

Let's turn our hearts to Romans 8 as we continue our series on *The Hope of Future Glory*. We want to look at Romans chapter 8, verses 18 thru 27. Reading from the English Standard Version of the Word of God. "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the Sons of God (or the children of God). For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, (and daughters) the redemption of our (physical) bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise, the Spirit helps us in 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. And he who searches hearts. (He searches your heart this morning and my heart) what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."

Father, may we receive this truth. May we receive your word. May it be peace to us, comfort, and encouragement. And may it be our blessed hope. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in your sight. O Lord, our strength and our Redeemer. Speak Lord, your people are listening. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Part two of the hope of the resurrection. There are three hopes we've been discussing from this text. We've been discussing 3 hopes of Christ' resurrection that transforms the Christian's perception and perspective on reality. It empowers us in the present to live by faith towards the future. It was Thomas Fuller who states, "he that fears not the future may enjoy the present". William Kerry states, "the future is as bright as the promises of God". Corey Tin Boone stated, "never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God". See beloved, our hope of the future should impact our living in the present. It should teach us how to respond to our present situation in light of our future hope. There's something about looking at life from the lenses of the future. Because when you look at life from your glorification, then you can move more faithfully in your sanctification. Right? If you look at your end, your destiny in light of your journey, then your journey is more joyful because you know where you're going. Your end is great. So Paul gives us three hopes in this passage. The first hope was our hope for a new creation. Secondly, our hope for the resurrection of the body. And within that context, we preached on we who have the Spirit, we groan along with creation. Because creation is waiting on us to be revealed so that creation itself can be released from the bondage of sin. Secondly (2B), we talked about we wait eagerly for the redemption of our bodies. Because we live in a falling world and death is a part of the process of birth and life and living. It's normal, but it's still shocking. It's normal, but it's still depressing. It's still discouraging, but it's a normal process of human maturation. But we must look at death in light of our future glory.

And then 2C, this is where we stopped, we wait. That's the word. We wait patiently for what we do not yet have. Romans 8:24 and 25, "for in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. (It's the reality) For who hopes for what he sees?" No, you just capture, you take it, seize what you see. "But if we hope for what we do not see (here it is) we wait for it with patience." Now this word wait is one word in the Greek language. This phrase, "we wait eagerly for it", or "we wait for or wait patiently for it". That's one word in the Greek language and it means that we wait with eager expectation, confident expectation. To wait expectantly, to wait fully and absolutely expecting what is waited on and that it will come to pass. It will come to fruition. It will be fulfilled. The keyword here in our text is wait. We don't like waiting. But we need to wait because we do not possess what we will have, yet. We're in the already and not yet world. We're already saved, but we're being saved. We're already in heaven, but we're on our way to heaven. I mean, if you go through the scriptures you can see that already-not yet proposition. Hope looks to the future, not to the present. Hope that is seen is no hope at all. Paul writes in 2nd Corinthians 4:18, he says so we do not focus on or gaze or fix our gaze on what is seen. Why not Paul? Because what is seen is passing away. What is seen is transitory. What is seen is not permanent, but what is unseen is permanent, what is unseen is everlasting. What is unseen will never perish. So, Paul says, we don't focus, we don't fix our gaze on the seen but we focus our gaze on the unseen. There's some unseen realities that we can't see yet. But one day, what is unseen will become seen and we will rejoice in that reality. Paul says, for what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal. First comes the groaning, then comes the glory. Isn't that the Christian message? First, there's the cross, then there's the crown. First, there's the pain, we use an athletic metaphor, then there's the glory of winning. As Christians, we hope and we wait. Ours is not doubting, it's not a doubting waiting. It's not a wavering hope. Rather, it's a sure and certain hope in God's promises. We don't enjoy all the blessings of the new creation. And we don't enjoy the blessings of the resurrected body yet but we're blessed with both. That's our future. We need to see our future so that we can shape how we live in the present. You know what I'm saying. I wish I would have done that much earlier in my life. I wish I would understand this truth earlier in my life. I would have ordered my steps more wisely because I saw my destiny before I started my journey. Many of us start journey and don't know where we're going, so we make so many mistakes and our choices are unwise and the consequences are sometimes crippling mentally, emotionally and physically. Because we didn't start off life with our destiny in front of us. It's like asking some kid graduating from high school, "what do you want to be when you grow up?" They don't have a clue! They have no idea. They're gonna have one major starting. In the middle they're going to get another major and hopefully they'll stop at the third major and get that done before they run out of money. Because they don't start the journey with their destiny. You know what I'm talking about. People don't start the journey with destiny in mind, do we? We just start the journey because folks told us you need to get on this journey. Right when you get out of high school, get on this journey and all these kids are running. They get on the journey. They don't know where they're going and some of them crash and burn on the journey. And now they have to recalibrate, you know, like a GPS system and try to find out where they need to go and what is their destiny. I love it.

