

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, September 13, 2023



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Romans 8:23–25

²³ Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body.

²⁴ For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? ²⁵ But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Spirit-Given Longing for Perfection

Main idea: There is a proper groaning that comes not from the flesh but from the Spirit, marked by eagerness and perseverance.

Introduction: “I’ve got the groaning, groaning, groaning, groaning down in my heart.”

1. Groaning as a fruit of the Spirit

- a. Where the Spirit produces the groaning.
 - i. We ourselves groan.
 - ii. Within ourselves, we groan.
- b. What sort of groaning the Spirit produces.
 - i. Eager waiting
 - ii. Adoptive redemption of our body. Glorified body wielded by perfected soul: the body of “that life” rather than “this death” (cf. Rom 7:24)

2. Groaning as a symptom of salvation

- a. “For in this hope we were saved” ... salvation is more about what we are saved unto than what we are saved from (cf. 13:11)
- b. Saved into eager waiting, but not the sort of eagerness that “wears off.” “Eager” waiting becomes “persevering” waiting.

Conclusion: For what do you groan? How do you groan? Is it in the flesh or in the Spirit? God grant that it would be in the Spirit!

(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 23, through 25. These are God's words Not only that. But we also, Who have the first fruits of the spirit? Even, we ourselves. Grown. Within ourselves. Eagerly waiting for the adoption. The redemption of our body.

For we were saved in this hope. But hope that has seen is not hope. For why does one still hope? For what he sees. But if we hope, For what we do not see. We eagerly wait for it. With perseverance.

Amen, that sends this reading. Of god's inspired, and And Aaron twerked.

Now, the church i grew up in did not have a A monopoly on. Theologically under informed songs for children. Um, it felt like it did. At times, but Um, Once i got to know my wife, I eventually learned one of the songs that she grew up, singing in church, And, The only thing i can remember is sunshine lollipops and then there's something after that.

And maybe some of you have sung it in church. Um, But the point of the song was that once you come to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ, That. Everything will be as it were sunshine and lollipops. And apparently no tooth decay. Um, but That you would come to the Lord Jesus.

And suddenly your eyes would be opened. And you would see everything in the creation. And you would say this is just as it should be. And when you looked in the mirror, And you saw that person in the mirror. That you would suddenly be satisfied with him. Or her, if you're a girl.

And be able to say that person is just as he should be. Of course, the opposite is actually true. As we heard last week, and God's subjecting, the creation To futility until all of his children are gathered in and conformed not just soul but even body. To the Lord.

Jesus Christ. The only begotten son. That the whole creation groans continually but it is not as it should be. And this is a comfort to Christians. Because didn't we hear the end of chapter 7? The second half of chapter 7, How? Having that delight in the law of God in our inner being.

And really beginning to know what good looks like. We could not look in the mirror. Apart from seeing union with Christ, of course, praise God. But we could never look in the mirror again in this life and say, Uh, I'm Good enough. Wise enough. And, Uh, If there's a God he sure would like me.

Uh, which is how the unbeliever thinks sometimes in this arrogance. Thankfully God and the common operations of his Spirit. Um, Will cause them to be disturbed without him. And so a Christian in part. Now is someone who agrees with the creation? Not only that, but we also Who have the first fruits of the Spirit?

Even, we ourselves grown. Within ourselves. Now. We did sing some Scripture songs. Um, Well, half Scripture, I guess on this one. And perhaps some of you have sung the fruit of the Spirit, not banana or Watermelon, kiwi, dragon fruit, whatever it is. That the fruit is love joy. And praise God for that and How many of us?

Probably. Need to be reminded as much so that joy is one of the fruit or one of the aspects of the fruit. More than any other one. And speaking of what God has done in us, By union with Christ. And the Holy Spirit is true. I've got the joy.

Joy joy. Joy. Down in my heart. Is interesting that Non-covenantal people would teach that to. Yeah, 500 children, who are Uh whining for another glass of punched 13 minutes ago, but Um, I think it's good to teach the children of believers that. Uh, they belong to the Lord and The benefits of that.

