

Completed

THE FULL PICTURE OF GOD IN
ROMANS

7

DIG DEEPER

🗣️ In your spiritual & religious walk, what things make you the most impatient?

YES, NO & MAYBE

1. I find myself groaning more often than I used to.
2. I'm very optimistic about my own personal future.
3. When I pray, I typically pray directly to Jesus.
4. My salvation is guaranteed.
5. Everyone's life has been predestined.

READ: Romans 8:18-30 (NIV)

18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. 19 For the **creation waits in eager expectation** for the children of God to be revealed. 20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

22 We know that the whole creation has been **groaning** as in the **pains of childbirth** right up to the present time. 23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, **groan** inwardly as we **wait eagerly** for our **adoption to sonship**, the redemption of our bodies. 24 **For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have?** 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

26 In the same way, **the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us** through wordless **groans**. 27 And **he who searches our hearts** knows the mind of the Spirit, because **the Spirit intercedes for God's people** in accordance with the will of God.

28 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.** 29 For those God **foreknew** he also **predestined** to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. 30 And those he predestined, he also **called**; those he called, he also **justified**; those he justified, he also **glorified**.

🗣️ Why do you think it's so typical for us to focus more on our present sufferings than on the glory that God has waiting for us?

▲ (Vs. 19) "**Creation waits in eager expectation**" - The word for 'eager expectation' is *apokaradokia*, which is derived from *kara*, the head. It means 'to wait with the head raised, and the eye fixed on that point of the horizon from which the expected object is to come'. It depicts somebody standing "on tiptoe" or "stretching the neck, craning forward" in order to be able to see.

√ (Vs. 22-26) **The 3 Groans** - So three persons are involved in our praying. First, we ourselves in our weakness do not know what to pray for. Secondly, the indwelling Spirit helps us by interceding for us and through us, with speechless groans but according to God's will. Thirdly, God the Father, who both searches our hearts and knows the Spirit's mind, hears and answers accordingly. Of these three, however, it is the Spirit who is emphasized. Paul makes three statements about him. First, 'the Spirit helps us' (because of our weakly, half-saved situation); secondly, 'the Spirit intercedes for us' (because of our ignorance of what to pray for); and thirdly, 'the Spirit intercedes according to God's will' (and therefore God listens and responds).

🗣️ What does it say to you that the entire trinity is involved whenever you pray, and how is this different from how most people view prayer?



DIG DEEPER...CONTINUED

Δ (Vs. 26,27) **"The Spirit helps/intercedes"** - "Helps" is sunantilambanō (συναντιλαμβάνω), made up of sun (συν), "together with," anti (ἀντι) "over against," and lambanō (λαμβάνω), "to take." The word speaks of the action of a person coming to another's aid by taking hold over against that person, of the load he is carrying. The person helping does not take the entire load, but helps the other person in his endeavor. The Holy Spirit indwelling the person, comes to their aid in his spiritual problems and difficulties, not by taking over the responsibility for them and giving them an automatic deliverance without any effort on his part, but by lending a helping hand, allowing him to work out his problems and overcome his difficulties, with His help. Paul's description of the Spirit's role in prayer is one of the most intimate glimpses we have in all of Scripture of the inner workings of the Godhead. When we are weak and trembling, confused about the purposes of God in our sufferings or our confusion, the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. The Father searches our heart, "not to know what [our] conscious prayers are, but to find out what the prayer of the Holy Spirit is" (Chambers, My Utmost, Nov. 8).

🔗 How does it make you feel when you realize how much the Holy Spirit is interceding with the Godhead on your behalf?

Δ (Vs. 23) **Firstfruits & down payment**- Aparchē, the **firstfruits**, was both the beginning of the harvest and the pledge that the full harvest would follow in due time. Perhaps Paul had in mind that the Feast of Weeks, which celebrated the reaping of the firstfruits, was the very festival (called in Greek 'Pentecost') on which the Spirit had been given. Replacing this agricultural metaphor with a commercial one, Paul also described the gift of the Spirit as God's arrabōn, the 'first installment, deposit, **down payment**, pledge', which guaranteed the future completion of the purchase. Although we have not yet received our final adoption or redemption, we have already received the Spirit as both foretaste and promise of these blessings.

🔗 God has already paid a down payment for your eternal life. How is this picture of God (guaranteeing your salvation) different from the fire and brimstone version of His character that is so common in the minds of people today?

Δ (Vs. 29,30) **Foreknew, predestined, called, justified, glorified** - the Hebrew verb 'to know' expresses much more than mere intellectual cognition; it denotes a personal relationship of care and affection. Thus, when God 'knows' people, he watches over them, and when he 'knew' the children of Israel in the desert, what is meant is that he cared for them. John Murray writes: "Know" ... is used in a sense practically synonymous with "love" ... "Whom he foreknew" ... is therefore virtually equivalent to "whom he foreloved". Predestined does not mean that you have no choice, it means that God destined you to your calling, your justified relationship with Him, and your future eternal physical transformation. You still can say "no thanks."

🔗 What does it tell you about God that He foreloved you before you loved Him, created a special destiny and calling for you, and that he states your glorification in the past tense--as if it has already happened?

NOTES:

My Prayers This week:

1. What spiritual things am I waiting for with eager anticipation?
2. What do I need God to show me regarding my destiny that he has mapped out?
3. What new aspect of God's character do I understand better this week?

