

# **Asking for a Friend: What Do We Do With the Problem of Evil**

**May 7, 2023**

## **Romans 8:18-30**

**18** Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. **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. **22** For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. **23** And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. **24** We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. **25** But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

**26** And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. **27** And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. **28** And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them. **29** For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. **30** And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory.

## ***Discussion/Journal Questions***

How have you personally wrestled with the problem of evil and suffering in the world? Is it something you have worked through or is it something you are currently working through?

Read Romans 8:18-30. What does Paul say here about natural evils like hurricanes and tsunamis? Where do these come from?

According to Romans 8:28, God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God. Do you believe this? Why or why not? How have you seen this play out in your life?

In the sermon, John mentions two promises we can hold onto in the midst of suffering. The first is the presence of the suffering servant. What comfort do you find in the idea that Jesus knows what we are going through?

The second promise is the hope of the risen Lord. Read 2 Corinthians 4:8-10. When we go through tough times, how can we remind ourselves that there is hope yet to come?

How can your group pray for you this week?

**Who are you praying for to accept Jesus, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?**

**Who are you currently discipling, and what specifically did you do this week to help them know, love, and follow Jesus?**

**Who are you considering for future discipleship relationships, and what specifically did you do this week to interact with them?**