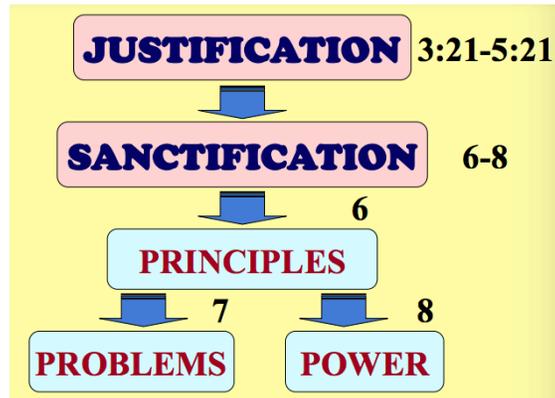


Romans 8.17-28 Reason Suffering, with Christ, 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, Natural Realm Transformations, Support in Suffering, Intercession of HS 112-117  
Ray Mondragon

[Romans 8.17-18 Reason Believers Suffer 112]

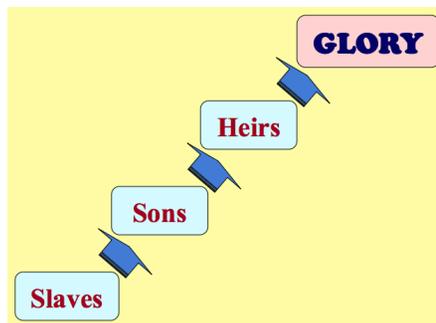


We have the means that God has provided so that we can face whatever circumstance that we have to face whether it be suffering or rejoicing, there is power to be able to live moment by moment—the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Principles** for the Christian life - chapter 8

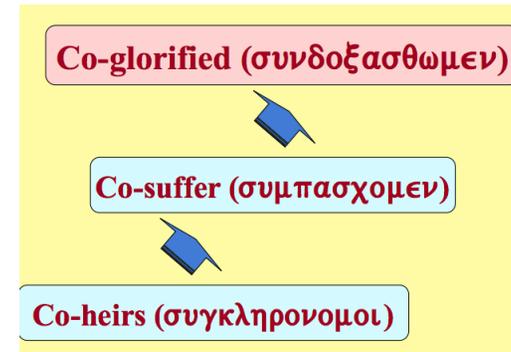
17. Power of HS in us fulfills God's Will
18. Walking in Spirit is means of Sanctification
19. Indwelling presence of HS gives power
20. Believers participate in sanctification

A summary of what we have seen thus far in Romans can be illustrated in this way:



Before we are believers we are slaves to sin, ultimately to Satan himself. Salvation brings us into a relationship of Sonship, which is what Romans is stressing. That brings us to having not only a position but a *possession* of Heirship; it gives us an inheritance. We can avail ourselves of some of it here and how—it is *ours*. The concept in the OT: the children of Israel *possessed* the land. It is pictured as an inheritance, but they were *in* the land, they owned it, received the crops from it and enjoyed the blessing of the land. So even though it was an inheritance, there was the present tense aspect as well. And there is also a future aspect which leads us to what I summarize with the word Glory.

These are the three words that describe this:



Each word has the prefix συν- which means 'with' or 'together with' and in English we use Co- to mean this.

Co-heirs συγκληρονόμοι (soog-kláy-ro-nó-moi), the prefix 'soog' meaning 'with'. The 'soon' is changed to make it easier to pronounce with the letter that follows it.

And, interestingly in this context, Paul has this word 'Co-suffer' συμπάσχομεν (soom-páhs-kho-men), the prefix is 'soom' because of the letter that follows it.

Co-glorified, συνδοξασθῶμεν (soon-dok-sáhs-tho-men). So we share, but there is a condition.

8.16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.

Now, in 8.17, Paul is transitioning from the subject of Heirship into the subject of suffering. We are heirs of God, and fellow heirs with Christ and if we suffer with Him we will also be glorified with Him. Suffering with Christ is part of what He is working in us. If we share in

His suffering and if we are faithful in that, we will share in His glory, the resurrection glory of Jesus Christ. He is *sinless*, so He doesn't lose anything but we have the potential, if we are not faithful, to lose some of that inheritance.

And, beginning in verse 18, we are going to deal with suffering in Sanctification. It is given to us in the most positive way, it almost overlooks it, but it permeates the passage.

And this is what He wants us to do, in the midst of it, keep our mental focus on those things that are true, that are real. That is what we have in Romans 8: indicative sentences, ie, *facts*, things that are factual throughout this passage. There are only 4 commands and they are all in chapter 6; everything else is 'the facts', the things we need to keep our minds and focus on, particularly when our experiences are causing whatever emotions and whatever else is distracting us from reality. We need to have this future focus, no matter what we are going through.

So he is going to talk about suffering in Sanctification with a very optimistic, positive viewpoint, but this is the reality. He is introducing what God is doing in the broadest sense that you can think of—in terms of the whole *universe*.

C. Sanctification	6-8
1. Principles	6
2. Problems	7
3. Power	8
a. Power over Sinful Flesh	8.1-11
b. Sonship of Sanctification	8.12-17
c. Suffering in Sanctification	8.18-30
1) <u>Future Hope in Suffering</u>	<u>8.18-27</u>
a) Antithesis to Suffering	8.18

Verses 18-27 are a long paragraph: we have a future hope in suffering. So immediately we know there is going to be an end. Sometimes we recover from an illness and that may be an end to that particular suffering, but there will be an ultimate end and that is the focus of this passage. But even if on a short term you are struggling, it is not always going to be this way. There *always* will be an end, and *always* there will be an ultimate end. We need to keep that focus in order to respond rightly to the suffering we are experiencing. So there is a future Hope in Suffering, 18-27.

Then verse 18 I have termed the 'Antithesis to Suffering'.

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

One writer describes it this way: 'Our suffering is like a drop. The glory we anticipate is like an ocean.'

Our suffering, as intense as it may be, as painful, even as destructive while we see it doing damage, it's like a drop. There is a glory that awaits us, and an even greater glory as we are faithful in the midst of that which is like an ocean.

So this is what we can think concerning suffering: that there is no comparison to what God has blessed us with. And this is unconditional, ie, we will not lose the bulk of that glory that he has in view here. What the Greek word for 'I consider'? We have seen it several times already—15 times, I think, in the book of Romans already. It is a very important word. We saw it in chapter 6 when he talks about the principles he has laid out. The first exhortation uses this word in the imperative; this is how we are supposed to focus and in that context basically he is telling us that this is what we need to consider as true, ie, we need to believe all that God has done to be able to cope with whatever situation we find ourselves in.

The term λογίζομαι (lo-guid-zo-mah-i) is thinking rationally, processing the information, the circumstances and the situation. 'Logos', logic. A mathematical term in the secular world, used in a mathematical context, taking in all the data, making your calculation and coming up with a calculated result, 'Here is the calculated answer'. Used in accounting, taking in all of the profits, subtracting all of the debits, you come up with an accounting at the very end. This is the result of that calculation.

**λογίζομαι** (lo-guid-zo-mah-i)

1. Term - logic λόγος (lō-gos), mathematical, accounting
  2. Illustration - Philemon 18, co-signing loan
  3. To consider, regard, or reason something as true - Acts 19.27, 1 Corinthians 13.11, Romans 8.18, Hebrews 11.19
  4. To be included or numbered with something - Luke 22.37 (Isaiah 53.12)
  5. Theologically = to credit something spiritually - Romans 4, Galatians 3.6
- > Sin imputed on man - Romans 5.13  
> Sin imputed on Christ - 2Corinthians 5.21  
> Righteousness imputed - Romans 3.21-26

So in this context, and in some others in Romans, it could be used, as in Philemon, co-signing, ie, putting your name to a definite legal document. In its broad sense, outside of math and accounting, to consider, regard or reason something as true. And in the case of Biblical concepts, they *are* true because God has stated them as

being ultimate reality: it doesn't matter what your feelings may be telling you. No matter what your unbiblical thinking is trying to convince you, they are Biblical truths we regard or consider to be true.

