

At The Crack of Dawn

Romans 8.26-39

EXPLORING THE SERMON

- * What did you hear?
- * What did you think or feel about what you heard?
- * What is one thing you can take away from the sermon this week?

KEY VERSES

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

REFLECTION

Acceleration and dread are two words commonly used to describe the times we live in today. We often feel like the world is accelerating away from us, and we live with an apprehension about where life is headed. And since the pandemic, many of us have experienced time with a warped quality. **How do you experience this? Do you find it difficult to live out your faith in these scary and unstable times?** In this passage, Paul helps us move into the unknown with confidence and joy. In doing so, he affirms something about the present, past, and future:

Present: When we don't know what to pray, the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness and intercedes for us (v. 26). As Christians, we know not just in our head but in our heart that every day God is at work to bring ultimate good, though not necessarily for our comfort or ease. **How does it help us not to be intimidated or cynical knowing right now that when we pray, the Holy Spirit intercedes and God is working out all things for our good?**

Past: As Christians, we can be optimists because in eternity past, God knew us and decided how He wanted to form us each into the character of Jesus. God is Lord of all of our days, and what he started in your life He is going to finish (v 29). God does make it clear, though, that He does want our involvement (v. 28). We are invited into a relationship with the One who wants to finish what he started with us. **How does this give you hopeful expectation for another day for God to work his purpose in your life?**

Future: While we don't know what is ahead of us, we can be assured that nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus (v. 38-39). Whether it's a fear of being separated from those whom we love, or fretting about tomorrow, we can live with a profound calm and an expectant hope that has us rising at the crack of dawn, eager for a new day! **This week, be intentionally aware of how God hears your prayers, works for your good, has a plan for your life, and how nothing can separate you from his love. Share your reflections with your group or others.**