

WARM-UP

- What is one thing you haven't been able to do for a while that you'd like to do again soon?
- Recall a time when you were willing to line up for something. What made you excited to wait for it?
- Share a story about something you saved up or worked hard for.

WORD *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* **ROMANS 8:18**

(Read also **ROMANS 8:18–23**.)

The apostle Paul gave bad news and good news in this part of the book of Romans. Here's the bad news: We will constantly encounter suffering in this world because of sin. Sin is why all kinds of suffering entered the world, and even those from the kingdom of God will not be exempted. This news is saddening, but, thankfully, the story doesn't end there. There is good news: God will redeem all of creation in the future, rid it of sin, and put an end to the suffering! This future glory of redemption is why many Christians are willing to go through suffering, even death, willingly. The ending of the story is already certain—the *glory that is to be revealed to us*. Here are three things we can learn about the good news of the hope we have in Christ.

1 | We have hope because God has saved us.

For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? **ROMANS 8:24**

When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, we are not only redeemed from our past and given a new identity as God's children; we are also secured with a glorious future. It's like having our adoption papers signed, and we're just waiting to be taken to our new home with our Heavenly Father. Our salvation assures us of this hope. How did your outlook on life change after you accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior?

2 | We have hope because the Holy Spirit helps us.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. **ROMANS 8:26**

It is challenging, impossible even, to persevere towards God's plan and purpose without the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit strengthens us, encourages us, teaches us to have a biblical mindset of the present, and helps us live according to God's ways. Even when we don't know what to pray for, the Holy Spirit Himself prays for us and guides our prayers according to the will of God. No matter what difficult situation we are in, remember that Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to help us overcome. How has the Holy Spirit helped you have hope during a difficult time?

3 | We have hope because we have a glorious future.

²³And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. . . . ³⁰And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

ROMANS 8:23,30

(Read also **ROMANS 8:23-30**.)

All the breakthroughs and works of God we are experiencing today are just a foretaste of what God will do in, for, and through us. The apostle Paul explains in this passage that the greatest days of God's goodness await us. There will be a new heaven and a new earth. Believers will be resurrected with glorified bodies and we will experience eternal life. Suffering has a time limit. Instead of focusing on the darkness of the present, we can look forward to our glorious future with great expectation. When today seems hopeless and impossible, look beyond today; God's promise is sure. How has this hope changed the way you see your past and live in the present?

APPLICATION

- What are the areas in your life where you find it most difficult to persevere? Surrender these concerns to God in prayer.
- What promises are you holding on to from the Lord? What verses in the Bible remind you of these?
- Who among your friends and family needs encouragement to persevere or to know about the hope God offers? Commit to pray and find opportunities to preach the gospel to him or her.

