

October 2012 Newsletter – Romans 8

“For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” Romans 8:22

Christian growth really entails the development of the new man that was created in us at the moment of our faith in Jesus Christ. And it all began with the **holy seed** that was implanted in us. *“Now the parable is this: The **seed** is the word of God.” Luke 8:11 “But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every **seed** his own body.” 1 Corinthians 15:38 “Being born again, not of corruptible **seed**, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.” 1 Peter 1:23*

It is the seed that contains the life of whatever the species is that we are talking about. In the plant world the seed is planted in the ground, whereupon receiving the nourishment of sunlight, soil and water, it will be able to grow up into a mature, healthy plant giving its production as it is supposed to.

In the world of people it is the seed of the man that contains the life of a new human being, and once it is implanted in a mother's womb, where it can receive the nourishment that it needs, it grows and develops to the place of being a full term baby now ready to be delivered. And Paul uses this example to refer to Christ being formed in us. *“My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,” Galatians 4:19*

Even though the growth that it is a spiritual concept that is taking place inside of us, Paul said that he was experiencing the pains similar to human childbirth while waiting for Christ to be formed in them. It is after the baby is fully developed in its mother's womb, and then delivered, when we have a new human being in this life. And so he uses this embryonic concept to refer to the forming of Christ in us.

The word for **formed** is the orist passive subjunctive of *morphoo*, which deals with the changing of the inner essence of someone. Christ has his *morphe* and so do we! Christ's *morphe* existed in his human body, while he was physically alive and walking on the earth. And when he died, and his body lie in the tomb, his *morphe* was now in Hades. And when Christ was raised from the dead, so did his *morphe*. And when he received his resurrection body his *morphe* was now present in it. And now that he has ascended into heaven and was glorified his inner *morphe* is there.

So the believer's inner *morphe* is being changed, but into what? Whenever there is a change of something, there is always a goal toward which it is going. Such as tender shoots that springs forth from the ground. They may all look the same, especially from a distance, but each one is going toward its completion/maturity of what it's supposed to be, whether a tomato plant or a redwood tree!

And so it is with believer's in Christ. We have a *morphe*, and it is being changed. But unto what? Unto the *morphe* of Jesus Christ! He is the prototype after which we are all modeled. And this is what spiritual growth is all about. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:29* Our inner essence is being changed into conformity to the inner essence of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, for which we have been predestined by God!

And how it is being changed is by means of the dynamics of faith, the Word of God, and the filling of the Holy Spirit. These three concepts, coupled with going through various trials in life create a spiritual phenomena inside of us which transforms us in the inner man bringing us into conformity to Christ.

W. The Christian's pains. v.23

“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.” Romans 8:23 - ου μονον δε αλλα και αυτοι την απαρχην του πνευματος εχοντες και ημεις αυτοι εν εαυτοις στεναζομεν υιοθεσιαν απεκδεχομενοι την απολυτρωσιν του σωματος ημων.

“And not only they, but ourselves also,” - *ou monon de alla kai autoi*. The word **only** is *monos* and refers to something that is by itself, or stands alone. Paul is saying that it is not the creation by itself that is groaning, as it awaits the revealing of the sons of God, but us believers in Christ as well.

Most unbelievers really don't have much of an idea of what awaits them in the future. Some think they will be reincarnated, others think that they will float away somewhere into the universe, while others think that when you're dead that's the end if it all. Only those who have believed on Christ as their Savior experience this inward groaning in this life for the day when they will be set free from this body and receive an eternal, resurrection body.

“Which have the firstfruits of the Spirit,” - *ten aparchen tou pneumatos echontes*. The word for **have** is the present active participle of *echo*, which means to have and to hold as one's own possession, and as a continuing abiding principle of life. The Holy spirit was given to us at the moment of our salvation, he is with us now, he will never leave us – never, and he will be with us and in us for all eternity!

Firstfruits is the accusative singular of *aparchen* and should be rendered the firstfruit. The original idea was one of a proportionate gift of one's natural products, such as, livestock, crops, etc., or one's possessions, as an offering to God, or to a deity in one's culture. If one wanted to give an offering of something to God, then he would take the very first of the crop, or the very first animal that was born, and give it to the Lord. That was the firstfruit.

