

From Groans to Glory!

I. Announce:

- A. **Slide#1** Machaca Camp (our directors in Belize, John & Lisa Gotz)
1. What is Machaca **core vision**? John (discipleship)
 2. Tell some **success stories**. (expanded ministry)
 3. Ask Lisa speak to **Kids camp**. (\$85 backpack & stuff)
 4. Hermon family update?
 5. John what are you sharing on Wed night? - Its just **discipleship**, cuz we are all dealing with something.
 6. My Sabbatical - fruit of discipleship. *Consistent with CM Vision* (We see disciples making disciples in sustainable national churches around the world).
- B. Voters Guide - Vote Tues June 5th

II. Slide#2 Intro: Title: From Groans to Glory!

- A. **Slide#3** Though **many of us** have seen pictures of a huge **eagle's nest** high in the branches of a tree or in the crag of a cliff, **few of us** have gotten a glimpse inside. **When** a mother eagle builds her nest she starts with **thorns, broken branches, sharp rocks**, and a number of other items that seem entirely unsuitable for the project. **But** then she lines the nest with a **thick padding of wool, feathers, and fur** from animals she has killed, making it soft and comfortable for the eggs. By the time the growing birds reach flying age, the comfort of the nest and the luxury of free meals make them quite reluctant to leave. That's when the mother eagle begins "**stirring up the nest.**" With her strong talons she begins pulling up the thick carpet of fur and feathers, bringing the sharp rocks and branches to the surface. As more of the bedding gets plucked up, the nest becomes more **uncomfortable** for the young eagles. Eventually, this and other urgings prompt the growing eagles to leave their once-comfortable abode & move on to more mature behavior.

III. Slide#4,5 GLORY! (18)

- A. God has a plan of **redemptive suffering** moving to its fulfillment *at the end of the age!*
1. **Suffering is Certain; Suffering is purposeful; Suffering doesn't compare.**
- B. **Slide#6 [1] Suffering is Certain** (*last week 16,17*) – To all fellow heirs.
1. At the **Nicene Council**, an important church meeting in the 4th century a.d., **of the 318 delegates** attending, *fewer than 12* had not lost an eye or lost a hand or did not limp on a leg lamed by torture for their Christian faith. Vance Havner
 2. Suffering is a **certainty** in the Christian life! [not always physical suffering, could be emotional suffering, soulish-suffering, or spiritual suffering]
 - a) Have you experienced rejection because of your faith because you became too serious about religion? (family, friend, co-worker?)

C. **Slide#7 [2] Suffering is Purposeful** (17b) – To lead us to Glory!

1. Do you think God has ever once thrown a pain or suffering your way...just to watch you squirm?
2. **C.S.Lewis** developed an analogy in his work *The Problem w/Pain*.
 - a) **A mold/cast of a key** will look strange if you've never see a **key**.
And, a key will look strange if you've never see a **lock**.
3. If we look at the **mold/cast of the key** to be our *sufferings* in our present state; **then** it will look awful strange if we don't understand there is a **key...i.e. Glory!**
 - a) Then, we can start to understand that *every notch cut into our lives* in this present world is **very purposeful!**
 - (1) **Matter of fact, one day our special key** will spring a lock no other key will be able to open (Our Own Mansion Door!)
4. If you go down to Home Depot/Lowes to get a **key cut** – it is *a terrible sound* when they place **the blank key** against **the grinder!**
 - a) **But**, is *the key-cutter* nicer if he just slips the **blank key** into your bag, because he doesn't want to *cause it any pain?*
 - b) **No!** every cut is **strategically placed & purposeful** in the hands of its maker!
 - c) **Like custom grips for a set of golf clubs, or a custom made wedding dress!** So *every trial, tribulation, suffering, pain, & disease, is custom fit for our life.*

D. **Slide#8 [3] Suffering Doesn't Compare** (18) - To our future Glory!

1. It works like child birth. **Read John 16:21,22.**
2. **In this world** we will have "*birth pains*" in our Christian life!
3. I remember taking **Lamaze classes** w/Kel at Fallbrook Hospital.
 - a) **The goal? To keep the mommy focused** [focal point, focused breathing technique, encouragement "he/she's almost here!"]
4. Paul also said this to the Corinth church, **For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.** 2Cor.4:17
 - a) So if we place on **Gods heavenly scales**: *Earthly hardships* on one side, & *Heavenly inheritance* on the other. *The scales would be so far tipped!*
 - b) **It would be easier to compare**: A **sapling** in your front yard **to** the **forests** of Brazil. A **thimble** of water **to** the **Pacific Ocean**.

