

"I Reckon That The Sufferings ..."

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed to usward" (Rom. 8:18).

The word "for" connects this verse with the things stated previously. The glory that shall be revealed to us is that as heirs of God we will be glorified with Christ. These words of Romans 8:18 are similar to Paul's in 2 Corinthians 4:16-18: *"Wherefore we faint not; but though our outward man is decaying, yet our inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is for the moment, worketh for us more and more exceedingly an eternal weight of glory, while we look not at things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal."*

"For the earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revealing of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:17). This verse, along with the next six which follows, talk about the "creation" (three times mentioned) and the "whole creation," (mentioned once). In verse 17 the creation "waiteth." In verse 20 the creation was said to be "subjected to vanity." In verse 21 the creation shall be "delivered from the bondage of corruption." What is this "creation" in these verses of which the writer speaks?

This "creation" is that which has an "earnest expectation" (vs. 19). The "creation" "is subjected to vanity" -- death. This "creation" "hopes to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the sons of God." From this we may reasonably conclude that this "creation" is somehow related to children of God (vs. 21). It would seem then that the "creation" of whom the apostle speaks, is Christians. It is Christians who are "new creatures in Christ" (2 Cor. 5:17). It is a "new creation" which matters, not circumcision nor uncircumcision (Gal. 6:15). All appearances of the words "creation" and "creatures" are the same Greek word "KLISIS" and while the word may sometimes refer to animals as well as man (Rom. 1:25); its occurrence in Romans eight seems to refer exclusively to men or to men who have hope; Christians. In my judgment, "creation" in these verses are references to Christians -- those who are new creatures by a new birth, new creatures because they are in Christ (Jn. 3:5; 2 Cor. 5:17). It is Christians who wait for the revealing of the sons of God. *"It hath not yet been manifested to us what we shall be"* John wrote; *"But we knew that, if he shall be manifested, we shall be like him ..."* (1 Jn. 3:3). Such is the earnest expectation of the sons of God. We wait for the "revealing of the sons of God" because we have been subjected to vanity (we must die). Beyond this, we hope for the resurrection *"the deliverance from the bondage of corruption."*

Paul turns next to the *"whole creation"* saying that it *"groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now"* (Rom. 8:22). The cares and trials of Christians are not peculiar to them; all men suffer the same subjugation to vanity -- but not all men have the hope Christians have; *"the revealing of the sons of God."* Then Paul further adds, *"and not only so, but ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body"* (Rom. 8:23). Likely these who have the *"firstfruit of the Spirit"* were apostles, but even the blessedness of having the firstfruit of the Spirit spared them not from the subjection to vanity -- death -- that Christians, along with all men experience. Howbeit, it is only Christians and the apostles who have the earnest expectation of the glorious, incorruptible body given to God's sons who will be like Him! It is they: Christians and apostles who in hope are *"saved: but hope that is seen is not hope: for who hopeth for that which he seeth? But if we hope for that which we see not, then do we with patience wait for it"* (Rom. 8:24f). NEXT: "All Things Work Together For Good To Them That Love God."

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