

SUPERNATURAL LIVING IN A SECULAR WORLD

Glorying and Groaning

Romans 8:18–27



LET'S BEGIN HERE

Once Paul got past the sinfulness of sin (Romans 1–3) and the grace of the gospel (4–5), he focused our attention on the sanctification of the saint (6–8). That third subject reached its climax in Romans 8, where Paul emphasized the work of the Holy Spirit, especially what Jesus called the abundant life (John 10:10). As we learned in the previous message, life is made possible by His empowering us to live above the drag of the flesh. Such a concept could cause some to think that the Christian life is a “cloud nine” delight, full of nothing but “glorying,” uninterrupted peace, pleasure, and prosperity. To keep things realistic, Paul introduced the other side of life—the “groaning.” And to help us understand it better, he interjected an analogy that is familiar to all of us: *God’s creation*. From that, Paul turned to all of us: *God’s creatures*. There are glorying and groaning in both. They are indissolubly linked—welded together and inseparable.



LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. The Timeless Principle for All to Remember (Romans 8:18; Philippians 3:10)

Suffering is a vital part of growth in maturity and the path to glory (2 Corinthians 4:16–18; 1 Peter 5:10).



Quotable

*When glorying
and groaning
are placed side
by side, the
glory will be
far greater than
the groaning.*

— Charles R. Swindoll



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2. The Glorying and Groaning of God's Creation (Romans 8:19–22)

All creation groans in its current state of yearning for God's final act of redemption. Though often excruciatingly painful, our temporary suffering in this fallen world pales in comparison with the future glory.

- Groaning is temporary (Romans 8:19).
- Groaning is a consequence (8:20).
- Groaning is a means to an end (8:20–21).
- Groaning is universal (8:22).

3. The Glorying and Groaning of God's Creatures (Romans 8:23–27)

Deep within us lies a foretaste of the future, a “first fruits” sample of the ultimate that will one day be ours to enjoy.

- We're groaning and longing (Romans 8:23).
- We're hoping and waiting (8:24–25).
- We're praying and searching (8:26–27).



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GETTING TO THE ROOT

Great Expectations

The Greek word translated “waits eagerly” in Romans 8:19 is the word *apekdechomai*. Bible scholar John Witmer noted that the word

is used seven times in the New Testament, each time to refer to Christ’s return (Rom. 8:19, 23, 25; 1 Cor. 1:7; Gal. 5:5; Phil. 3:20; Heb. 9:28). The revealing of the sons of God will occur when Christ returns for His own. They will share His glory . . . and will be transformed. . . . All of nature (inanimate and animate) is personified as waiting eagerly for that time.¹



LET’S LIVE IT

4. Helpful Reminders to All Who Suffer

Believers should acknowledge the sovereignty and goodness of God in the midst of our current sufferings, surrendering to the work of God in our lives.

- The greater the groan, the greater the glory.
- The weaker our spirit, the stronger His support.

Using the Holy Spirit’s intercessory ministry as an example, how can you come to the aid of others who are suffering?

ENDNOTE

1. John A. Witmer, “Romans,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, ed. John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1983), 472.



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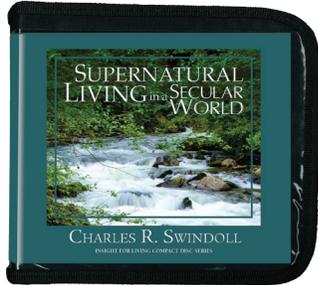
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Glorying and Groaning

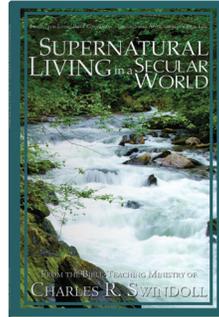
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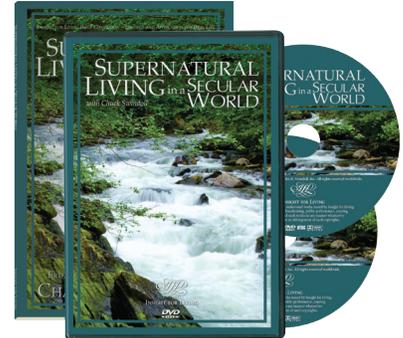
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