

The Promise of Sonship

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you. It's good to be back here again for second in a series of sermons from Romans 8 on sonship. And I'd like to say that my kid sister came all the way from Pentecost to just hear me preach, but that's not quite true.

She came to hear me preach, but she came to Pentecost, I'm sure for other reasons, maybe to visit her own children. But anyway, you can say hi to her for me.

And Jillian, with sonship, last Sunday we were reminded that all of us are sons of God. All of us who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord are sons.

Because sonship is chosen because sonship means we get the full inheritance. It's only recently that daughters have been allowed to get the inheritance. But we have the full inheritance, whether male or female, no slave, no free, whatever, language, culture, whatever, all who confess Jesus as Lord are sons.

And we're reminded that the freedom of sonship from last Sunday, that Jesus has set us free from bondage to the law. We don't have to live under it anymore.

[1 : 1 9] Set us free from bondage to sin. He can give the victory over that. We set us free from bondage to death. And he set us free from bondage to fear. Today we're talking about the promise of sonship.

Continuing on Romans 8, this time picking up at verse 18 and reading to verse 27. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that we've revealed in us.

For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but the will of one who subjected it in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

For in this hope we were saved, but hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But we hope for what we do not yet have.

[2 : 3 7] We wait for it patiently. In the same way the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with wordless groans.

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for God's people in accordance with the will of God. The Apostle Paul, here and other places, warns Christians that they're going to experience hardship and persecution.

They might have to suffer for the faith, might even have to die. And why not? Jesus suffered and died for us, so it's not unreasonable that Jesus would expect his followers to be willing to do the same.

And they were even rejoiced when they suffered. Pastors has been preaching through Acts, and I'm interrupting it for this series.

And in Acts 5.41, it talks about the sufferers that they've experienced. It says the apostles left the Sanhedrin, the Jewish reading council, rejoicing because they've been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name, the name of Jesus.

[3 : 56] The Apostle Paul warned his converts that they would have to suffer. He says in Acts 14.22, we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.

And again, and he says in 2 Corinthians 4.17, for our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. Or here in verse 18, it says, verse 18, I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Hardship, persecution, a normal lot, especially back then. And in many places throughout the world, Christians suffer hardship and persecution. Many places.

Hasn't hit us really yet, but it's hit many places. Tells us in this passage that our adoption was necessary. In Genesis 1.31, God created the world and he pronounced that it was good.

But in this passage, he talked about how creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of him who subjected it in hope that creation itself be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

[5 : 12] See, not only are we suffering because of our sin and that we've all sinned and we all continue to sin, but creation itself, the world that we live in, suffers because of it.

I mean, you only have to catch the news on any given day to know that the world is suffering, that there's a lot of problems in the world. I mean, you look at the hurricane that hit Jamaica and places like that.

And look at the heat waves that's hitting the United States and other places. The world is in turmoil and it's our fault because we have sinned.

And even though creation didn't do anything wrong, but because we're under God's, the shepherd of creation, creation suffers.

The second law of thermodynamics says that everything goes from order to disorder. Everything falls apart. The verse, and abide with me, says change and decay all around I see.

[6 : 23] Help of the helpless, so abide with me. Or as Paul Simon put it, everything put together sooner or later falls apart. That's the way life is. Everything falls apart.

And we're suffering as a result of sin. But we have to make it, don't make the mistake that Job's friends made. And they said, well, he's suffering, therefore he must have sinned.

Or as Jesus' disciples said when they encountered a blind man, Rabbi, who sinned that this man was born blind? Jesus said neither.

We suffer because of sin, but we don't necessarily suffer because of our own individual sin. But that's part of what we have to suffer. Our adoption was necessary because of the sin that entered the world.

But our adoption is not yet fully realized. Many places in the Bible talk about the restoration of creation, how that things are going to come back to where they should be, like in the Garden of Eden.

[7 : 34] Isaiah 11.6 says, the wolf will lie down with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion, the yearling together, and the little child will lead them. Doesn't that sound like a beautiful picture?

Everything at peace. Even all of creation at peace. Certainly not that way today. We know wars in Ukraine and the Middle East and other places in the world.

But here it talks about peace even in the animal world. And also talks about the promise of our restoration when Jesus comes again and takes us to himself at the time of the resurrection, at the time of his return.

He says in 1 Corinthians 15:51-57, Listen, I tell you a mystery. We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed. And that's not a nursing model.

And the flash, and the twinkling of eye, the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality.

[8 : 41] When the perishable is been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true. Death has been swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory?

Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of the sin is the law. But thanks be to God, he gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, creation's going to be restored when Jesus comes back again, and we will receive new bodies.

I'm really looking forward to a new body. My own, this body right now is giving me a lot of trouble. And that's why we struggle, because we know what lies before us.

Apostle Paul, towards the end of his life, wrote to his beloved son in the faith, Timothy. In 2 Timothy 4, verse 7, he says, I have fought the good fight.

I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will reward me in that day. And not only to me, but also those who long for his appearing.

[9 : 50] The Apostle Paul says, there's a crown awaiting for me, and everyone else who has accepted Christ as Savior and Lord. So we wait patiently.

James in James 5, 7, 8 says, Be patient then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains.

You too be patient and stand firm, but the Lord's coming is coming near. Patiently. And if he's telling that almost 2,000 years ago, we still are waiting for the coming of the Lord.

And because of that, we should live godly lives, waiting, preparing ourselves for the coming of Christ. 2 Peter 3, 11 to 12 says, Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be?

You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God, and speed is coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

[10 : 55] We're waiting. We've been adopted as sons of God, but we haven't yet gotten our full inheritance. It's coming when Jesus comes again.

And so we wait patiently, and we strive. We work, try to live godly lives. Talks about the, our adoption not fully realized, but it also says, talks about the present reality of our adoption.

In verse 23, it says, Not only so, but we ourselves, who are the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

Firstfruits. We have the Holy Spirit to testify to us that we are the children of God, that we are of the full rights of sons. And he's in there.

Ephesians 1.14 says, That the Holy Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory.

[12 : 04] The Holy Spirit is there to assure us that, yes, when Jesus comes, we're going to get everything. We're going to get glorious new bodies.

We're going to get everything restored. We won't have to worry about sin and death. There'll be no more tears. Everything will be changed. And the Holy Spirit is there to help us.

He's also there to help us against all opposition. In verse 26, it says, In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with wordless groans.

Sometimes people think that they have to pray such eloquent prayers before God. But sometimes the best thing is to be quiet before God. Never forget the value of silent prayer.

And allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you and through you. Because we don't always know what to pray for. We don't. Augustine's mother was, prayed that her son, Augustine, would never go to Rome because Rome was such a great place of wickedness.

[13 : 16] But he did go to Rome. And there he met Jesus and became one of the great theologians of the Christian church. And then there was another song, country and western song, written by Garth Brooks called Unanswered Prayer.

Blessing of Unanswered Prayer. Sometimes the best thing that can happen is that the things we pray for, we don't get. Because they're not what's best for us.

But the Holy Spirit knows what's best for us. And he intercedes for us and prays intelligently. We don't always know what to pray for, but the Holy Spirit's there to guide us.

We are the children of God. And that doesn't mean we're not going to suffer. Because sometimes God allows suffering to discipline us, to make us more like him, to refine us, refining fire.

Suffering is just an essential part of life. If you haven't suffered in some way, I'd be really surprised. Because that's just the way life goes. Sometimes we suffer because we've lost a loved one.

[14 : 32] Sometimes we suffer because we've been in a car accident. Sometimes we suffer because we've got cancer. All kinds of things happen to us. But that doesn't mean that God can't use us.

The verse after the passage I read, verse 28 says, And we know that in all things God worked for the good of those who love him, been called according to his purpose. Doesn't say all things are good, but all things work together for good.

Reminded the story of Joseph. His brothers sold him into slavery. Was that good? And then because of Potiphar's wife, he ended up in prison.

Was that good? But God worked it out for good. And he became second in command to all of Egypt. God can work anything out for good.

So when we fall, when things happen to us, we think, well, maybe somehow we've, that God has been defeated and that is definitely not the case.

[15 : 37] God is capable of using anything for his glory, for his honor. God used murderers like Moses and David. God used the apostle Paul, who as Saul, he was persecuting the church.

But he turned him around. God can turn anything around. The suffering that we experience is temporary. What is our life compared with eternity?

Just a speck in time. Our momentary sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. So yes, we're going to suffer.

Things are going to happen. But we have the promise that everything's going to work out when we trust in Christ as our Savior and Lord. We have the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit to help us in our time of need.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father, we thank you that all of us who have confessed Christ as Savior and Lord are sons of God.

[16 : 45] We're the children of God. As your children, we have an incredible inheritance awaiting for us. But in the meantime, things are not working out the way we always want them to.

Help us to continue to trust in you when things don't work out for us. Help us to know that sometimes the best thing that happens is unanswered prayer.

That you're capable of working out anything for your honor and your glory. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.