

12. Waiting patiently

Romans 8:18-39

Introduction

Have you ever had to patiently wait for something? What were you waiting for? How long did it take before the waiting was over?

In this last study in the book of Romans the apostle Paul looks at the waiting that a Christian is involved in. It is true that we have already received many great blessings through our faith in Christ. We have seen some of these in the last few chapters. But everything that will be ours isn't ours yet, at least not fully. We wait to receive our inheritance (8:17). But waiting isn't always easy. Paul has made clear while we wait there will be suffering for the believer (8:17). In 8:18-39 the apostle explains more about the waiting and why if we patiently wait, the believer won't end up being disappointed. Please read these verses.

Waiting for glory

What is all the waiting about and is it worth it? The apostle Paul explains more about the waiting that the believer is a part of. Please read 18 to 25.

1. Is the waiting worth it? What comparison does the apostle make (18) and why would this suggest that it is worth patiently waiting?

2. What is the creation waiting for and why is it waiting (20-21)?

3. What does the creation experience while it is waiting?

4. What are believers waiting for and please describe what that waiting is like (23-25)?

Think about it

What are present sufferings and why do we experience them?

What does it mean to wait with patience?

What symptoms might someone display who is impatient with waiting?

There would seem to be a close connection between the waiting that we experience as believers and the waiting that the creation itself is also experiencing¹. Please explain why creation's destiny finds itself bound up with that of the destiny of God's people.

Help while we wait

Waiting patiently is not easy, especially when we are weak and that waiting involves suffering and hardship. Yet the Christian doesn't wait alone. The apostle Paul in verses 26 to 30 explains that the believer has help while he or she waits. Please read these verses.

5. How does the Spirit help us who are patiently waiting?

¹ C/f Genesis 3:17

6. What is God (the Father) doing while we are waiting for the redemption of our bodies?

Think about it

In what way are we weak?

Please describe the way that God is there to help us.

What is the good that is working towards in our lives? How does he bring about this good?

We won't be disappointed

If we wait patiently we not only have God's help we are also assured that we won't be disappointed. There is no situation that is too hopeless. There is no circumstance too difficult. God won't let us down. We won't be disappointed. We have his guarantee on that. Paul gives us the reasons in verses 31 to 39. Please read these verses.

7. What is the guarantee that we will receive our inheritance (31-34)?

8. Why are believers more than conquerors in the sufferings and obstacles listed in verses 35 to 39?

Think about it

What is the guarantee that is given to a believer who is waiting patiently?

Think for a moment what is the worse possible thing that might happen to you. You probably don't even like to imagine it. Is what came into your mind, already in the apostle's list of things? If it isn't in the list do you think that the guarantee extends to this?

Why do you think we are described as being *more* than conquerors? It is obvious that in some cases that Christians even suffer to the point of death. How can they be more than conquerors?

Conclusion

While we wait for glory we are not promised that we won't experience trouble or hardship. We are actually told in the Bible not to be surprised by hardship and trouble. We are to expect it.

Think about it

How does our hope as believers sustain us through these difficulties?

What does God do to help us through these difficulties?