

Romans 8:18–39

Big Idea: Hold on because nothing can separate you from God's love.

Holding On

For several weeks we've been talking about holding on to God during those seasons when God doesn't make sense. We have multiple examples throughout the Book of real people in real, difficult situations who learned the value of holding on. So, as we wrap up our series today, I want to turn the whole idea around.

Romans 8

Romans 8 is one of the greatest chapters in the Bible. Paul writes to Christ-followers who understood suffering. This wasn't theoretical theology, or Sunday School Jesus cliché. These people lived in a world where following Jesus could cost them relationships, businesses, their freedom, and possibly their lives.

- 1. Hold on because this isn't the end (v.18).** Paul's perspective is completely different from ours. We naturally evaluate God based on what is happening right now. Paul says: You can't do that, because right now isn't the whole story.
Q: What are we hoping for? Not simply that tomorrow will be better than today. Something much bigger. The resurrection of Jesus guarantees that death does not get the final word. Jesus does.
- 2. Hold on when you don't know how to pray (vv.26-27).** Sometimes grief is so powerful, the circumstance so difficult, your life so complicated, you don't really know how to pray. You don't know what to say. What to ask for. Paul says that's okay. The Holy Spirit is interceding for you. The word means "mediation" or "negotiation." When you are too confused to pray, God is still working. You may feel like you've lost your grip on God, but God hasn't lost His grip on you.
- 3. Hold on because God isn't finished (v.28).** We see our circumstances. God sees something else. He sees the finished story. Just because I cannot see what God is doing doesn't mean God isn't doing something.
Be careful here. Romans 8:28 isn't primarily something we say to somebody else in their suffering. It's something we hold on to in our own suffering. I don't understand this. I would never have chosen this. But I believe God is not finished.
- 4. Hold on to what you know (vv.31-32).** Eventually, God doesn't make sense. When that happens, we need more than a packaged religious answer. We need a Savior who has suffered. A Savior who understands grief. A Savior who was betrayed. A Savior who experienced pain. A Savior who stood outside a tomb and wept. A Savior who hung on a cross. And a Savior who walked out of a grave. That's the Jesus we hold on to.

There have been seasons when my grip wasn't very strong at all. But here's the good news... My hope doesn't depend on the strength of my grip. It depends on the strength of His.

Family Night – Read Romans 8:18-39

- **Elementary School** – Ask, "Who helps us in our weakness (v.26)? Who prays for us when we do not know how to pray (v.26)? How does God work for us (v.28)? What can separate us from the love of God?"
- **Middle/ High School** – Ask, "What evidence do you see that demonstrates we live in a fallen universe? How is the earth 'groaning'? What are we hoping for? What does v.28 mean? How should we live according to v.37?"

Prayer: "Father, thank You that your love can be trusted and you are holding on to us. Amen."

Velocity (Middle and High School Students)

Velocity: This Wednesday, August 26 at 6:30.

Gravity: Gravity will resume September 6th.

Today's Songs

Running Home.....Cochren and Co.

Holy Forever.....Chris Tomlin

Holy is the Lord.....Chris Tomlin

Grandparents Day

Join us in KidsJAM on September 13 for Cookies, Milk and Bingo. All grandparents are welcome. We will see you between the services, 10:35-10:55.

GCC 101

Membership Class is September 13 after the 11:00 service. Childcare is provided and a light lunch will be served. Please sign up at the Welcome Desk.

Small Group Leadership Training

Training is Saturday, September 19. Check out the QR Code in the Lobby or contact Tyler.

Impact

See a need, meet a need, make an Impact. Find out how you can serve in our community through our Church App and Facebook page.