We know our destiny as Christians and we need to use our destiny as a barometer, if you will to chart our journey so we can do it in hope. We know it's coming and so we wait patiently for it. We can persevere through the trials and the tribulations of life because we know they're temporary. "That troubles don't last always." And there's a glory that is coming. And we wait patiently for what we do not have yet. We live with a Spiritually delayed gratification. See hope gives us the ability to postpone an immediate gain in favor of a greater and later reward. Hope gives us the ability (I'm talking about that Spiritual delayed gratification hope is that thing that I'm talking about). Hope gives us the ability to postpone an immediate gain in favor of a greater and later reward. The Chicago Mass Choir released a song back in the late 1980s, "you can't hurry God, no, no. You just have to wait. Trust and give him time. No matter how long it takes. He's a God that you can't hurry. You don't have to worry. He may not come when you want it. But he's right on time." Beloved, that captures what Paul is saying, that we need to wait on God because God is wise and calling us to wait on him. And in the Hebrew language wait means to hope in him. It's similar to the Greek word Elpece. It means to hope end, to trust in, to rely upon, and to trust and look forward with confidence and expectation. So we wait. That's the hope of our resurrection.

3. And then lastly. Our hope for God's help in the present. That's our third one. Our hope for God's help in the present. So Paul moves now from our eternal destiny and how that should guide how we face suffering and pain and problems in this life, but then he places in the middle of that, if you will a life saver. So that we won't become discouraged on the journey. So that we won't become dismayed in this process of life and living with all its ups and downs and ends and outs and uncertainties. He tells us in verse 26, "Likewise the Spirit helps us in 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. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." Oh, that's beautiful! That's beautiful, beloved. As we start this journey looking to our ultimate destiny between our destiny and this starting point of the journey, there is going to be some rough waters. There's gonna be some difficult bends around the road. There's gonna be some crashes if you will. There's gonna be some upsets if you will. Some disappointments, even some disillusionment. And we need help on this journey. And the scripture says that our hope for God's help in the present is prayer. But it's a prayer that is accompanied by the Holy Spirit, who's the prayer. This is a powerful thing. It's one thing for me and you to pray, I t's another thing for Jesus to pray, but it's something totally different from the Holy Spirit to pray. And most of his prayer life is about us. It's directed toward us. Because on this journey to our destiny, we don't know the unseen realities that will take place. So Paul has spoken about our hope for new creation, he has spoken about our hope for the resurrection of the body but those things are all in the future. So now Paul finally speaks about the hope for God's help in the present. And he tells us two things here: the Spirit helps us in our weakness and the Spirit helps us to pray. My, my, my! Listen beloved, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. A beautiful word Paraklete in the Greek. It's the word that Jesus said when he was getting ready to go away to be with the father, he told the disciples, "Hey, I'm gonna send the Paraklete. I'm gonna send another one just like me and that one's going to be with you and he's gonna be in you and he's going to lead and he's going to guide you. He's going to comfort you. He's gonna be like a

