

Romans Part 20 (8:15 - 8:25)

I. INTRO:

--in tonight's passage Paul continues to develop the theme of sanctification by talking about the hope of heaven and how the Holy Spirit gives us spiritual understanding about the hope of heaven.

--maintaining a fresh perspective on the hope of heaven (having an eternal perspective) is a strategic part of sanctification, as the blessings that await us in heaven far outweigh the difficulties of living a sanctified life and life in general – **"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."** (8:18)

--the hope of heaven serves as a catalyst in the process of sanctification... "And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure." (1 John 3:3)

II. ADOPTED INTO GOD'S FAMILY...

"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him... 23 we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." (8:16-17, 23)

--through God's Word we learn that we are God's children and have a future in heaven with Him, but it is the Holy Spirit bearing witness deep within our soul that brings this hope to life and causes it to have a real impact on our life... so that we persevere on the path of sanctification ("eagerly wait for it with perseverance." –Romans 8:25b)

--1 Corinthians 2:9-14: "But as it is written: 'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.' 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. ... 12 **Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.** 13 These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual."

--we were once **"children of wrath" in whom Satan worked...**

--Ephesians 2:1-3: "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, 3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath..."

--now we are **God's adopted children in whom the Holy Spirit works...**

--Romans 8:15: "you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.'"

--Paul chose his words carefully, and the terminology of adoption carried special significance in the Roman culture of his day...

--in the words of John MacArthur: *For some today, the concept of adoption carries the idea of second-class status in the family. In the Roman culture of Paul's day, however, an adopted child... sometimes had greater prestige and privilege than the natural children. According to Roman law, a father's rule over his children was absolute. If he was disappointed in his natural son's skill, character, or any other attribute, he would search diligently for a boy available for adoption who demonstrated the qualities he desired. ... Because of its obvious importance, the process of Roman adoption involved several carefully prescribed legal procedures. The first step totally severed the boy's legal and social relationship to his natural family, and the second step*

placed him permanently into his new family. In addition to that, all of his previous debts and other obligations were eradicated.

--we may be unwanted by the world...but God chose us to be in His family! We have become totally severed from our past reality of being "children of wrath..." Our spiritual debt as children of wrath has been totally eradicated and now as God's children we have "**an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven.**" (1 Peter 3:4)

III. SUFFERING IN THE WORLD BECAUSE WE ARE PART OF GOD'S FAMILY...

"...heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, **if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.**" (8:17a-18)

--Jesus was out of synch with the world... so if we're part of His family we also will be out of synch with the world to some degree.

--Matthew 10:24-26: "A disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master. 25 It is enough for a disciple that he be like his teacher, and a servant like his master. **If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more will they call those of his household!** 26 Therefore do not fear them."

--Beelzebub was the name for a ruler of demons: "Then one was brought to Him who was demon-possessed, blind and mute; and He healed him, so that the blind and mute man both spoke and saw. And all the multitudes were amazed and said, 'Could this be the Son of David?' Now when the Pharisees heard it they said, 'This fellow does not cast our demons except by Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons.'" (Matthew 12:22-24)

--as we follow Christ we not only suffer in various forms from persecution in the world around us, but we also experience profound suffering within as we crucify the desires of the flesh...

--2 Corinthians 4:8-10: "We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – **always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus**, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body."

--Philippians 3:8-10: "Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things... 10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and **the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death..."

--2 Corinthians 4:17-18: "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and **eternal weight of glory**, 18 while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

III. OUR FUTURE AS GOD'S FAMILY...

"**18 ...the glory which shall be revealed in us. ... 23 ...eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.**" (8:18b,23b)

--"the glory which shall be revealed in us..."

--1 John 3:1-3: "Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. 3 And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

--just as we suffer with Christ we will also be glorified with Him – "if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8:17)

--Philippians 3:19-21: "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body..."

