**Lesson 22: You Have Help and Hope in this Life!**

Text: Romans 8:26-30

**Introduction**

As people living in a fallen world, we will experience trying times. Life’s difficulties range from minor inconveniences to life-altering circumstances. As believers, we have help and hope. Paul describes our help and hope in Romans 8:26-30. This is perhaps one of the most well-known passages in the Bible and for good reason. While your troubling circumstances may not change, you will be greatly blessed to know what the Lord is doing while you are going through your trying circumstance.

1. **Paul said that believers have help in the midst of their suffering because the Spirit intercedes for us. (v. 26-27)** 
   1. “Likewise” indicates that we have additional help to what he explained in the previous verses.
   2. The word *help* literally means “to take hold with another who is laboring” (Thayer). It is “a rich word that pictures someone helping another carry a heavy load” (John Witmer). Thus, it means that the Spirit comes to our aid! He joins with us to help! We are not in the struggle of life alone. The only other time this particular word is used is in Luke 10:40. Martha was upset with her sister because she was not helping in the preparation of a meal. She asked Jesus to tell her to come and help. We may be disappointed by the lack of help from others, but we are never without the help of the Spirit. He bears the burden of life with us.
   3. We desperately need the help of the Spirit due to our *infirmities* (lack of strength). It is not that we have moments of weakness, but that we are characteristically weak!
   4. There are times we don’t even know what to pray. Because of our limitations as finite human beings, we struggle to know God’s will in the particulars of life.
   5. The Spirit helps by interceding for us. *Intercede* means to approach or appeal to someone. The Spirit appeals to the Father on our behalf.
      1. The word *groaning* refers to a “sigh as the result of deep concern” (Low-Nida). The Spirit is deeply concerned about you!
      2. The phrase “which cannot be uttered” comes from a single Greek word that is used only in this verse. It means, “something that arouses such strong emotions one cannot find words to speak of it; inexpressible, unutterable” (Friberg).
      3. This does not refer to “speaking in tongues” as some suggest. The groaning is done by the Spirit, not the believer. The context refers to the Spirit’s intercession for believers.
      4. We can be encouraged to know that when we don’t know what to pray, the Spirit perfectly intercedes for us according to God’s will.
   6. The Spirit intercedes according to God’s will because of the perfect harmony that exists within the Trinity. (v. 27)
      1. The One who searches the hearts is best identified as the Father. He searches the hearts of men (1 Samuel 16:7, Jeremiah 17:10, Acts 15:8, Hebrews 4:13).
      2. The Father knows the *mind* (intents, thoughts, aims) of the Spirit and that He intercedes according to God’s will for the saints.
   7. The Son of God intercedes for us in Heaven (Romans 8:34) and the Spirit of God intercedes for us! Pause to consider how greatly you are loved! No wonder Paul expresses confidence in the completion of God’s plan as described in the following verses.
2. **Paul said that believers can find hope in the midst of their suffering because God is working in our lives according to His eternal plan. (v. 28-30)**
   1. In the midst of the trying times that come upon us, we can be confident that God is working behind the scenes of our lives. (v. 28)
      1. “The things themselves may not be good, but God harmonizes them together for believers’ ultimate good because His goal is to bring them to perfection in His presence.” (John Witmer)
      2. The good that God intends to do in our lives is to conform us to the image of His Son. He is constantly at work in the believer’s life to accomplish this goal.
      3. The reference to loving God and being called according to His purpose limits the application of this verse to believers.
   2. We can be confident that all things are working together for good because of His predetermined plan for our lives. (v. 29a)
      1. Don’t misunderstand Paul’s intent in reference to God’s predestination. He is not saying that God arbitrarily chose some to be saved to the neglect of others.
      2. “Predestination applies only to saved people. Nowhere are we taught that God predestines people to be eternally condemned. If they are condemned, it is because of their refusal to trust Christ.” (Warren Wiersbe)
      3. The Bible clearly presents that God has sovereignly chosen to save any who would come to Him by faith (John 3:16-17; Luke 19:10; 1 Tim. 2:4). This truth helps us to understand His *foreknowledge* as knowing in advance rather than predetermining who would be saved. “Whosoever” really means “whosoever.”
   3. God’s predetermined plan is that all who believe would be made just like His Son. (v. 29b)
      1. God loves you just the way you are, but too much to leave you that way.
      2. He is so pleased with His Son that He wants all believers to be just like Him.
   4. God’s plan involves three stages:
      1. He calls the lost to faith in Christ.
      2. When he or she responds by faith, they are justified.
      3. Those who are justified are glorified. He used the past tense form of this verb. While their glorification is a future event, Paul speaks of it as though it were already accomplished. From God’s standpoint, their salvation is a settled matter. Their salvation is secure in the plan of God. He does not lose one person in the process.
3. **Central Idea: Paul said that believers can find help and hope in the midst of their suffering because the Spirit intercedes for us and God is working in our lives according to His eternal plan.**
4. **Application: You can have help and hope in the midst of your suffering because the Spirit intercedes for you and God is working in your life according to His eternal plan.** 
   1. As a believer, the Holy Spirit comes to your aid. He is there to help you with the load that is too much for you to carry.
   2. When you don’t know what to pray, rest in the fact that the Spirit intercedes for you according to God’s will.
   3. Regardless of what you are going through, take hope in the fact that God is working out His plan in your life as a believer.

**Conclusion**

It is easy to feel alone in the struggles of life and to question the purpose for the pain we experience. The Spirit’s intercession and God’s eternal purpose assure us that our pain has purpose. Since that is true, there is nothing that can separate us from God’s love. We will rejoice in this fact in the next lesson.