

December 30, 2018 18100-A #24

Romans 8:26-30

The Spirit's Encouragement

I. God's gift of salvation and redeemed relationship with Himself (Gospel) is wonderful, but also profoundly humbling. The good news of Christmas (gospel) implies some bad news, too.

- A. At Christmas and New Year we rejoice in God's grace.
- B. But the grace of God in Christ implies our own humiliating failure: we desperately need grace because we have so much wrong with us.

II. Rom. 8. A description of life in the Spirit: A supreme gift and a sobering reminder.

- A. The Principle of the Spirit sets us free from condemnation. 1-2
 1. Which means that condemnation is the normal state for humanity. John 3:16-19 (Rom.5:10)
 2. But it's gone for those in Christ Jesus.
- B. The Power of the Spirit releases us to obey. 5-11
 1. Which means that obeying the Lord from the inside out is counterintuitive to fallen humanity. (Rom.3:23)
- C. The Adoption of the Spirit makes us children of God. 12-17
 1. Which means that orphanhood is the natural condition of humanity. We are not naturally born children of God. (John 1:12-13)
 2. Only those thus adopted are children of God. (Jn. 1:12-13)
 3. Only the children inherit. Heirs with Christ.
- D. The Hope of the Spirit keeps us focused on the Future. 18-25
 1. Which means that true hope cannot be found in this age. Gal.1:4
 2. Waiting With perseverance/patience.

III. The Action of the Spirit insures God's purposes for us. 3 ways. 8:26-30

- A. He translates our prayers perfectly. 26-27
 1. Which means we are basically weak and ignorant about what to pray for.
 2. We never need to wonder if prayers are "getting through"
 3. He gives us what we would have asked for if we knew what He knows.
 4. Note the difference between confidence in God, and confidence in God doing what we think he should do. One is faith, the other is pride and presumption.
- B. He guides our circumstances meticulously. 28
 1. Which means that very hard things will happen to us (Jn.16:33) and we cannot control everything. The context is "suffering in this age" 8:18
 2. All things work: all the details of our lives.
 - a) Specifically, the suffering things that lead to glory. (8:18-25)
 3. Those who love God and are called
 - a) Love God and Called = Christians
 - b) Called = summoned, not just invited in the generic sense.
 4. According to His purpose "advanced planning"
 - a) prothesis = purpose, advanced planning, preplanned purpose in God's mind. Eph. 1:11
 5. Not that "everything will feel better here and now"
 6. Not that we will understand why things happen here and now.
 7. Not that God creates the evil people do. Acts 2:23
 8. It does mean that God uses every detail of our lives in the suffering and fallen world for His kingdom and for our growth.

C. He guarantees our destiny permanently: 29-30

1. *Which means we cannot guarantee it ourselves!*
2. Conformed to the image of His Son.
 - a) This is the “good” we are destined for.
 - b) A reference to our internal transformation (already) and physical resurrection (not yet). Phil. 3:21
3. By the exercise of His Grace: (these are all pasted tense, emphasizing certainty)
 - a) Foreknown. To deliberately and intimately know a person.
 - b) Predestined. To decide something before it happens (Eph 1:4,5,11)
 - c) Called. More than a generic call. Actually, a summons.
 - d) Justified. Declared righteous by faith.
 - e) Glorified: Resurrection
4. *This means that all the people in the first group are in the second group—like a tour group that doesn't lose people. (Jn.6:37-40; 10:27-30)*

IV. How should a Christian respond to this? Admit weakness and live confidently:

A. Vent by talking to Him honestly. Lk.18:1-8

1. Take it to Him in frustration, letting Him move
2. Honesty and persistence, coupled with humility and awareness that you might be wrong...
3. God has made a covenant in Christ to hear our prayers

B. Worship by trusting Him practically. 2 Cor.4:16-18

1. Especially in trauma. Worship is a lifestyle of loyalty and trust. (Rom.12)
 - a) *It is at the point of trauma and confusion that faith happens.*

C. Rest by focusing on Him eternally. Col.3:1-4

1. If you are a Christian, you are secure. But if your mind is anchored only in this age, you will be restless.

V. How should a Pre-Christian respond to this?

- A. By realizing that we are not what we pretend to be—autonomous and self-sufficient.
- B. Let God draw you into his humility and grace. Come to Christ.