

## **Content**

Here is our first Community Group Guide for the New Year and in it we are concluding the series we have been working on through the Advent and Christmas season, Christmas hope. We have seen the promise of hope, the forerunner of hope, the announcement of hope and the surprising means of hope. And finally, this morning we are wrapping it up with a look at the comprehensiveness of hope in the cosmic hope from what might be the Mount Everest of the New Testament, Paul's eight chapter of his letter to the Romans. We will explore here this theme from three perspectives. First, the need of hope. Paul certainly doesn't water down the difficulty and suffering of life in any of his letters, especially this passage. He speaks of both suffering and glory and while he says they can be contrasted they certainly cannot be compared. In v.18 Paul states, ***"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."*** And that glory is comprehensive, thus the second point, the scope of hope. And the scope is the creation. The gospel cannot be reduced or limited for it has as its scope the entirety of the creation. The good news is good news for a new creation. And lastly, we will explore some of the fruit of hope, particularly in the areas of supernatural living, authenticity in how we relate to one another and how we actualize this in a life of Spirit-centered prayer.

## **Gospel Connections**

The Holy Spirit is central to this entire passage; in fact, He is central to the whole of Romans 8. And as we have said many times the Spirit's main function is to bear witness to us of the glory and greatness of Christ. His main function is to make real to us the work of Christ on our behalf. The Spirit is given us as firstfruits, as a down payment to enable us to more deeply love, behold and adore Christ.

## **Application and Discussion Questions**

1. What did you learn from this sermon? Specifically
  - a. What insights did you learn?
  - b. What questions do you have? Are there any areas you don't understand?
  - c. What areas of your life (be specific) do you sense God wants to change as a result of this passage of Scripture?

2. What is Paul comparing in this passage? What does he teach about creation? How is creation connected to the Christian's hope?

3. What is the glory that will be revealed to us? Why would this cause Christians to groan? How does the Holy Spirit and prayer help you with this?