

# Overflowing With Hope

Contributed by Dr. Fred W. Penney on Mar 23, 2020

**Scripture:** Romans 8:18-30

**Denomination:** Pentecostal

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**Summary:** This message gives hope in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic

Title: "Overflowing with Hope"

Text: Romans 8:18-30

Big Idea: "While we wait in hope – the Holy Spirit helps"

Introduction:

I Dreamed a Dream

(Les Miserables)

There was a time when men were kind

When their voices were soft

And their words inviting

There was a time when love was blind

And the world was a song

And the song was exciting

There was a time

Then it all went wrong

I dreamed a dream in times gone by

When hope was high and life worth living

I dreamed, that love would never die

I dreamed that God would be forgiving

Then I was young and unafraid  
And dreams were made and used and wasted  
There was no ransom to be paid  
No song unsung, no wine untasted  
But the tigers come at night  
With their voices soft as thunder  
As they tear your hope apart  
As they turn your dream to shame  
He slept a summer by my side  
He filled my days with endless wonder  
He took my childhood in his stride  
But he was gone when autumn came  
And still I dream he'll come to me  
That we will live the years together  
But there are dreams that cannot be  
And there are storms we cannot weather  
I had a dream my life would be  
So different from this hell I'm living  
So different now from what it seemed  
Now life has killed the dream  
I dreamed

Context of letter:

- Roman empire...threats...Jewish threats...Paul is under attack

- Church in Rome is being persecuted...what to do? Quit...how long to wait?
- Hardship of Paul...shipwrecked...imprisoned...hungry...wild animals...stoned...emotional toll...Jews/Pharisees

"Lord, is it true that a thousand years for us is just like one minute to you?"

The Lord said, "Yes." The economist said, "Well then, a million dollars to us must be like one penny to you."

The Lord said, "Well, yes." The economist said, "Well, Lord, will you give me one of those pennies?" The Lord said, "All right, I will. Wait here a minute."

Passage:

Romans 8:18 I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; 20 for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; 23 and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. 26 Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. 27 And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God....28 We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. 30 And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

"hope" is mentioned 6 times.

"wait" is mentioned 3 times

I. We All Hope For A Better World: Vv. 19-22

a. Curse on creation

i. Injustice

ii. Drought

iii. War

iv. Aids

v. Poverty...diseases...cancer...

b. "bondage to decay" v. 21

c. Argument against belief in God is "natural disasters"

d. Deuteronomy text...

e. "glorious freedom" ...in the future.

f. Groaning..."As in pain of childbirth"

g. Illustration of birth labour..

h. New heaven and new earth

i. All NFLD all the time—except the weather...hospitality and the scenery!

- See Hosea 4:1-4...even the fish disappear.

- What about Katrina? Mississippi flood of 93...at least a wake up call...why doesn't it hit Chicago or any town? No one is exempt. There but for the grace of God go we. Good people get hit in the cross fire.

- We need a theology of weather.

- Look at verse 19-21: "The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself would be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God."

- The world as God originally created it was good; it was very good. But when man and woman fell, when they tumbled head over heels into sin, all of creation fell with them. And ever since that time, the world has not always worked as it was meant to work. Rivers overflow their banks, destroying homes and fields. Tectonic plates shift beneath the surface of the earth, causing earthquakes and tsunamis. Germs and viruses run

rampant. Blistering heat and killing cold render many places on earth uninhabitable. And human beings have only made things worse: acid rain, global warming, endangered species. The world is not getting more and more hospitable, but in fact less and less conducive to life as we know it.

- But the Bible tells us that someday the God who created this world will re-create it, liberate it from its bondage to decay so that it becomes the glorious place God meant it to be in the first place. This world has never lived up to its potential as a home for human beings in community with God, but someday, it will. Someday, Isaiah tells us, "The lion will lie down with the lamb, children will play with serpents and not be afraid. There will never be an infant that lives but a few days, and he who dies at a hundred will be thought a mere youth." !!!???

## II. We Now Live By Divine Hope: V. 23

WE ALSO WAIT EAGERLY FOR ESCHATOLOGICAL HOPE—PAIN AND SUFFERING ...A WORLD NOT RIGHT

a. We also groan inwardly

i. Not home yet!

b. "we eagerly await our adoption as sons"

i. Eagerness to Go home !!!

ii. Safe at home

iii. Baseball diamond---coming home; a triple is great but its not a guarantee to come home...we have that guarantee...wait...fix your gaze...

1. Illustrate: Wisconsin.

c. "redemption of our bodies"---from sin/temptation/decay.

d. Hope is central to salvation; salvation is not merely here and now

i. Wait patiently

e. one aspect of life that God does not experience. Jesus experienced nearly every human emotion, including sorrow, joy, pain, tiredness, anger and hope. But there's one aspect of our lives that God never experiences: God's never frantic. God never panics.

God is never in a hurry. That gets irritating to those of us who are in a hurry. But God never is.

III. While we wait in hope – the Holy Spirit helps! V. 26-27

SPIRIT WAITS AND HELPS AND UNDERSTANDS OUR SUFFERING AND PAIN!

