

Groaning Prayer

Romans 8:26-27

Romans 8:26-27

²⁶ Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. ²⁷ And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

Suffering and Groaning

- Suffering is never easy!
 - Causes: persecution, illness, relationships
 - Results: stress, pain, groaning
- Christians and Creation suffer together (Rom 8:17-25)
- Suffering leads to a groaning-type-of-praying
- But how do we pray?

Questions about praying

- Is there a “right” kind of praying?
- Our prayers have shortcomings...
 - Lack of insight, selfishness, anger, vague
- How do we pray, or ask for God to intervene?
- Many questions, but God provided help

Help in prayer: The Holy Spirit

- The Holy Spirit comes to our rescue
- Given to help us also in our prayers
- We are not alone

We have God the Holy Spirit
helping us to pray

Truths about God

1. God's knowledge: He knows us

- We are weak, and God knows it (v26)
- God knows that we struggle with groaning prayers
- God is all-knowing (Ps 139 - *You have searched me, LORD, and you know me... you perceive my thoughts from afar... you are familiar with all my ways... ⁴ Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely*)
- God also knows his own plans and purposes (2 Cor 12:7)

2. God's provision: He provides help

- The Spirit is given to us to help us in our weakness (8:26-27a)
- God does not leave us as orphans (John 14:18)
- He is our Helper (John 14:16 – “advocate”)
- He intercedes for us (like Jesus - 1 John 2:1-2)
- He uses His own mysterious “groaning”

3. God's will: He aligns our prayers

- The Spirit prays according to God's will (v27)...
- God searches our hearts
- God knows the mind of the Spirit
- Therefore, the Spirit intercedes for us according to God's will

The story of Job

- Suffering in the extreme!
- Job stayed focused on God, but also praying “wrong” prayers
- Given some insight into God’s creation (Job 38-41)
- Job confessed he had spoken without insight (Job 42:1-6)

Response

- Suffering is real
- Groaning prayers are good, but require trust in God
- The kind of prayers are important
 - Not: O Lord, make my life smooth and nice
 - But: O Lord, let your will be done

Comfort

- God knows you and what you are going through
- God provided the Holy Spirit to help us
- Even weak/“wrong” prayers are heard by God

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.**

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

**For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for
ever.**

Amen