

To listen to this or other sermon series, go to [www.bbcpa.org](http://www.bbcpa.org) and follow the link to sermons in either audio or video.

**In Romans, Paul delineates man's fall in its fullness in three major areas:**

- 1) Man as **sinneris unrighteous** before God the just Judge.
- 2) Man as **sinneris enslaved** to sin and death, and therefore to a futile and hopeless existence.
- 3) Man as **sinneris alienated** from God and all that God intended for man to have as image bearer of the Almighty.

**Paul also describes the work of God in saving the sinner in its fullness in these same three areas:**

- 1) Man as **sainthas** been cleansed and given **righteousness** and stands justified before God the just Judge. (3:26)
- 2) Man as **servant is freed** and given **resources** as a steward to serve God with joy and hope and delight.
- 3) Man as **son** is regenerated, restored, adopted and **made heir** of God and co-heir with Christ to **inherit** all that God intended His image bearer to receive.

### Saints with Righteousness

### Servants with Resources

### Sons with Inheritance

In *Romans 8:14-17* we are told that those who are lead by the Spirit of God (in putting sin to death in our bodies) are God's sons. And as His sons, we are given the Spirit of His Son, who is *co-witness* with our regenerated human spirit that we truly are God's children in this new, eternal, love relationship with the Father. And since we are now God's adopted children, then we are also *heirs* of God our Father, and *co-heirs* of all that Christ our elder brother receives from the Father.

### *An heir receives his inheritance when the will is read*

"The will" of our Father has been revealed, and it has *two pages*. *Page one* is our temporary, present inheritance. *Page two* is our eternal, future inheritance. Both pages record our inheritance that is fully shared with us by Christ as co-heirs. I have to admit that it has only been the past two weeks that I have thought about and considered *page one* of the will as a co-heir with Christ. ***I am a co-heir with Christ in co-suffering so that I may also inherit co-glory.*** This theology of God-appointed suffering and glory is found repeatedly the scriptures. See more passages to consider in the "for further study" section below.

Paul instructs us that our inheritance as "co-heirs with Christ" includes "co-suffering" and "co-glory." Paul uses particular word forms beginning with the Greek preposition "sun" meaning "with", or "together with" or "co". The first "co" is the Holy Spirit that is our "*co-witness*" giving us assurance of our security as sons of God. The second is that as God's sons we are now "*co-heirs*" with Christ, due our inheritance form the Father. The third & fourth is that as co-heirs, we inherit present "*co-suffering*" so that we will inherit permanent "*co-glory*". The fifth and sixth have to do with creation that "*co-groans*" with "*co-labor pains*" as we wait for the glory to come. The seventh is the Spirit who "*co-lifts*" (helps) our weakness in bearing up the load we cannot carry alone. The eighth and ninth are that our sovereign Father sees to it that all things "*co-work*" for our good to result in our being "*co-formed*" into the image of Christ, to which He predestined us before time began. This is the fullness of glory that we shall inherit permanently, when we get *the second page* of the will.

It is in this larger view of *page two* of the will, the ultimate, permanent end that Paul states that our present sufferings on *page one* are not worthy to be compared to the glory to be revealed in us on *page two*. In comparison to our permanent, magnificent glory bearing the fullness of the image of Christ, our present sufferings are miniscule, incapable of making a numeric fraction small enough to define it.

I've stood at the edge of the Grand Canyon several times in my life, awestruck by its vastness. And I've never heard anyone step up to the edge and say.... "Yeah, I dug a ditch once." It would be ludicrous, idiotic, impossible, unworthy to even attempt to compare our feeble ditch with such vast immensity. But how often do I dwell in the darkness on the depth of the ditch of my present sufferings, forgetting the bottomless canyon of glory that awaits me.

I am not minimizing your sufferings. I am not discounting your sufferings. I am not ignoring your sufferings. Some sufferings are so tragic, so deep, so overwhelming that if it were not for God's grace we would indeed despair. But God is present in our sufferings. Paul was no stranger to "present sufferings" as his lists in 2 Corinthians 4:8-18 and 11:23-24; and Romans 8:35-39

clearly attest. Yet he calls them “our light afflictions” when considering our “eternal weight of glory.” When living page one of the will, don’t forget page two. Page one is temporary, page two is permanent!

