

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, August 30, 2023
Romans 8:18

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Fellowship that Sweetens Our Suffering and Glory That Dwarfs It

Main idea: union with Christ is the great factor in properly accounting for believers' suffering

Introduction: "Reckoning" with our suffering. Imputing to it its proper place and proportion. Psalm 42. Psalm 103.

1. Suffering of the Present Time
 - a. Sweetened by union with Christ
 - b. Strengthened by union with Christ
 - c. Sanctifying, serving suffering (not atoning)
2. Glory of the Future Time
 - a. The very glory of Christ, the display of the very glory of God
 - b. But revealed not only to us but in us
 - c. The glory that we had fallen short of responding to will now be displayed in us!
3. Suffering of the Past Time
 - a. Our suffering not atoning, but there was suffering so great as to be atoning. Suffering as big as God's glory.
 - b. We were joined in the benefits of that, so that we would never be joined in the experience of it.

Conclusion: in all of our suffering, we have One suffering with us Who is well-experienced. So, let Him take the lead, and consider the suffering not to be compared to the glory and joy set before us.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 8, verse 18. These are God's words. For I consider. That the sufferings of this present time, Are not worthy. To be compared with. The glory. Which shall be revealed. In us.

Amen. So far the reading of gods inspired And inherent word.

Even before verse 18. Begins to compare suffering and glory which has been brought up by verse 17. Because you remember as the spirit, Agrees with us and testifies on our behalf and to us that we are god's children and the father bequeaths his estate upon us. Takes us in as his heirs and wills to us.

That which is greatest of all, namely the knowledge of himself and of And of his son, by his spirit. And as Therefore, the sun takes us to be joint heirs with himself because that's his rightful inheritance. And we are joined to them. In that. Praise god. And so that brought up.

What else we do together with Jesus? Yes, we inherit together with him. But we suffer first. Together with him. And we will be glorified. Together with him, those three. Joint actions joint ventures. That we have with our lord. In union with him and that's what has brought up. Glory and suffering those last two joint ventures or suffering and glory to put them in the correct order.

But even before we get, Uh, to the sufferings of the present time, not being worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us. We have a very important beginning to the verse 4. I consider For I consider. And this word for considering is a very important word.

It is most Often. Well, not maybe most often. But most importantly, most famously used in the book of romans for imputation that god reckoning Abraham righteous through faith. Her god. Reckoning, his faith for righteousness by accounting Christ to him by that faith. And we too are to be those who consider who count, who calculate This will help you dear once not to be a victim of your suffering, not to be controlled by your suffering that you would be one who Calculates your suffering correctly, you assign to it the proper place and the proper value.

You understand how big it is? Comparatively and what it is doing? And, Often in the scripture, the lord calls us to consider or think about or make a judgment. He Instructs and commands that we would use our intellect and here's a blessed to use of our intellect. That we would make calculations about the suffering that we go through in the present time, putting it in its right place and connection, with what the Lord is doing.

Putting it in its right place and connection. With our being united, to the lord, Jesus and adopted by the father and intelled, by his spirit, putting our suffering in its place with right doctrine. So, the apostle is modeling that for us right off the bat when he says, I consider.

And this is something that the scripture teaches us to do in several places. It teaches us. For instance, to bless the lord. Oh my soul. So one of three, we give our soul that instruction forget none of his benefits. And in the middle of that psalm, of course the god considers us like a father.

He knows our frame. He knows what we are like that. We're like the grass that comes up in the morning and And withers in the evening. And so, we take the truth and we we command and instruct ourselves in light of that truth. Similarly in Psalm 42, why are you cast down on my soul?

Why are you so discouraged? Hope now in god i will yet praise him and importantly then in both of those psalms if you followed Psalm, one of three all the way through you have not just the instruction to your own soul to bless the lord. But the the as you go towards the end of psalm 103 we're joining, the heavenly hosts, we're joining all of his servants were joining, all his creatures in all places.

This is where it is. All going. Uh, suffering is a pit stop on on the way but the destination is, Uh, blessing the lord with all of creation, and our whole heart of same thing in psalm 42. Where the psalmist is struggling battling with his own despair. And, And he's questioning the validity of his feelings.

Something we're not taught to do by the world but praise god. We're taught to do it by the lord. Our feelings, get out of kilter. They, they're often incorrect and so we ask ourselves is this, right? Is Is this what we should be doing in light of all the data?

Have you considered the big picture? Why are you cast down on my soul? Why are you so discouraged? Hope in god. For i will yet praise him. At the time in psalm 42 and 43. Although it applies to all sorts of suffering, his particular suffering is that he's not able to gather With the people of god, he's not able to to go and experience and sometimes there are those who For a season.

