

Reasons to Hope When Suffering

International Bible Lesson

Romans 8:28-39

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L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

“Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?” (Romans 8:35).

In his Letter to the Romans, the Apostle Paul listed several sorrows that the followers of Jesus might suffer on earth. When he wrote his letter, the Christians in Rome had already passed through a number of these ways of suffering and would pass through many more in the centuries ahead. Paul would eventually lose his own life to the sword of Imperial execution. In spite of the afflictions believers in Christ will suffer in this life, Paul wanted all of his readers to be assured that God loved them and would be with them through all their trials and tribulations. He wanted them to remember (and God inspired Paul’s writings so Christians in subsequent generations would remember) several truths. First, Christ loves Christians; therefore, Christians love Christ. John wrote, “We love because he first loved us” (1 John 4:19.) Second, God has a purpose for all Christians and no one and nothing can defeat God’s purposes for them. Paul wrote, “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” (Romans 8:28). Third, Christ is at the right hand of God the Father in heaven, and Christ lives to intercede for Christians; therefore, Christ is able to save Christians completely (Hebrews 7:25). Fourth, the Holy Spirit indwells Christians and He helps Christians in their weaknesses; He also intercedes for the followers of Christ according to the will of God (Romans 8:27). For these and other reasons, no matter what happens, Christians need not fear separation from God and His loving care.

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Thinking Further

1. What are two reasons you can give for knowing that everything that happens to you God will work out for your good?
2. How much of your relationship with God depends on Jesus Christ and His life, death, and resurrection? Give a reason with your answer.
3. What does it mean to you to be justified and glorified?
4. What reason did Paul give for us to believe “that God would graciously give us all things” (Romans 8:32)?
5. Why can no one succeed with God if they bring a charge against us or condemn us as a Christian? Give a reason for your answer.