

WE GROAN

I. Romans 8:18-30 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

A. Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense during the Iraq War, made a peculiar, if not humorous statement during a press conference. To paraphrase, he said, "*There are known knowns; there are known unknowns; and there are unknown unknowns. There are things we know we know; there are things we know we don't know, and there are things we don't know we don't know.*" As funny as that may sound, it's more true about the things of God than anything else.

B. Today we'll see that one of the *known knowns* in this life is *groaning*. And the groaning we experience is ultimately from the fall of man. Due to man's sin, all creation was subjected to darkness, decay, and death. But then God sent His Son, Jesus, the Light of the World. His Kingdom of Light was inaugurated with His first coming and will be consummated upon His second coming. In Advent we celebrate His first touch-down and look forward to His second touch-down.

C. Romans 8:18-30 (ESV) What we know, what we don't know, where it's leading...

1) **V18: 18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. (Our next text calls them *light and momentary*. And no, they don't feel light and they sometimes seem unending. But relatively speaking...)

2) **V19: 19** For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. (i.e. When the children of God enjoy the full culmination of their adoption. We are saved, are being saved, and will be saved. Justification, sanctification, glorification.)

3) **V20-21: 20** For the creation was subjected to futility, (Futility, frustration = fall!) not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. (God has always had a redemptive plan for His creation! There was no Plan B!)

4) **V22: (So what do we know and what don't we know?) 22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. (So the groaning is leading to something good, right?!)

5) **V23: 23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (We groan in growing measure as these temporary bodies wear out.)

6) **V24-25: 24** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. (At Mark Waibel's funeral last Wednesday I talked about two kinds of hope: The world's hope based on *wishful thinking* and our hope in Jesus Christ which is rooted in bedrock certainty.)

7) **V26-29: 26** Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. **27** And He who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. **28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. **29** For those whom He foreknew (God knew us before He ever made us! That's a *known known!*) He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.

8) **V30: 30** And those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified. (So we groan in these diminishing bodies and we groan for our eternal bodies, and while we don't know what all to pray for, the Spirit in us knows the mind of God and intercedes with groans too great for words because God is in all this! So despite the known knowns, the known unknowns, and the unknown unknowns, God's got all this! And He's got us!

D. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV) More on groaning and more on the Day when the groans will be no more: **16** So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self (**This body**) is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. **17** For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, **18** as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, (**Temporary, even momentary!**) but the things that are unseen are eternal.

E. 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 (ESV) More on what we know, don't know, and groaning...

1) **V1: 1** For we know that if the tent (**this body**) that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **(The new version will be built to last forever! That too is a known known!)**

2) **V2-3: 2** For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, **3** if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. **(First we have our temporary body suffering decay; then when we pass, our bodiless spirit goes to be with the Lord in what's commonly referred to as the intermediate state; and then upon Resurrection Day, we'll be raised from the dead and our spirits will be enjoined with eternal bodies that share continuity with the original model. This is what the Scriptures teach and what Christians have believed from the beginning. Jesus' resurrection gave us a glimpse.)**

3) **V4-5: 4** For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **5** He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. **(This is in our spiritual DNA and most of you deep down know so!)**

4) **V6-10: 6** So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, **7** for we walk by faith, not by sight. **8** Yes, we are of good courage, **(No matter how much we groan, it is well with our souls!)** and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9** So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him. **10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. **(Should our groaning and suffering and ever-present afflictions put a damper on celebrating the Incarnation, the Birth of God the Son? May it never be!! They should make the celebration all the more meaningful. For Jesus came at such a time as this for such times as these! Because Jesus came, the days of groaning are numbered! And that too is a known known!)**

II. Communion

A. The Story Behind the Hymn: "*It is Well With My Soul.*"

B. Read the lyrics to, "*It is Well with My Soul.*"

* Pray & Serve Communion...

* Benediction: Re-read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Romans 8:18-30 (ESV)

18 For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. **19** For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. **20** For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. **24** For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. **26** Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. **27** And He who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. **28** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to His purpose. **29** For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn among many brothers. **30** And those whom He predestined He also called, and those whom He called He also justified, and those whom He justified He also glorified.

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 (ESV)

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the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

2 Corinthians 5:1-10 (ESV)

1 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **2** For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, **3** if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. **4** For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened--not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **5** He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee. **6** So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, **7** for we walk by faith, not by sight. **8** Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9** So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please Him. **10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.

Galatians 4:4-7 (NIV)

4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. **6** Because you are His sons, God sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." **7** So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are His child, God has made you also an heir.

Film Clips & Article Links

"Christ Incarnate, Word Made Flesh" - Sow & Tether

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iZnEYawaB9g>

"God with Us" - All Sons & Daughters

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sukbtENMUw>

"It is Well" - Kristian Stanfill (Live)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMsOx3hqkF>

Bonus Stuff

1 Peter 1:3-9 (NIV)

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **4** and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, **5** who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **6** In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. **7** These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith--of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire--may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. **8** Though you have not seen Him, you love Him; and even though you do not see Him now, you believe in Him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, **9** for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

It is Well With My Soul - The Story Behind the Song

Shortly after losing everything in the Chicago Fire, Horatio Spafford sent his wife and 4 children to England on a passenger ship. At 2:00 am in the morning, just days from port, her ship was rammed by another vessel and sank in the icy waters of the Atlantic. While his wife was saved, all 4 of Spafford's children were among the 226 passengers lost at sea. Mrs. Spafford cabled her husband just two words, "saved alone." He booked ship and sailed to meet his wife and was told by the ship's captain when they were passing over the place where his children were lost. With difficulty sleeping, Spafford began to pen the words to "It Is Well With My Soul."

*When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, / When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, / It is well, it is well with my soul.*

It is well, (it is well,) / With my soul! (with my soul!) / It is well, it is well with my soul.

Horatio Spafford collaborated with a musician and friend, Philip Paul Bliss, to compose the tune to fit his words. By November of 1876 the song had been published. Shortly thereafter, Bliss and his wife were going by train from Buffalo

to Chicago when the train tragically wrecked near Ashtabula, Ohio as a bridge over a deep ravine gave way. Out of 166 passengers, only 14 survived. People died either by the collision, falling timbers from the bridge, or the fire which broke out and swept through the wreckage. Bliss' wife was trapped in the rubble and so he chose to stay with her and they both perished in the fire. Their remains were never recovered. Bliss was only 38 years old. He and his wife were survived by their two children.

It is Well with My Soul

By Horatio G. Spafford & Philip Paul Bliss, 1876

When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
It is well, it is well with my soul.

CHORUS:

It is well, (it is well,)
With my soul! (with my soul!)
It is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
Let this blessed assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate,
And has shed His own blood for my soul.

My sin, Oh the bliss of this glorious thought,
My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend,
Even so it is well with my soul.