

The Groan of God

I. Introduction and Recap

- a. Romans 8
 - i. First examine layout of chapter
 - ii. As pastor Todd mentioned, Romans 8 is one of the most power packed chapters in the Bible
 1. filled with famous verses and themes that anchor our walk with the Lord
- b. In fact if you are a new believer, the layout of chapter 8 guides you through the major building blocks for Christ followers. there's 4 major building blocks in this chapter.

II. The Themes in Order

- a. Theme #1 No Condemnation
 - i. Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are **in Christ Jesus.**
 - ii. So here's one the very first things a new believer needs to get down
 - iii. You are IN Christ. And the Father in no way condemns or rejects Christ His Son. So if you are IN Christ and He's in perfect union with the Father, then the Father in no way rejects you- because you're IN Christ.
 1. Are we really IN Christ?
 - a. **2 Corinthians 5:17** – "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.
 - b. **Galatians 3:17** For all of you were baptized into Christ
 - iv. First section of Romans 8 is about the Shedding of the old man and old mindsets: Out of sin and condemnation and into grace
- b. Theme #2 Identity
 - i. The next theme is your identity- you're no longer condemned so what are you?
 - ii. You are sons and daughters
 - iii. Verse 15 you have received the spirit of adoption by whom we cry Abba, Father. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of GOD.

1. Jesus removed the condemnation so that we can have relationship with our Father, hallelujah.

c. Theme #3 Suffering & Prayer

- i. next theme Paul presents has to do with suffering, groaning, and eagerly awaiting Christ's return. It gets into the nitty gritty of prayer and we're going to look at that today- we'll call it groaning prayer

d. Theme #4 More than Conquerors

- i. and lastly he ends with the victory in Christ every day of our life- we are never separated from His love

e. Recap

- i. So Romans 8 you have this
 1. There's no condemnation
 2. a new identity as a son and daughter
 3. Groaning prayer
 4. our victory in Christ and His eternal love

f. Again today we're going to uncover what the Lord really means when He talks about all this groaning in this chapter. Why all this groaning?

- i. You're surrounded by it, so the Father addresses it and speaks very clearly to us. He acknowledges all of it. And He's intimately connected to it. So there's 3 types of groans

III. The Groan of Creation

a. You might think you don't care about this but you will. Let's read.

b. 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 eagerly awaiting creation waits for the revealing of the sons and daughters 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.

IV. Do you know when the groan of creation started?

a. From the moment Adam and Eve (the stewards of creation) chose for their will to be done over God's will

b. Creation began to groan as man became increasingly separated from God. Why did that impact Creation?

- i. Originally, mankind was commanded by God in **Genesis 1:28 God says "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and**

rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

1. What does God mean by rule and subdue?
2. That means take your God given authority and bring order, use your strength to cultivate, prune, harvest and enjoy the fruit of it
3. But from the moment the forbidden fruit is eaten, you see this shift over time from ruling to exploiting
 - a. from instilling order and peace to a selfish extraction that holds no regard for the wellbeing of what is taken.
4. Anything today that can be exploited has been exploited: mammals, fish, plants, soil, people
5. NOTHING in creation wanted to be exploited by earth's stewards (us)
6. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly
7. That word futility means devoid of truth, corrupted, depraved
 - a. The Lord gave us authority over the earth whether we exercise that well or not
- c. Thus enters the groan of creation. But it's not without hope. There is a day coming when creation will be set free from bondage and exploitation. And God designed it to come through us.
- d. For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.
 - i. It suffers the pains of childbirth- not death. Creation knows it's hard now but the baby is coming. The bride of Christ is that big fat baby. When Christ returns, we will be in our glorified bodies and creation will also be freed from corruption

V. **Second Groan: Our Groan**

VI. But until then we see not only a groan from creation but a groan within us.

VII. Let's look at our groan. **Romans 8:23 And not only that, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons and daughters, the redemption of our body.**

- a. The "firstfruits" (singular) should not be confused with the "fruit of the Spirit" (like love, joy, and peace listed in [Galatians 5:22](#)). Instead, the *firstfruits* is the Spirit Himself given to believers, who serves like it says

in Ephesians 1:14 as an initial down payment, foretaste, and guarantee of the ultimate eternal inheritance and bodily resurrection

