

## Blessed In Every Tense – Romans 8:18-30

Bible Study ~ 8/17/16

Grace Church of Lockeford

The past few weeks we have looked at the trials and battles we face as we strive to live for the Lord. There is blessing in that we are able to please God but it is not easy. The blessing we will consider today centers around the fact that we have blessing we anticipate in the future, blessing we appreciate in the present, and blessings we appropriate in the past. The key to this study lies in the tenses used in these verses. Paul is giving believers hope and joy that bring courage to face the struggles ahead. **He begins by walking us through...**

### 1. Future Blessing To Anticipate vv. 18-25

Paul makes a contrast in *v. 18*. The sufferings of this present time are nothing when compared to future glory. Notice, this glory is what “shall be revealed”. It is a future reality that gives us courage and boldness in the present. Paul is not discounting present suffering but putting it into perspective. *2Corinthians 4:17*. In *v. 19* Paul begins to reveal that creation itself awaits our future glorification because at that time all of creation will also be renewed. Creation has an “earnest expectation” This refers to “*an intensely desired expectation with a high confidence of fulfillment.*” Creation intensely desires our revealing. We are told why in *v. 20*. Through the fall creation itself was subjected to futility. Futility - *ματαιότης mataiotēs Emptiness. Uselessness as a consequence of being purposeless or incapable of producing results.* The purpose for which God originally created was corrupted and twisted by the fall. Yet this futility was with hope! With the confident expectation of future glorification. The content of the hope is spelled out in *v. 21*. Creation will be delivered from corruption into the liberty of the children of God! Creation awaits the time when it will be set free from its slavery to corruption. This is a future event that will coincide with the glorification of believers. Creation groans as it awaits this redemption in *v. 22*. Creation is not alone in its longing. We who have been redeemed spiritually also eagerly await the redemption of our bodies in *v. 23*. We groan with this desire! We want the adoption of our bodies. We have been adopted spiritually, we desire it physically as well. We want our bodies to be redeemed. Interesting wording here. Even we . Creation doesn’t have the HS. Implies it has more reason to groan than we do. Yet even though we are free from sins penalty and power, we groan. According to *v. 24* we are saved in hope. The idea here is that when we trust in Christ there is an expectation of fulfilled future promises. We are not hoping for something that takes place immediately or something we can see; our hope is in a future reality. That future reality is the physical redemption of our bodies. This hope. *V. 25* puts it well when it states that we hope for what we don’t see and eagerly await it with perseverance. Perseverance – *ὑπομονή hypomonē KJV has patience. Steadfastness. Steadfast endurance – the power to withstand hardship or stress; especially the inward fortitude necessary.* Though we groan for and desire and eagerly anticipate our redeemed bodies, for now we continue living and serving with steadfast endurance. This steadfastness is fueled by the anticipated future blessing! These bodies are only temporary! Something much better is coming! This reality is repeatedly presented as the incentive to present faithfulness. The confident expectation of a future reality, a future glorification, that is what keeps us going through trials. **Our blessing is not all future. We also have...**

### 2. Present Blessing To Appreciate vv. 26-28

In *v. 23* Paul mentions that we have received the firstfruits of the Spirit. This is elsewhere called the down-payment or guarantee. As we await our future glorification we experience weakness and corruption. The struggles we face are to the point that *v. 26* reveals we don’t even know what to pray for! The Holy Spirit must intercede for us! I want to make an interesting connection for you. Creation groans in *v. 22*, we groan in *v. 23*, and the Holy Spirit groans in *v. 26*. All of this groaning seems to have the same cause, the desire for the redemption of our bodies! The desire for our redemption arises out of “the sufferings of this present time” (*v. 18*). This suffering highlights our weakness and inability to even pray on our own! There is a temptation to pray to impress. We think that the words we say or how we say them will make us more or less acceptable to God. But the reality is our prayers have to be interpreted by the Holy Spirit before they even make sense! The combination of verses here is

incredible. Again, v. 26 reveals that we don't even know what to pray for so the Holy Spirit intercedes for us. V. 27 reveals that the one who searches the hearts knows the mind of the Spirit and makes intercession for the saints according to God's will. So we don't know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit takes our unspoken desires and thoughts and intercedes for us. Christ knows the mind of the Spirit and our hearts and He intercedes according to the will of God. What an incredible blessing! We cannot pray without the involvement of the trinity! These verses provide the all-important context for v. 28. We know that all things work together for good to those who love (agape) God and are called according to His purpose. This is speaking of believers. All things work for good because the Holy Spirit and Christ both intercede for us! And they do so according to the will of God. This verse is in the present tense. It is not saying everything will work out for good in the future, though that is true. What this verse teaches is that all things that we are currently experiencing work together for good! Not that they will feel good, seem good, or look good, but that they will be good. Let me enumerate our present blessings. The Holy Spirit is interceding for us. Christ is interceding for us according to the will of God. All things are working together for good! We have the future anticipation of glory that is so incredible it eclipses present suffering! We have present blessing that assures us that everything is working for good and ensures that our prayers are heard. **We have blessing in the future, blessing in the present and finally...**

### 3. Past Blessing To Appropriate vv. 28-30

I included v. 28 in the past blessing to appropriate because we need to realize and accept that even difficult trials and struggles in the past work out for good. When we love God and are called according to His purpose, all things work together for good! The next two verses explain why that is true. Paul gives us five reasons all things work together for good. The first is in v. 29. He foreknew us. Foreknew – προγινώσκω *proginōskō* *Know beforehand. To befriend or be acquainted with someone in a familiar way ahead of time or before meeting.* The object of this foreknowledge is the believer. So God knew us before we knew Him. Secondly, He predestined us to be conformed to Christ. Predestined – προορίζω *proorizō* *Foreordain. To predetermine — to determine something ahead of time or before its occurrence.* God determined something would happen to us ahead of time. In this instance we are told what it is. Not salvation, but sanctification. God determined beforehand that all who believe in Christ by grace through faith would be conformed to Christ, that He might be the first among many. This takes us to v. 30. Third, He called us. Someone is called when they hear the Gospel message according to *2Thessalonians 2:13-14*. When we accept the gospel and are saved we experience the fourth thing, He justifies us. Justified – δικαιόω *dikaioō* *Declare righteous. To pronounce a verdict that someone is in full accordance with the requirements of the law (of God).* Those who are called and respond to the call are declared righteous. Fifth, they are also glorified. This is the idea of praise or recognize. All of these realities are aorist indicative which usually is past time. But they are not past necessarily. They happen when we believe yet have already happened. While this glorification is an assured reality we will not experience it until later as vv. 21-23 pointed out. As far as God is concerned, these have already happened. We are to live our lives in light of these realities. All things work together for good because we are foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified. The struggles and trials we face are all apart of God's wondrous plan! It is the sovereignty of God that assures us that everything we are presently experiencing is working out for good!

We have the confident expectation of glorified bodies and a new heaven and earth in the future. We have the intercession of Christ and the Holy Spirit who helps our infirmities. We have been foreknown, predestined, called, justified, and glorified! In light of these awesome blessings, how should we live?

**CHALLENGE:** Walk as someone whose future, present, and past is blessed beyond measure!