

Alive in Hope

Romans 8:18-39



Our troubled & troubling world

Two seasons of life

of a **mother**

HOPE Baby in the womb	Birth of Baby	GLORY Baby in the arms
Some joys along with many troubles & pain		Great joy!

of the **natural world**

HOPE The world today	Jesus' return	GLORY The world to come
Beauty plus... <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Frustration, no progress, decay		Beauty without limits

of a **Christian**

HOPE This life	Death, or Jesus' return	GLORY Being with Christ
Many joys along with many troubles “Present sufferings”		Great joy! Without the troubles

Romans 8:18-39

The Big Idea

God relentlessly uses EVERYTHING now to increase joy in GLORY

Hope that is seen is not hope

Hope demands faith

Most traditional art

Pick the best materials, with a good vision, and enough skill to make something beautiful

Scrapfest

Pick **the right junk**, with a good vision, and enough skill to make something beautiful out of junk

God

Used ALL the junk to show the glory of God

Judas's betrayal. Peter's denial. Pilate's weakness. Jewish leaders' jealousy. Rome's cruelty. Satan's evil

Uses ALL the junk in our world and in our lives

trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword
Paul's sinful past shows the amazing grace of God

Nothing at all can stop the active and relentless love of God for His people

Sometimes He stops the junk

Often He USES the junk

This requires hope & faith

This present age of HOPE

Good and bad jumbled together

We are called to compassion and action

We know: all progress will be limited in this age

None of the bad can stop God's love

We have eager expectation for the age to come

Will be replaced by the age of GLORY



“Steel Rose”
by “A Smith in Mason”

Our situation

The indwelling Spirit gives us **joy**,
and his coming glory gives us **hope**,
but the interim suspense gives us **pain**.
Until we are with Christ → joy, hope, and pain
When He returns → unbounded joy!

Application

1) Set our HOPE on GLORY

“we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies” Romans 8:23

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33

Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world.” John 18:36

Remember: we live in the age of HOPE

2) Live with great HOPE today

HOPE in God’s unstoppable love in Christ

HOPE in God’s power to use EVERYTHING to increase joy in GLORY

HOPE in the coming age of GLORY

HOPE gives courage in uncertainty and difficulty

HOPE empowers bold self-sacrifice and self-giving

For some, sacrifice is not imposed on us. We must choose it, and it is commanded

3) Practice compassion and action, while pointing to GLORY

Holy Spirit is the ‘firstfruits’, promising full GLORY

Compassion and action are signs that point to full GLORY

→ Only for those who are in Christ

Christians should be the most HOPE-filled people!

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. What is the “junk” or trouble that erodes your HOPE?
2. In what way is it hard to have HOPE in future GLORY?
3. What troubles of today are the hardest to believe that God is working together for joy in GLORY?
4. How does HOPE in future GLORY empower you to self-sacrifice?
5. What sacrifices is God asking you to choose today?

Conversation Starters

How is hope different from wishful thinking?

What gives you true hope?