Even as even as we confess, There are those who for a seasoned, the Uh, the lord withdraws, the sense of his presence and gives us to overrule our feelings with good doctrine and so the salt. And so the apostle here is doing the same thing as the psalmist, isn't he?

He's taking the present sufferings, and he is reckoning, or considering or accounting, or imputing to them, their proper place. And their, their proper quantity, their proper value in the big picture. For i consider. That the sufferings of, this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us.

And what that means for you is that this is not just a, an intellectual exercise. This is not just data that you listen to and agree with and then store away. And if If you ever have a question about suffering again or the glory, that is to be revealed again.

You just go to your data bank and pull it out. No. This is something that you you need to be acting upon. You need to be employing this truth that the suffering of the present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory, which shall be revealed in us.

And so, as we think about this tonight, as we prepare to reckon our sufferings to put them in their place, Uh, we do so under these three headings One, the suffering of the present time. Right there. In the passage. For i consider that the sufferings Of this present time.

And the second. The second main heading glory, the glory of the future time, They're not worthy. To be compared to stand with or are just unworthy. There are dwarfed by comparison with The glory, which shall be revealed in us. And that glory, which shall be revealed in us. That is directly connected to the suffering or a suffering.

Of past time. The glory that we had despised, the glory of which we had fallen short. And therefore, The glory of the one who had to atone for our sin. There has been. There has been a

suffering that Can be compared. To the glory that will be revealed in us but it's not the suffering that we go through in the present time.

And so we seek to consider. Or to think about, This verse on considering. Under those three heads. The first thing really comes out of verse 17 from last week. That as the spirit and then we considered the father, just going in the order of the text there. And then the sun applying our adoption to us.

And the sun doing that by bringing us into union with himself. By bringing us into a shared life, a shared experience with himself. One of my. Favorite things is weddings and As an elder. I am to love and honor marriage. As we've seen from first, Timothy 3 and Titus wanted he was 13.

It is a marvelous thing. When a man takes A bride, his bride to be bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. And that they are no longer too, but one And, The, the type, the great reality. Of which marriage is a picture. That is the reason that marriage is designed to be that way, is because this is what our lord jesus has done with us.

And many of us have. With. With our wife, if we've been married for some time, We have memories from those early years of our marriage or maybe not even early years. Maybe it was something that came along later, something that we went through together. That no one in the right mind would ever enjoy the substance of the thing that they went through.

It was a trial or a suffering and yet they are for the, the one who has that union, Those sweet times. When we went through things. Together. And so verse 17 has described our suffering together. With the lord jesus christ, which sweetens the suffering to us. That we go through it with the lord jesus.

He is as we're going to hear under the third heading and experienced suffer. And so, It's not just sweet that it's something that we go through and fellowship with him, but it's strengthening Not only has he suffered well, and as an example to us, sympathizes with us and we go through our suffering with him.

Uh, but He also strengthens us. You remember? In the verse actually, that By which we were invited on the lord's day morning to To receive jesus as our true, Adam, and our true abraham, and our true david. With his own words, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden and i will give you rest and then he talks about his yoke.

Being easy and his burden light. Uh, well, the reason his yoke is easy and his burden is light, is because he's the one in the other side of the yoke, and we get yoked together with him. Some of you children have tried to lift something very heavy. And dad has come with you and he's put his hands on it with you and Um, And he has started to lift it and you're lifting with all your might and Yet for all practical purposes, dad is doing all the lifting, isn't he?

You can feel the weight. Of of what you are trying to carry. But the reason you can carry it is really dad is carrying it with you. Well the analogy breaks down, the lord jesus is the one who gives us even our own strength for for our part. But what can you not bear?

What can you not carry? When the lord jesus is the one who is carrying it with you? And so even if our suffering in the present time could be so great as the glory of god, the lord jesus could carry even that and you yoked in with him. Could carry even that for you have the Lord jesus as your co-sufferer?

Your joint. Suffer and so we are strengthened not just as our suffering sweetened to us by our union with christ, but we are strengthened in the midst of our suffering, where strengthened, to

be able to bear it by union with christ. And then of course, there's implied here, not just that it is sweetened to us, not just that we are strengthened in it but that it's not useless.

It's not pointless. It's something that as we're going to get on in the chapter and god working whole things together for good and his Predestined for knowing and predestining and calling and giving us all things together with christ. We know that not one, not one moment of of agony of the christian is wasted.