parent is to a child. He's not going to abandon you, 'cause I'm not abandoning you. I'm going to my father. But when I go, he comes. And when he comes, he's going to do the work that I would have continued to do in the flesh. He's going to do it in the Spirit. Not only that, he's gonna do it in you." Now that's beautiful, man, because the Spirit is the Paraklete. So the helper helps, the the teacher teaches, the guider guides, the leader leads. This is who the Holy Spirit is. He helps us in our weakness. Now listen, he helps us in our weakness, not our wickedness. So that's a good point to distinguish. He ain't talking about your wickedness. The Bible told you what to do about your wickedness, saint. He says, "flee from it". He says, "repent of it". "He says turn away from it". He says, "confess it". He says, "don't make room for it, don't entertain it, don't go near it, don't taste it, don't touch it, don't walk around it, don't walk by it." That's what we're supposed to do with the wickedness that still exists in our mortal bodies, called the flesh. But our weakness is our human limitations because we're not as Spiritual as we think we are. Let something pop off and you will see us get out of our character and I don't think we are. I think we're acting in our character. We're acting just like we are when we're not in the Spirit, we're in the flesh. The Bible says, "walk by the Spirit and you will make no provisions for the flesh". You will not even engage the flesh to fulfill those fleshly desires. So this help here is not help from wickedness. He already gave you the help from wickedness. First of all, he regenerated your heart, gave you a new heart then he justified you by his grace. Then he indwelt you by his Spirit. Then he said, "every day be filled with the Spirit" and then he says, "walk after the Spirit". And if you are truly a son of God and you love God, he said, "if you love me, keep my commandments". So we don't have to get into that discussion. This is not about wickedness its about weakness. This is about human limitations. Things that we can't see, things that we don't know, 'cause we're not omniscient. We're not omnipresent. We are frail, fragile, fragmented human beings saved and redeemed by the grace of God. Oh, that's a lovely thing. And he said, "likewise, the Spirit helps you in your weakness". In your limitations that word "helps" is a beautiful word. It also means that he bears your burdens along the pathway. You see, he can bear your burdens in a way that I can't. I can walk with you, he can walk in you. I can help you carry the external, oh, he helps you to carry the internal because that's where it gets heavy, doesn't it? Listen, beloved, we will carry many burdens in this life and many times those burdens are more than we can bear on our own. How comforting to know that no matter how weak you may feel, God is there by his Spirit to help you in your weakness. You know when you feel like I should be more faithful or I should have more faith in this situation, but doubt and despair comes in. Weakness isn't it? You prayed and prayed and prayed and the answer is not coming in the affirmative and then you begin to doubt the love of God. Have you done that? That's a weakness. Or I can go on and on with this all day long, 'cause we've all experienced it. We all deal with our human limitations, but God sends the Holy Spirit, the Paraklete, the helper, the teacher, the guide to come alongside of us within us, and to help us bear the weakness. A major source of that help comes from the means of prayer. As James says, in James 5:13 "Is anyone among you suffering?" Guess what you do, you let them pray. Start praying. "Is anyone cheerful?" He says, "Let him sing praise". "Start praising him", he said, "but I don't know." What I should pray for? This is where Paul has us. We don't know what we should pray for. He says, "what do I do then?" I allow the Spirit to pray for me. First John 5:14 and 15. Holy Spirit, I don't know what to pray for. I'm full of anxiety, I'm full of fear,

I'm full of doubt. All the things that I should not be as a follower of Jesus Christ. This is too much for me to bear. What should I do? Holy Spirit pray for me. Pray for me, Holy Spirit. See, when your brother and sister pray for you we're going on the information you give us. But we don't see down the road what we should actually be praying for? We're just praying based upon your assessment of the situation from your limited understanding. We think our prayers are so comprehensive that it covers everything. No it doesn't. It only covers what I told you. But what I told you may not be what he wants me to pray for. It's what I feel I need to pray for. I need to ask him, pray for me. I need the Holy Spirit to pray for me in a way that Ken can't pray for me, the way Rodney can't pray for me. He's gonna pray for me because he has a broader perspective on the situation. So the Holy Spirit helps us to pray first John 5 says this, verses 14 and 15, "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us and whatever we ask, we know that we have the request that we have asked of him." Well beloved, the Spirit helps you with that too. The Spirit not only helps us in our weakness, the Spirit helps us to pray. Not only does he help us to pray, he prays for us. I want you to see that. Romans 8:26 it says right here, "Likewise, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray as we ought, but the Spirit himself (does what?) intercedes for us with groanings." With words too deep to understand. Listen, the problem is that our weakness, many times doesn't even know that we should pray. I can handle it. I can work through this. I had a similar situation like this, I can fix this. And we pull out our Spiritual toolbox and we began to try to apply old methodology to present messes. And it doesn't work. We don't know the future. We don't know what tomorrow will bring, let alone what today will bring. We don't know what's best for us or for others. Sometimes, we even pray for the wrong things. We know if we pray according to God's will, he hears and answers us, but we don't always know God's will is for that situation. We don't know all the time in the particulars what it is. Which is praying generally when the Holy Spirit prays specifically. So what good is our prayers? This is the good news of your prayers. Is that the Holy Spirit helps us here when we don't know what, when we don't know how, and we don't know when. But we pray and the Holy Spirit helps us in our time of prayer. You don't know what to pray but the Spirit comes and bears that burden, a prayer along with you, the Spirit himself intercedes for us. The Spirit intercedes for us with groanings. With words that cannot be expressed verbally. He does this two ways. First, verse 26 tells us that the Spirit intercedes for us, with groans that words cannot express. The Holy Spirit is our intercessor. We become intercessors to other people. But isn't it wonderful that the Holy Spirit is an intercessor and that Jesus sits at the right hand of the father in heaven? And he liveth always to make intercession for us. This is the third time now that we find groaning in these verses. Creation is groaning. We are groaning along with creation. We are groaning inwardly. Now, the Holy Spirit is groaning. What is this groaning all about? Creation groans as it awaits the restoration of this world. We groan as we await the resurrection of the body. Now we learn that the Holy Spirit groans as he intercedes for us. It is during those times when you cannot put your prayers into words. You cannot articulate those words. You can't even write them down in a sentence. You're not sure what to pray or how even to say it. Don't worry about it. The Spirit hears your sighs and your groans? So I love that sometimes when you go through stuff, sigh and groans is just about it. That you wanna get out of us, right? Pillowcases wet with tears, tossing and churning late at