For example; Christ was the **firstfruit** from the dead, that is, Christ was the very first human being to be raised from the dead with an eternal, resurrection body. Which means that he was the the very first of this “crop”, if you will, of resurrected people. *“But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.”* 1 Corinthians 15:20 *“But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.”* 1 Corinthians 15:23 And, as in the matter of crops, etc., it means that the rest of the harvest, of the same kind, will be following.

But instead of man making a gift to God of the firstfruit of his harvest, God is giving to man, that is, to those who believe on his Son as their Savior, the gift of the Holy Spirit, who is the first of all the wonderful things he has in store for us in eternity, with the resurrection body as the first of them.

The Holy Spirit is also referred to as the earnest, or the deposit, of what is to come. *“Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”* Ephesians 1:14 When a person purchased something from a shop owner, and he was going to go some place else and return later on to pick it up, he would purchase the item, place it in a clay jar, seal it with wax, then the purchaser would place his signet ring on it signifying who owned it. The sealing prevented the contents from going out and pollutants from coming in. This is our sealing and redemption for the day when Christ returns to pick up what he purchased with his blood. *“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,”* Ephesians 1:13

“*Even we ourselves groan within ourselves,*” - *kai hemeis autoi en heautois stenaxomen*. As we have seen, *stenazo* meant to groan, to sigh, that is was an inward, unexpressed feeling of sorrow and weariness, a deep distress of the spirit. It isn't something that can easily be expressed in words, but more of a feeling, or sense, that one experiences deep down inside.

It could be said that it is a sense of restlessness, an inner sighing or longing, a feeling of sorrow in this life, a sense of being incomplete, of being out of place, that you don't belong here, a dissatisfaction because you're here in one place when you know deep down inside that you belong some place else, a lack of fulfillment, like something isn't right, that it's incomplete and you're waiting for your fulfillment and completion, which hasn't happened yet. It's a sense that regardless of how good it is here, it's not what you want, nor is it where you belong. It's not having a sense of belonging, because you have been given a glimpse, a foretaste, of what's to come and you know that's where you belong. And the groaning comes in because you're not there, nor are you what you were designed to be... yet.

“*Waiting for the adoption,*” - *huiiothesian apekdechomenoi*. The present middle participle of *apekdechomai* meant to await, or eagerly, expect the end of something. It expresses the attitude of someone who believes in and eagerly awaits for something. In the case of the Christian, it refers to the second advent of Christ, when he returns to earth, raises the dead, and gives to his people an eternal, resurrection body. The present active participle denotes that Paul, et al, were looking forward to this event each day of their lives – and so should we!

Adoption, *huiiothesian*, is literally the placing of a son. The word is not found in the Septuagint, but was found in Greek culture from around the second century BC and onward. Adoption was used by Greek families, when there was no heir to hand down the family name and line, business, or tradition, so that the family tradition, name and business could continue on.

When a son was adopted, he was formally presented to the family, and/or clan, his name was written down in their book, and he immediately entered into all rights, privileges and benefits that came with being a son. In his adoption, his placing into the family as a son, there was a formal ceremony, the legal aspect involved and being placed into his new position of responsibility, rights and benefits.

This is the word that is used when describing our adoption into God's family. And we need to look at our adoption from this perspective, and what it meant, rather than the present idea in today's society. With us there is the legal aspect of our adoption, there will be the formal ceremony when all this is finalized, there will be the all the rights, privileges and benefits that come with being God's sons, and there will be our being placed into our future roles and responsibilities in God's kingdom.

And this is where we get into a new body. If we are going to live forever with an eternal being and an eternal family, then we will have to have bodies that will live forever! And we will also have to have an eternal earth and heaven as well, which God will create when he creates a new heaven and new earth. And our future roles and responsibilities for us in God's celestial hierarchy have already been decided and we will be placed into our new positions as kings and priests.

And, as in the case of Greek families, when there was the day of their formal presentation and ceremony that came with being placed as a son into the family, so will be the day of our formal presentation to the Father and that will be when we have received our resurrection bodies! On that day, which we can refer to as the Day of Presentation, we will be presented before God the Father with all the glory he has given us in our new, eternal bodies.

“*The redemption of our body.*” - *ten apolutrosin tou somatos hemon*. We already have the redemption of our souls, which took place at the very moment of our faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, and something that we will never lose. **Once saved – always saved!**

So our souls are now ready to face an eternity with God, **but these present bodies aren't!** They still are cursed by sin, they still have an indwelling sin nature, they still have the problem of corruption and death, upon which they go back to the basic elements of the soil. So we are going to need an eternal body, with which are souls can dwell in eternally.