It also can be used to be numbered with something. And, in a theological way, it can be used in the sense of crediting something, in this case *spiritually*. That's the accounting idea except rather than crediting to a financial account, it is crediting something spiritually. We saw this especially in Romans 4, in fact we looked at this word at that time and developed the concept of *imputation*. The term *logízomai* (lo-guéed-zo-mah-i) has the idea to impute something or to credit something spiritually. The example he used from Romans—in fact it is used 11 times in 4:3-24—is Abraham who believed God and it was *credited to him* as righteousness.

4.5...one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness. In the place of faith, what is put into his spiritual account is *righteousness*.  
6...blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works...

We also developed this: sin imputed on man, from Adam.

Sin imputed on man - Romans 5.13 *for until the Law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.*

Sin imputed on Christ - 2Corinthians 5.21 *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.* The word 'imputed' is not used in this verse, but it is clearly the concept. God placed sin upon Christ, or imputed it...and then He paid the penalty so that we could have the righteousness of God.

Righteousness imputed - 3.21-26 righteousness imputed. And this precedes chapter 4 where Abraham is the example.

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

'For I consider', have come to the conclusion, have reasoned, accounted this to be true—that the suffering... so in this context he follows up the idea in verse 17 of the concept of suffering. But first of all, the term that is in this context for suffering in verse 18 is *πάθημα* (páh-thay-mah) which occurs 16x in the NT. We will come back to this term, but first I want to look at the second point here:

## Suffering

1. Term - *πάθημα* (páh-thay-mah) 16x
2. = Co-suffer *συμπάσχομεν* (soom-páhs-kho-men) of 8.17

Notice that it is a different word, from a different root. *πάσχομεν* (páhs-kho-men) with the prefix 'soom', ie, suffering together. It's the continuation of the idea of suffering for Christ, and now he is going to expand that using a different term. So in verse 17 we have Co-suffering with Christ, and then more detail in verse 18.

And he is making a contrast: it is like a 'drop' as we said, in comparison with the *glory* that is like an ocean. There is no comparison at all. It doesn't minimize the suffering, as huge as the glory is. Our suffering is *real* and sometimes very intense. But in *comparison* 'there is no comparison'.

We will return to details of the term for suffering. But first let us look at Biblical reasons why we suffer. I have 5 different categories... Keep in mind that he is talking about believers—why we as *believers* suffer.

## Suffering Reasons

1. Consequences of Sin - Galatians 6.7 *Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap.*

If we reap things relating to the flesh, we will suffer the consequences of that. Sometimes we suffer simply because of the wrong choices we make. That is *not* what is in view in the passage beginning in Romans 8.18.

2. Discipline for Correction - Hebrews 12.3-13 ...5 *and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons. "MY SON, DO NOT REGARD LIGHTLY THE DISCIPLINE OF THE LORD, NOR FAINT WHEN YOU ARE REPROVED BY HIM; 6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." 7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ...10b but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. 11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. ...*

Following up from the Galatians passage, if a believer lives according to the flesh—and is heading in a direction which ultimately will be destructive, and harmful to others as well—God intervenes and brings discipline. This is for *correction*, not for punishment, to change the course of the believer who is heading in a direction that is not good. This Hebrews passage has, in fact, some similarities to our Romans passage in that the analogy is of a father and a son, and a good father disciplines the child. Hebrews was written to Jews who were being

persecuted, although it is noted that they have not resisted yet to the point of shedding blood—ie, they had not suffered physically under that persecution. Verse 5: they are *sons* and whom the Lord loves He *disciplines*. It is a father-son relationship—and He *scourges* every son... So it can be severe; the discipline can be drastic if need be. Then verse 7: This is what a good father will do because he sees the destructiveness of the path into which a child may be heading; discipline is the corrective action.

So in the spiritual walk, sometimes the Lord will intervene to bring discipline in order to correct...because He *loves* us. It would be *not* loving to allow us to go in a destructive path.

3. Refining for Growth- James 1.1 *James, a bond-servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, To the twelve tribes who are dispersed abroad: Greetings. 2 Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. 4 And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*

Similarly, on the positive side, another reason why we suffer is because sometimes God is simply *refining* us in order to mature us, to bring us into conformity to Jesus Christ. There are several passages that we could include in all these categories. I am just giving you representative ones.

James 1.2: Consider it *all joy*...we should rejoice, especially if we know that what God is producing in us is not only for our benefit, but He is refining us, conforming us to His image...and notice what it says...*various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance*. These are tests to produce qualities, and the first one that is noted is *endurance*. This, then, results in maturity; it causes us to grow and moves us in the direction of maturity.

I have used the illustration of sports. An athlete goes through rigorous training that is painful, but he knows that the more and better he trains, the more prepared he is for the game. And then, when he is in the game he suffers even more because he has the opposition now which is sometimes more stressful and difficult than any of the practice. And he is *suffering*, but, and this is the point here, he has a different focus—on executing and accomplishing certain goals within that competition because his purpose is to execute as a team and follow through on all the practice. Then he will be successful in reaching all his short-term goals and ultimately winning a game. But he goes through a lot of suffering to get there. He doesn't focus on

the pain; he knows that is part of it. The focus is the *outcome*; and that is what we have here in this passage in Romans.

#### 4. Unknown - Job

There are some areas where we suffer and we will never know the answer. And perhaps for those maybe we will stop asking God and simply trust *Him*. The prime example is the entire book of Job, and if you remember, Job is trying to figure out why *he* is experiencing suffering and the book. In fact God Himself, identifies Job as a *righteous* man. So we know from the very beginning that it is not as a result of sin necessarily, in his case, even though his 3 friends come and try to give an explanation and the essence of all 3 of them is that there has to be something, some hidden sin, maybe some unknown sin—there has to be some relationship to sin in your life, maybe you are hardened...

The exchange with the friends takes the bulk of the book, but the point of the book is 'No, none of these'. That is not the reason. In fact a 4th individual comes. He takes a different tact, but essentially he is trying to come up with a reason for Job... But Job, at the end of the book, is encountered by God and what does God do? He doesn't give him an answer; instead He points to his greatness and asks him a series of questions to elicit from Job an understanding of God's greatness. He asks scientific questions and obviously Job does not know the answers.

What He is communicating to Job is: 'If I am able to create all of these things that you cannot even explain, how a fetus grows in the womb, how I have set up the constellations, and you can't give answers to these issues and my greatness is such that I can do all these things, can't you simply trust me?' Trust me with the pain that you are experiencing. Job never got an answer, but he simply trusted in God and God rewarded him with restoration.

We don't know who the author of the book is, and it's probably not Job, and if not Job, then he never had the benefit of the first two chapters which give us, as readers, God's reason why Job is suffering. He never has the benefit of knowing what God is doing. He was simply to trust. We know that God is doing something in the spiritual realm with satan, demons, probably angelic creatures that are unseen. And He is teaching *them* some things, using Job as His instrument of instruction for them. But Job doesn't know that; he is left without an answer. So some of our suffering may be of that category.

Now the 5th reason is the primary reason we have in view in 8.17-18, because he is talking about Co-suffering with Christ. And in verse 18 he goes on to say that that our suffering is not worthy to be compared to the glory that is to be revealed to us in the future. We can describe that category or reason for suffering for righteousness sake:

5. For righteousness sake - 1Peter 4.12 *Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; 13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 14 If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests on you.*

In other words, we are suffering simply because we are believers, because we are proclaiming the name of Christ, because we are associate with Christ and Christ promised that those who align themselves with Him would in fact *suffer*. And that is the essence of what it means to be a Co-sufferer with Christ. We are suffering for righteousness sake. Christ never suffered as a result of consequences of sin because He was sinless. He experienced the consequences of a fallen world, but not because of sin. He suffered for righteousness sake, in order to take the penalty that you and I deserve. And we can experience suffering in a similar way.

The key passage is Peter 4.12-14. There are several passages in 1Peter that we could look at, because suffering is one of the major themes of the whole book. He is writing to another audience that is under persecution in the 1st Century. This is one of the clearest passages. Verse 12: *do not be surprised*...It shouldn't surprise us. In fact from another statement of Paul's that *all* will suffer if in fact we are in Christ, it shouldn't surprise us. ... *as though some strange thing*: ie, this is not an unusual thing; this is part of living in a lost world, part of being associated with Jesus Christ.

Then verse 13: *degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing*: 'rejoicing' as James says... *at the revelation of His glory*: that is the context of verse 18... *rejoice with exultation*. So he anticipates this future *rejoicing*. Then he goes on in the following verses expanding on this concept of suffering.