- i. I just want to be clear that it is Holy Spirit Himself causing this groan
 - ii. Because by having Holy Spirit and this taste of the eternal, we feel an inner groan for what...
 - iii. For our adoption and redemption of our bodies
- b. I remember talking to a friend who lost family member and there was grief but also the jealousy that he was with Jesus. That was her groan. She was called to stay behind for right now.
1. Philippians 1: ²³ My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.
- c. Because you are still alive, you are called for more here. I don't know how much time I have or you have but what I do know is every moment holds purpose
- i. So we have purpose now but there's this groan in us because we hold the eternal Holy Spirit within us.

VIII. Third Groan: God's Groan

- a. ²⁶ Now in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as we ought- EVEN PAUL recognizes this
- b. A great thing for a new believer to learn is that we don't know what to pray for as we ought, we don't know all the thoughts and perfect plans in God's head- and it takes godly wisdom and humility to acknowledge that.
- c. We should never approach prayer in the flesh but we weaken the flesh and enter in the Spirit- we enter in a posture of surrender- He knows best. We want what He wants. Your kingdom come, Your will be done. And in that place of surrender look what happens
- d. ²⁶ 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*.

 - i. Amazing. When you come in weak- God comes to intercede FOR YOU

- ii. When Holy Spirit is praying for you, it says He is interceding according to the will of God. Because He has full access to the Father. He knows what's in His mind in a way that we don't.
- e. A number of scholars attribute this groaning too deep for words to be at least partially referring to praying in tongues
 - i. Here's what I have to say about praying in tongues. It's a form of surrender.
 - ii. It is allowing Holy Spirit to pray the perfect will of God through you
 - iii. I pray in the spirit more than any other type of prayer
 - iv. If all of this is new talk to us after
- f. And so I want to mention tongues but personally I feel that in this passage Paul could have easily just said praying in tongues like he does in other scriptures, but the Lord specifically chose for him to use this word groan. So I just think there is a wider application than just praying in tongues and I think we see it thematically in scripture
- g. John 11:11 (Jesus is talking to his disciples) ... He *said to them, "Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep; but I am going so that I may awaken him from sleep." ¹²The disciples then said to Him, "Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will come out of it." ¹³Now Jesus had spoken of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about actual sleep. ¹⁴So Jesus then said to them plainly, "Lazarus died, ¹⁵and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, so that you may believe; but let's go to him."
- h. **IN this next part I want you to pay attention to the differences between Martha and Mary as they approach the Lord, and how the Lord responds.**
 - i. ...²⁰ So then Martha, when she heard that Jesus was coming, went to meet Him, but Mary stayed in the house. ²¹Martha then said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. ²²Even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." ²³ Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise *from the dead*." ²⁴Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." ²⁵ Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; the one who believes in Me will live, even if he dies, ²⁶and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?" ²⁷ She said to Him, "Yes, Lord; I have come to believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, *and He who comes into the world.*"

- j. I just want to note here that even though Martha makes this statement, *you are the Son of God*, as we continue reading it becomes clearer that she doesn't believe Jesus is going to raise Lazarus from the dead right then EVEN THOUGH this type of miracle had already been performed twice by Jesus
 - i. Jesus raised a widow's son and the 12 year old girl
 - ii. IF she believed, don't you think she would have run to tell Mary the good news of what was about to happen?
 - iii. Let's read what she does next
- k. 27 When she had said this, she left and called Mary her sister, saying secretly, "The Teacher is here and is calling for you."
 - i. Martha didn't think it was even relevant to deliver the news of what Jesus just prophesied would happen
 - ii. I see in Martha kind of a stoic acceptance of her brother's death, regardless of the hope Jesus HIMSELF tried to impart. Her mouth says Jesus is the Son of God but her heart has accepted a loss. I think her disappointment that He didn't come sooner coupled with her grief was so loud she didn't have ears to hear what the Lord was saying.
- l. ...32 So when Mary came to the place where Jesus was, she saw Him and fell at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died." Therefore when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, He was deeply moved in spirit and was troubled
 - i. He was deeply moved in spirit- another translation says he groaned in the spirit
 - ii. Mary comes in weakness. Not even standing; she's on her knees. She wasn't there for the conversation Jesus had with Martha where Jesus says exactly what He's going to do. She doesn't know the full plan she just knows to come in raw and be with Jesus.
- m. Now don't forget this story is running parallel to Romans 8
 - i. It says the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words
- n. How does Jesus respond to Mary, who is weeping at His feet in grief? He begins to groan, and he's troubled- and that word troubled indicates an anger and indignation.