Apolutrosis is the intensified form of *lutrosis* and it meant to release someone on the receipt of ransom. It was used of slaves, prisoners of war and criminals condemned to death. There are three main ideas found in it: **one**, that a person is in bondage, **two**, that a ransom had to be paid, and **three**, that the person was set free.

The doctrine of the believer's redemption is very interesting and needs to be understood as to: how we're in bondage? What is our bondage? Who paid the ransom? How much was it? What will be set free? And when will it happen? Our bodies are in bondage, this was due to Adam's sin, Christ paid the ransom, the price was his life, our full redemption will be our bodies, and it will occur at the return of Christ to earth.

How we came to be in bondage, which is the state of all humanity, goes back to when Adam sinned against God and received a curse on, not only him, but all of Adam's progeny as well. When Adam sinned against God he acquired at that time a body subject to death and decay, which we all still possess today.

As to what is in bondage is our bodies. Even though born again Christians have new natures inside, their bodies are still subject to death and decay. As Paul said, “*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from [ek – out of] the body of this death?*” Romans 7:24

As to what is to be set free from this bandage to death and decay is our bodies, as Paul writes here, “*the redemption of our body.*” Romans 8:23b There is an intermediate state for all believers between physical death and the resurrection in which the believer will not have a body, but be a disembodied spirit awaiting a body. Some Christians believe that their souls be be living in the Paradise of Sheol awaiting the resurrection of the dead, while others believe that they will be living in the Paradise section of the **third heaven**. Paul said that he was caught up to the third heaven. “*I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the **third heaven.***” 2 Corinthians 12:2 By the way, the word caught up here is *harpazo*, which so many have incorrectly applied the word rapture, which comes from the Latin word rapio. It means to be caught up. If we begin with God's abode as the first heaven, and the angel's abode as the second heaven, then the third heaven would be under them.

Paul was not looking forward to this intermediate state, for it was a period in which he would be without a body. Humans do not have fulfillment as disembodied spirits, because they were created by God to be spirit, soul and body. “*For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven: If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.*” 2 Corinthians 5:1-4

Who is our **Redeemer**? Jesus Christ! *“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,”* Luke 1:68 *“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:”* Romans 3:23,24 *“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:”* Colossians 1:14

How much was the ransom that he had to pay? His life! *“Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”* Matthew 20:28 *“For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.”* Mark 10:45 *“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.”* Titus 2:14 *“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:”* 1 Peter 1:18,19 *“Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”* Hebrews 9:12

Awaiting our redemption. Paul stated in Romans 8:23, *“And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”*

God could have given us new bodies at salvation just as easily as he created a new man inside of us. But he chose not to for several reasons. One is our **spiritual growth** consisting of growing in faith, in the Word, in grace, and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Another reason is, because of the **angelic conflict**, to see **what we will choose**. We have been given free will, and in life we will be confronted with many choices, so we will be tested to see what we will choose. Will we choose our will over God's will? Will we choose to do our thing, but not the Father's plan? Will we choose for Bible doctrine and the spiritual life, or will we choose for the world and the flesh?

Another reason is so that we can be conformed to the image of Christ. *“For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.”* Romans 8:29 It takes the renewing of the mind, which comes under the operation of the spiritual life dynamic, consisting of the teaching of Bible doctrine, operating in the filling of the Holy Spirit, the exercise of faith in the Word and faith in the Father, and trials whereby our faith is tested, that we can become conformed to the image of Christ. *“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”* Romans 12:2

Another reason is so we will have the opportunity **to glorify the Father**, as the son glorified the Father here on earth. *“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”* Matthew 5:16 *“That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Romans 15:6

Another reason is so that we may have the time and opportunity to **accumulate rewards** for ourselves that will endure throughout eternity! *“And whosoever shall give to drink unto one of these little ones a cup of cold water only in the name of a disciple, verily I say unto you, he shall in no wise lose his reward.”* Matthew 10:42 *“For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works.”* Matthew 16:27 *“If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.”* 1 Corinthians 3:14

X. Our redemption is our hope. v.24

“For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?” Romans 8:24 τη γαρ ελπιδι εσωθημεν ελπις δε βλεπομενη ουκ εστιν ελπις ο γαρ βλεπει τις τι και ελπίζει.