So here are 5 reason why we suffer, the primary one that is in the context of 8.18, is for righteousness sake suffering along with Jesus Christ.

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

This is the suffering in the present time that is not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

We need to be walking in the Spirit especially in suffering.

[Romans 8.17-20 Suffering with Christ and Glory 113]

Most theologians do not tie in science with Scripture, but in reality there are several statements in Scripture that are actually scientific statements. And we are going to look at one of the most important ones in Romans—there are at least two major ones. I like to focus on that because most people neglect it and although the main idea is suffering, the big picture includes science too. One of the clearest statements in Scripture on the 2nd law of thermodynamics is in the passage we are looking at.

Paul is talking about Sanctification, and one of the main tools that the Holy Spirit uses to sanctify us, ie, to bring us into conformity to Jesus Christ is Suffering. I have 5 reasons or categories of why we suffer. It is painful and we don't like and try to avoid it, but Paul gives us a Biblical perspective on it in this passage, even a big picture idea about suffering.

Christians have suffered for their faith throughout history. You can visit the Colosseum where many lost their lives; it has been said that it could hold 50,000 people. There were performances, singing, speeches, political issues and spectacles one of which was the martyrdom/killing of Christians there.

We are talking about chapters 6,7 & 8 which are about Sanctification, living the Christian life. One of the principles is that we are united with Christ. Issues or problems that arise in the Christian walk are dealt with in chapter 7—we cannot solve them ourselves. But in chapter 8 we have studied the power of the Holy Spirit which God gives us upon conversion to overcome difficulties in the Christian life.

- |                                    |                |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| C. Sanctification                  | 6-8            |
| 1. Principles                      | 6              |
| 2. Problems                        | 7              |
| 3. Power                           | 8              |
| a. Power over Sinful Flesh         | 8.1-11         |
| b. Sonship of Sanctification       | 8.12-17        |
| c. Suffering in Sanctification     | 8.18-30        |
| 1) <u>Future Hope in Suffering</u> | <u>8.18-27</u> |
| a) Antithesis to Suffering         | 8.18           |

Verses 1-11 explain the Spirit's power over sinful flesh. And in 12-17, we have not only a present inheritance but future aspects, the concept being Sonship. So if we are sons of God, we are heirs also, which means we have an inheritance. A word study on that showed us that there are four different aspects to it: 1- present possession having access to it here and now; (we don't have to die first), 2- a future aspect including aspects that we will enjoy in the future, 3- God Himself is our inheritance with all His resources—it's by grace. 4- Then as a second category of inheritance, we are *fellow heirs* with Christ in which the inheritance is contingent on faithfully walking and living, especially in suffering. It's faithfulness in suffering so that we may be glorified with Him. And, from verse 17 he transitions into suffering with Him and being glorified with Him.

Verses 18-30 are all related to suffering—but from a big picture perspective, all of God's plan will be fulfilled.

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

The *antithesis* to suffering is the focus that we as believers need to keep in the midst of suffering and it helps us to go through it because we know that God has a bigger plan than the immediate pain that we are experiencing.

We looked again at the word 'consider'. The Greek word can be used in a mathematical context. We get our word 'logic' from it. In science it is a 'reasoned conclusion'. Paul has looked comprehensively at suffering in its biggest context, in terms of what God is doing overall. He goes back to Genesis 3 where suffering began and traces it all the way to the future when you and I in present suffering will be freed from it. That is the essence of what he is saying. And it includes the entire creation. That is the big picture of suffering in which he makes some scientific statements.

**λογίζομαι** (lo-guéed-zo-mah-ee)

1. Term - logic (λόγος, ló-gos), mathematical, accounting, in science a reasoned conclusion after all data is evaluated

$$Q = W + U_1 - U_2$$

Q = Heat Absorbed

W = Work

U = Energy State

This formula is in Thermodynamics itself.

## Science Insights

1. Reasoned conclusion - 18 λογίζομαι

This is a reasoned conclusion that Paul has come to. In this context, he is making a scientific conclusion after taking in all of the data (starting in Genesis 3),

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

He starts with the present time: what is your pain or struggle or what are your heavy burdens? We have seen that Paul has already used two different words for suffering:

## Suffering

1. Term - πάθημα (páh-thay-mah), 16x
2. = Co-suffer συμπάσχομεν (soom-páhs-kho-men) 8.17,

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Yet our suffering is like a drop compared with the ocean of glory we will have in the future. .

## Suffering

1. Term - πάθημα (páh-thay-mah), 16x
2. = Co-suffer συμπάσχομεν (soom-páhs-kho-men) 8.17

In these verses πάθημα (páh-thay-mah) is the word used:

Philippians 3.10 *that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;*

Hebrews 2.9-10 *But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. 10 For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.*

1Peter 1.10 *As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, 11 seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.*

Peter is thinking of Isaiah 53: When would it be fulfilled, the sufferings of this Messiah? We know that it was in Christ. The prophets were thinking comprehensively, prophetically, in terms of

the plan of God. *Suffering of the Messiah precedes glory of the Messiah.*

1Peter 4.13 *but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.*

3. Our sharing in His suffering      2Corinthians 1.5-7 *For just as the sufferings of Christ are ours in abundance, so also our comfort is abundant through Christ. 6 But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer; 7 and our hope for you is firmly grounded, that as you are sharers of our sufferings, so also you are sharers of our comfort.*

*The purpose not only has ramifications in our future glory, but it has ministry in the lives of others here and now as well: Our suffering can be a comfort and encouragement in the Christian walk of the believer. Remember the 5 reasons for suffering: our own sin, intervention for correction of wrong ways, to refine us—like some of the passages we are looking at here—to conform us to His image, working all things for good. Then there is some suffering for which we will never know why, like Job. And the fifth: we suffer simply because we are believers, because we name the name of Christ, or ‘for righteousness sake’. This is suffering *with* Christ.*

Colossians 1.24 *Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.*

That is suffering for righteousness sake. We can even rejoice in it because we have God’s perspective on it. Filling up the sufferings of Christ: that is co-suffering. πάθημα (páh-thay-mah). For *our* sake. We not only suffer on behalf of and with Christ but it benefits the rest of the body of Christ.

1Peter 5.9 *But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.*

The main theme of the whole book of 1Peter is suffering. And in the book he distinguishes some of the categories that I gave you. But most of the suffering that he is talking about is as a result of his audience suffering for righteousness sake.

4. Can be -      physical, emotional, mental, spiritual

It can be in a variety of forms, but in any of those forms God wants us to have His perspective on it and respond rightly to it.

8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Now he is going to talk about his future revealing and how it includes very comprehensively all of the creation. We are adding another principle here:

**Principles** for the Christian life - chapter 8

17. Power of HS in us fulfills God’s Will
18. Walking in Spirit is means of Sanctification
19. Indwelling presence of HS gives power
20. Believers participate in sanctification
21. Suffering is God’s main tool for sanctification

C. Sanctification	6-8
1. Principles	6
2. Problems	7
3. Power	8
a. Power over Sinful Flesh	8.1-11
b. Sonship of Sanctification	8.12-17
c. Suffering in Sanctification	8.18-30
1) Future Hope in Suffering	8.18-27
a) Antithesis to Suffering	8.18
b) Anticipation of Glory	8.19-21
(1) Waiting of Creation	8.19

Verse 18 is the antithesis to glory. Verses 19-21 I call the Anticipation of Glory, and even the creation is anticipating glory.

8.19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

The first verse, 19, is the anxious longing of the creation. We note that all the main words in the section are an alliteration, starting with ἀπο- (ah-po). The spelling varies depending on what it is attached to.

#### **Terms**

1. ἀποκαραδοκία (ah-po kah-rah-do-kée-ah) - eager expectation, anxious longing  
its like stretching out your neck to see something (envisioning a giraffe)

8.19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

‘Waits eagerly’ is another word starting with ἀπο- (ah-po):

### Terms

1. ἀποκαραδοκία, (ah-po-kah-rah-do-kée-ah) - eager expectation, anxious longing
2. ἀπεκδέχομαι (ah-pek-dáy-jo-mah-ee) - waiting in great anticipation

8.19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

‘For the revealing the sons of God’: this is future; the thing that we wait for. So in the middle of suffering our perspective is ‘let me stretch my neck out further into the future to be able to anticipate and wait eagerly.

