

Victorious – H.O.P.E.

10/12/25

Romans 8:18–25

Sunday AM

HOPE – what is it? The English word for hope is actually quite anemic as it infers *wishful anticipation of something happening*. Like, “I hope I get a raise next year.” Or “I hope I got a 100 on my exam.” Or “I hope the Georgia Bulldogs can win the Natty.” Well... that last one isn’t actually hopeful, its pure fantasy!

When the Bible speaks for **hope**, it’s referring to *dynamic certainty* – as in, I can hardly wait for Jesus to return b/c it’s going to be AWESOME! There’s sense of confident expectation – as in – I know. It’s serves as an *anchor* mooring one’s soul to trust in God.

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. Hebrews 6:19a

There’s something about hope that keeps people alive.

- When a doctor tells a patient, “There’s still hope,” something inside of them stirs.
- When a soldier receives word that rescue is coming, strength returns to his hands.
- When a mother waits for the cry of her newborn in the delivery room, pain gives way to purpose.

Hope is the invisible oxygen of the soul. W/out it, we’d suffocate spiritually and emotionally long before we’d die physically. It’s an essential ingredient to life.

This is why Paul, who was writing from the trenches of suffering, penned Romans 8:18–25. He telling us that *hope* isn’t a life luxury—it’s a life necessity.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing w/ the glory that’ll be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that’s seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we don’t yet have, we wait for it patiently.
8:18-25

In this text, Paul isn’t minimizing pain – he’s magnifying perspective. He’s saying, “If you could see what’s coming, you’d stop despairing over what’s now.” This is what hope does – it gives us heaven’s outlook for our present experiences.

So, let’s take the acrostic H.O.P.E. and walk thru this passage together to find hope for our lives today.

H – HOLD ON thru Suffering

Consider it joy, when you encounter various trials, knowing the testing of your faith produces endurance. Let endurance have it perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. James 1:3

James tells us that it’s not a matter of **IF** but **WHEN** we’re going to experience challenges/difficulties in life – they’re coming! Some ¹we will bring on ourselves, some ²will occur b/c we live in a fallen world, some ³will occur b/c we have a spiritual enemy, and some ⁴will occur b/c God authors them – but in all of them, we don’t

have to fear or falter b/c God wants to work in/thru them for His glory and our good – and even better, none are permanent but temporary.

Paul says – **I consider**. It's a word of calculation. It's as if Paul pulled out a ledger to compare (2) columns – present suffering on one side and future glory on the other. And he concluded – *it's not even close*.

He's not denying the weight of pain/suffering – Paul knew beatings, prison cells, shipwrecks, and betrayal. He's saying, "When I put my suffering next to what's coming in Christ, the scale breaks in favor of glory."

Think about a mother in labor. Giving birth is agony. But the moment she hears that first cry and sees that tiny face, the pain fades into the background. The joy that follows doesn't erase the pain – it overwhelms it.

This is the Christian life in a nutshell this side of heaven in a fallen world. We live in a world that hurts, harms, and hampers, but our hope is anchored in a world that's coming. Paul says – *Hold on*. "The glory that's ahead will eclipse the grief/struggle that's now."

James says – in the meantime, learn and grow thru your challenges b/c they'll make you stronger and more effective for God's glory and your endurance.

O – OBSERVE Creation's Longing

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Here – Paul personifies creation. It's as if the oceans, mountains, and galaxies themselves are groaning to be redeemed and restored to God. He says,

The creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. v.19

eager expectation literally pictures someone craning their neck forward, standing on tiptoe to see. IOW – the universe is leaning forward, looking into the future in anticipation of when Jesus returns for His children.

WHY? B/c when Adam/Eve fell – the entire creation fell w/ them. The curse of sin didn't just touch you and me (and all of humanity – it fractured everything in the created order. Thus, earthquakes, disease, decay, and death are all symptoms of a broken world.

To Adam God said, "B/c you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, 'You must not eat from it, cursed is the ground b/c of you; thru painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It'll produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.'" Genesis 3:17-19

Now – get the picture. Before the fall, there were no thorns or thistles. Earthquakes, tornadoes, wildfires, and hurricanes didn't exist. Everything in the creation was for man's good – and nothing in the creation brought misery/harm. But not after the fall. Everything changed. DON'T MISS – b/c of man's sin, not one part of nature exists today as God intended. The entire created order was cursed. The world of *geology, zoology, biology, ecology, cosmology* – and every other "ology" was affected by the fall.

Jus look around – the ache we feel in this fallen world – the injustice, the decay, the heartbreak, natural disasters – it's all a result of the sin and the fall.

But I have some good news. Paul says, in spite of the calamity we see in this fallen world – we can still have hope. He says, b/c of the cross and empty tomb – these difficulties that we unfortunately have to witness and experience – they're not a sign that God has abandoned or forgotten us, but a groan and promise that something new is on the way.

