

Weekly Bible Study for Highcliffe and Bransgore Methodist Churches

Creation Groans – Romans 8: 1-11 and 18-25 by Norman Bonnett w/c Sunday 20th September 2020

Two words in this passage stand out to me: “adoption” and “hope”. They are vital words to Paul and I wonder: **“what do they mean to you?”**

About 60 years ago Ruth and I were blessed with a lovely baby daughter of our own. We anticipated more children but that wasn't to be so we adopted two children, a boy and a girl. Our own born child was good at school and very musical, the new arrivals had their own qualities and shortcomings and we found difficulty in treating them all the same. Should we share our time and resources equally, what about our wills?

We quickly came to realise that they were **ALL** three wholeheartedly **OURS**. They deserved the same love, care, provision, attention and later, inheritance. So it is for us to be adopted into the family of God (verses 16-23) and as children of God we belong eternally.

The Christian life is dominated by “hope”, it is hope which leads us to a conversion experience, hope which leads us through the traumas of life and leads us on into eternity. To be a Christian is to be steeped in this “hope” but it is fashioned by the quality of our walk with our Lord; especially in being into His word, a wise saying is “you being into His word and His word being into you”.

Bishop Paul Keon, an American with Methodist leanings reads his Bible because:

1. He finds power there for his inner life.
2. It tells him that he is dear to God.
3. It tells him whither he is bound
4. It tells him how to walk the pathway of hope.

We are living through an exceedingly difficult period in the history of the world. Many of the sadness's have always existed but the addition of Covid-19 has amplified and perhaps hastened them. More people are seeking some meaning and purpose in their lives, for some, thankfully, that is through a relationship with God for others, unfortunately, it is in a bottle, an addiction to gambling or endless junk TV watching. Paul writes about the state of the world (remembering that he is writing a little under 2,000 years ago) groaning for redemption, he knows the hope that is awaited, anticipated, almost but not yet. Verse 24 says “we are saved in this hope but a hope that is fully seen is not hope because you have it already, we hope for what we do not see, but that which we anticipate, wating eagerly with perseverance”. It will bring redemption, liberation and re-creation through the power of God in our lives **NOW** and also into eternity.

In what way can “pass on” this helpfulness that is within us to those who so desperately need it?

Verse 8 states: “those who are in the flesh cannot please God” how do you read this?

This passage of scripture is both deep and rich but also difficult to digest, we all go through periods of doubt and unhappiness and yes, even hopelessness. This passage is pressing us to a life of trust and helpfulness and, especially, a closer and deeper walk with God. God bless, Norman.