TIME OF REFLECTION

"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent', he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance…. The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and grace of God…. Christians should be exhorted to be diligent in following Christ, their Head, through penalties, death and hell. And thus be confident of entering into heaven through many tribulations rather than through the false security of peace."

~Martin Luther's famed *95 Theses*: 1, 62, 94 and 95; posted October 31, 1517

"The greatness of man is so evident, that it is even proved by his wretchedness. For what in animals is 'nature', we call in man 'wretchedness'; by which we recognize that…he has fallen from a better nature which once was his.

"For who is unhappy at not being a king, except a deposed king?"

"Thus it is wretched to know that one is wretched, but there is greatness in knowing one is wretched."

"All these examples of wretchedness prove his greatness. It is the wretchedness of a great lord, the wretchedness of a dispossessed king."

~Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), French mathematician, in his *Pensées*, 409, 114 and 116

"This hard place…you perhaps find yourself is the very place…God is giving you opportunity to look only to Him, to spend time in prayer, and to learn long-suffering, gentleness, meekness – in short, to learn the depths of the love that Christ Himself has poured out on all of us."

~Elizabeth Elliot (1926-2015), missionary, author, and speaker

"The self-sufficient does not pray, the self-satisfied will not pray, the self-righteous cannot pray. No man is greater than his prayer life."

~Leonard Ravenhill (1907-1994), British-born speaker and author

"When God's people cry out, God hears them…. The act of being heard is a privilege in itself, offering great comfort through communion with God in prayer."

~Voddie Baucham (1969-2025), pastor, author, and educator

"The glory of God is a living human being, and the life of man consists in beholding God."

~Irenaeus of Lyon (c.130-c.200), in *Against Heresies*, Book IV, chapter 20, paragraph 7

SERMON – "Groaning to Glory" – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *Romans 8:26-30 (NASB)*

12 So then, brothers and sisters, we are under
obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the
flesh— 13 for if you are living in accord with the
flesh, you are going to die; but if by the Spirit you
are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will
live. 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of
God, these are sons and daughters of God. 15 For
you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to
fear again, but you have received a spirit of
adoption as sons and daughters by which we cry
out, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies
with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if
children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs
with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we
may also be glorified with Him.

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this
present time are not worthy to be compared with the
glory that is to be revealed to us. 19 For the eagerly
awaiting creation waits for the revealing of the sons
and daughters of God. 20 For the creation was
subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of
Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation
itself also will be set free from its slavery to
corruption into the freedom of the glory of the
children of God. 22 For we know that the whole
creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth
together until now. 23 And not only that, but also we
ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even
we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting
eagerly for our adoption as sons and daughters, the
redemption of our body. 24 For in hope we have
been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for
who hopes for what he already sees? 25 But if we
hope for what we do not see, through perseverance
we wait eagerly for it.

26 Now in the same way the Spirit also helps our
weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as
we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us
with groanings too deep for words; 27 and He who
searches the hearts knows what the mind of the
Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints
according to the will of God.

28 And we know that God causes all things to
work together for good to those who love God, to
those who are called according to His purpose.
29 For those whom He foreknew, He also
predestined to become conformed to the image of
His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among
many brothers and sisters; 30 and these whom He
predestined, He also called; and these whom He
called, He also justified; and these whom He
justified, He also glorified.