Because it is producing in us. That glory. Which shall be revealed we already thought about that, didn't we? Back in chapter 5, when we rejoice Not only in the hope of the glory of god but also we gloried in tribulation. And there it was the perseverance and the character and then the halt, the knowledge.

That these tribulations are bringing us into that glory and they must because god loves us. And they come also in the same love that gave us. Jesus and you remember the holy spirit pouring out the love of god in our hearts so that we would continuously know alongside with the with what we're experiencing in our suffering, it comes to me from the same.

Love that gave me. Jesus and now the love is making me to be like jesus and he will not fail. How great is his love? For me, very similar than to james chapter 1, when we consider it pure, joy. When we suffer, many trials, of many kinds, because of what god is using them to do in us, they are sanctifying sufferings and they're also service sufferings.

Sufferings that we get to do in union with christ. With the lord ever assigned to his son. Would god ever assigned to his son a useless? Unprofitable unnecessary suffering. And the answer of course. Is of course, not. Everything that we do in union with jesus christ, jointly with jesus christ.

Has its purpose from god. So, that's the suffering of the present time. We haven't even compared it yet. To the glory that is coming or the suffering of the past but how the lord blesses us to know that it comes in union with christ. Well, on the second place, then the glory of the future time.

The glory of the future time. For i consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory, which shall be revealed in us. Now, this is Holy ground. If the lord had not done this, first of all and then told us about it.

Second of all, It would be a, a blasphemy. To say the glory of god will be revealed in me. And there's one thing to say we are made in the image of god. It is one thing to say, we bring god glory But the lord jesus, his son is the one who is the brightness of his glory and they exact imprint of his nature.

And as we're about to hear in a few verses, he is the one. To whom god predestined that we would be conformed. And it was our being predestined to be conformed to him. That made it absolutely certain that that must end up with those whom he foreign you. He glorified.

Yes, there's predestination and there's calling and there's justification along the way. But this is that glory that the creation is longing to see that lord willing, lord, sparing us helping us. We'll hear about next week. The very glory of christ will be displayed. Not only in christ's But in his bride, This is what he has devoted himself to do.

Isn't that what Ephesians 5 tells us. That he loved her and gave himself up for her. That is his church, his bride. Not just that she would be forgiven. The forgiving is necessary. But it's

necessary unto the cleansing. And the removal of every spot. Every wrinkle Because he has devoted himself.

He has given himself up not just once for all on the cross. But continually, isn't that what the bible teaches you that you're redeemer? Didn't just on that one day, devote himself in that glorious way that we will praise him with uh with with all of heaven forever for you, redeemed us by your blood And what a glorious day it was but he has continued devoting himself for us.

He always lives to intercede for us. Even now as he sits on the throne of glory and his father is giving him and making his enemies to be a footstool under his feet. What is he doing? Interceding, for us. Pleading the merits of his sacrifice on our behalf, applying his salvation to us by his spirit.

And always acting. As. Not just our priest, but in the words, Of ephesians 5 are devoted husband. Who will not rest. Until he sees his wife. Every bit as glorious. As he is. With respect to his Humanity. Here Jesus is. Divine person. The fully human nature, and we will not become divine persons.

But our human nature. Will be made fully like his. Oh, we're looking so forward, aren't we? To leaving this world to leaving the body of this death behind. To having a perfected soul. Like the Lord Jesus. That doesn't just desire perfectly and we don't even desire perfectly. But the desire that he's given us, we keep failing to fulfill you remember.

We're not too far from that. But we will one day desire perfectly continuously and we will fulfill that desire with a hundred percent success rate and we will only ever love God entirely with all our heart and soul and mind and strength, and we won't be susceptible to any weakness from within and we won't be Subjected to any attack from without.

There will be no sorrow, there will be no suffering, there will be no sin, there will never again be another intrusive or distracting thoughts. That would turn our attention for a moment from loving God and loving everything that he has made and especially those who he made in his image and redeemed in his son.

And not only will we have the Father of lights from whom continuously comes down every good and perfect gift, but we will be children of light. From whom continuously comes up every good and perfect homage and love and honor and praise to our God and goes out. Every righteous desire.

And every righteous thought, and every righteous Judgment and speech and action. And that's just half of the glory. Because when we glorified in our bodies at the resurrection,

Our bodies will be made like unto his Glorious body. The very glory of Christ. Who himself is the display of the very glory of God? And not just revealed to us. That's what we had sinned against. Isn't it? Back in chapter 1, the wrath of God revealed against all the unrighteousness and ungodliness of men, and what is our chief unrighteousness?