### Terms

1. ἀποκαραδοκία, (ah-po-kah-rah-do-kée-ah) - eager expectation, anxious longing
2. ἀπεκδέχομαι (ah-pek-dáy-jo-mah-ee) - waiting in great anticipation
3. ἀποκάλυψις (ah-po-káh-loop-sis) - uncovering, unveiling, revelation

This is the title/first word in the book of Revelation, a revealing, and exposing of something that is hidden and not seen.

The future is obscure to us; we have no idea what is in the future apart from what God has revealed. This is the third word starting with ἀπο- (ah-po), all with this idea of the great anticipation of the *creation*.

Now he goes on with suffering in its broadest context. Even creation, in a sense, is suffering a malady that was not present from the beginning. When God created, He created a ‘very good’ creation. And now even the creation groans, in a sense, without rational thought or emotions. He is *personifying*, giving personality to things that don’t have personality, from a literary perspective. Creation is anticipating what *we* are anticipating. It’s the revealing or uncovering, the unveiling.

So we have another insight into science that we can draw from verse 19.

### Science Insights

1. Reasoned conclusion - 18 λογίζομαι (lo-guéed-zo-mah-ee)
2. Prediction of model - 19 eager anticipation

If I have an idea, a hypothesis, what do I anticipate coming from that in a future situation of phenomena? Paul is laying this out; there is a future that we anticipate here. This is a literal, Biblical prediction of what is going to happen. Because we have a scientific

Biblical model we can have scientific predictions. This is one of the clearest scientific statements in all of Scripture.

- |                                |         |
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| C. Sanctification              | 6-8     |
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| a. Power over Sinful Flesh     | 8.1-11  |
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| 1) Future Hope in Suffering    | 8.18-27 |
| a) Antithesis to Suffering     | 8.18    |
| b) Anticipation of Glory       | 8.19-21 |
| (1) Waiting of Creation        | 8.19    |
| (2) Subjection of Creation     | 8.20    |

That leads us to verse 20, the Subjecting of Creation.

8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

The malady, the suffering, the disorder, you might say, of the creation he describes in verse 20. ‘For the creation was subjected to futility’: That is the beginning of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. And notice several things, starting with the terms:

### Terms

1. Creation - κτίσις (k-tée-sées) natural realm - 6x in Romans, once in chapter 1, 5x in ch. 8, 4 of them right here in the passage we are dealing with from verse 19 to verse 22. He is talking about science, about the creation, the natural realm—the thing that science devotes itself to.
2. Subject - ὑποτάσσω (hoo-po-táh-so) - authoritative subjecting by God

The verb, ὑποτάσσω (hoo-po-táh-so), has the idea of putting something under something else, to subject. The word is difficult for many women as the Bible speaks of them subjecting to their husband, voluntarily; that is the word used in most of those contexts. It’s also a military term in an army subjecting an enemy to defeat. A strong word used for action taken on the creation. It was subjected, and not of its own will. In

this context, I take it as an authoritative subjecting by God.

3. Futility - ματαιότης (mah-tah-ee-ó-tays) -emptiness, purposelessness

This word has the idea of ‘emptiness’ or not meeting its purpose, ie, something is lost here, is damaged and cannot fulfill its ultimate and total purpose. And it is something that God has *imposed* on the creation.

### Science Insights

1. Reasoned conclusion - 18 λογίζομαι (lo-guéed-zo-mah-ee)  
2. Prediction of Model - 19 eager anticipation  
3. Historical event - aorist 20 ὑποτάσσω (hoo-po-táh-so)

Aorist tense = something completed in the past. and in this case at a point in time. It is a historical event, not a philosophical event; it is a real historical event that could have been observed—and *was* observed by Adam and Eve. And it can be observed today because it continues; we are still in that *condition*.

4. Outside cause - passive aorist ὑπετάγη (hu-pe-táh-gay)  
The verb is also in the *passive*; that means that the creation is acted upon by an outside cause. These are all scientific concepts. (There are ten of them.)  
5. Changed nature - futility Physics

There was a radical change in the physical realm that took place in a point in time in history and the record of that is Genesis chapter 3. All of zoology was affected, all of geophysics was affected, all of botany and physics, and it is stated in the text. It is using, not scientific terms, but the description and the implication go far beyond the words in Genesis 3. It was a fundamental change in the natural realm.

People say that ‘religion has nothing to do with science; if you want real truth you have to go to the sciences.’ Well, the sciences are based on what God had revealed. And real truth, absolute truth, is what we have in Romans 8. Science tells us *what* it is, not *why* it is. But the Bible tells us both.

This introduces you to the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics.

What we have in this passage is that the ultimate goal of Sanctification is GLORY! It deals with the entire creation and it involves glory.

[Romans 8.18-21 Suffering and the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics 114]

Every scientist will tell you that science does not give you absolute truth. There is only one source of absolute truth; it has to come from an absolute source, ie, something or someone that is eternal, unchanging, ie, one that is omniscient and has all power. So absolute truth is not only *from* God, but the Bible defines absolute truth as God Himself. All wisdom and knowledge are found in Jesus Christ.

So there are apparent contradictions with science and Scripture, but in reality you cannot do good science without a Biblical foundation. Also, you cannot even understand scientific issues in their proper perspective without a Biblical foundation, and I would go even further and say—a Biblical *explanation* because the Bible gives us a framework for all of science. And this is not only—you have heard me talk about Genesis 1 a lot—not only Genesis 1 or 6-8 (which are highly scientific passages, by the way, with lots of elements describing the natural realm), but Romans 8, verses 18 through 21, is one of those fundamental passages that give us an explanation of the natural realm that science cannot. Paul is going to give us an interpretation of a past event that cannot be reproduced. We can *detect* it; in fact we *know* about it, but we don’t *understand* it fully from a scientific perspective.

But we have passages like this that give us the parameters, the foundation, the explanation of scientific realities that we can study and understand as we *look* at the natural realm and make observations. So, I would like to study this passage of which we stressed the context which is primarily spiritual, Biblical and theological, but within that it gives us an explanation of the natural realm. And since you won’t find this in virtually any commentary, and obviously not in a science textbook, I’d like to stress some of the scientific aspects that are brought out in this passage.

And I have a list of ten things that are right in the text that give us a commentary on not just Genesis 3, but on one of the most fundamental laws of science not contested anywhere, observed in virtually every science that you can study. In fact there are formulas that you can derive to describe it in a mathematical, scientific way. So we are going to look at the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics within Romans 8.18-21.

Context: written to Romans, the heart of the Roman empire, the heart of the intellectual world and the political world. He is writing to an educated people and primarily dealing with the major doctrines relating to salvation or redemption. The theological context is Sanctification and we are talking about a passage that is within Sanctification.

I use this information when I refute evolution:

## Thermodynamics

- > Evolution - Principle of Innovation  
You have to have something progressing from disorder to order; innovation is fundamental to evolution.  
Higher & Higher Complexity  
You have to have a movement from lower to higher complexity. There is no such principle in the natural realm.
- > Thermodynamics - Universally Accepted  
Instead in thermodynamics and physics in general—and it can be observed in biology, chemistry and virtually all the sciences—we have a universally accepted principle. Science does not dispute it; it is established. All have to do is look in the mirror and you can see it, the change in your face from even one day to the next....  
No Exceptions are Observed...  
Except True Miracles

From one of my science textbooks:

### 2nd Law

Kelvin-Planck Version:

‘It is **impossible** for any device operating in a cycle to absorb heat from a single reservoir and produce an equivalent amount of work.’  
—Jones & Hawkins

That is, there is no such thing as a perpetual motion machine. There is no machine that is 100% efficient. There is a loss; there is always something that goes wrong, a degeneration.

And an easier explanation to understand:

An irreversible Tendency to unwind - If you clean the house and go on a two-week vacation, you return to a dirty house!  
‘In any physical change that takes place by itself the entropy [unwinding, dirtying of the house] **always** increases.’  
—Morris

This, also from a textbook, is a little harder in the first part, but I think we can all identify with the second part:

‘Thus, heat always flows spontaneously from a hotter to a colder body; gases always seep thru an opening spontaneously from a region of high pressure to a region of low pressure; gases & liquids left by themselves always tend to mix, not unmix. ... Rocks weather and crumble; iron rusts; people grow old. These are all examples of **irreversible** processes [this wipes out evolution] that take place naturally in only one direction and, by their one-sidedness, express the 2nd law of thermodynamics.’