night because we don't know the future. We're not omniscient. We're not omnipotent, we're not infinite, right? We're not transcendent at that point. We're limited as human beings. And so the best we can do is sigh and groan. And guess what? The Holy Spirit loves that 'cause now he says that "he's ready to be helped", "she's ready for assistance", "I'm ready to step in and intercede on their behalf with groanings too deep for words". I can't even communicate to them what I'm gonna say because they won't be able to understand it because it's too deep for words. He's gonna get right to the issue at heart.

So that's the first way. The Spirit intercedes for us. He hears our sighs, he hears our groanings, he comes and he groans along with us. That's beautiful. When you're in despair. You don't need a person come alongside you telling you, "You know it's gonna get better." I don't feel like it's gonna get better. Why should you tell me that now? "You know, God's gonna make a way out of no way". Well, that way isn't here yet. I'm groaning, man. I'm sighing. I'm hurting. I'm crying. From your perspective, it's gonna get better. 'cause. You're not groaning yet, you're not going through it yet, you're not sighing yet, you're not worried yet, you're not anxious at this moment? I am. The best you can do is just side with me. Groan with me. Weep with those who weep. Don't try to wipe my tears, cry with me. Let me know you empathize, let me know you sympathize, let me know you see my pain from my vantage point. And then you join me in that pain. You bear underneath with me. That's what all the Holy Spirit does for us. That's what we're called to do for one another. The best thing that Job's friends did for him. I'm saying this is the only thing they did for him, they kept quiet. They sat and they experience the sighs and the groans with him. And because they lack the patience and the wisdom, they had to open their mouths. They wanted to give explanations and solutions and anecdotes to what they knew nothing about. Beloved, the Holy Spirit, when he joins you, he knows everything about you. He knows your heart, he knows the heart of the father, and he intercedes on your behalf. And he lines up the father's heart with your heart. And then he groans the cry that you can't cry. He says the words that you can't say to the father. And the father answers that prayer. You need spiritualized eyes to see this. This is not natural stuff here. This is the hope that looks beyond the physical, the natural. The Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

Secondly, the Spirit intercedes for us in accordance with God's will. Oh, I wish it was easy to just go to a verse in the book and Bible and find God's will for a situation that we're in. There are a lot of verses that's God's will but all those verses are not about what you're going through. That shows his general will. We're talking about his specific for me and you in that situation. That's something the Holy Spirit works out in your heart with the heart of the father. I do what God said do, God would do what I can't do. I gotta accept the general revelation of the scriptures before I get to the specific revelation of the scripture. It tells us what the will of God is for our lives, and we don't sit on that. God's will for your life is that you abstain from sexual immorality, know how to possess your body of purity and holiness. Well, we can't do that, we can't get no further. He done told you what his will was and we struggle with that. But Jesus, I want specifics right now. Wasn't a specific general command of his will for your life. He said in everything give thanks for this is the will of God for you in Christ. And here I am in this situation that is thankless and I'm not giving thanks to God in every situation. How he's going to give me more. I can't even deal with what he said in his will is, written in Scripture. And I'm

