

Jesus is Greater Than the Problems of This World Bible Study

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How do we trust in God's goodness and sovereignty in the face of the world's problems? How do we trust that Jesus is greater than the problems of the world?

We look to God's promises in Scripture. Paul addresses these kinds of concerns (and many more) in the beautiful words of Romans 8. Paul begins by contrasting life in the flesh from life in the Spirit (vv. 1-17). He then addresses head-on the problem of suffering and corruption in the world and how Jesus is greater (vv. 18-30). Finally, Paul says that God's gift of His Son Jesus secures for us these promises and reminds us that we are, in fact, conquerors ourselves (in Christ, of course) over the problems of the world (vv. 31-39).

Read Romans 8:1-17

1. How is life in the Spirit different from life in the flesh?
2. What do other Scriptures teach us about how to live life in the Spirit (e.g., Gal 5:16-26)?
3. How could living by the Spirit instead of the flesh change the way we see some (or all) of our problems?

Read Romans 8:18-30

1. Paul says, "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is going to be revealed to us" (v. 18). What are some of the sufferings you have faced? What does reflecting on this verse tell you about future glory?
2. If creation will be set free from bondage to decay and be restored, how much more will human beings, the ones who were created to have dominion over creation, likewise receive freedom and restoration? How does this help give you hope? What are some things you hope for?
3. One of the more well-known verses of encouragement in the Bible comes in verse 28: "We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God, who are called according to his purpose." How does God's promise of working all things together for our good help remind you that Jesus is greater than the problems of this world?

4. Paul goes on and says that this work of good by God for us is to conform us to the image of Jesus (his Son). When you are struggling with the problems of the world, do you often reflect on how you are being conformed to Jesus' image? Do you reflect on how Jesus, too, suffered? Read Hebrews 4:14-16. How does this encourage you and help you trust that Jesus is greater than the problems of this world?

Read Romans 8:31-39

1. If God did not spare His own Son, why do we sometimes feel that we ask for things that are too big? Anything God could give us is less than what He has already given us. Does this change how or what you will ask for God to do?
2. Whether it's persecution, or affliction, or any other problem of the world, nothing can separate us from Christ if we have committed our lives to Him. Instead, Paul says we are conquerors through him who loved us. So despite the challenges of the world, God the Father gives victory to those who trust in His Son. What challenges do you face to trusting Him? How does Romans 8 give you encouragement and instruction in how to overcome the problems of the world?

Concluding Reflections

1. Read 2 Corinthians 4. How does Paul's discussion there of glory and suffering relate to Romans 8? What additional encouragement do you gain from that passage?
2. We have only looked at a few of the many, many passages in Scripture that teach us that Jesus is greater than the problems of this world. What concerns, questions, or fears do you still have? Take those to the Lord in prayer, remembering from Romans 8 that the Spirit helps us in our weakness (Rom 8:26-27), bringing our deepest emotions, fears, and thoughts to God the Father even when we don't have words.