

CONFIDENT LIVING IN THREATENING TIMES

Romans 8:18-28

We live under the biggest threat the people of the United States (and the world) has felt for almost 20 years (since Sept 11, 2001). Yet those who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, in the family of God, can live with a hopeful confidence that should be refreshing and life giving.

So how are you processing, as Jesus' disciple, these threatening times?

Let's get STARTED – Encourage the members of your group to share the concerns, challenges, threats, and even losses they are experiencing these days. Ask and share with one another, "How have these days impacted your walk with the Lord Jesus?"

Let's Explore in the WORD

Take some time with Romans 8:28-28 (New Living Translation below). Read, observe truths and lessons, and discuss what you hear the Holy Spirit teaching through the Apostle Paul. What hope and confidence do you draw from this (and other passages which come to mind).

Romans 8:18 I consider that what we suffer at this present time cannot be compared at all with the glory that is going to be revealed to us. ¹⁹All of creation waits with eager longing for God to reveal his children. ²⁰For creation was condemned to lose its purpose, not of its own will, but because God willed it to be so. Yet there was the hope ²¹that creation itself would one day be set free from its slavery to decay and would share the glorious freedom of the children of God. ²²For we know that up to the present time all of creation groans with pain, like the pain of childbirth. ²³But it is not just creation alone which groans; we who have the Spirit as the first of God's gifts also groan within ourselves as we wait for God to make us his children and ^(a) set our whole being free. ²⁴For it was by hope that we were saved; but if we see what we hope for, then it is not really hope. For who of us hopes for something we see? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶In the same way the Spirit also comes to help us, weak as we are. For we do not know how we ought to pray; the Spirit himself pleads with God for us in groans that words cannot express. ²⁷And God, who sees into our hearts, knows what the thought of the Spirit is; because the Spirit pleads with God on behalf of his people and in accordance with his will.

²⁸We know that in all things God works for good with those who love him, ^(a) those whom he has called according to his purpose.

Let's Prioritize APPLICATION

Share ideas of how to encourage those you may know who are struggling in these days. How are you reaching out? How could you? What steps might you take together as a group?

