

**O Thou From Whom All Goodness Flows***Thomas Haweis (1734–1820)*

O Thou from whom all goodness flows!  
 I lift my soul to thee;  
 In all my sorrows, conflicts, woes,  
 Good Lord! remember me.

When, on my groaning, burden'd heart,  
 My sins lie heavily;  
 My pardon speak, new peace impart;  
 In love remember me.

When trials sore obstruct my way,  
 And ills I cannot flee,  
 Oh, give me strength, Lord, as my day:  
 For good remember me.

Distress'd with pain, disease, and grief,  
 This feeble body see;  
 Grant patience, rest, and kind relief:  
 Hear and remember me.

If on my face for Thy dear name,  
 Shame and reproaches be,  
 All hail reproach, and welcome shame,  
 If Thou remember me.

The hour is near, consign'd to death,  
 I own the just decree,  
 Savior, with my last parting breath  
 I'll cry, Remember me!

**ΤΩ ΚΡΟΝΟΥ ΚΑΙΡΩ***In the Nick of Time***Tried with Fire: Suffering and Glory***Kevin T. Bauder*

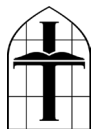
How perplexing! Christians are supposed to be children of God, heirs and joint heirs with Christ. We are no longer under condemnation—God's wrath has been cancelled for all our sins. We have received unimaginable privileges in Christ. Yet we ache when we get up in the morning. We need glasses and antacids. We have to visit doctors and dentists. We even attend funerals—the last one of which is our own. How do we reconcile these experiences with what we have been told about who we are in Christ?

The eighth chapter of Romans probably has more to say about the subject of suffering than any other chapter in scripture. Paul tackles our problem head-on in verse 10: "And if Christ *be* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin; but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness." Many find these words puzzling, but I think their meaning is rather straightforward. Even though we are Christians, our bodies are still mortal (dead), meaning that our bodies still die. The reason they die is because of sin (for death came into the world by sin, Rom 5:12). So on the one hand, we are no longer under condemnation (Rom 8:1). The Holy Spirit indwells us (Rom 8:9). Christ Himself lives in us (Rom 8:10). On the other hand, our bodies have not yet been delivered from the mortality that came through sin.

The indwelling Spirit provides the solution to this problem. The Spirit is life because of righteousness (which probably refers to the imputed righteousness of Christ). The Spirit who lives in us is also the Spirit of the one who raised up Jesus from the dead (Rom 8:11). Hence, the indwelling Spirit constitutes a guarantee of a future resurrection—and the resurrection body will no longer be subject to mortality.

This same Holy Spirit is the Spirit of adoption. He teaches us to address God as "Abba! Father!" (Rom 8:15). He testifies to our spirits that we are children of God (Rom 8:16) and consequently God's heirs and Christ's joint heirs (Rom 8:17a). Paul adds that if we suffer with Christ, we will also be glorified with Christ (Rom 8:17b).

The "if" in this verse does not express doubt about whether Christians will suffer. Paul assumes that believers will suffer during the present age, and he makes this point clear a bit later (Rom 8:36). What the verse is saying is that



*In the Nick of Time* is published by Central Baptist Theological Seminary.

Permission is granted to duplicate for personal and church use.

www.centalseminary.edu | info@centralseminary.edu  
 900 Forestview Lane N, Plymouth, MN 55441 | 800.827.1043

for the Christian, the very quality of suffering has been transformed. All of our suffering is now suffering “with Christ.” Our suffering brings us into the same experience of suffering that He accepted when He took a mortal, human nature. Since Christ’s sufferings led to His glory (see Phil 2:5-11), our sufferings will also lead to glory. Indeed, Paul elsewhere points to suffering as the very mechanism through which God increases our glory (2 Cor 4:17).

In His sovereignty, God is able to take evil things like suffering and use them to produce great good (Rom 8:18). In fact, if God loved us enough to give us Christ, then He loves us enough to give us everything that is good (Rom 8:32). Paul’s affirmations are not Pollyannish naivety. Paul knew that bad things happen, even to Christians. These bad things can include afflictions, pressures, persecution, starvation, inadequate clothing, physical danger, and even violent death (Rom 8:35). Yet even in these calamities God is at work.

During the present, God uses sufferings to conform us to the image of His Son (Rom 8:29). In anticipation of the future, God uses sufferings to prepare us for glory; indeed, He uses present sufferings to increase future glory. This exchange of suffering for glory is near the heart of Paul’s perspective on afflictions during this present life. We accept affliction now so that we can receive glory later. We will exchange the one for the other.

This exchange, however, is not even. Paul says that our present sufferings will result in a “far more exceeding weight of glory” (2 Cor 4:17). Indeed, “the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Rom 8:18). To say that there is no comparison is to say that present suffering fades to insignificance when compared to future glory.

To repeat, Paul is not denying the reality of present suffering with all its pain. Our tears are real. They may come from physical distress. They may come from bereavement. They may come from betrayal. We may weep from concern for lost loved ones. Rivers of water may run down our eyes because of those who reject God’s law (Ps 119:136). The pain is real and it goes deep.

Think of your most harrowing affliction, and ask yourself this. What would have to happen, not just to erase that pain, but to make it seem so incidental as not to be worth thinking about? How great would the change have to be? That is the kind of thing that God intends to do for us. He intends to heap such a heavy weight of glory upon us that our sufferings will recede into the nooks and crannies of our recollection. They will not be worth remembering.

That is why Paul can affirm that in all “these things” (which refer exactly to our sufferings) we are “more than conquerors” (Rom 8:37). We will not simply triumph after adversity. We will not stagger across the finish line, ready to collapse, whispering, “at least I made it.” Rather, we will burst out of

suffering and into unimaginable splendor. We will hand over our thimble of affliction for boxcars full of glory—and in the process we will almost forget that we ever had a thimble.

God rules over our afflictions. He permits them for good reason. He is doing something with them. However severe our pain, however heavy our pressure, we have reason to trust Him, obey Him, and rejoice. Let every morning ache and every bout of indigestion, every betrayal and every bereavement, remind us of God’s good plan: this pain, too, will be transformed into glory.



---

This essay is by Kevin T. Bauder, Research Professor of Historical and Systematic Theology at Central Baptist Theological Seminary. Not every one of the professors, students, or alumni of Central Seminary necessarily agrees with every opinion that it expresses.

---