Sears & Zemansky

### 2nd Law of Thermodynamics

- > Irreversible tendency to unwind - Your car always falls apart; it never fixes itself—you have to add effort and energy to fix it.
- > Movement from organization to disorganization
- > Law of decay  
I think there is a 2nd Law of Spiritual Dynamics—the tendency of your spiritual life to decay and degenerate. You have to constantly give it the power of the Holy Spirit to continually walk in the Spirit. It’s a day-by-day, moment by moment experience.
- > Isaiah 51.6 *“Lift up your eyes to the sky, Then look to the earth beneath; For the sky will vanish like smoke, And the earth will wear out like a garment And its inhabitants will die in like manner; But My salvation will be forever, And My righteousness will not wane.*  
This is an example of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. If you have a smart child, he might say there is no point in cleaning his room because every thing moves from a state of order to disorder and it will return to disorder!  
Romans 8.20-22 *For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.*

8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

‘not willingly: This is external; it is not a natural process. This is not the natural realm; it was different at one point. The natural realm was subjected to futility by an outside agency. This is still at least personification, an outside agency acting because of Him—the agent outside of the universe that imposed this Law.

### Science Insights

6. Outside agency - unwilling 20

And then it looks forward in *hope*.

8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope

There is going to be a releasing, and it will be in stages, not all at once. I think the Millennial Kingdom is described in Isaiah, and other

passages, that give us a picture of a partial lifting of the 2nd Law. It is not totally removed,

Isaiah 65.20 *“No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed.*

The complete lifting of the 2<sup>a</sup> law does not take place until after the Millennial Kingdom, after a thousand years.

The degeneration of the gene pool, recognized in biology, only observed more recently, and in a lot of other areas the 2nd Law is seen working itself out over time. But verse 21 looks to the future. And it is in the context of suffering; we, and the entire creation, will experience the release.

8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God

The ultimate goal of Sanctification is the GLORY that this passage is moving towards.

[Romans 8.18-23 & Genesis 3-9 Radical Transformations of Natural Realm 115]

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8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

There is a *purpose* word at the beginning of verse 21: ‘that’, so this whole experience from Genesis 3 is part of a bigger plan that is in the process of working itself out. And there is a future part of it that Paul is laying out in this context—‘that the creation itself will also be set free’ of something. Today the 2nd Law continues; the only way you can deal with it, like the law of gravity, is to counteract it. It takes energy to counteract but, with the 2nd Law, you are never 100% efficient in it. In fact *life* counteracts the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. But there will come a day, this passage is telling us, when a purpose for all of this suffering that you might be experiencing today is not only going to be removed, but it anticipates a state of glory.

### Science Insights

- |                     |              |    |
|---------------------|--------------|----|
| 6. Outside agency - | unwilling    | 20 |
| 7. Divine action -  | He subjected |    |
| 8. Divine purpose - | in hope      |    |

But he starts with the creation: ‘that the creation itself also will be set free’ This is another insight: you have not only divine *action*, God acting, but number 8: we have a divine *purpose*. There is a *purpose* behind it all. Now secular science ignores the work and action of God so the unbeliever does not know these things; in fact science cannot discover these things. This is outside of the realm of science. Science has limitations; it can only deal with that which is observable; you need *revelation* to be able to understand the *ultimate* working of *any* area of science.

So science only scratches the surface, you might say; there is a whole realm of the *unobservable*, the divine action and purpose. But what we have in Romans 8 is not only these scientific insights but we also have *revelation* that gives us the bigger picture in terms of the natural realm.

8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

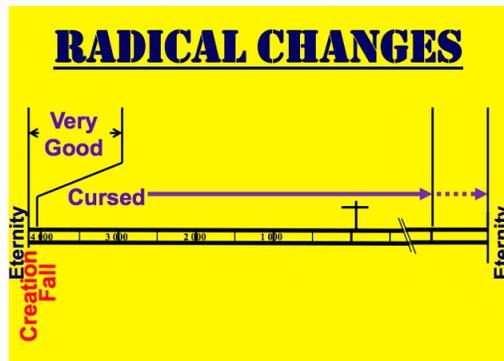
So, that the creation itself be set free ‘from its *slavery to corruption*’, to this ongoing decay process, the outworking of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. This is observable; you can see it, measure it even. That’s what the science of Thermodynamics does in term of energy. This is another concept, a scientific insight, natural law; there is no way to change it. It’s like slavery; this is a kind of human analogy throughout this passage. But in fact you can’t reverse it. You can use

creams and botox—whatever—but you are still decaying and eventually your heart going to stop beating. So it is like slavery to corruption.

That's why it is important in this context to walk in the Spirit because when you are not walking in the Spirit that is what is counteracting, in the Spiritual realm, the 2nd Law of 'Spiritual dynamics'. You either go forward or you degenerate even spiritually. And it's like slavery to corruptions and if you go back to Genesis 3 you see the physical effects described and continuing from Genesis 1. This list summarizes:

- Physical Effects** - Romans 8.19-22
- > Zoology - serpent cursed—more than all the beasts of the field. So all of zoology was affected by the Fall of man, Genesis 3.
  - > Anthropology - woman's pain—in child bearing. Biological. I think that man, Adam, was changed as well.
  - > Geophysics - ground cursed—God cursed the earth.
  - > Botany - thorns and thistles—before, a 'very good creation' did not have plants with thorns and thistles. Actually all of biology was affected, all of life.
  - > Physics - toil, sweat, death—another description of the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics.
  - > Environmentalism - inefficiency—The Law affected all the environment.

This chart is a timeline including these historical events, starting with the Fall of man described in Genesis, and here in Romans: a cursing of the world. And that curse will endure until a future event that the book of Romans is also describing.



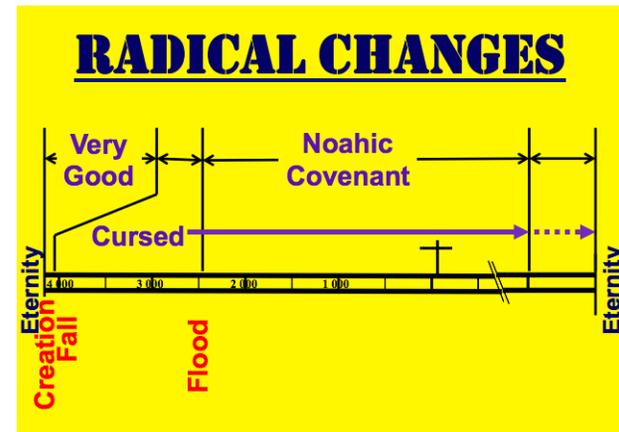
There is a break in the timeline because we don't know when that future event is going to take place. After that event there will be an interruption in the 2nd Law, but it is a dotted line because we don't

know how to explain it scientifically. That dotted line is a thousand years long, the Bible tells us.

**Science Insights**

- 6. Outside agency - unwilling 20
- 7. Divine action - He subjected
- 8. Divine purpose - in hope
- 9. Fixity of Law - corruption 21

When he talks about the slavery to corruption it's like a *fixed law*, the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics within certain time frames. Creation is different today than it was before the Fall, and if it is different today than before the Fall, then all of science is different. If you studied things before the Fall, you would have different calculations, different constants, different effects—you would have a 2nd Law of Thermodynamics. So what I am charting here are the *radical* changes that took place, first with the Fall. The slavery to corruption in verse 21 is natural law, what we can observe, repeatability. You can't reverse the 2nd Law, only counteract it.



There is another event that caused radical changes also: the Flood. And in chapter 9 we have a covenant that God enters, not just with Adam and Eve, but with all of the creation—it involved *science*, the natural realm. God tweaked many of the laws of science. We are living under the Noahic Covenant today. God is going to tweak it at that point in the future; there will be another radical change.