That, although, we could see that there is a glory glorious. God, we refuse to glorify him or give him. Thanks. But not only will his glory be revealed to us. It will be roughly held. In. Us. So, that one of the reasons why The environmentalists will. Never achieve success in their idolatry.

Is because the creation has been bound. It's been shackled. In a corruption and decay that it is not allowed to leave. Until it participates in the glorious, freedom of the children of God. And it can't wait to see what we will be like that's the picture and next week's passage And it should ravish our hearts as well.

That. We would. Desire, that we would not be able to wait. To see. What we will be like. Now, if our sufferings, Had appeared. Uh, smaller had been put in their place. By there being sweetened by union with christ and our strengthened in them, to carry them yoked in with christ and their sanctifying purpose, for us, and the opportunity to serve god in the midst of them.

And by use of them, And how much more even now they are put in their place. By being set up next to The glory of the future time. When jesus returns and all his glory. And his bride, perfectly reflects. All of that glory. And this is what god has planned for you.

You begin to understand, don't you? Why john's heart is about to burst. Is he writes? First, john three he says behold look. Consider. If you will. But it's a, it's a viewing word. Behold what manner of love? The father is shown to us that we would be called the children of God and that is what we are and it is not yet appeared what we what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we will be like him because we will see him as he is.

And those who have this. Hope, what do they do? They purify themselves as he is pure there, just so eager. For the glory. Well, the suffering of the present time put in its place just by virtue of union with christ and The glory of the future time putting its very further into its place.

Finally, the Suffering of the past time. Referring specifically. To the suffering of the lord. Jesus. And the cross. See, our suffering is not atoning. Although it is in God's providence to us, sanctifying Helps to make us. Holy But there was suffering. Great enough to be atoning. Ours couldn't ever have atoned.

Because what we had fallen short of was the glory of god. Yeah, you know, that you are guilty when you sin and god by, by helping your conscience to To be healthy and respond rightly to send you feel ashamed and dread And you feel the dread and perhaps even, You, you feel the greatness of god's wrath against that sin?

But we must only always. Fly to the cross. We must not say things like, oh lord, you know, my heart, you know, i meant well or Um, But it's so hard or I'll really do better this time or It's not a wrong desire, but We must fly to the cross for atonement.

Because not only what did we fall? Short of the glory of god but that was in order. If you remember back to chapter 3 verse 23 and then verse 25 that was in order that when jesus died on the cross for us he would be exhibited using that courtroom language of bringing out your evidence, he would be exhibited as a propitiation.

What does that mean? He would be exhibited as as someone who's suffering is as great as the glory. Of which we have fallen short.

So, that has One famous. Preacher. Said and perhaps others before him. It was as if the father is saying, And we say, Reverently worshiping. My son is at least as glorious. As i am.

But it was the greatness of his glory. His divine Personhood. That was necessary so that he might suffer more than Not just any man but a world of men in an eternity of time. Could suffer. This is the greatness of the suffering of the lord jesus. This is why.

Foolish films, like Mel Gibson's passion film. Are not just offensive to god. For. Making visual displays of him. Who is a divine person in both of his natures? He's a divine Person. But you simply cannot put on film. The greatness of the suffering of the lord jesus christ. Because it was infinitely greater than the physical suffering and it was infinitely greater than the shame.

He was propitiating, the wrath of god for us.

His suffering was as big as God's glory. And that was your suffering too, wasn't it? If you've believed in Jesus Christ, that's how your sins were paid for. You're united to him, in it, you receive all the benefits of it. But you never experience this the smallest particle of it.

Do you Jesus for it all. All of it. He's a very experienced, sufferer, hasn't he? And how how did he get through his suffering? Well, dear question. Just the way the apostles teaching us to here. For the joy set before him. He despised the shame. He counted the suffering of the cross.

As not worthy to be compared. To the joy that was set before him. The joy of vindicating, his father's righteousness. And displaying his father's steadfast love. God demonstrates his love and Get and that while we were still sinners Christ died for us in, this is love. That Jesus died for us and that the father gave him You have both of those and consecutive chapters, and First John.

So, take the lead. Take the lead of your savior who's yoked in with you. With whom you are joining, jointly suffering, in all of your suffering, And learn from him. Learn from him to count the joy. And for the joy set before you Of enjoying his glory and reflecting his glory.

And having his glory revealed in you, Put your suffering in its place. In and of itself. It is not lighten momentary. Understand. But you don't have the suffering in and of itself. You have it in Christ. And you have it from, and with him. So let him take the lead.

And let us reckon, let us calculate. Are suffering not to be compared. To the glory. And the joy. That is set before us. Oh man.