



Nothing Can Separate Us: Romans Chapters 7-8

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Group Leader Notes

Welcome to week 3 in our series, *Grit and Grace: Paul's Letter to the Romans*. In week 1 we learned to pursue God's vision will require grit and grace. In week 2 we learned that through Jesus' death on the cross we are justified, forgiven, and receive grace. Today we are going to discuss the question of suffering. In fact, many walk away from faith because we can't understand how a good, loving God would allow suffering, pain, and heartache. I want to help us make sense of this question of suffering.

Questions: Why does a good God allow suffering? Why do we experience pain and heartache, hardship and trials?

Bottom Line: God doesn't promise we won't experience suffering, but in our suffering, he will walk with us through it.

Memory Verse: Romans 8:38

Nothing can separate us from the love of God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Take Home Message: Romans 8:35-39

³⁵ *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?* ³⁶ *As it is written:*

*"For your sake we face death all day long;
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."*^[i]

³⁷ *No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.* ³⁸ *For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,^[k] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers,* ³⁹ *neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

Other Scripture References:

Romans 7:7-8a, 14-15, 24-25

Romans 8:1-2, 9-10, 18, 28, 31, 34-35, 38-39

Group Discussion

Begin in prayer before reading and discussing the text.

1. Pastor Joshua began the message with a couple at Grace who had been married for decades. The secret to their marriage is that they dance together every day. Consider your closest relationships (e.g., spouse, family, friends, God).
 - What are the habits and practices that you do to nurture the various relationships throughout your life?
2. Read Romans 7:7-8a:

⁷ What shall we say, then? Is the law sinful? Certainly not! Nevertheless, I would not have known what sin was had it not been for the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."^[b] ⁸ But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of coveting.

 - What do you think Paul means when he uses the word "coveting" here, and how do you relate to this?
3. Read Romans 8:9-10

⁹ You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. ¹⁰ But if Christ is in you, then even though your body is subject to death because of sin, the Spirit gives life^[a] because of righteousness.

 - How do you experience the Holy Spirit? Give some specific examples.
 - How do you know it is the Spirit that is leading you in a particular direction or decision, or whether it is your own personal desire?
4. Pastor Joshua shared photos of 13 individuals who were baptized at Heart Pond in Chelmsford this past summer.
 - What thoughts were running through your mind during the baptisms?
 - Describe your experience with baptism.
 - If anyone would like to be baptized, we can help you notify your Campus Pastor, and you can visit www.grace.org/baptism
5. God is always with us, so we do not have to suffer alone. We were meant to extend our love and care to others experiencing hardship, tragedy, and hurt. Spend a few minutes thinking about someone you can reach out to this week. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.

Let's Pray: Ephesians 3:17b-19

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.