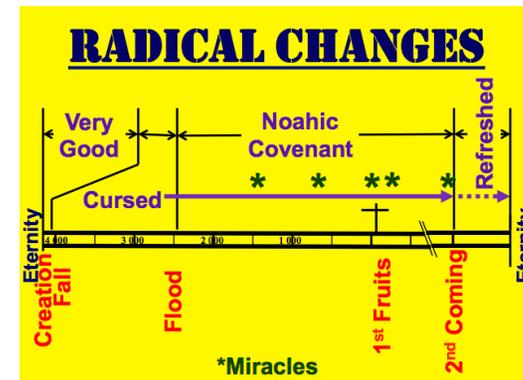
**Physical Effects:** some of the things that Genesis tells us, not with scientific words or descriptions, but just like Genesis 3, gives us little insights that all of these realms are affected.

- > Geophysics- geologic column—you can explain where the geologic column came about based on the Genesis flood, at least down to the Cambrian layer. Below the Cambrian layer—pre-cambrian rock, that's creation rock.
- > Tectonics - continents—John Baumgartner thinks that the mechanism for the Genesis flood was a huge tectonic event. So the whole science of tectonics probably came into existence with the Genesis flood: tectonics, movement of continents. Baumgartner describes the movement of continents during the Flood as 'continental sprint'. Today we see increments, continental drift, very small—centimeters, inches that cause earthquakes.
- > Climatology - seasons, ice age—There are little hints, Genesis 8 and 9, that seasons come about and creationists have a flood model that would produce an ice age. So all of climatology is different.
- > Oceanography - boundaries—We have different boundaries now than what existed before the flood.
- > Orogeny - high mountains—Orogeny is the science of mountain building; all of the high mountains of today were created as a result of tectonic effects of the Genesis flood. The flood was *huge* and had massive impact, not just on Noah and his family, and obviously all that died in it, but on the natural realm as well.
- > Physics - constants changed—You would expect constants to be changed after the Fall where clearly, I think, constants are changed. I don't have a reference in Genesis where I think this happened. The whole RATE program, Radio isotopes and the age of the earth, came up with lots of conclusions that lead you to believe that all of radiometric dating changes, ie, all of the constants of radiometric decay, changed and were radically different before and after the Flood.
- > Anthropology - longevity—This is very clear. Adam died at 930 years, Methuselah 966. A lot of constants affect the longevity of life and biology itself. There are many factors that are involved.

Lots of effects were radically different before and after the Flood. There is some sense that the Flood even had astrophysical effects. But there is a future: this hope, that the 'creation itself will be *set free*, ie, there is going to be a future radical event, set free from this corruption...

8.20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

... 'into the freedom of the glory of the children of God'. Just as we are going to be transformed, the entire universe is going to be transformed. There will be an event: and we already have the 1st fruits of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. 1st fruits anticipates *more*, ie, there will be resurrections, particularly you and I as believers. And I believe at the rapture—we are described as being transformed, glorified—we will receive our resurrection bodies.



So at the 2nd coming I believe that God is going to tweak the creation once again. Isaiah describes, after Christ establishes a Kingdom, the lion will lie down with the lamb—that's biology/zoology. You wouldn't do that today unless the had a lion and wanted to feed it.

Miracles are examples of God reversing the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics, radically changing biology in some cases, eg, if it is a healing and in the stilling the storm, the waves obeyed Jesus.

Isaiah passages and others: your children will play with snakes without fear. Great productivity, eg, among other things all of agriculture will be refreshed and regenerated. That will be the thousand years. To illustrate it, I am going to ask you a series of questions, thinking in terms of you and me:

### Resurrection

- > Thermodynamics - 2nd Law: How is the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics affected by resurrection bodies? in the 2nd Law that slavery is gone, so it does not affect a resurrection body
- > Newton's Laws of motion - What about Newton's Laws of Motion? I bring this up because Newton's Laws of gravity didn't have an effect on Jesus Christ when he ascended.

- > Molecular properties - What are the biological molecular properties of the resurrection body? We don't know, but we *do* know that it will not be like it is now—it will be very different.
- > Chemical composition - What about the chemical composition of your body? We don't know but it is going to be different. The Bible says 'changed'.
- > Optic properties - What about optic properties? The reason I bring this one out is that Jesus somehow altered what He looked like: The Emmaus travelers did not recognize Him—until they were in a dark room with lamps, He opened their eyes. So the optic properties were affected.
- > Biological cell properties
- > Nature of Immortality

You can find radical changes in these and other things.

### Science Insights

- |                              |              |    |
|------------------------------|--------------|----|
| 6. Outside agency -          | unwilling    | 20 |
| 7. Divine action -           | He subjected |    |
| 8. Divine purpose -          | in hope      |    |
| 9. Fixity of Law -           | corruption   | 21 |
| 10. Need for revelation -    | in science   |    |
| 11. Radical Transformation - | glory        |    |

So number 10: We need *revelation* to properly understand science. That is what we have in Genesis 3, Romans 8, 2Peter 3: revelation.

Number 11: We have radical transformations—and *glory* is going to be introduced. Future glory will come in stages. We will be transformed for a thousand years and then it's heaven—where everything is glorified. We don't know if there will be a natural realm or if it will be entirely spiritual. It will be a New Heaven and New Earth.

In terms of science insights, there is no way today that we can project back before the Genesis flood and/or project forward apart from revelation. This is one of the arguments I use for a relatively young earth because all of the old-earthers use a concept that this invalidates. They assume what is called uniformitarianism: The constants, the laws that we have today have always been the same. That assumption has been invalidated by revelation because there has been a radical transformation of the entire natural realm in the past at the Fall and a second one at the Flood. And Romans 8 and all the passages that describe the Second Coming describe a future radical transformation of the natural realm for a thousand years and then at the end of the thousand years, the ultimate 'big bang' — glorification.

### Principles for the Christian life - chapter 8

17. Power of HS in us fulfills God's Will
18. Walking in Spirit is means of Sanctification
19. Indwelling presence of HS gives power
20. Believers participate in sanctification
21. Suffering is God's main tool for sanctification
22. Glorification is end product of sanctification

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a) Antithesis to Suffering	8.18
b) Anticipation of Glory	8.19-21
c) Agonizing Waiting	8.22-23
(1) Groaning of Creation	8.22

8.22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.



We *know* [οἶδα (o-ée-dah), the more intuitive knowledge rather than the word for knowledge from experience]: this is factual, this is knowledge, that the whole creation *groans*. You can *see* it—how can you observe that natural realm groaning? Earthquakes, volcanos erupting, tsunamis... scientifically you can observe it and you can sense the agony.



8.22 For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

‘and *suffers* the pains of childbirth’; it is like the intense pains of a woman when she is about to give birth, for some it takes days. It is like the earth experiences these.... ‘together until now’, together with us perhaps, until now. With the fall of man, God introduced elements in the creation to show us that the creation now is rebelling against us and our rulership.

[Romans 8.22-27 More Support in Suffering 116]

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c) Agonizing Waiting	8.22-23
(1) Groaning of Creation	8.22
(2) Groaning of Believers	8.23

8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

So if *you* are suffering *now*, you are like the creation...

8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

...we have ‘the first fruits of the Spirit.’ He is transitioning to the future glory. Not only does the creation experience the groaning, but we also ourselves. What does he mean by ‘having the first fruits of the Spirit’? The Spirit is immutable and doesn’t change, but our *experience* is greater. It is related to the ‘first fruits’. In the OT, they were to bring as offering some of the first harvest to give back to God, in faithfulness, but also in anticipation of the full harvest that would come. It was a celebration: lots of labor and time spent developing the crops and now they had the first fruits.

### First Fruits

#### 1. OT Background

Harvest - Exodus 23.16 *Also you shall observe the Feast of the Harvest of the first fruits of your labors from what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in the fruit of your labors from the field....19 You shall bring the choice first fruits of your soil into the house of the LORD your God. ...*

He is laying out the law for living in the land when they arrive.

22.29 *“You shall not delay the offering from your harvest and your vintage. The firstborn of your sons you shall give to Me.*

In the book of Exodus, one of the passages also talks about giving the first son, and the firstborn of the animals. Paul is taking that Jewish imagery in the our passage and basically saying that we have the first fruits, the early part of the harvest, God’s harvest, in the indwelling presence of the HS. In this context he already developed that idea and it should tell us that this is just the first fruits. In the Millennial Kingdom, after the second coming, after the rapture, during that period of time there is going to be a *greater* ministry to us in the HS.

And this is an encouragement in terms of suffering that we anticipate in the future as well.

