

Romans Session 113

The Holy Spirit Guarantees Our Glory

The inexpressible Groans For Glory 3

Romans 8:23-25 (NASB)

²³ And not only this, but also, we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, 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, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

We have been talking about the groanings of all Creation and the Universe for the day when it shall be set free from the curse put upon it by God, when man fell in the garden.

We now want to look at the Groanings of Believers.

THE GROANINGS OF BELIEVERS

Romans 8:23-25 (NASB)

23 And not only this, but also, we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, 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, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Not only does natural creation groan for deliverance from destructive consequences of sin into the promised new universe, **but also, we ourselves**, that is, believers.

It is the redemption of believers that is central to God's ultimate cosmic regeneration, because believers, as His own children, redeemed and adopted into His heavenly family in response to their faith in His beloved Son, Jesus Christ are the heirs of His glorious eternal, and righteous kingdom.

Every true believer agonizes at times over the appalling manifestations and consequences of sin in his own life, in the lives of others, and even in the natural world.

Because we have **the first fruits of the Spirit**, we are spiritually sensitized to the corruption of sin in and around us.

Because the **Holy Spirit** now indwells us, His work in us and through us is a type of spiritual **first fruits**.

They are a foretaste of the glory that awaits us in heaven, when our corrupted and mortal bodies are exchanged for ones that are incorruptible and immortal.

Although we will not be totally free of sin's power as long as we are in our present bodies, the Lord has given us complete victory over the dominion and bondage of sin.

When we experience the Holy Spirit's empowering us to turn from iniquity and to truly worship, serve, and obey, and love God, we have a taste of the future completed and perfected renewal He will work in us at the resurrection.

Because every genuine believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit;

Romans 8:9 (NASB) 9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

They will to some degree manifest the fruit of the Spirit that Paul enumerates in Galatians;

Galatians 5:22-23 (NASB) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Every time we see Him working His righteousness in and through us, we yearn all the more to be freed of our remaining sin and spiritual weakness.

Because of our divinely-bestowed sensitivity to sin, **we ourselves groan within ourselves** over the dreadful curse of sin that is still manifested by our remaining humanness.

Acknowledging his own sinfulness, David cried out;

Psalm 38:4 (NASB)

⁴ *For my iniquities are gone over my head; As a heavy burden they weigh too much for me.*

Psalm 38:9-10 (NASB)

⁹ *Lord, all my desire is before You; And my sighing is not hidden from You.*

¹⁰ *My heart throbs, my strength fails me; And the light of my eyes, even that has gone from me.*

Paul grieved over the remnants of his humanness that clung to him like a rotten garment that could not be cast off. That reality brought him great spiritual frustration and anguish and caused him to cry out.

Romans 7:24 (NASB)

²⁴ *Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?*

In another epistle he reminds all believers that their plight is the same as his:

2 Corinthians 5:4 (NASB)

⁴ *For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.*

As long as we are in the “tent” of our human body, we will never fully escape sins corruption in our lives. That truth causes Christians to suffer times of deep inner distress over the debilitating sinfulness that still clings to them.

As believers, we therefore find ourselves **waiting eagerly in anticipation of our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.**

The New Testament speaks of believers as those who are already the adopted children of God, but whose adoption awaits ultimate perfection.

Just as there is never salvation that is not completed, neither is there divine adoption that is never completed. A child of God need never fear that he might be cast out of his spiritual family or never enter his heavenly home.

Puritan pastor, Thomas Watson said,

“The Godly may act faintly in religion, the pulse of their affections may beat low. The exercise of grace may be hindered, as when the course of water is stopped. Instead of grace working in the godly, corruption may work, instead of patience, murmuring: instead of heavenliness, earthliness, thus lively and vigorous may corruptions be in the regenerate: they may fall into enormous sins, but though their grace may be drawn low, it is not drawn dry; though grace may be abated, it is not abolished. Grace may suffer an eclipse, not a dissolution, a believer may fall from some degrees of grace, but no from the state of grace. (A Body of Divinity [reprint, Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 1974], pp. 280, 284-85)

Scripture teaches that the believer's salvation is secured by God the Father, by the Son, and by the Holy Spirit.