“For we are saved by hope:” - *te gar elpidi esothemen*. Now when we get into this matter of **hope**, we will see that the hope that the entire OT and NT were talking about was not some disembodied state, but the resurrection of the dead and the new bodies that God has promised us all. The word **hope**, *elpis*, speaks of having the confident expectation that something good awaits us in the future.

Actually, there are two kinds of hope. **Subjective hope** is having the inner confidence of good things awaiting us in the future, not because we are optimistic in our outlook, but based entirely upon what God has promised he would do. And then there is **objective hope**, where, based upon what God is going to do, good things will be awaiting us in the future, regardless of what we may think, or feel, at any given moment.

Now Paul tells us what our **hope** is. It is the resurrection and our receiving eternal bodies! We see such things as: the glory that is to be revealed in us, waiting for our adoption, the redemption of our body, the revealing of the sons of God, all creation waiting for this event. This is our hope. Not that we will live forever in these bodies, nor that we will live in some disembodied state, but that we will have an eternal, glorified body like Christ's!

“But hope that is seen is not hope:” - *elpis de blepomene ouk estin elpis*. By understanding what hope is all about, we will be more secure in what is presently unseeable and untouchable and be able to strengthen our faith. A common expression, which is totally inaccurate is, “I'll believe it, when I see it”! Or, “seeing is believing.”. Yet seeing is not believing and believing is not seeing.

There are three modes of perceiving reality. **Rationalism** – where we reason things out with our minds. **Empiricism** – where we perceive reality by one or more of the five sense, of which is seeing with the eyes. And **pisticism** – where we perceive reality by faith alone. The concept of **hope belongs to the world of faith**.

Hope is something you have, but not in your possession! It is something you're going to get, but do not have it yet! Hope **always** deals with the **future**, never the **present!** Hope **always** deals with the **unseen**, never the **seen!** Hope speaks of something that is **real**, but not **realized!** Hope refers to the **unrealized**, but not the **unreal!** And hope **always** deals with that which is **good**, never that which is **bad**. Despair deals with that which is bad happening to you in the future.

Subjective hope is where believers experience an inner positive mental attitude that something good is going to happen to them in the future. But it is based upon the knowledge that God is going to do something for them in the future! Which is **objective hope**. Now we are able to have this inner confidence of good awaiting us in the future, subjective hope, only by the exercise of faith in what God has promised to do for us! And the receiving of the new body is just but one of his promises to us.

Now God is the source of **hope**, and this hope comes to us through the filling of the Holy Spirit, as we exercise faith in his Word! “*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*” Romans 15:13 NIV

Y. Waiting for our redemption. v.25

“But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Romans 8:25 - ει δε ο ου βλεπομεν ελπίζομεν δι υπομονης απεκδεχομεθα. “But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.” NIV

*“But if we hope for that we see not,” - ei de ho ou blepomen elpizomen. Both verbs **hoping** and **not seeing** are in the present active indicative, which denote actions that are currently going on in the believer's soul. Combined with the first class condition of *if, if it's true and it is*, we then have, “But if we are hoping, and it's true we are, for what we are not seeing”.*

So many believers today are hoping for the wrong things: to get married, or to have children, to make money, get rich, buy things, go places, have fun, acquire toys, gratify their lusts, etc., etc.. All things they see around them in life, or on TV. When they should be hoping for the things they cannot see! Things such as: the return of Christ, the resurrection from the dead, their new bodies, etc..

As Paul wrote in Colossians 3:1,2, *“If ye then be risen with Christ, **seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.**”* Or as I put it in an expanded translation, *“Therefore, since you have been raised from the dead in union with the Messiah, **keep on seeking the things above, where the Messiah presently exists at the right hand of God. Keep on directing the entire intellectual activity of your soul, (bound to the human body), toward the things above, not toward the things upon the earth.**”* Colossians 3:1,2

*“Then do we with patience wait for it.” - di'hupomones apekdechometha. The present middle indicative of *apekdechomai* meant to expectantly wait for the end of something, to be waiting for something to be over, or fulfilled, or completed. But combined with *hupomones*, which meant to be enduring a bad situation at the same time, it meant to be enduring a bad situation while we are waiting the end of something, which is going to be replaced by something better.*

Hupomones did mean that one was in a bad situation and there was no other recourse than to just endure it. It won't go away, you can't avoid it, so all you can do is endure it. But it also had the idea that the way that God wants us to endure it, (and them), is not by “gritting our teeth”, but by utilizing the spiritual grace provision he has provided for us, which consists of: being filled with the Holy Spirit, exercising our faith in the promises and doctrines of God's Word, prayer, etc..