- a. We have the firstfruits of the Spirit – a downpayment on our future inheritance.
- b. The HS helps us in our weakness
- c. Admit our weaknesses!
- d. Weak in prayer—no words only groans...
- e. HS is our intercessor—groans...
  - i. In accordance with the will of God
  - ii. Prayer in the spirit = acc to the will/mind of God.
- f. HS “searches our hearts”
  - i. why?
  - ii. He cares!
- g. Pray in spiritual language

IV. We Have The Certain Hope Of Future Glory:

SO, THIS GLORIOUS HOPE SUSTAINS US WHILE WE WAIT AND WHILE WE WAIT WE WILL SUFFER.

- a. WHAT IS THIS FUTURE GLORY?
  - i. Jesus return and kingdom
  - ii. Heaven!
  - iii. New earth...like Eden...no war/disease..
  - iv. New bodies!
  - v. Absence of sin/death/corruption!

vi. "glorious inheritance"

b. Suffering should never drive us from God but toward God---why? Because we say there must be more than this!

c. Our world is broken...corrupt...I worry about the future...without God I would be really worried...don't put your hope in man's technology...as soon as we get these hydrogen fuel cars in production and off our dependency on oil...life will be great...ozone layer will heal... no more wars in the middle east...spend our money fighting poverty...that will do it.

d. Anxiety is a real problem in society

e. Suicide is a real problem

f. Mass shootings

g. Youth...drifting...purposeless...?? Give yourself to eternal purposes!!!

h. Don't waste your life! Give it to God!

i. C.S. Lewis says it this way. "At the present, we are on the outside of the world, the wrong side of the door. We discern the freshness and purity of the morning, but they do not make us fresh and pure. We cannot mingle with the splendours we see. But all the leaves of the New Testament are rustling with the rumour that it will not always be so. Someday, God willing, we shall get in." And that, Lewis says, will be glory. When heaven and earth will be one, when redeemed men and women will radiate the beauty of Christ, when God himself will be among us, and we shall see him just as he is.

Conclusion; There's an interesting word picture behind this verse that we don't pick up in the English translation. In the Greek language, the word for glory literally means weight, or heaviness. C.S. Lewis plays off it in the title of his famous essay, "The Weight of Glory." Glory is heavy; it has substance. And the phrase "cannot be compared" suggests a scale, or a balance. You know the kind: a bar set on a fulcrum with a tray on either end. So picture an old-fashioned scale, or balance, with glory on one side and suffering on the other. Glory is heavy, so let's imagine it represented by a bowling ball—16 pounds of whatever a bowling ball is made of. And on this side is suffering, represented by ... BB's. You know, those little pellets you shoot from an air rifle. Now a BB weighs something; it's made of metal. A BB can sting if you get hit with one, especially in an exposed and vulnerable place, or if you get hit with a lot of them all at once. But BB's will never tip the balance when there's a bowling ball in the other side. You could fill that tray with BB's, and the bowling ball wouldn't budge. The weight of glory is so great, that no

amount of suffering can overcome it. In another one of his letters, 2 Corinthians 4, Paul puts it this way: "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

A hope fixed on heaven enables us to handle the frustrations of earth!

Glory... Glory is the blaze of fall foliage on an October morning in New England. Glory is a child's artwork hung up on the refrigerator for everyone to see. Glory is a student walking across the platform to receive her diploma. Glory is a man and woman on their wedding day, in all their finery, declaring their love in the company of family and friends. Glory is that same man and woman 50 years later, surrounded by generations of loved ones, toasting the love they have shared for so many years. Are you getting it?

Glory is someone or something at its very best, seen and celebrated by others. And glory is what God promises for all those who turn to him in faith; glory is the endgame of his eternal purposes...But the road to glory leads through suffering.

\*\* don't quit serving God for short-term pleasure...relief from suffering/persecution...put things on the weigh scales and we win!

Henri Nouwen, some friends of his were trapeze artists. They were with the circus, and their lives had an effect on him. They were called The Flying Roudellas. One thing they told Henri Nouwen is that there's a very special relationship between the flyer and the catcher on the trapeze. The flyer is the one that lets go, and the catcher is the one that catches. As you might imagine, this relationship is important especially to the flyer. When the flyer is swinging high above the crowd on the trapeze, the moment comes when he must let go. He arcs out into the air, and his job is to remain as still as possible and to wait for the strong hands of the catcher to pluck him from the air. This trapeze artist told Nouwen, "The flyer must never try to catch the catcher." The flyer must wait in absolute trust. The catcher will catch him. But he must wait.

Even youths will faint and be weary and the young will fall exhausted. There is a limit to the strength of the strongest human being. "But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They shall mount up with wings like eagles. They shall run and not grow weary. They shall walk and not faint (Isaiah 40:30-31)."

Summary:

The world is hurting,

We all are hoping,



The Holy Spirit is helping,

There is healing coming!

Big idea: "While we wait in hope – the Holy Spirit helps!"

"May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Rom 15:13)