

Dear Friend,

As we continue our journey through Romans 8, I was drawn to the truth in verse 18. In this verse, Paul shares his analysis of present suffering and our future glory and says they cannot be compared to each other.

"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Paul was not ignorant or blind to the sufferings of human experience. He experienced more of them than most any of us today. Yet he still considered that the future glory far outweighed the present sufferings.

"The glory which shall be revealed in us." Without a heavenly hope, Paul considered the Christian life foolish and tragic (1 Cor. 15:19). Yet in light of eternity it is the wisest and best choice anyone can make.

This coming glory will not only be revealed to us, but it will actually be revealed in us. God has put this glory into the believer right now. In heaven the glory will simply be revealed. One commentator said, "The implication is that it is already existent, but not apparent."

We may at times question whether we are actually connected to God, or whether God engages with us personally in the suffering and struggles of this life. When difficulty, challenge, pain and suffering come our way, we might question whether we are living in God's favor as God's dearly beloved children. We don't have to wonder if we are legitimately children of God--or if we are genuine followers of Christ. Paul reminds us that God's children know who they are!

"The Spirit Himself bears witness to our spirit that we are children of God." Paul is saying that those who are God's children, born again by the Spirit of God, know the truth of this

reality because the Holy Spirit communicates with our spirit to assure us that we truly are the beloved children of God.

Verse 17 reminds us that because we are in Christ, we are also called to share in His suffering. God's children aren't immune from trials and suffering. We are "in Christ" and this intimate relationship gives us direction, comfort, peace, patience and strength to go through the trials, never losing the hope of that glorious reality that is already present, but not yet fully apparent!

May we walk by faith and trust in God's loving presence with us each moment now and forever.

With love and blessings,

Pastor Duff