

3. Christ Through Us

19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. - Romans 8:19-21 NLT
13 But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. - 2 Peter 3:13 NLT

This intriguing but often missed aspect of Romans 8 is that it demonstrates our role in bringing the presence of Christ (who dwells in us) into the world. And that we both represent a hope of the restoration of God's promised new creation where God and man will dwell together, and the means by which God participates in the suffering of the world as we intercede and lament in concert with His Spirit. We are not saved to escape this world we are saved for the benefit of the whole of creation.

Are you, like Peter, looking forward to a new heaven and earth? Are you surprised to read that creation will join God's children in freedom from death and decay? How do you envision a restored earth?

WRAP-UP

Romans 8 reveals a profound truth: Christ in us, the hope of glory. As God's image-bearers, we are called to reflect His love and care to the world through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This chapter underscores our transformation into Christ-likeness and our role as heirs of God's glory, sharing in His sufferings and bringing hope to a broken world. It assures us of God's unwavering love that nothing can sever, offering us strength amidst life's trials. Through intercession and embodying Christ's presence, we participate in God's redemptive plan for creation, embodying His love and lamenting with His Spirit. Romans 8 resonates deeply as a call to live out our faith, embodying Christ's love and bringing hope to a world longing for redemption.

MEMORY VERSE

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? - Romans 8:31 NLT

Challenge- Read slowly through Romans Chapter 8 this week at least twice as you consider how God is speaking to you through it.

Christ in Us, Christ For Us and Christ Through Us

Romans 8 - Week 1

INTRODUCTION

How often do we slow down and take time to drink in the richness of God's Word? If you have been in church for some time, you may have found that certain passages are frequently used as topics for a Sunday sermon, and certainly many verses from Romans chapter 8 fall in that category. But has our familiarity blinded us to the depth of what may be the greatest chapter in Paul's greatest letter? Have we skimmed the text, focusing on those "coffee cup" verses, and assumed that we know everything we need to know about this passage of scripture? This summer we will slow down and take a deep dive into this pivotal chapter of the Bible.

Ice Breaker

Can you complete this verse?

And we know that all things work together for good

_____ . Romans 8:28

Key Passage

What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? - Romans 8:31 NLT

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Christ In Us

God created man in His image (Gen 1:27), and the majority of Romans 8 addresses the work of the Spirit in conforming believers into the image of Christ. God has given us this critical role to play, we are called to be God's image-bearers to the world. The details of that vocation are revealed in the heart of this chapter.

As we examine Romans 8 closely, we will find themes aligning with God's original plan from the beginning of creation, to dwell with mankind. We see this accomplished by the Spirit living in us.

9 But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.) 10 And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. - Romans 8:9-11 NLT

The truth of this passage should astound us. God's Spirit lives in us! When you read these verses, what do you notice about the relationship between having life and having the Spirit in us? Do you remember when you welcomed the God's Spirit to live in you, and if so, how would you describe becoming spiritually alive? Where do you see the trinity in these verses?

In his letter to the Colossians Paul links Christ in us to the hope of glory and says that the Gentiles (non-Jews) can have the assurance of sharing God's glory if Christ lives in us. In Romans 8 he states that we are heirs of God's glory.

27 For God wanted them [the Jews] to know that the riches and glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing his glory. - Colossians 1:27 NLT

17 And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, together with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to share his glory, we must also share his suffering. 18 Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. - Romans 8:9-11, 17-18 NLT

Believers in Jesus are a living breathing reminder that God not only wants to live with us, He adopts us into His family as heirs and shares His glory with us. The Greek word for glory (doxa) has several meanings. It can mean splendor and brightness, but it can also mean

dignity, honor, praise, or worship. As image-bearers we carry the honor and dignity of God with us. Allowing the Spirit of God to shine through us means that our lives will be a beacon of hope to those around us. But we also share Christ's suffering.

When we think of Christ's suffering we probably think of the physical suffering on the cross. But what are some the things that caused Jesus' grief and suffering that were not physical? Which of these things also touch your heart and cause you to lament?

The closer we are to God, the more we will experience grief for the things that break His heart. They will break ours too. Roman's chapter 8 conveys how we labor together with God through intercession and prayer.

2. Christ For Us

31 What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? ... 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below--indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord. - Romans 8:31, 39 NLT

At the conclusion of chapter 8 Paul assures us that God is for us and nothing can separate us from His love. The world will do its best to throw us off course, but God's love is an anchor against the storms we will face.

How would you respond to Paul's question, "What shall we say about such wonderful things as these?" Reflect on the power of this truth: God is for you, and nothing can separate you from His love.

And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow--not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. - Romans 8:38 NLT

Verse 38 lists several things we may find threatening. How does God's unconquerable love address each? Have you personally faced issues of the end of life, any present challenges (fear), or any future unknowns (worries)? Share any of these you struggle with and pray for one another.