

More Than a Platitude

Scripture Reading — Romans 8:18-30

We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. — Romans 8:28

Christians sometimes have the best intentions but say the wrong things. In attempts to comfort someone who is grieving the death of a loved one, we have been known to offer platitudes like “God had a plan” or “She’s in a better place” or “His suffering is over.” All true, but perhaps we should simply imitate the Spirit with “wordless groans,” offering a hug and ongoing prayers.

The greater the degree of suffering on this earth, the more we long for the day when we will be with Christ in heaven, free from the tyranny of sickness and sorrow.

In this passage, the apostle Paul seeks to encourage God’s people with both strength to get through today and a glorious vision of the future. He tells us that in all things God works for our ultimate good and his purpose. This does not mean all things are inherently good but that God redeems the pain and blesses us.

My Uncle Leon quotes Romans 8:28 as a text that has comforted him and his wife, Shirley, since losing both of their sons in early adulthood. Through tears and a shattered heart, he still expresses confidence that God will use his scars to bless others in similar circumstances. This verse is more than a platitude; it’s a promise based on God’s enduring love.

Prayer

Lord, in the midst of our deep suffering and crippling grief, may your Spirit begin to heal our hearts and translate our tears into something that is ultimately good. Amen.

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