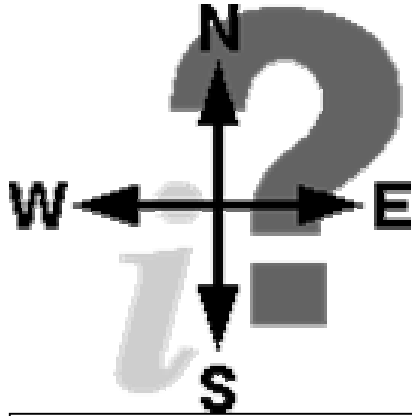


LIFE Community Sermon Notes



Why is there
so much evil
and suffering in the world?

Romans 8:18-39

Future Glory

18I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. 20For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21that^[a] the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? 25But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

26In 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 groans that words cannot express. 27And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

More Than Conquerors

28And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him,^[b] who^[c] have been called according to his purpose. 29For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. 30And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

31What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? 33Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. 34Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. 35Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? 36As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;

we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."^[d] 37No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[e] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

LIFE Community Sermon Notes

Sunday, August 19

Big Idea: Christianity offers a solution to the problem of evil and suffering.

Key Verse: Romans 8:28

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.

Opening Question: What is the most significant thing that has happened to you in the past week?

Questions in **bold** below are suggested focus questions.
Sections in *italics* and/or parenthesis are for the leaders notes.

Read the passage.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Paul talks about “our present sufferings”. What sufferings would the original readers have experienced? What suffering did Paul experience (see 2 Corinthians 11)?**
- The passage goes on to talk about both the creation and people groaning for liberation. What does creation groan for, and what does Paul say we groan for?
- 3. There is a third groaning in the passage—what is it? (*The groaning of the Spirit is mentioned in verse 26 and is used in connection with prayer. Often prayer is seen as an easy answer to someone's sufferings and the problem of evil. Yet, the bible affirms that prayer is what we do when we are weak—we turn to God, and His Spirit prays with and through us.*)**
- 4. What is the promise of verse 28? What is it not promising us?**
- Bryan listed the three classical statements in dealing with the problem of evil:
 - God is all powerful
 - God is good
 - Evil and suffering exist.He went on to list a fourth statement: the response of biblical Christianity. This statement deals with the conflict of the first three: Therefore, God sent His Son. Bryan spoke about how God gets involved and that biblical Christianity offers a solution to the problem of evil rather than a statement about it. God is the solution—He gets involved.
6. What does God’s presence in suffering and the fact that He endured suffering for you mean to you?
- 7. How should you respond appropriately to God’s work for you?**
- 8. How are you responding to God’s work for you?**

Leader’s Notes

- 1. Work through the questions of this study focusing primarily on the Romans passage. Allow the group to think of other passages to help them as they wrestle with the problem of evil and suffering.*