

**Loving Jesus, Loving People, Plowing a Counter-Culture****SERMON TEXT:** Romans 8: 18-30**KEY POINT:** We live in a world where suffering is inevitable, but God's salvation offers us incredible hope.**FOR LEADERS**

- **Worship Night!** We're going to be hosting an outdoor Worship Night at our Totowa campus! Mark your calendars for May 16<sup>th</sup>!
- **Feedback:** Walking in discipleship together this past year during Pandemic has been CHALLENGING (to say the least)! Even so, the challenging seasons we've faced have opened new doors of opportunity for us together as a church. As we prayerfully consider what it means for discipleship to consider to flourish at Emergence, we would very much like to hear from our faithful leaders! When you have a moment, please head to [www.emergencenj.org/feedback](http://www.emergencenj.org/feedback) to let us know what your experience has been and to help provide insight as we plan for what's to come!

**GETTING STARTED****[1] Communities Video:** Watch this week's community extras video!**[2] Icebreaker:** Where / how do you personally find your best rest?**[3] Opener:** What were some of your biggest takeaways from the sermon this week?**PROVIDED WE SUFFER**

This week we zoom in a bit further on Paul's arguments in Romans 8, or what many Christians are calling the "Mountaintop" passage of Romans. And here, we see that suffering is an integral part of the Christian walk.

**Ask for someone to read Romans 8:17.**

- [1]** As a review from last week, why do you think Paul says that suffering is a part of what it means to be "in Christ?"
- [2]** Often, the concept of suffering can be a bit difficult to integrate with a sincere faith in God. Why do you think this is?
- [3]** Do you think that this verse means that we should do nothing to avoid or alleviate suffering? Why or why not?

**COMING GLORY****Ask for someone to read Romans 8:18-21.**

In the sermon, Ryan talked about how we have a choice to either allow our suffering to impact how we view God's truth or allow God's truth to impact how we view our suffering.

- [4]** What do you think Ryan meant when he said this? How would you explain it in your own words? Give an example of when you've experienced each of these if you can.
- [5]** How does this line up with our expectations of what this life is "supposed" to be like?
- [6]** Read v. 21 again. What are some ways we see this "bondage to corruption" manifest itself?



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- [7]** What are some ways in which humans might try to address this corruption? What are some ways you think Christians should engage in this?
- [8]** What do these verses tell us about God’s care for all creation, beyond humans beings? How might we try to incorporate this into the way we share the good news of Jesus? (See also Col. 1:19-20!)

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### ***GROANING, WAITING, HOPING***

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**Ask for someone to read Romans 8:22-25.**

- [9]** Why do you think Paul is using the metaphor of childbirth here in verse 22?
- [10]** What does Paul mean when he says that we “eagerly await the redemption of our bodies”? (See also Phil. 3:20-21)
- [11]** Compare what Paul says here about hope in vv. 24-25 with what he wrote earlier in Romans 5:1-5, as well as what he wrote to the Corinthians in 2 Cor. 4:16-18. According to these passages, what does hope look like in the midst of suffering?

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### ***PRAYING FROM OUR WEAKNESS***

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**Ask for someone to read Romans 8:26-27.**

- [12]** When was a time in your life when you had a situation that you prayed for, but didn’t know *how* to pray, or what to pray *for*?
- [13]** What are some things we’re told about the Holy Spirit that should give us confidence in our prayers, even if we’re suffering or don’t know how to pray?

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### ***ALL THINGS FOR OUR GOOD***

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**Ask for someone to read Romans 8:28-30.**

- [14]** Sometimes we can get disappointed if we can’t see how God at work through our suffering. What are some things Paul has said here in Romans which might help us in this?
- [15]** What are some examples of the “good” that God brings about for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose? How can verses 29 & 30 help transform our understanding of God’s love for us?
- [16]** If believers are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ, does that imply that our faith in Christ is irrelevant? Additionally, what does the mean for the mission we’re called to?

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### ***PRAYER***

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- [1]** Pray that God would help us to view suffering through the lens of His truth, rather than vice versa.
- [2]** Thank the Lord for the great hope he’s given us, which helps us live faithfully in a word that’s in bondage to corruption.