But here we have. Something that sounds opposite until we really get into the text. And that is even we are ourselves grown. Within ourselves. I've got the groaning. Groaning, groaning groaning. Down in my heart. And praise God. That's where the comparison ends. Because the joy, if you're a believer is in your heart to stay, And the groaning.

Is in your heart as long as this world stays, but this world is going to be a set free. To participate. In the glorious freedom. Of the children of God. And so, one of the things that we find as a fruit of the work of the Spirit in a believer, Is not only joy.

But also one of the fruits that the Spirit works in us in this life and this world. Is groaning. You see, we live in a creation that groans and labors with these. Birth things. The whole creation together until now. Excuse me. And one of the things.

That God the Holy Spirit does for us. As you can form our mind to Christ. As he causes us, to agree with what is true. Um, we were discussing with a. Brother or hearing from a brother. Um, not too many minutes ago in this room. We live in a world that is largely in rebellion against truth.

But when God brings us by his Spirit to faith in Jesus Christ, We agree with the groaning creation. We ourselves grown. We don't just observe that the creation is groaning. That every Particle. Of this material world that exists. Is. Groaning, agonizing longing. Saying this is not as it should be.

But we agree with that. And the Spirit. Agrees with that. As Lord willing will hear next week the Lord's sparing us. Fact, those of you who have. Just, Have been memorizing, thy kingdom come thy will be done. And what we learn and The third and No, second and third petitions.

Of the lord's prayer. Have been learning that as you learn to pray like Jesus. As his spirit, who has His mind. Teaches you to pray. You learn to groan? And you learn to grow. Even within yourself, even with your heart, it becomes. Uh, one of the primary axioms of your life.

That. You now belong to another world. And you long for that world. And you belong to a king who is worthy. Of things that have not yet been seen. God is worthy to have his name. Palette. By a world, an entire creation. Full of those who only hallow and never have liked thoughts of him.

God. Christ. Is worthy. Of being acknowledged as king. And having every knee bowing and every tongue confessing having all things in subjection to him. All his enemies put under his feet. And yet. Zebra says, we don't yet see All things subjected, we know that he reigns But not all things.

Have been brought to him. And so, if you're a believer, One of the things that you will find, Is that there is this visceral? What that means kids is with your guts, comes from a Latin word for your innards. Usually, the intestines kidney and art or so. But there is this visceral within yourself.

Desire. For the coming of things as they ought to be. Sometimes it takes.

Theological form in those. Who use phrases like make all things new? And they mean, Acting like new creature. New creation people in this world and that that's going to, but The groaning that is of the spirit in the passage after and the groaning that is of the creation in, what we have just heard that is matched by the groaning that the spirit produces within a believer is not going to be satisfied.

He has made us new. We're not going to be able to make all things new. And so there's this groaning within ourselves. That is in believers. Well what is this? Groaning like well, praise God. It is an eager. Groaning an eager waiting. Now, this This verb. In verse 22.

Sorry. Verse 23. Even ourselves. Even we ourselves growing within ourselves eagerly waiting. For the adoption. It's something that we saw already in verse 19. For the creation. Eagerly Wait. And it's something that we second time. In our passage this evening in verse 25. If we hope for what we do, not see we eagerly wait.

This is not the groaning of someone who is. Under such a burden, as He has unable to tolerate. And, Makes it feel as if he cannot. Go on. There's the groaning of someone who knows what is coming. And, He would like nothing more than to be there. His eagerly.

Waiting. And so that's the nature of the groaning. It's a positive groaning. The groaning forward. Uh, not so much a Uh, a groaning backward of what has happened, or even a groaning in the present of what is happening. It's a groaning because the future is so good and it is not yet happening.

And so there is pain. There's agony. There's grief. But it's forward looking. It lays hold of something that is not yet. And says,

The pain or the. The groaning is. Because of the not yetness. Of that. Because of it being, Not yet and so it's this eager waiting. Sort of groaning. Now, some of us Uh, we have anxieties griefs. Depressions. Over the way things are. Or the way things have been. And there's a lot in this world.

That is opposed to God, that is opposed to all, that is good. That is opposed to all that is beautiful.

