

Musing #60: Romans 8:14–39

Today, we continue our study of Romans Chapter 8, focusing on discerning individuals within our churches and communities who may profess Christianity but lack genuine belief.

Many individuals acquire religious doctrines and, as the author of Hebrews observed, experience a “taste” of God’s power and the illumination of God’s word. However, they often fail to attain the fullness of a valid, consistent, and trusting faith.

Hebrews 6:4-8 For it is impossible to bring back to repentance those who were once enlightened—those who have experienced the good things of heaven and shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the power of the age to come— and who then turn away from God. It is impossible to bring such people back to repentance; by rejecting the Son of God, they themselves are nailing him to the cross once again and holding him up to public shame. When the ground soaks up the falling rain and bears a good crop for the farmer, it has God’s blessing. But if a field bears thorns and thistles, it is useless. The farmer will soon condemn that field and burn it.

Faith includes a “mind set” that leads to the resetting of how we think, choose, and act— **“let this mind be in you”** and **“set your affections on things above.”**

A mindset on the flesh is impacted by the world, the flesh, and the devil that can deceive us to fully trust in and focus on—Money / Power / Pleasure / Vanity / Significance.

Men and women who have left the past are learning to focus more on God, the coming Kingdom, and those things Paul addressed in his letter to the Philippians in 4:8, **Whatever things are... true... honest... just... pure... lovely... of good report... think on these things.**

Ray Stedman wrote... *If we remember who we are, by an absolute psychological certainty we will start acting like who we are. When we do, we will find there is power available to say no to the flesh, to say yes to the Spirit, and to walk in a way that glorifies God.* This power is a function of grace by the work of the Holy Spirit.

14-18 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. So you have not received a spirit that makes you fearful slaves. Instead, you received God’s Spirit when he adopted you as his own children. Now we call him, “Abba, Father.” For his Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God’s children. If we are His children, we are also heirs, fellow heirs with Christ, if we really suffer with him so that we can also be glorified with him. I believe that the present suffering is nothing compared to the coming glory that is going to be revealed in us.

Many newer translations say “revealed to us” in verse 18. Only the KJV says more meaningfully — **revealed “in” us**.

2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow (suffering) **works repentance** (change).... **but the sorrow of the world works death.**

2 Timothy 3:1-5 Understand that the last days will be dangerous times. People will be selfish and love money. They will be the kind of people who brag and who are proud. They will slander others, and they will be disobedient to their parents. They will be ungrateful, unholy, unloving, contrary, and critical. They will be without self-control and brutal, and they won't love what is good. They will be people who are disloyal, reckless, and conceited. They will love pleasure instead of loving God. They will look like they are religious but deny God's power. Avoid people like this.

Luke 9:23 Take up your cross daily...

Question—What is our cross? Oswald Chambers says —“**Doing the will of God!**”

We sing the old hymn..... "Take my life....and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee."

Most prefer it to read... "Take my life and let it be!!!... (period)."

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our present troubles are small and won't last very long. Yet they produce for us a glory that vastly outweighs them and will last forever!

There is something extremely positive that God is working out through our problems. Problems have eternal value. At Rapha we interviewed many counselors, Psychologists, and Psychiatrists. I was talking with one of the potential Psychiatrists. He was questioning our treatment philosophy and how we integrated clinical and spiritual issues. He said, *"When you confront spiritual belief systems you become a little too intrusive."* I told him, *"God clearly makes it a point to be intrusive in our lives."* He couldn't agree to that. The Holy Spirit is at work in us to make changes in our life with how we think and believe.

Romans 8:19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

The veil will be removed and we will be revealed to the universe. We live on a fallen planet, and all of creation is under the 2nd Law of Thermodynamics—everything is decaying.

Verse 23, **"we believers also groan."** Remember, this was written by a man who had been • beaten • stoned • chained • shipwrecked • jailed and • starved. Jesus taught...**"In the world you will have tribulation."**

I Thessalonians. 3:2-4 We sent Timothy to strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith, and to keep you from being shaken by the troubles you were going through. But you know that we are destined for such troubles. Even while we were

with you, we warned you that troubles would soon come—and they did, as you well know.

1 Thessalonians is the first book (chronologically) in the New Testament books. The early church was taught about suffering and groaning, verses 3:2-4. We're too careful with new believers. A child learns to walk by getting up on his feet and then falling on his face. But does that stop them? No! They want to walk.

24 We were saved in hope. If we see what we hope for, that isn't hope. Who hopes for what they already see? But if we hope for what we don't see, we wait for it with patience.

2 Corinthians 5:1-3 For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands. We grow weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our heavenly bodies like new clothing. For we will put on heavenly bodies; we will not be spirits without bodies.

26 And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

He knows our needs just as we know our children's needs better than they do, which brings us to a full picture of God's all-powerful sovereignty. A great verse.

28 We know that God works all things together for good for the ones who love God, for those who are called according to his purpose.

"All things!" We must believe by faith that we are not just having some bad luck and "unfortunate circumstances." The ultimate reason for everything that touches us is for a very important purpose. Those little words "all things" seem so insignificant. Somebody hurts us—badly. We think, that's not from God, that's just old so-and-so who tends to be kind of mean and unkind. But we must learn to see God in it—a "re-thinking." There are many storms in life. Some are in our path. Whether the house is built on sand or on rock, the Bible teaches that neither house was spared the storm. See Matthew 7:24-27.

We forget it was God who led the nation of Israel through the wilderness for 40 years. Why didn't He do it in 10 years—or even 10 months? Because becoming dependent upon someone else's strength, by faith, takes a long time.

29 We know this because God knew them in advance, and he decided in advance that they would be conformed to the image of his Son. That way his Son would be the first of many brothers and sisters. Those who God decided in advance would be conformed to his Son, he also called. Those whom he called, he also made righteous. Those whom he made righteous, he also glorified.

31 So what are we going to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He didn't spare his own Son but gave him up for us all. Won't he also freely give us all things with him? Who will bring a charge against God's elect people? It is

God who acquits them. Who is going to convict them? It is Christ Jesus who died, even more, who was raised, and who also is at God's right side. It is Christ Jesus who also pleads our case for us. Who will separate us from Christ's love? Will we be separated by trouble, or distress, or harassment, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword?

God is 100% for us. He is worthy of our trust!!! We will be swimming against the world's stream and its upstream all the way.

36 Paul wrote, we are being put to death all day long for your sake. We are treated like sheep for slaughter. But in all these things we win a sweeping victory through the one who loved us. I'm convinced that nothing can separate us from God's love in Christ Jesus our Lord: not death or life, not angels or rulers, not present things or future things, not powers or height or depth, or any other thing that is created.

There is a little tract that was written over one hundred years ago. It brings the reality of being a child of God into a responsible focus and relates it to our daily lives. It is very short and can be downloaded on the link below. The title tells it all—*Others May... You Cannot!*

<https://www.cslewisinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/OthersMayYouCannot.pdf>