- i. NOT ANGER AT MARY'S WEAKNESS. Scripture says- we just read it that the Spirit HELPS us in our weakness, and Jesus is no different. So what is happening?
- o. I don't know. All I can do is observe what's happening in this scene.
 - i. In this moment, Jesus who is the resurrection and life, Jesus who came to bring life and life abundant, Jesus who is the bread of life, is suddenly surrounded by death, loss, and grief. His friend Lazarus died. And his friend Mary is before Him in utter weakness.
- p. What does He do next?
 - i. ...34 And he said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see." ³⁵ Jesus wept.
- q. The shortest verse of the Bible. Jesus wept. Jesus, who knew He was going to raise Lazarus from the dead. Jesus, who knew He was the resurrection and the life. This Jesus, became fully present with Mary in this moment.
 - i. Fully present with the pain of loss she was experiencing. Mary wept. Those around her wept. And Jesus did too.
 - ii. He didn't emotionally skip over a single moment here. Nor does He skip over them now. He's the same yesterday, today and forever. This is who He is.
 - iii. Now look at the different responses it causes from the onlookers
- r. ...36 So the Jews were saying, "See how He loved him!" ³⁷ But some of them said, "Could this Man, who opened the eyes of the man who was blind, not have also kept this man from dying?"
 - i. Some people are only interested in the power moves of Christ. They're like- *why is He weeping, why didn't He do something sooner since He's so powerful.* There's no interest in the side of Him that is fully present and connected with His people. His ability to love and relate before the answer comes .
- s. Jesus is both all powerful AND a man with scars. He's Savior of the world and near to the broken hearted.
- t. In this story Mary approached Jesus in a posture of weakness, and Jesus responded in 2 ways to her:
 - i. He responded with a groan- a groan that holds resurrection power
 - ii. but He also responded to Mary with tears

- IX. My Story- filming, trafficking, dog barking, you have no idea the screams I hear.
- a. **And I share that just to say the Lord is still deeply connected to the groans and cries of His people**
- X. And when we surrender to the Lord, when we allow Him to come in strong in our weakness, that Humility is a landing pad for His glory to be seen and His will to be done.
- XI. ³⁸ So Jesus, again being deeply moved within, came to the tomb Now it was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. ³⁹ Jesus *said, "Remove the stone." Martha, the sister of the deceased, *said to Him, "Lord, by this time there will be a stench, for he has been *dead* four days." ⁴⁰ Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you believe, you will see the glory of God?" ⁴¹ So they removed the stone. And Jesus raised His eyes, and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. ⁴² But I knew that You always hear Me; nevertheless, because of the people standing around I said *it*, so that they may believe that You sent Me." ⁴³ And when He had said these things, He cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" ⁴⁴ Out came the man who had died, bound hand and foot with wrappings, and his face was wrapped around with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go." Therefore many of the Jews who came to Mary, and saw what He had done, believed in Him.
- XII. What Romans 8 is telling us and what John 11 is showing us is that when we take a posture of surrender and trust in prayer, the Lord responds with groans that bring forth His will to be done
- XIII. The Lord certainly comes in close with our personal trials and pain, but there's also just the groan we feel in prayer for His complete restoration in all areas of suffering and pain in creation.
- a. Because there's real pain that God cares about: the lost, trafficked children, the restoration of Israel,
- i. You can hear the anguish and sorrow of Paul's heart over Israel from the very first line of Romans 9:1. He calls it unceasing grief.
- ii. Paul picked up the groan with Christ
- b. And when you let yourself enter into those spaces of prayer- you come to know the Lord in a deeper way. There should be a groaning prayer on your heart that is also beyond yourself and current situation. And I see it in this body (examples) I commend you...
- XIV. Communion

