

THE GLORY TO BE REVEALED IN US

The creation itself waits to join us -- We groan inwardly and wait eagerly for the Day.

Romans 8:18-23

TEXT: *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*

In Jesus' name, fellow redeemed:

"Pastor, what does it mean now that the US Supreme Court has given homosexuals legal right to get married?" What does it mean? Nothing! God's Word hasn't been changed by what any human court might declare. Our faith and confession that God's inspired infallible is the rule and norm of our faith and confession hasn't changed. And so anyone who doesn't believe what we believe and confess will never want to join our confession, our church or even dare ask to get married here. Nothing has changed for us.

But there will be some big and distressing changes in the culture in which we are living. Paul writes concerning such bold sinning of any culture: *Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. ... Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.* Ro 1 It's that last line of this inspired Script that makes us groan: *not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.* This means that they demand our approval and will now teach these things as good under that godless euphemism now called "diversity."

The groan that you hear coming from the hearts of true Christians is in these words of Paul that say: *he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.* Are we not witnessing this? Every morning we wake up to another thing that makes us groan. And yet, the Apostle Paul writes in the 8th chapter of Romans the words that serve to comfort His Church in days like this. *I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. ... we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.* The Creation joins us as we wait eagerly for the glory to be revealed in us on the Last Day!

Here is another amazing revelation. It is as if the creation were alive and human. David writes in Psalm 19: *The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard. Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world.* At the same time, *the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.* The stress of sin has been placed upon the creation, as Paul says, *not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.* By God's will and power, the world is under sin's curse and a "bondage to decay." Global warming? Climate Change? Fools who believe and teach this ought to be concerned about the signs Jesus has given us concerning the End of the Word: *There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea. Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world ... When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.* Lu 21 "Look up and rejoice!" says this creation under the duress of man's sin, because your Redeemer is closer than ever before!

You and I should not be timid about these things because there are many souls at risk. Many years ago I was summoned to the hospital to the bedside of a man who had been excommunicated for despising God's Word and Sacrament. The man wanted to confess his sin. The man was dying of AIDS. He confessed his sin and sins. He confessed, like that thief on the cross next to Jesus, his faith that Jesus had died for his sins; and at my invitation, confessed his faith again by receiving at my invitation the Lord's Supper. It would be his last communion since he suddenly died the next day.

Now if we were a congregation that believed that homosexual sin was not a sin, to whom would this poor soul have made his confession? Oh, the Lord would have found someone to whom this lost soul would have confessed his sin and be brought back to his Savior, but it would not have been us! The Lord knows His Elect and none of them will be lost. But how terrible it will be for those who do not preach the truth of God's Word, both Law

and Gospel! How terrible it will be for those congregations of whom Paul also writes in his letter to Timothy: ***For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.*** 2 Ti 4 To whom will sinners go if there are not congregations who hold firmly to the truth? To whom will they confess their sins if they are convinced that their sins are not sin?

Rather than groaning, let us be confessing our faith, standing on the truth and proclaiming both Law and Gospel faithfully. Let the creation groan for us we ***wait in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.***

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. As good Lutherans, we must ask, "What Does This Mean?" We learn from Scripture that any and all sufferings of the present, are for each and every one of us, from three sources: the Devil, the ungodly in this world, and our own sinful nature.

The Devil seeks to destroy your faith. He does not care if he can tempt you to sin because you and I do that quite well on our own. He wants you to sin in such a fashion that you despair and lose faith. Like Judas who was convinced that he had committed the unforgiveable sin. Job suffered horribly only because he was caught up in a challenge for his faith. Scripture says that Satan challenged God's grace, and without knowing what was going on behind the heavenly scenes, suffered immeasurable pain and heartache in defense of God's glory. While Scripture tells this to us, it doesn't say that God ever revealed this to Job. However, there can be no greater honor that to suffer only for the glory of God's name!

The ungodly world often makes Christians want to puke. While the enemies of the cross dance and sing their victory with so-called "Gay rights" we groan inwardly with the fears of what our children and grandchildren will have to face. While the ancient cult of Islam, the so-called 'religion of peace,' continues to cut off heads and blow up and shoot up thousands of Christians, Jews and anyone in the way of their belief that they are hastening the day when Allah will come, we groan inwardly for fear of what our children and grandchildren will have to endure for the sake of their faith. However, John writes: ***How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure.*** 1 Jn 3

Finally, there is my own sinful nature, the Old Adam. He groans only because I covet and lust for good times while our government is joining the global economies of debt beyond measure. Then I easily forget ***the glory that will be revealed in us.*** Have you ever watched an old person die? Many of you probably have. If you haven't yet, you most likely will. It's sad to see a man of strength lying helpless, or a lady of great beauty, disfigured by age. My daughter's first nursing job was in pediatric oncology. She finally moved to neonatal intensive care because it was too much for her heart to watch beautiful 16 year old girls lose their hair to chemo therapies only so that they might live another year or two. What if this were all that any of us had in this world, and then to suffer God's wrath forever in hell?

It's easy to forget the blessed future awaiting the children of God and ***the redemption of our bodies...*** And so I need Paul's reminder: ***I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.*** The glory of God will be revealed IN US! It is THE REDEMPTION OF OUR BODIES! The glory that will be revealed in us was proclaimed by Job in the midst of his sufferings: ***Oh, that my words were recorded, that they were written on a scroll, that they were inscribed with an iron tool on lead, or engraved in rock forever! I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God ...*** Job 19 It is taught by Paul: ***Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.*** 1 Co 15

Remember: You and I aren't the only ones looking forward to this Day when the Lord comes. The entire creation is eagerly waiting for us to be redeemed and to join us in eternal joy and pleasure forevermore. Would God tell us this if it weren't true? Would Jesus die for us if it were not true? Amen