

Describe a time when the knowledge of God's loving control was a source of strength and comfort to you.

What guarantee do we have that God will fulfil his promises to us (v. 31 – 34)?

Notice the dangers Paul says we face in this life (v. 35 – 39). When have dangers and problems caused you to question God's love?

How do the powerful enemies that threaten us actually reveal the strength and depth of God's love (v. 37 – 39)?

God's saving work is constant in our lives. How might the following sentences be a helpful summary of the classic Christian understanding of salvation encompassing justification, sanctification and glorification: **I have been saved. I am being saved. I shall be saved.**

Something to do NOW

Thank God for his love, present help and promises of future glory.

Something to do LATER

Picture yourself on the other side of death: you no longer struggle with sin, physical or emotional weakness, or any other problem.

As you look back on your life, what do you see?

For further study read:

Philippians 1 v. 21 – 22; 2 v. 12 – 13

Hebrews 12 v. 1 – 3

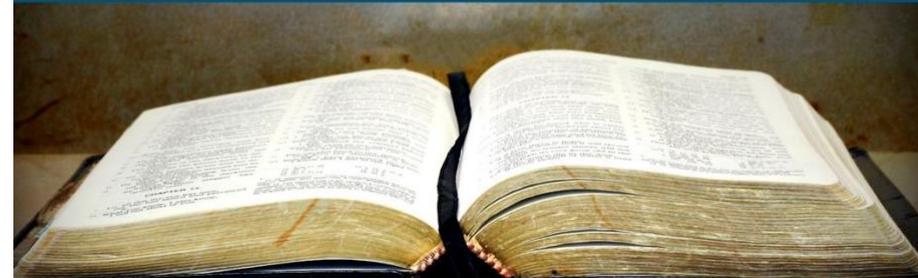
Revelation 4 v. 1 – 5 v. 14

Now use the opportunity to PRAY

Salendine Nook Baptist Church

Romans 8 v. 18 – 39

Wednesday Bible Study



In our Bible Studies we will be using a booklet from 'A Life Builder Bible Study' series. Our overall theme for these studies is: **CHRISTIAN BELIEFS**. The studies were originally written by Stephen Eyre, but we will be modifying them in order that they become more usable for both home study and Church study.

These studies give us the opportunity to study the Bible in a greater depth and to reflect on what it is saying to us.

If you are unable to be with us in church and have decided that you will be doing the studies from home, it is suggested that you do the study on a Wednesday morning, for an hour, starting at 10.30am. Get yourself a tea or coffee, a Bible, pen and paper (for any notes you want to make) and begin studying.

We do hope that you enjoy the studies that have been produced!

Knowing what we believe is foundational to a healthy relationship with God and others. These studies on Christian Beliefs explore what Christians need to understand about some vital topics: **God, Christ, The Holy Spirit, God's Word, human nature, salvation, the church and the 'last things'**.

Having a good grasp of these beliefs will equip us to make sense of the world we live in, strengthen our assurance of our own identity in Christ and direct us to a life of integrity.

Some Thoughts To Help You While You Study

The purpose of the study is:

To realise that the suffering of this present age is merely a prelude to a glorious future.

The final stage of our salvation is **Glorification**. God will one day complete his work in us and the rest of creation. We will be fully renewed in the image of Christ. We will have resurrection bodies, and we will live in a re-created heaven and earth with Christ forever.

Paul uses the metaphors of slavery, child-birth and adoption to portray the battles we face in life. Our hope of glory can strengthen us to keep on resisting sin and live in holiness. Runners who have hope of finishing continue to run. Runners who have no hope drop out of the race.

In **v. 22** Paul spoke of creation groaning; in **v. 23** he said we ourselves groan inwardly. Here he makes the startling claim that the Spirit groans in prayer for us, especially since we don't know how to properly pray for ourselves and others.

God's purpose is to make us like his Son, who fully reflects his image. Scripture teaches two things that Christians are to affirm. The first is that God is Lord of all, and nothing happens without his knowledge and guidance. Second, Scripture is clear that God is not the author of evil. It is not clear how these two truths fit together. Nevertheless, it is important to make the distinction. God never asks us to be glad about bad things, believing that his good purpose will somehow be accomplished. As believers we can take comfort that God is in control of our lives and that nothing that happens to us is not being used by him to make us like Jesus.

God has given his Son's life for ours. If he has done that, then we can be assured that nothing is more important to God than our salvation. When bad things happen to us, we are sometimes tempted to question God's love. Paul doesn't deny that such things will happen, but he gives us strong assurance that they cannot separate us from God's love.

A Place To Make Some Short Notes:

STUDY 9 THE BEST IS YET TO COME

Whether your life has been relatively free of trouble or full of pain, there comes a point when you begin to feel there has to be more to this life – somewhere. Several years ago some commercials summarised a popular attitude: '**You only go around once in your life, so grab all the gusto you can get**'. Such an approach may sound attractive, but it isn't real. Ultimately, we become frustrated as we find that some pleasures are beyond our reach or fail to live up to our expectations. The Bible presents a different perspective towards life. The good things we experience now are just a taste of what is to come. And the suffering we see and feel encourages us to live in anticipation of Christ's return.

PERSONAL REFLECTION: *When you think of life beyond the grave, what comes to mind? What experiences cause you to reflect on the limitations of this life?*

God has delivered us from condemnation of sin through justification and has given us the power to wrestle with sin by means of sanctification. In addition he wants us to anticipate and aspire to a greater experience of freedom in heaven on the other side of death. This final state of God's victory over sin is, in classic Christian teaching, called **Glorification**.

Read Romans 8 v. 18 – 27

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

How does Paul describe the suffering that we (*and the rest of creation*) experience during the present time (**Romans 8 v. 18 – 25**)?

What hope does Paul offer us in the midst of our suffering (**Romans 8 v. 18 – 25**)? How does the hope of future glory encourage you when you are suffering?

Paul speaks of waiting eagerly (**v. 19**) and waiting patiently (**v. 25**). How can these two ideas be reconciled?

How does the Spirit help us during our present sufferings, groanings and weakness (**v. 26 – 27**)?

Now Read Romans 8 v. 28 – 39

What is God's good purpose for us (**v. 29 – 30**)? What steps has God taken in order to fulfil that purpose?

Romans 8 v. 28 is often misread. What is the difference between God '**working in all things**' (*the better reading*) and '**causing all things**' (*the conventional misreading*) for the good of those who love him?