2. Christ - 1Corinthians 15.20 *But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep....23 But*

*each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ's at His coming.*

There will be other, future resurrections that will include us. I believe that what Christ experienced, we will experience similarly. Christ is the first fruits, implying that there are more resurrections to come. This passage is not emphasizing Christ's resurrection, but it is stressing that ultimate time at the resurrection when this glory will be experienced.

3. Here - full future ministry of Holy Spirit

Here we have a future ministry of the Holy Spirit anticipated that is even greater than the experience we are having here and now.

8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

...but we ourselves are groaning as well, wanting it to be gone—to leave. The word 'groan' is the same stem as the other one except that it had a 'together with', ie, the creation groans together. But we groan in ourselves, anticipating this agony, this pain that we go through. So when you suffer, you have an affliction or mental stress, whatever form the suffering takes, he is using the same imagery of groaning.

The emphasis is *internal* because even if it is physical it causes a groaning, a sense of pain, that we experience internally.

## Groaning

1. Creation - 8.22 *For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.*  
seen in natural disasters

2. Believers - 2Corinthians 5.4 *For indeed while we are in this tent, we groan, being burdened, because we do not want to be unclothed but to be clothed, so that what is mortal will be swallowed up by life.*  
physical weakness, sickness. He is anticipating that we are not going to have to live in this tent anymore. It is temporary, fragile, allows small amounts of elements to come in, gives little protection...groaning and, as in Romans 8, we will be clothed in a future resurrection body.

3. HS - 8.26 *In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;*

intercession Then in verse 26, the Holy Spirit also groans—not suffering though—using the same word to bring

home this concept. The Holy Spirit is groaning in a different way, but groaning all the same. The groaning is in intercession.  
8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

We wait *eagerly*—same word as he used of the creation. And another word he uses for the second time: adoption of sons which we talked about in a prior passage. In verse 19: the creation '*eagerly waits*' and in 25, '*if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.*' And in the midst of suffering, this is what we anticipate, *eagerly* waiting—for it to be over. So it's used 3 times in the passage.

In 8.15 we have 'adoption as sons': *but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"* Here in 15 it deals with the present experience of sonship and our present crying out to the father. In 8.23 we are *anticipating* our adoption as sons; there is a future aspect of the entire sonship experience. That is what our hope is in and what this whole passage is looking forward to.

Paul is assuring us here: There is future glory and particularly as we are faithful there is even more glory.

8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

... 'the redemption of our body', and just as there are aspects of this adoption as sons that are yet future, in this context, the redemption of our body is future, ie, a completed redemption that involves, essentially, the end product—the final glory aspect. So I refer to verse 18: *For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.* That is what he is talking about here—that future revelation includes the total and complete redemption of the body—at the resurrection which will take place at the rapture; we will be removed from these old, sinful bodies and given resurrection bodies, a new body.

We have talked about what the resurrection body is like and I used Jesus Christ and referred to some of His appearances that give little hints concerning the nature of that resurrection body. This transformed body is very very different from ours now. It will be radical changes, not only in the human race, but this passage indicates changes in the physical realm as well.

But in terms of the resurrection body, one of the questions I asked was: What effect does the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics have upon a resurrection body? The only example we have is that of Jesus Christ; and we conclude that the Law has *no* effect on the resurrection body.

Similarly, we looked at a long list...eg, Newton's laws of motion, do they have any impact on a resurrection body? We noticed that Christ could move about totally unhindered, seems to appear in one place and the next moment He is somewhere else. So Newton's Laws of Motion have no effect on the resurrection body. Likewise, the laws of gravitation, Acts 1 describes the ascension of Christ with no effect on His ascension. And we don't know if or what changes will be in the other scientific areas we talked about.

Radical changes from what we experience from now. That is what the phrase 'the redemption of our body' refers to.

### Summary

1. Waiting eagerly - 8.19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. ...25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.
2. Adoptions as sons - 8.15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!"
3. Redemption of body - 8.18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

8.23 And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.

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In the midst of suffering we need to focus on, not our present experience, not what we can see here and now, as the text will indicate, but we need to have the perspective that Paul is giving to us: we need to look ahead and realize that ultimately the suffering will end, we will even be totally removed from these weak and frail bodies, and we do

that by faith, because everything around us and our experience of the pain that we are suffering seems sometimes to overwhelm us. But we need to be reminded that we apply what Paul is talking about by *trusting* and that is the thrust beginning in 8.24.

8.24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?

'For in hope we have been saved'. That is a little bit of a problem because everywhere else in Scripture we look at salvation by *faith*, and this is the only passage that refers to hope being related to salvation. But he is not talking about receiving salvation for the first time here; it is in the *past* tense referring to what we have already experienced, and based on that, we look *forward* in hope for the completion. In this context he is talking about the *consummation of salvation*, the end product, the redemption of our body, awaiting the adoption as sons that is still in the future.

### Hope

> Salvation characterized by hope

There is a relationship between salvation and hope. This salvation that we received in the past is *characterized* by things that we still anticipate in the future. So we can say that salvation is characterized by this hope. Hope is not the means by which we enter into salvation, but there is an element of anticipation of the completion of the salvation.

8.24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?

And then the next little part: 'but hope that is seen is not hope' is kind of axiomatic, and in fact what Paul is explaining here is the essence of what hope is all about. And hope that is *seen*, ie, if you are seeing the fulfillment, then that's not really hope because hope anticipates something that is in the future and is unseen. Hope that is seen is not hope.

### Hope

> Salvation characterized by hope

> Explaining the obvious

8.24 For in hope we have been saved, but hope that is seen is not hope; for who hopes for what he already sees?

Then the last part of verse 24: simply a question that reinforces what he just said in this axiomatic statement. ‘For who hopes for what he already sees’? It is just obvious that if you already have received what you are anticipating you no longer hope for it because you already have it. Again, explaining the obvious. And in essence the hope passage in verse 24 is the idea of *assurance* of future promise. That is the heart of the meaning of the word ‘hope’ in the Bible.

Now we need to distinguish: ‘hope’ in Scripture is associated with assurance and confidence. In Hebrews it is described as an *anchor*, something that gives assurance and surety. It is not as in our culture: when we say ‘hope’ oftentimes it is a *wish*, ie, how I wish things will turn out, and it doesn’t necessarily have this idea of assurance, but *Biblical* hope is associated with assurance. So hope is the assurance of future promise. It is actually another way of describing faith and trust, but with the added element of assurance because we believe what God has said and what He has promised.

### Hope

- > Salvation characterized by hope
- > Explaining the obvious
- > Hope is assurance of future promise

8.25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Picking up from verse 24: we do not see the outcome, the resurrection body, apart from Christ’s and even that we don’t see and only read about it, and try to piece together some of the details of the text, but we don’t see Christ now. So if we do not see it now, then:

8.25 But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

... ‘with perseverance we wait eagerly for it’. The idea is that this should be the focus in the midst of suffering. We persevere, we endure, we wait—we *eagerly* wait—and here we have the same word, verses 19, 23 and now here: the creation and we are waiting eagerly; it appears 3 times, emphasizing that this is the perspective that God desires, that Paul is giving, this future anticipation and waiting. It should be an encouragement in terms of persevering and waiting through the pain regardless of how severe it may be—because we have the assurance of this hope.

### Hope

- > Salvation characterized by hope

- > Explaining the obvious
- > Hope is assurance of future promise
- > Motive to endure through suffering
  - So it is the motivation for us to endure the suffering.

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a) Intercession need	8.26

Along with what he has already encouraged, in terms of resources that we have to be able to cope with difficulties and suffering, we have not only this perspective, not only this hope and awareness that God is going to transform everything including the entire universe, but verses 26 and 27 tell us of the *present support* of the Holy Spirit.

[Romans 8.26-28 Intercession of Holy Spirit 117]

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

The heart of that support is that the Holy Spirit intercedes on our behalf. We have the hope of glory.

### HS Intercession

1. In the same way - hope of glory

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

This would include any kind of weakness: physical, mental, spiritual, emotional—a whole spectrum of weakness. And in the same way that we have this hope of glory, this new perspective, so also, we have the HS helping us, another added resource that God has provided for us.

The verb ‘helps’ in the Greek text is in the present tense giving us the idea that this is a continuous activity of the HS, moment by moment,

day by day experience of helping us. And the weakness is over all areas.