*Suffering is part of our inheritance – a sanctifying stewardship to be used for His glory*

**The scriptures remind us that present suffering as a co-heir with Christ has multiple purposes.** Our suffering is determined, allotted, prescribed, limited, assigned, purposed, employed, directed and used for God's holy purposes. If God hadn't included it in page one of the will, you wouldn't be receiving it. Consider your sufferings as a co-heir with Christ. Time does not allow me to expand on all of this, but here are some passages you should study as you embrace page one of your inheritance with Christ.

Heb 2:7-11 Christ's suffering was ordained for His full ministry to save & sympathize & sanctify us.

John 15:17-21 our suffering is a means of identifying with Christ to fulfill prophecy

2 Cor 1:3-11 as a means of ministry to others – special comfort to share with co-sufferers

James 1:3-10 as a means of growth in holiness – knowing it produces Christ-likeness

Phil 1:27-30 as a sign of the truth of the gospel we proclaim

Phil 3:10 as a means to a deeper knowledge of and relationship with Christ

Col 1:24 as a means of filling up the cup of suffering appointed by Christ (Acts 9:16)

2 Tim 1:6-14 as a means to encourage others to be strong in faith as they view our suffering

Heb 10:32-36 as a means of greater reward when we get to page two of the will

1 Peter 4:12-19 as a means to demonstrate genuine faith

### ***Three Great Groans***

Page one of the will, *present suffering*, is then illustrated with the *three great groans* of Romans 8, the *groan of the creation, the Christian, and the Comforter!*

Our suffering is not pointless. Our suffering is not lethal. Our suffering is not punishment. Our suffering as co-heir with Christ is defined as *a suffering comparable to labor pains*, as a mother gives birth to her precious child. I cannot speak of such suffering in personal experience, for which I am grateful! But having been a witness to my wife's labor, I can attest to two things... it is suffering that is agonizing and it is suffering that is anticipatory. Valorie embraced the suffering willingly in view of the glorious outcome that filled her heart.

Creation *co-groans* in suffering under the curse of Adam's fall, but it is a suffering comparable to labor pains... a suffering that is both *severe in agony* but also *extreme in anticipation* of soon coming blessing. Just so does the Christian groan deeply, suffering under the curse of present, pregnant fallen-ness, but anticipating release when we get page two of the will, the fullness of our adoption privilege, a glorified body. And just so does the Spirit groan with unspeakable, silent groans, striving with our spirit to overcome our inner corruptions as He intercedes with longing for the day when we shall be birthed in glory to bear the fullness of Christ's image in perfect holiness.

**Let us embrace both pages of the will as co-heirs with Christ.  
It is in love that the Father has given us such an inheritance.  
Page one, present suffering.... Page two, permanent glory!**

### **For Further Study:**

**Suffering & Glory connected as equal heirs**

Romans 8:17, 18

2 Corinthians 4:8-18

1 Peter 1:11

1 Peter 4:13

1 Peter 5:1

Heb 2:9-10

### **Co Heirs**

Heb 11:9 Abraham, Isaac, Jacob... same promise

Eph 3:6 Gentile and Jew same promise

1 Peter 3:7 Husband and Wife are co-heir of eternal life

*Suffering is not worth comparing with the glory that will soon be revealed in us.  
Glory is so much greater, lasting, all comprehensive, permanent, perfect, full, beyond description*

"Lord, You have made me Your child, given me Your Spirit, and made me co-heir with Your Son. Your Son embraced the inheritance of suffering in view of the coming inheritance of restored glory. Give me grace to embrace my co-inheritance of suffering with Him that I may also rejoice in His presence when His glory finally and fully transforms my being, making me into His image, as He rejoices over His many brothers brought home to glory. You know how prone I am to forget all this

when suffering looms before me. Father, You have given me the present and the future as my inheritance. Grant me the insight to embrace the present even as I focus on the future, that You may be glorified in both. In the matchless name of Him who suffered and is now glorified, my Co-Heir and only Savior, Jesus Christ my Lord, Amen."

Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.

**Living with leaving in view.... Jn 9:4 Ron & Val**

Seeing The Invisible, embracing The Unapproachable, declaring The Unexplainable,  
changed by The Immutable, running after The Irresistible  
with inexhaustible joy in our inexpressible sorrows,  
spending our time on eternity,  
owning nothing yet possessing everything that matters and lasts.  
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.  
Welcome to THE JOURNEY.