However, due to the restrictions and various health reasons, many have never been to physical service or had much interaction or fellowship with the people of our church family, aside from digital means. Whilst it's been exciting to grow during this period, we do not want to assume that the most important value of our church – Gospel Centrality, has been grasped by all who are at Redemption Hill Church. Therefore, we want to use this series to lay these foundations very clearly in the church. Some goals include:

- Teaching about the gospel itself, and what it means to be part of a community where the gospel is at the heart of all that we do.
- Laying out the basics and foundations of our faith very clearly and explicitly.
- Romans 8: This chapter elaborates on God's victory over our sin. God's grace is given to us in the here and now (the power of the Spirit, the certainty of the hope we have, the knowledge that all things are working for our good), and that we can live as conquerors here despite our sufferings.
- Romans 12: The letter shifts from the indicatives (what God has done for us) to the imperatives (how we are to respond to God). This chapter elaborates on how we must respond to God's mercies and how we are to live is to offer up our bodies as living sacrifices. It also demonstrates the reality of living out God's grace and love is how a church culture shaped by the gospel looks like.

B. Summary

Christians, in living out their union with Jesus, will experience suffering in this life before they are resurrected, vindicated, and glorified with Jesus. However, the hope of resurrection is what compels our hearts to greater faithfulness and expectancy as the future hope of glory and resurrection far outweighs our present sufferings. Christians also have the Spirit as an intercessor in our hearts, who intercedes for us effectively even when we are limited by our weaknesses to pray rightly. Finally, we have a certain and unshakeable hope even amidst our present suffering, because God has loved us in eternity before, and His love has predestined us to be transformed to the image of His perfect Son. That is why He has called us, each and every individual one of us to Christ, according to His eternal purpose and will, to be transformed into the likeness of the Firstborn and glorified Son, and to that end, He justified us. Finally, following His unbreakable, indissoluble, sovereign, eternal redemptive plan, He will glorify us with Jesus, through our conforming to Jesus' image, up to the ultimate vindication and resurrection when Jesus returns.

C. Big Idea (8:18-25)

Our hope as Christians is in the reality of our future resurrection and glory. Even in the midst of our current suffering, God has granted us His Spirit as the promise of our complete adoption and glorification with Jesus when He returns, therefore we can draw strength and encouragement from this hope as we will surely overcome all suffering and brokenness eventually.

D. CG Takeaway

To make God's promise of future glory our greatest hope, anticipation, and encouragement in this life: to look forward to when we will receive our perfected bodies and have our adoption vindicated and manifested before all creation, and for our current circumstances to find their place within the context of that reality. To rest in the wonderful truth that the Spirit intercedes for us even when we are limited by our own weaknesses.

E. Fallen Condition Focus

- Our greatest hope in life is not in the reality of our future glorification and resurrection. The vindication of our hope and the perseverance of our faith means little or nothing to us. Allowing all of this to lead us to become cynical and/or despair in present sufferings.
- Defining “good” according to our narrow and limited perspective of life, or according to the standards of this world, rather than seeing God’s desired “good” for us through an eternal perspective.
- Forgetting that we have the Spirit as the promise of our final adoption, and overcome by a sense of bitterness or hopelessness thinking we are left to our own amidst the sufferings and challenges in this world.

Interpretation and Observation

(Read the text notes to have a comprehensive understanding and help for the answers for this section)

What kinds of sufferings might Paul be referring to in v18? What does this tell us about Christians and suffering?

What is creation’s relationship with humanity? How does Paul describe creation in the fall and in redemption?

What does Paul mean by the phrase 'firstfruits of the Spirit' (v23)?

Paul had already spoken about the Roman Christians receiving “the Spirit of adoption as sons” in v15, so why does he say that they are to “wait eagerly for adoption as sons” (v23)? How is it connected to “the glory that is to be revealed?”

Gospel Applications:

A. Fallen condition:

Are there sufferings that we face because of a desire to walk faithfully as God’s children, that often wear our hearts down?

Our present sufferings are sometimes directly related to the fallenness of creation (death, sickness, etc) and not due to the results of sinful or evil choices from or against us. However, in these forms of suffering, how do our responses sometimes betray a lack of reference to God or the eternal perspective?

Are we drawn and compelled by the reality of our identity as God's children, and also by the hope of future glory? If not, what lies might we be believing in or what are some things that might be eclipsing this hope of future glory?

B. Personal Renewal:

In what context does Paul want us to locate our present suffering in (v18) and why? How does the presence of suffering actually strengthen our assurance/identity as God's children?

What is the "hope" that Paul describes? Think about your personal present suffering. How does this hope strengthen us and lead us to trust in God?

C. Shaping Church Culture:

What are some ways that we have seen, or experienced for ourselves how suffering is lived out in our community (both for the suffering and those around them)? What has been helpful and what has been unhelpful?