

**DESIDERATA<sup>1</sup>**  
**GOOD GRIEF: HANDLING LIFE'S HURTS**  
**ALDERWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**Romans 8:18-39**

**BIG IDEA: THE CHRISTIAN COMES WITH A BOMBPROOF WARRANTY**

*We are not necessarily doubting that God will do the best for us. We are wondering how painful the best will turn out to be.—C. S. Lewis*

- I. SOME THINGS LOOK LIKE THEY ARE BROKEN (VERSES 18-26)
- A. BROKEN THINGS
1. Broken Me
- Present sufferings
    - 1915: ***The Turks** slaughtered or expelled hundreds of thousands of Christians....In 1923, Istanbul's Greek Christian population was around 400,000; today, it may be only 4,000.* (Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*, Oxford University Press, NY, 2002, 170)
  - Eagerly waiting
    - *When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don't throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer.* (**Corrie Ten Boom**)
  - Groaning
    - Quadriplegic **Joni Erickson** says, *Sometimes life is so hard for me that I would rather disappear. I'm not talking about suicidal thoughts. But I have days when I think, "I've written a bunch of books. I've encouraged people. God, you've used my wheelchair. My life has had impact on a few people. Can I go home now? Please, can I come home now? I'm tired of struggling with sin. I'm tired of prying the world's suction cups off of my heart."* (Dave Goetz interview with Joni, "Thriving with Limitations," *Leadership*, Winter 1996, 67-68)
  - Hoping
  - Weakness
2. Broken World
- Eagerly waiting
  - Groaning
  - Bondage to decay
- B. WHISPERS OF WHOLENESS
1. Firstfruits of the Spirit
2. Holy Spirit intercession
- *It is impossible that any ill should happen to the man who is beloved of the Lord. Ill to him is **no ill, but only good in a mysterious form.** Losses enrich him, sickness is his medicine, reproach is his honour, and death his gain.—**Charles Spurgeon***
  - *There is no situation so chaotic that God cannot, from that situation, create something that is surpassingly good. He did it at creation. He did it at the cross. He is doing it today. —**Bishop Moule***
3. The glory that is to be revealed in us:
- **2 Corinthians 4:17**, *For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.*
  - Adoption of sons

<sup>1</sup> *Desideratum: Something considered necessary or highly desirable.*

- Redemption of our bodies

Here's a great line out of *Les Miserables*, as Jean Valjean gropes into the darkness of the sewers beneath Paris: *The pupil dilates in the night, and at last finds day in it, even as the soul dilates in misfortune, and at last finds God in it.* (Victor Hugo, *Les Miserables*, Modern House Library, Random House, New York, 1992, 1104)

II. BUT MY WARRANTY SAYS...

A. THE PLAN IS WORKING (VERSES 28-30)

1. God Foreknew
2. God Predestined
3. God Called
4. God Justified
5. God Glorified

**LEON MORRIS:** ROMANS 8:31-39 IS "THE CHRISTIAN'S TRIUMPH SONG."

B. THE SHIELD IS IN PLACE (VERSES 31-32)

1. God is for us
2. God gave up Jesus for us
3. God gives us all things

C. THE ASSAULTS ARE FUTILE (VERSES 33-39)

1. Charges against us  
**Zechariah 3:1** *Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. <sup>2</sup> The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" <sup>3</sup> Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. <sup>4</sup> The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you."*
2. Condemnations
3. Separation
  - Verse 36 is a quotation from Psalm 44:22. *The words in the original psalm express the perplexity of the people of God in the face of inexplicable suffering.* (Leon Morris)
4. Death/Life
5. Angels/Demons {Phillips: *neither messenger of heaven nor monarch [archai=ruler] of earth*
6. Present/Future
7. Nor any powers
8. Height/Depth
9. Anything else...

**C. S. Lewis** writes that the first two words we will say after we open our eyes in heaven will be, "Of course." *Now I understand. Now I see. Now it makes sense. Now it all comes together.* (Stu Weber, *Infinite Impact* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2007), 169.

**A prayer by George Mattheson:** *My God, I have never thanked Thee for my thorns. I have thanked Thee a thousand times for my roses, but not once for my thorns. I have been looking forward to a world where I shall get compensation for my cross: but I have never thought of my cross as itself a present glory. Teach me the glory of my cross: teach me the value of my thorn. Shew me that I have climbed to Thee by the path of pain. Shew me that my tears have made my rainbow.*

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