And so it is helpful for us. When we? Are struggling with. Are having difficulty with. The way things are. To discern differentiate distinguish. There's the word. To distinguish in our hearts. That groaning that is overwhelmed with the present. Versus that groaning, that is Overwhelmed with, or

Grabbed by in raptured with. How glorious is the future? And to take that. Knowledge of how good what God has determined is. And by the, that which comes from the spirit, That, which is laying hold of the goodness of the future. Which then? Becomes something that, you know, God is using the present to get us to And then you have a holy grief, and a holy groaning and a holy longing.

It's not denying, or ignoring. The greatness of the evil, the greatness of the griefs that are in the present. But is putting away. The. Defeat. And dejectedness. And hopelessness. Of a groaning that is overwhelmed. By. The. Present in the past. I believe is experience being overwhelmed. Praise God. We have three weeks in a Song that helps us sing and break through that.

So what sort of groaning, the spirit produces a groaning of eager? Waiting. And a groaning that has as its content, then the thing that we are waiting for You see in verse 23, the adoption. That is the redemption. Of our body. We are groaning for the completion. Of the answer.

In time. To the question. In chapter 7 verse 24. Excuse me. You remember? Oh, wretched. Man that i am. Who will deliver me from this body of death, or More literally translated from the body. Of this death. You remember, we said at that time, that as long as we are in these bodies, We will be dealing with sin.

But thanks be to god through jesus christ. Our lord One day, we will be delivered from this body and will be made, perfect and holiness. And yet. The final and full answer to our deliverance. Is not going to be bodylessness. But having been perfected in our souls, we are then going to be given in the resurrection.

Glorified bodies that will be able to accomplish what our glorified soul's desire to do. In the service of our lord jesus christ. And worship of him and service to him. In a new creation. And it is then. When we have been made by the spirit to match jesus christ in our souls, And we have been made by the spirit to match jesus christ in our bodies.

That the adoption will be complete. You know, the lord gave me. This week to, Witness. The formalizing or the Forget what they were calling it. To adoption being made official. By a judge. And, It was a joy. And, There were Kits. In the family. And They're all wearing school uniforms.

So they all looked You know, really super identical on that day. Well. One of the things are going to hear a couple of passages from now. Is it in the last day? The lord, jesus will be the firstborn among many brethren. And, if we can. Imagine. Um, Reverently. What one might say?

Of us on the last day. Isn't it marvelous? They look exactly like him. And we will be conformed to him. Soul and body. And so, On that day. Not only will, we have been delivered from the body of this death. We will have. The body of that life. And this is something that we should be looking forward to groaning forward to

The saints and glory still long. The lord jesus christ to return and judge. And vindicate. And so we also long, To be made like him. For that, final piece of our adoption to be put in place. The redemption. Of our body. So, groaning is a fruit of the spirit's work in our life.

But it's also a symptom of having been saved. For we were saved in this. Hope. In this. Enjoyment already of a reality that is not yet of a certainty. Of something in the future. That is so sure. That even before. We enjoy the thing itself. We can enjoy the certainty of the thing.

And this is what we have. If we have jesus christ, if we have been saved by grace through faith in him, We do have. Full forgiveness. Perfect righteousness. Before god. Adoption the indwelling of the spirit, the right to call god, our, our father, and have his spirit agreeing. That we are confirming gratifying that we are his children.

And yet, there are parts of our salvation that are still future. Sinlessness is still future. A glorified body is still future. And we can't enjoy sinlessness yet. But we can enjoy this certainty that we shall be. And we cannot enjoy our glorified body yet. But we can enjoy the certainty that we shall have one.

And we cannot enjoy a new creation. Yet, there has been set free to participate in the glorious. Freedom of the children of God, but we can enjoy this certainty. That we will. And it's the enjoyment of all of those certainties. That enables us to groan forward. It is a symptom.

Of salvation. That we do this eager waiting. And one of the things that, And a few chapters time. When the apostle is, Calling upon them to stop. Living. In a way that belongs to the flesh that belongs to the darkness. That belongs to the night that belongs to their former life outside of christ.