The groan is not the end – it's the beginning. So, live each day in the hope of His return. B/c the very moment that He redeems us – He will also *redeem, restore, and recreate* the creation too.

P – PERSEVERE in Confident Expectation

In vs. 23, Paul moves from the world's groaning to our groaning – and to our promise.

We ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption ... the redemption of our bodies. v. 23

IOW – if we know Jesus as our Savior and Lord, then a homing beacon has been set off in our soul that while we live on earth, we can hardly wait for heaven.

This verse is reminding us that while we've received God's grace unto salvation – and God has deposited the H.S. into our lives as a down payment of heaven – b/c the resurrection hasn't occurred yet, we're still awaiting our full inheritance. So, we groan too.

This is the tension of the Christian life – *we live b/w the already and the not yet*. We've already been saved, but we've not yet been glorified – and so we wait.

LWF – this is one of the primary truths of the book of Romans – our salvation is in (3) tenses – *past, present, and future*. That is – I have been saved, I'm currently being saved, and in the future, I will be saved.

SEE – Paul is saying that we can have hope in Jesus' imminent return and our salvation being completed, but until they come keep waiting faithfully/diligently.

I'm reminded of Corrie ten Boom's words in surviving the concentration camp at Ravensbrück – *There is no pit so deep that God's love is not deeper still*.

This is the language of hope. *Hope is when we can't see the top, yet we keep climbing b/c we know God's rope will hold.*

Until he returns – Paul pleads – persevere. Don't give up, give out, or get down. Instead, wait upon the Lord. Wait w/ patience. Not w/ passive resignation, but w/ active endurance – trusting that God is weaving all things together for His glory and our good.

Our Christian hope is that we're going to live w/ Christ in a new earth, where there is not only no more death, but where life is what it was always meant to be. Tim Keller

E – EXPECT God's Glory to Eclipse Your Grief

But hope that's seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we don't yet have, we wait for it patiently.

Paul closes this section the way it began – w/ **hopeful expectation**. He never denies the groaning of the present world; he simply refuses to give it the final word. He knew that every sigh and every tear in this life is temporary and that God's glory is eternal.

What this means is the ache of today in the here/now will one day be swallowed up by the awe of then.

The night may be dark but it's not endless. Joy comes in the morning. Spurgeon

SEE – when Jesus returns, ¹the broken will be made whole, ²the temporary will give way to the eternal, and ³what we once called suffering will become the seed that produces a harvest of joy. Every tear you've cried will be redeemed. Every injustice will be set right. Every unanswered question will be swallowed up in the presence of Jesus.

So – Paul is teaching us to live w/ *a forward-leaning faith* – a confidence that the future glory of Christ will so far outweigh our present suffering that we'll one day wonder why we ever doubted.

He is reminding us that “*hope that is seen is no hope at all.*” That is, ***biblical hope isn't wishful thinking – but confident waiting.*** It looks thru the fog of pain and sees the sunrise of glory. It doesn't deny the storm; it simply trusts that the storm cannot cancel the sunrise.

Like a farmer who tills the soil thru the winter, knowing spring will come, hope endures the present b/c it believes in the promise of what's coming.

So – when life hurts, or doesn't make sense – HOPE

H – Hold on thru Suffering

O – Observe Creation's Longing for Renewal

P – Persevere in Confident Expectation

E – Expect God's Glory to Eclipse Your Earthly Grief

In 1999, NASA lost a \$327 mil. spacecraft – the Mars Climate Orbiter b/c (2) teams used different measuring systems. One used English units, the other metric. The difference was tiny, but the result was catastrophic. The craft burned up in Mars' atmosphere.

When we measure life's pain on the wrong scale, we end up in despair. But when we measure our suffering against the scale of eternity, everything changes.

I think this is another reason why Paul told the Colossians to ***set the mind and hearts on things above*** – so that they wouldn't lose hope in the face of the trials and difficulties of life in a fallen world.

Romans 8:18–25 recalibrates our measurements. It tells us that hope isn't a feeling – it's a focus. It's not denial of reality – it's defiance in the face of despair. The good news is that one day the groan will become our glory – and faith will become sight. One day hope will have done its job giving way to unspeakable joy.

Until then—keep looking up. Heaven's outlook will give you the endurance you need today.

Anchor Daily – Fasten your heart to God's promises so your emotions don't drift w/ circumstances.

Recalibrate the Scale – purposely compare present pain w/ future glory so eternity, not urgency, guides you.

Hear the Groan | Trust the Promise – Notice creation's brokenness and answer it aloud w/ God's promise of renewal to train your heart toward hope.

Practice Patient Endurance — Trade anxious waiting for steady faith; trusting in Who you can't see.

Become a Hope-Bearer — Speak and show tangible encouragement to others to spur them along in hope.