### HS Intercession

1. In the same way - hope of glory
2. Helps - continuous
3. Weakness - over all

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

The next part: ‘for we do not know how to pray as we should’. Oftentimes we are so overwhelmed with our suffering that we don’t have a clear perspective. But even when things are going well, we don’t always necessarily know how to pray, we don’t know ultimately what God’s will is in particular, specific instances. We don’t know how to pray as we should because we don’t have all the information, the data, the big picture. Basically we don’t know how to pray. But He wants us to communicate, to have that relationship with Him. He reminds us that we have a *need* for prayer—because we don’t even know what prayer is all about.

### HS Intercession

1. In the same way - hope of glory
2. Helps - continuous
3. Weakness - over all
4. Need for prayer - general

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

So there is a general need for prayer, but the Spirit Himself *intercedes for us*. That is a tremendous concept; we need to develop it further. How can God pray? Obviously there is an inter-Trinitarian communication. We get that all the way from Genesis 1 where there seems to be communication within the Trinity in terms of creation of man: ‘Let *us* make man in *our* image’. There seems to be some mysterious—from our perspective—communication where the Spirit *Himself* intercedes for us. Not that God is not hearing, not as if God is aloof and needs to be informed by the Spirit. ‘Let’s have a little meeting and you can clue me in on what’s going on down there.’ That is not the concept at all.

It’s an incredible thought that within the Trinity there is conversation concerning our needs, our weaknesses and who we are. We don’t know how and specifically we don’t what things we need to pray for; we simply lay our hearts out before God, but we are sure that the Spirit Himself *intercedes*—which means making requests, asking for specifics. Again, the verb is in the present tense, so when we are not praying, the text says that He continues to pray. Tremendous encouragement, and great security. As we proceed, we will see added little notes in the text giving us security, of not only a plan, but His purpose for all of His creation. Knowing this plan we are able to face whatever we face as well.

### HS Intercession

1. In the same way - hope of glory
2. Helps - continuous
3. Weakness - over all
4. Need for prayer - general
5. Intercession - continuous

Again, the ‘interceding’ is in the present tense so it’s continuous.

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words;

And the last part: ‘with groanings too deep for words’. This is somewhat of a strange comment. This does not support the idea that some charismatics have, that speaking in tongues is this ‘groaning’ or mysterious language. First, it is the Holy Spirit, not we groaning. But I think he is using the groanings here as a play on words. The HS doesn’t have pains and groans like we do. He has used this word two times already, at least the cognate.

The creation *groans*, but even that is not a literal groaning. I gave examples of earthquakes and hurricanes—you have a sense that something is not quite right with creation and these natural disasters that kill people and destroy villages and cities—these are what he is alluding to, and we looked at some of the science relating to that.

That is why he explains and gives a commentary on Genesis 3; the sin of man affected the entire universe, and the whole universe anticipates *release*. He focuses on a *time* when the believer will be released from these suffering bodies and experience glorification. We identified that as the first phase, the Rapture of the church.

The groaning of creation is probably anthropomorphic, as if it were a person, and then he speaks of our groaning, which, if we are in pain is a literal groaning. Then here, the Holy Spirit is groaning. I think he is

playing on words—ie, the same emotional aspect, the same intensity, the prayer in inter-Trinitarian communication where the Spirit groaning ‘too deep for words’. And there are no words that need to be communicated, so it is not a prayer language, if you will, because it is too deep for words, not articulate, not speaking. It’s too deep for speaking. So it doesn’t lend support to that concept of speaking in tongues.

So it’s the HS and it’s too deep for words—they are not needed. In fact, in the Trinity words and communication are inherent, are not something that has to be verbalized. God is immutable. It is not like the HS is informing God; He knows all things, all times eternally, so it’s not a ‘communication’. We can be encouraged that it is *as if* the HS and God were communicating certain things. In reality there is no need to communicate yet we are told that there is some sort of communication too deep for words. Paul is anthropomorphizing the HS also—looking at the HS as if He were a human.

### HS Intercession

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. In the same way - | hope of glory     |
| 2. Helps -           | continuous        |
| 3. Weakness -        | over all          |
| 4. Need for prayer - | general           |
| 5. Intercession -    | continuous        |
| 6. Groaning -        | transcends speech |

So groanings *transcend speech*. It is not articulate, not verbal, but transcends it because we are talking about things that go on within the Godhead itself.

- |                                |         |
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| b) Intercession in God’s Will  | 8.27    |

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; 27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

‘He who searches the hearts...’ God not only knows the hearts, but He ‘searches’ the hearts, not to find anything, but searches bringing to *our* awareness what *we* need to know about our hearts—which are like filthy rags. He who searches the hearts ‘knows what the mind of the Spirit is’. Again this is a statement that doesn’t need stating: God has all knowledge; He is omniscient, but it is brought to our attention to give us a kind of assurance that God is taking care of all of these issues, particularly in the most severe of pain. The HS knows our pain, intercedes for us. God knows the hearts and He also knows the mind of the Spirit. So everything within the Godhead obviously God knows omnisciently because He (the Spirit) intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

This gives us added assurance and encouragement that basically God the Father and the Holy Spirit are both involved in the midst of any suffering we are experiencing. And it is intercession according to God’s will. This is one of the things the HS does *internally* praying in us. We should be encouraged to pray, and perhaps the greatest prayer we could pray would be ‘God, help me to align my prayers with the HS, with what the HS is interceding for’. Then this is what God would be pleased with.

8.26 In the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; 27 and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

‘He’ = the Holy Spirit who intercedes for us according to the will of God. When we pray according to the will of God we have the promise that God will answer. And if He will answer *our* prayers, what might we expect in terms of the Holy Spirit? The HS will *always* get answer to prayer because the HS is in fact God. So we have intercession according to the will of God. This is one of the most important concepts and encouragements that we have: God Himself is praying for us!

### HS Intercession

- |                      |                   |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. In the same way - | hope of glory     |
| 2. Helps -           | continuous        |
| 3. Weakness -        | over all          |
| 4. Need for prayer - | general           |
| 5. Intercession -    | continuous        |
| 6. Groaning -        | transcends speech |
| 7. Intercession -    | God’s will        |

Not only the Holy Spirit prays for us, but Jesus Christ as well. An incredible promise in the midst of this passage on suffering of the believer in the context of sanctification.

### Intercession

1. HS in us - 8.26-27  
John 14.16 *“I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.*

This is a Trinitarian passage again: Jesus asking the Father to give us the ‘Comforter/Helper’ who will intercede for us.

2. Son at Right hand 8.34 *who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.*

And, here in Romans: Jesus, the Son, from the Right hand of the Father is praying.

Hebrews 7.25 *Therefore He is able also to save forever those who draw near to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.*

Jesus, as a Melchizedekan priest is interceding—that is what a priest does. So the Spirit and the Son interceding to the Father. Tremendous encouragement, tremendous promise.

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      - 2) Present Support of HS 8.26-27
        - a) Promise of Plan 8.28

The second great promise, I believe, in all of Scripture is in the next verse. It begins as kind of a sub-paragraph, with the promise of a sovereign plan. It is a tremendous promise to know that God is orchestrating a plan and within that plan every circumstance, every situation, every electron in the universe is working in such a way that it is all working for our good, to our benefit.

8.28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

‘We know’ here is one of the two Greek words for ‘to know’.

### Terms

1. Know - οἶδα (o-ée-dah) know by revelation not experience, intuitive, in this context, by revelation. the other word, γινώσκω (gnee-nós-ko), is for something learned, such as a lesson, or by some experience.

You can’t observe it, learn about it as in study, but we can learn about it by revelation.

8.28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

‘that God causes all things’, tremendous promise—all things. These are broad statements, this whole context is ‘big picture’. The whole universe, dealing with all the scientific realm, dealing with all of the spiritual realm. I think ‘all things’ here is comprehensive.

The subject of the working together is God. The KJV is a little bit inaccurate: , not ‘all things working together’. *God* is the subject of the verb. (KJV: And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God,...) In the Greek ‘all things’ is in the accusative, ie, is the object.

### Terms

1. Know - οἶδα (o-ée-dah) know by revelation not experience  
2. Work together - συνεργέω (soon-er-géh-o) all circumstances working together

8.28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

A tremendous promise to think that God is working this heartbreaking situation, this weakness, this suffering, for my good.