--1 Corinthians 15:35-44: "But someone will say, 'How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?' 36 Foolish one, what you sow is not made alive unless it dies. 37 And what you sow, you do not sow that body that shall be, but mere grain — perhaps wheat or some other grain. 38 But God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body [*our present body is like a mere seed and our glorified bodies are like the tree that grows out of the seed*] 39 All flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of animals, another of fish, and another of birds. 40 There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. 41 There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory. 42 So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. 43 It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. 44 It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

--the security of our future in glory with Christ...

--Romans 8:23b: "...eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body."

--at first glance, the word "adoption" in v.23 may appear to be referring to a future event as if we haven't yet been adopted, but in the greater context of Scripture it becomes clear that this passage simply refers to the final result of our adoption – "the redemption of our body."

--as we have seen over and over again in Scripture, our salvation – our adoption into God's family – was completed the moment we placed our faith in Christ because it is based not on our works but on the finished work of Christ; and because our salvation is complete, God has sealed us with His Spirit...

--Ephesians 1:13-14: "In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, **you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance** until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory."

--the word "guarantee" is used only three times in the entire Bible and all three times refers to the Holy Spirit being the "guarantee" of our salvation! (2 Corinthians 1:22, 2 Corinthians 5:5, Ephesians 1:14)

--*In ancient times, the seal, or signet, was a mark of authenticity or of a completed transaction. The seal of a monarch or other distinguished person represented his authority and power. For example, when Daniel was thrown into the den of lions, King Darius had a large stone placed across the entrance and sealed "with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing might be changed in regard to Daniel" (Daniel 6:17) In an infinitely more significant and spiritual way, the Holy Spirit seals the salvation of every believer, which, by divine promise and protection, can never be altered.* –commentary by John MacArthur

--but since our salvation is complete and we have been sealed with the Holy Spirit, in the words of Romans 8:23 – "we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." ...we can look forward to the day we receive new bodies in heaven as a fixed, definite point in our future!

--if entrance to heaven wasn't a definite point in our future, then the Holy Spirit wouldn't be working in us causing us to persevere and we would all cave in under the pressure of persecution from around us and our flesh within and give up the hope of heaven and return to the ways of the world.

--Hebrews 6:19: "**this hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...**"

--2 Timothy 2:2-11: "You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ... 10 Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain **the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory**. 11 This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. 12 If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. 13 **If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.**"

IV. THE FUTURE OF THE NATURAL WORLD...

"For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; 21 because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now." (8:19-22)

--"For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God..." (v.19)
--the only reason God allows the world to continue is to finish His plan of salvation... to bring salvation to all those who He knows in His foreknowledge will trust in Christ and be adopted into His family – "the revealing of the sons of God."

--"For the creation was subjected to futility... because of Him who subjected it in hope..."
--the secular environmentalists claim that mankind is ruining the natural world... but the truth of the matter is that the natural world was ruined the day Adam and Eve fell... Adam and Eve were indirectly responsible for the ruin of the natural world, but it was God who cursed creation... "Cursed is the ground for your sake..." (Genesis 3:17)

--"the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

--the natural world is subject "the bondage of corruption..."

--evolution states that the world is going from disorder to order... but the opposite is true – the natural world is in "the bondage of corruption..."

--even the fundamental *Law of Entropy* (or *Second Law of Thermodynamics*) in science contradicts evolution and confirms that the universe is in "the bondage of corruption."

--The Law of Entropy: *there is a constant amount of energy in the universe, but in all energy transfers there is a loss in the amount of usable energy and an increase in the amount of useless energy.*

--in other words, everything is going from order to disorder, everything is growing older, wearing out. In 700 B.C. God revealed this same fact to the prophet Isaiah -- "Lift up your eyes to the heavens [stars] and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke, the earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner; but My salvation is forever, and My righteousness will not be abolished" (Isaiah 51:6).

--the secular environmentalists hold onto the vain hope that mankind can save the planet... but it is God who, rather than save the planet, will destroy the planet and create a new one...

--2 Peter 3:10-13: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. 11 Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, 12 looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? 13 Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells."

--in conclusion, having an eternal perspective promotes sanctification.