1. God Secures our Salvation;

Referring to God the Father, Paul assured the Corinthians,

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God,*

²² *who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.*

Also, he wrote Timothy;

2 Timothy 2:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ *Nevertheless, the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Everyone who names the name of the Lord is to abstain from wickedness."*

The Father not only grants salvation to those who trust in His Son but also seals their salvation and gives the indwelling Holy Spirit as the guarantor.

1 Peter 1:3-5 (NASB)

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,*

⁴ *to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,*

⁵ *who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*

Although persevering faith is indispensable to salvation, Peter emphasizes that God the Father's own initiative and power, He, "*caused us to be born again*" and in that same power He sustains us toward the inheritance that our new birth brings, and inheritance that is "*imperishable, and undefiled and will not fade away.*"

It is divinely "*reserved in heaven*" for each believer, who is divinely preserved to receive it.

Whoever belongs to God belongs to Him forever.

In order to point up the absolute and incontrovertible security of those who trust in Jesus Christ, the writer of Hebrews declared;

Hebrews 6:17-19 (NASB)

¹⁷ *In the same way God, desiring even more to show to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of His purpose, interposed with an oath,*

¹⁸ *so that by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have taken refuge would have strong encouragement to take hold of the hope set before us.*

¹⁹ *This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, a hope both sure and steadfast and one which enters within the veil,*

2. God the Son also guarantees our salvation;

John 6:37 (NASB)

³⁷ *"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.*

Paul assures the Corinthian church, which had more than its share of immature and disobedient believers, that;

1 Corinthians 1:6-8 (NASB)

⁶ *even as the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you,*

⁷ *so that you are not lacking in any gift, awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

⁸ *who will also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

And to the Colossians;

Colossians 1:22 (NASB)

²² *yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach—*

In other words, their relationship to Christ not only had been confirmed when they were justified but would remain confirmed by the Lord Himself until their glorification at His return.

Again, in his letter to the Thessalonians he wrote;

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (NASB)

¹³ *so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.*

Later in that epistle he wrote;

1 Thessalonians 5:24 (NASB)

²⁴ *Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass.*

The ongoing, mediatorial, intercessory work of Jesus Christ in heaven unalterably secures our eternal reward.

3. God the Spirit also secures the believer's salvation.

By a work that Scripture sometimes refers to as the **Spirit's sealing**.

In ancient times, the seal, or signet, was a mark of authenticity or of a completed transaction.

The seal of a monarch or other distinguished person represented his authority and power.

For example, when Daniel was thrown into the den of lions, King Darius had a large stone placed across the entrance and sealed with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles so that nothing might be changed in regard to Daniel;

Daniel 6:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ *A stone was brought and laid over the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signet rings of his nobles, so that nothing would be changed in regard to Daniel.*

In an **infinitely more significant and spiritual way**, the Holy Spirit seals the salvation of every believer, which, by divine promise and protections, **can never be altered**.

Paul assured the Corinthians believers that;

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 (NASB)

²¹ *Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God,*

²² *who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge.*

In similar words he assured the Ephesians;

Ephesians 1:13 (NASB)

¹³ *In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,*

The ideas of partial or temporary salvation not only are foreign to the teaching of Scripture, but completely contradict it. No true believer need ever fear loss of salvation.

At the moment of conversion his soul is redeemed, purified, and eternally secured in God's family and kingdom.

Believers should be concerned about sin in their lives, but not because they might sin themselves out of God's grace. Because of God's promise and power, **that is impossible.**

Until we are glorified and fully liberated from sin through the **redemption of our body**, we still have unredeemed bodies that make it very much possible for sin to harm us and to grieve our Lord.

Again, to understand this, we need to know that the word body here is an often-used term in the New Testament and is not limited to a person's physical being but relates to the whole of his unredeemed humanness, in particular to the remaining susceptibility to sin.

We will take this up again next time.