

Hope rooted in Redemption

Romans 8.18-25

Key Points:

- Is it rational to be hopeful? While many good things happen, we also know that bad things happen too. At a personal level we face difficulties, and life doesn't always work out as we would like it to. In society we see many problems, and in the natural world disasters happen that have harsh consequences.
- In the reading, we learn that the whole of creation (including people) is in bondage to decay. It all needs redeeming.
- The death and resurrection of Jesus was the first act in the process of redemption: Christians have the first fruits of the Spirit, but, we, like all of creation are waiting for the new heavens and the new earth when we will be fully redeemed and the impact of sin will be no more.
- The concept "all will be well, and all manner of things shall be well" describes a hopeful approach to life. The idea is not about circumstances being easy; rather it is about acknowledging that hope and wellness are based on what is happening in our souls. Our souls can be well, however hard the challenge.
- When challenges come, it is not always easy to retain our hope. Our understanding of redemption gives us something solid to build our hope on. We need to build habits that will help us grow our hope and trust in Jesus.
- Hope rooted in redemption means that
 - We know that eternal glories await us and they will be better than anything we have now
 - We can face the reality of sin in ourselves and the world, and as we face challenges and difficulties grow through them

Questions:

1. What is your mind set when something goes wrong?
2. What is the impact of the whole of creation being in bondage to decay?
3. What promises do we have because we are redeemed?
4. What does it mean to wait patiently for the hope we do not yet have? (v25) How does that fit with waiting eagerly? (v23)
5. How does the promise of future glories affect your day to day living?
6. When do you find it easy to believe that "all will be well"? And when not?
7. How does the way you live demonstrate hope rooted in redemption?
8. How do you recognise areas of your life that need redeeming?
9. How does declaring the truth that our hope rests in Jesus help us? How do you do this?
10. What helps you to build habits of hope in your life?
11. What is distinctive about Christian hope?