IV. **Slide#9 CREATION GROANS! (19-22)**

- A. **Earnest expectation** - "watching eagerly w/outstretched head. There is a diversion from all other things & concentration on a single object" (LKGNT)
- B. **Eagerly awaits** – to await expectantly but patiently...with the idea of readiness & preparedness. (LKGNT)

1. **Eagerly awaits** is used **7 x's** in the NT, each time to refer to **Christ's return**.
We will then share His glory, and be transformed.
- C. (20) **Creation was subject to futility** (or frustration) – Here we have creation (animate & inanimate objects) personified!
 1. Tornados, Hurricane, Floods, Earthquakes, Forest Fires, Blizzards, heat waves, locust plagues, **are just a few imbalances of nature**. **All a consequence to man's fall!**
 2. **Slide#10** We also learn from creation's **decay-death-birth-growth-decay-death cycle**, of our own fleeting lives here.
- D. (22) **Are you** as eager as the rest of creation to see your final & complete redemption?
Do you dream about heaven? Are you **waiting** for Jesus on your *tiptoes w/a craned neck?*
 1. Oh to be like the caged bird that will **beat its wings** against its prison cage hoping to one day **escape to fly free** in heavens sky!

V. **Slide#11 WE GROAN! (23-25)**

- A. **Groaning** – God hears groaning! Ex.2:23-25 **Now it happened in the process of time that the king of Egypt died. Then the children of Israel groaned** because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry came up to God because of the bondage. So God heard their **groaning**, and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob. And God looked upon the children of Israel, and God acknowledged them.
- B. **Firstfruits** – (i.e.) both a **1st installment & a pledge** for the final delivery of the whole (LKGNT); **and** it is also a **guarantee**.
 1. 2 Cor.5:5(NIV) **Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.**
 2. **This is God's pledge** of our complete triumph w/**Christ** at the end.
 3. The **Spirit Himself** is evidence that **at the present time** we are the sons of God(14,16)
 - a) He who has the Spirit shall in the end be saved!
- C. **Slide#12 Eagerly waiting for the adoption** – It hasn't happened yet? **Not fully!**
 1. **Believers yearn for the full adoption** as sons/daughters.
 2. Many of our friends here at CM have been through the **process** of International Adoptions. (many through *International Christian Adoption*)
 3. **So it's a Process? Yep**, a child is chosen. There is a meeting & time spent with the child (often a month, they come & live w/them).
 - a) If the family seeks to Adopt, **then** there's the paperwork to fill out; **& a pledge** or a **guarantee** is made(*a deposit*).
 - b) **Then** the child returns *eagerly* waiting for their adoption.
 - c) He/she can return to their orphanage & tell their friends *they are adopted, they have a family!*
 - (1) A child in the orphanage might say, **"No, your not you're still here!"**

(2) They could respond, “Yes I am. I have a promise, I have a guarantee!”

(a) Oh, & what a terrible wait for **the child!**

Oh, & what a terrible wait for **the new parents!**

4. **Slide#13** And so with Us & our *Adoptive Process!*

a) We have been **chosen** by God (before we even knew he was looking at our picture!)

b) **Then**, there was a **meeting** (our salvation)

c) **Then**, there was a **pledge/guarantee/deposit** (the H.S.)

d) **Now**, we **eagerly await for our adoptive parent** to return!

e) **And**, our Adoptive Parent(Jesus) **eagerly waits** for us!

f) **And** when Jesus returns He will **take us to His house!**

g) **And** when we get to His house we will be a partaker of **ALL** of His **inheritance!**

h) But most importantly, we are *no longer orphans*. We will finally have *One to call our own...Abba!*

D. **Slide#14,15** *Hope to the rescue!* (24,25)

1. Hope will *carry us through* our times of sufferings.

2. Heb.6:19 **This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil,**

3. **“Hope prevents us from clinging to what we have and frees us to move away from the safe place and enter unknown and fearful territory.”¹**

VI. **Slide#16,17 THE HOLY SPIRIT GROANS! (26-27)**

A. *Holy Spirit to the rescue!*

B. **Help** – To lend a hand. To come to the aid of someone.

C. **God the Father** understands what **the Spirit** desires **even though** it is inexpressible in human terms.

1. ***No passage in Scripture provides greater encouragement for prayer!²**

a) Listen to the **intensity** by which the Spirit brings his prayers!

D. Wow, that God would not only **answer** our prayers when they are made, **but** also **make them** for us!

1. **Spurgeon describes a king & a petitioner:** “Bring your case before me, & I will grant your desire,” is kindness. **But for him to say,** “I will be your secretary. I will write out your petition for you. I will put it into proper words so that your petition shall be framed acceptably” **this is goodness at its utmost stretch.**

2. **There are times we can't even pray!**

¹ Henri J. Nouwen in the Wounded Healer. Christianity Today, Vol.40, no.12.

² Shepherds Notes, pg.53.

- a) **Slide#18,19** I remember back in 2004 when I had my neck surgery. Laying on the carpet for 13 days, I couldn't lift my head to read the first 4 days. I didn't even feel like praying. Then I was able to read a little devotional quoting **Hudson Taylor** that read,
"I am too weak to work, I cannot read the bible, I cannot even pray. I will lie in the big arms of my heavenly Father, like a child, & trust!"

(1) Will you let the Holy Spirit come to **your** rescue?

E. COMMUNION: