

Foundations for Spiritual Growth – Romans 6-8 – Week Nine

Suffering and Spiritual Growth

Romans 8:12-30

Introduction: Suffering is a reality in life and a crucial component of spiritual growth. But how do we deal with it in such a way that it forms in us the image of Christ (8:29-30)? For suffering to contribute to our growth we must reflect on two realities: 1) the future greatness of our destiny in heaven, and 2) the present prayers of the Holy Spirit.

1. 1ST ATTITUDE – Draw strength in the prospect of heaven.

Romans 8:25-27

- A. What an objector might say. 8:18
- B. Dealing with suffering requires us to passionately embrace a biblical worldview. 8:19-22
- C. Dealing with suffering requires the courage to persevere in the face of difficulty. 8:23-25

2. 2ND ATTITUDE – Draw strength in the prayer of the Spirit.

Romans 8:26-27

- A. Note the connection with suffering: “In the same way...”. 8:26a
- B. Our condition in times of suffering. 8:26b
- C. Our help in times of suffering. 8:26c
- D. Key: In suffering we must turn to God and communicate with him no matter how imperfectly.

3. 3RD ATTITUDE – Draw strength in the providence of God. He recycles our suffering into our present good and his eternal glory.

Romans 8:28-30

- A. Paul is very realistic in his assessment of suffering.
- E. Paul promises that everything *works together* for good.
- F. God’s ultimate purpose is that we would be like his Son. 8:29