asking for something that's not written that's personally for me. The Holy Spirit won't step in until you get to the end of your weakness, your human control, your human limitations. God is not transactional with you. "Well you know God, I've been serving you for 50 years, 30 years, 20 years, five years. You know, I've been giving my tithes and offering God for 50 years, 60 years. God doesn't care about that! You're approaching God on the transactional deal. Instead of a transformational lifestyle. So you're saying, God, I did A you do B. God doesn't work like that. You don't move God because of what you do. Anything you do for God, he does it through you. All the glory goes back back to him, it belongs to him, it comes from him. Any ability or gift that you have accrued in this life, God gave it to you. It's a blessing from the Lord. Every good and perfect gift comes from the heaven above. So why am tripping on God when it comes to his general will and his specific will. Because of my weakness. Oh, I don't like pain. I wanna get rid of it. That's my weakness. I don't like disappointment. I wanna be happy. That's my weakness. I wanna just be around joyful people. That's it. No sad people. You don't wanna live in the world then. Because there's joy and sadness in this world. There's happiness, right? And there's sorrow. There's comfort and discomfort. There's hope and hopelessness. That's the world you live in. You gotta live in this world. But you gotta walk by faith not by sight. You gotta live with a hope that's beyond what you can see as you journey towards that destiny. You need the Holy Spirit to empower you to deal with it. Deal with the suffering, deal with the pain, deal with the disappointment, deal with the confusion, deal with the mishaps of life. That's what he's called to do. Listen, beloved, even as the Spirit groans along with you, God knows the mind of the Spirit. The Spirit knows the heart and the will of God and that is a perfect match for effectual prayer. The Spirit knows God's will perfectly for you. And he intercedes for us according to the will of God not according to our feelings, not according to what I think or I thought. And that means that God will answer his will every time. But I don't always pray his will. I'm praying my will.

I remember my my aunt. She's gone on to be with the Lord right now. But Aunt Mary was watching the life of Christ one day around Easter time. And man, she was crying. She was so mad at the people that crucified Jesus. She said, "Oh, why did they crucified him. They should have let him down. They were praying that he would be saved and delivered from that terrible death of the cross". I said, "that's why he came. That was his will that his son be crucified by 'em terrible people and treated terribly, but not because the people, but because of sin. He was our substitute, our sacrifice." But she went on with this crying and welling at a historical event that has passed for the last 2000 years and didn't understand why the man died. He died because we needed salvation. He died because we needed forgiveness and it was our sins that nailed him to that cross. What a motivation. For consistent prayer life, even when we do not know exactly what we should pray, the Spirit prays for us. The Spirit prays that we would have prayed if we knew God's will in that situation. The Spirit himself intercedes with groans that words cannot be expressed in perfect accordance with his will.

Conclusion, we will in a fallen world that is under a curse because of sin, experience suffering and pain. But the good news of Romans 8 is that we can persevere through the pain because we have hope. We have hope for new creation. All of creation renewed in Christ and restored to its former glory. You think of God's creation as beautiful now as you travel, wait until this is restored to perfection. We have hope for the resurrection of the body, these fallen bodies of

ours, are still subject to what? Sickness, sin, and death, even when it's healthy. Regardless of if you are herbivore or carnivore, you still will face sickness, disease and death. Even the very food you eat comes from our earth that is cursed. We can't trust them. These bodies get old, they get tired, they hurt, they breakdown but your new body will be perfect in every way. That's our future hope. And even though most of these hopes are for the future. You also have the hope for help in the present. The Spirit helps you in your limitations and even when you don't know what to pray, how you should pray and all to pray, the Spirit does. And I love this, he intercedes for me in accordance in an agreement with God's will. I know that after I go through my prayer, stumbling and stammering, he has a perfect request that meets my need. Hope means you don't have what you want yet? Is still in the future. And that means waiting. But God's Spirit is with you while you wait. Isaiah 40:31 says, "but they who wait (hope) for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not get weary; they shall walk and not faint." Beloved, if we put our hope in Christ for this life only, the Bible says "we should be pitied more than anyone on the earth, but as it is, Christ has been raised from the dead", the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep.

As we come to the Lord's supper this morning, we're reminded about a future hope. That what he has done in the past, he gives us a model in the present. To keep our eyes on the future, he's given us the new covenant. The Lord's supper. And it is a wonderful reminder of what we will experience in the future because of what happened in the past. In the past, he died according to the scriptures, he was buried according to the Scriptures and he arose from the dead according to the Scriptures. That's what he did in the past. And that has a future effect. He says that when he set with his disciples on that Passover day that he would not eat or drink of this supper until he even drank with his bride, his church, in heaven. That the impact of the past affecting the future but what about the present preacher? This is for the existentialist. This is when I say, "What does this mean for me now?" It is a reminder of your forgiveness. It's a reminder that you've been reconciled now, that you're redeemed now, that you're adopted son and daughter of God now, that you belong to God now. See many of us don't see the relevancy of the past, so we do away with it. Many of us are myopic, only looking for the future and don't know the present and don't realize the present has a future. And communion covers both, the past, present and the future. He said, "when you eat and drink this, you are proclaiming my death until I come." When is that? The Future. You see how relevant the body in the blood of Christ is to our present salvation. It is a reminder that our substitute Jesus, that vicarious sacrifice, died a sinner's death, even though he was God in flesh, but he died for us. He stepped in for us, he took it all for us that we may have life. He was broken that we might be made whole.