We tend to forget that this world is not our home. We live in a world controlled by the devil, filled with demons, people with old sin natures, having bodies of corruption, as well as old sin natures ourselves also, and living in a world where sin death and corruption rules! This obviously creates all sorts of problems for us resulting in our souls being under constant pressure. Which is why the concept of endurance is what we will need to be living by during our walk as pilgrims in this world.

The Christian's attitude is to be one of expectation of the end or consummation of God's plan. Where at Christ's return and the resurrection we will receive our public sonship and enter into immortality with our new bodies. *Apekdechomai* didn't look forward to the completion of just one aspect of God's plan, such as, second advent, the rapture, or Armageddon, etc., but to **the end of it all!** All that plus the new heavens, new earth, the new Jerusalem. **Our attitude of expectation is to be looking forward to the eternal state!** *“But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells.”* 2 Peter 3:13

Z. The ministry of the Holy Spirit on our behalf. v.26

“Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.” Romans 8:26 - *ωσαυτως δε και το πνευμα συναντιλαμβανεται ταις ασθενειαις ημων το γαρ τι προσευξομεθα καθο δει ουκ οιδαμεν αλλ αυτο το πνευμα υπερεντυγχανει υπερ ημων στεναγμοις αλαλητοις.*

“Likewise” - hosautos de kai. Hosautos is translated as: in the same way, likewise, similarly and also. It tells us that Paul is going to add to what he has been saying about our trials and tribulations that we go through in this life, as we await the Lord's return to earth.

He's been saying that we are to face our trials and tribulations with hope, the hope of our future glory with Christ, which comforts, strengthens and enables us to endure what we're we're going through. But now he's bringing in the idea that we are not just left with hope and faith to face our trials, but also the Holy Spirit, who has been given us to comfort and strengthen us, helps us and assists us in our prayers.

Likewise connects this verse back to verse 16 where Paul is talking about the ministry of the Holy Spirit to us. *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:” Romans 8:16* He then digresses away from the subject in verses 18-25, where he goes into the area of talking about the sufferings we and the creation go through in this life and how important hope is in this.

Now in v.26 he goes back to the role of the Holy Spirit. He shows that we are not left with just our faith, which gives us hope and assurance, but we have the help of the Holy Spirit, who helps us in our weaknesses and prays for us, as well as, giving us the assurance of our salvation, leading us in our daily lives, helping us in our decisions, motivating us, enlightening our minds, giving us the desire to do the Father's will, as well as actually doing it, and so many other things.

*“The Spirit also helpeth our infirmities:” - to pneuma sunantilambanetai tais astheneiais hemon. To pneuma, **the Spirit** with the definite article, of course, refers to **the Holy Spirit**. The word *astheneia* meant to be without strength, and can be rendered: infirmity, feebleness, weakness, etc.. Basically it meant the inability to produce in any given area.*

Infirmities, as the KJV has it, primarily means weaknesses. But they are not necessarily sinful in and of themselves. There is a difference between personal weaknesses and sins. Our weaknesses may lead us to sin, but they are not necessarily sinful themselves. There are many things that contribute to us being weak in various areas of our lives, but all of them are due to the original sin of Adam and Eve. The genetics of our parents, the environment we were raised in, the OSN nature trait of our father, personal experiences in life – all of these contribute to our many weaknesses. These affect us in our relationship to God, to others, and to our living our own unique spiritual life God has given us.

Antilambanomai meant to help, to take up a matter, to enter into an alliance with someone, to come to the aid of someone. But our word here has another preposition, sum, prefixed to it making it *sunantilambanomai* showing that a person is not doing something **for** someone, but **with** someone! **This tells us that the Holy Spirit not only comes to the aid of believers, but with the believer, as he or she goes through whatever it is they are going through, because he is in union with them!** This tells us that the Holy Spirit comes to our aid in the midst of our weaknesses, and especially in the midst of our weaknesses, to help us be able to go on and perform God's will for our lives, even in our prayer life before the Father!