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# Sermon Notes

May 20, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Groaning Together

Romans 8:26-27

### The Holy Spirit

- ❖ Marching along together, keeping in step with the Spirit
- ❖ The Spirit is mentioned 11 times in Romans 8;11-27
- ❖ Several vital ministries of the Holy Spirit are summarized for us here
  - the Spirit's role in sanctification (v. 13)
  - the Spirit's role in joining us together in God's family (vv. 15-16)
  - the Spirit's role in prayer (vv. 26-27)

### WHAT Does the Holy Spirit Pray for Us?

- ❖ *Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness.*
  - what weakness?
  - we live in a fallen, broken world
  - because of sin's presence in the world, the world suffers decay and creation "groans" for the time when it will be restored to its original beauty

- ❖ In the same way that creation groans for freedom from decay and futility, the Spirit helps us when we groan in the midst of our own brokenness, fallenness, and sinfulness
  - we long to be housed in glorified bodies that are not subject to sin
  - the Holy Spirit longs for us in the same way, groaning for and with us for the time when we will be fully, finally, and forever glorified
  - we experience weakness because of
    - sickness (Luke 5:15)
    - adversity (2 Corinthians 12:9-10)
    - our natural, human limitations (Romans 6:19)
- ❖ The Spirit asks for things that we don't know we should ask for
  - the Spirit asks for things for us that are in perfect alignment with the perfect will of God
  - what we know to pray for *vs.* what we don't know to pray for
  - examples from the life of Paul
    - 2 Corinthians 12
    - Philippians 1:22-24
  - should we pray for
    - healing or endurance?
    - escape from danger or God's peace, presence, and protection in the midst of danger?

- when should we take risks for our lives and the lives of our families? (*e.g.* from the life of John Bunyan)
- ❖ Romans 8 encourages us by reminding us that we are not expected to know the will of God about everything
  - the Spirit does not judge or condemn us in the midst of our uncertainty
  - The Spirit is praying **FOR** us and not **AGAINST** us!

### HOW Does the Holy Spirit Pray for Us?

- ❖ *With groanings too deep for words.*
  - these groaning are shared between us AND the Holy Spirit
  - rather than just being inter-Trinitarian communication, the Spirit causes these groanings to resonate in our hearts as well
- ❖ These groans reflect our deep desire and the ache of our hearts that Christ be magnified in our lives in whatever way He deems best

### WHY Does the Holy Spirit Pray for Us?

- ❖ Why does God design His universe in such a way that He does things in partnership with the prayers of His finite creatures?
  - God created the universe and everything in it to put the riches of His glory on display

- in a very specific way, God calls His children to put His glory on display through the way they walk and work in the world (*cf.* Matthew 5:16, 1 Corinthians 10:31)
- when we point out how much we depend on the grace of God and the power of God to do what we do, we bring glory to God
- ❖ In prayer, we witness to the fact that we are completely dependent on God's grace and power
  - God gets the glory when we get the help
  - God gets the glory because God the Father hears and acts on whatever God the Holy Spirit asks
- ❖ God gets the glory because God the Son has purchased every blessing we will ever receive

### Personal Reflection

1. How aware are you of your weakness? Do you feel weak because of suffering, decay, sickness, futility, persecution, failed plan or baffling decisions you must make? Is your weakness a cause for despair or a cause for rejoicing? Why?
2. What area(s) of uncertainty are you currently facing? As you pray about this, ask "Jesus, how do You want to glorify Yourself in the midst of all this?" "How do You want Your ultimate worth and Your infinite beauty to be put on display in both the seen and the unseen world as I go through whatever it is I am going through?"
3. How does knowing that your prayer brings glory to God deepen your commitment to pray?