As he points out to them, the thing that they are eagerly waiting. The thing of what, the certainty of which that they are enjoying as their christian hope, And so chapter 13 is going to say and do this. Knowing the time that now, it has high time to awake out of sleep.

For now, our salvation is nearer. Then we first believe, when we first believed the night is far spent the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off, the works of darkness. And let us put on the armor of light. Let us know what properly is in the day.

Not in revelry and drunkenness. Not includingness and lost not in strife and envy. But put on the lord jesus christ. And make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts. So here we here. And chapter 8 verse 24. We were saved in

this hope. But then in chapter 13 verse 11, he's going to say, Our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed.

In other words, he's saying. You are saved already. Through faith in Jesus Christ. From your sin. But you are saved. Sinlessness. You are saved for. Christ-likeness. You are saved for the light and the day in which you will walk as Lightnings. Children of light. And so there's this focus in our salvation, that the spirit teaches our heart, That is focused much more about what we are saved unto than what we are saved from.

It's a similar point of growth and change of mindset to that, which many of us have had at some point and thinking about the Lord's day and keeping Sabbath, And we begin. Because we're very fleshly. Focus on all those things that we don't get to do. That our flesh would have preferred.

And we're focused on what the day is sanctified. From But that's not the right focus, is it? The right. Focus is what the day is sanctified. With worship. And knowledge of God, delighting in Him. Having an entire day of delight. To train and form and satisfied delighted in. Well, similarly, with your salvation.

We can begin. Because it has, it was so near to us at first With a great focus on what we have been saved from and praise God. We've been saved from the guilt of sin. We've been saved from slavery to sin. We've been saved from wrath and death and hell.

But the focus in salvation what we're saved into as a whole That focuses more on what we are saved for. What we are saved unto? And so, the apostle comes and says, And this hope. We were saved. But hope that a scene is not hope. For why does one still hope for?

What he sees. Remember we're not enjoying the reality or the arrival, yet of all the things for which we are. Um, For which we have been saved or unto, which we have been saved. We enjoy the certainty of those things. That's the Christian book. I was almost said reality, but they are real.

Even though their future, They're not less real. The Christian doesn't. Tell time, like the historian, who tells you what's real? Because it's in the past, No, we could tell you what's real because God said, it's in the future. And so we're saved into this eager waiting, verse 25. If we hope For what we do, not see, if we enjoy already the certainty, the reality.

Of what we were saved unto the adopts and the redemption of our bodies total conformity to the Lord Jesus Christ. That not only His life would be in us. But as joy would be in us. So if we hope for what we do, not say, see we eagerly, wait for it, With perseverance.

Now, this is a different kind of eager weighting than the eager waiting of our flesh. Yeah. Don't know. What it is that? You all tend to anticipate. Um, Hope it's Has Lord's day and family worship and those things. But we all have other things that we Look forward to and not necessarily inappropriately.

But if it's something, that is a long way off, sometimes the eagerness of the waiting, Can start to wear on us. And it becomes disappointing that it hasn't come yet. That is not the way. That the spirit given eager waiting for the resurrection works. Rather eagerness over time. Does not wane.

According to verse 25. It becomes perseverance. Eager waiting. Becomes. Persevering waiting. And so may the Lord grant to us. That are groaning would not be fleshly groaning but spirit groaning. That it would be eager waiting for the final fullness of a salvation. That, although it is not yet, here it is still or it is already certain.

And then we will know how those two things can sit together in the same heart. I've got the groaning. Groaning, groaning groaning. Down in my heart. Precisely because it'll not stay. The Lord Jesus said. That one of the many things He would do in making us like Himself. Was that He spoke?

So that our joy, This joy would be in us. And the apostle, John and others. Button particular. Wrote. That our joy. Would be full. My God, the Holy Spirit, grant to you. My dear congregation. That you would have such a certain entity of what you would be saved unto. That.

Yes you would groan as long. As this world does not what it should be and you are not what it should be. That you would Be able to say that with spirit given conviction. But that you would be able to say at the last, but it will be With the same spirit given conviction.

And joy. Amen.