

Our Infirmity (Rom 8:26-27)

- The context of this section is still the assurance of justification by faith
- I. Rom 8:26- "Likewise"- "In the same manner, in like fashion or suit"
 - A) Mechanics
 1. This word links this sub-section with the one that has just gone before, and possibly even further
 2. "Likewise"- shows that what the apostle is about to say is tied to the same thought which he had been expounding
 - i. Basically 2 options here as well as 2 opinions of commentators:
 - a) Paul is adding to the discussion on suffering and hope
 - 1) The Holy Spirit helps us in our sufferings through prayer
 - 2) Now this is certainly true, and not to be denied
 - (a) But it seems to go back to something more central to the chapter:
 - b) Paul is going to take up his subject again concerning the work of the Holy Spirit in assuring the believer
 - 1) This view seems most likely, and takes up another dimension of the work of the Holy Spirit, thus:
 3. Rom 8:1-17 +(18-25)- Paul was expounding the work of the Spirit in our assurance
 - i. In v. 17 Paul introduced the topic of Christian suffering
 - a) In v.18-25- Paul went on a slight digression to expand upon the subject of suffering
 4. Rom 8:26-27- Paul returns to his original context before the digression
 - i. Read the passage this way: v.1-17 (skip 18-25) and then v.26-27
 - a) This seems to make the most sense
 - b) The Holy Spirit appears 16x's thus far in ch 8
 - 1) Notice especially: v.2, 4, 9-13, 14, 23 and then "likewise" 26-27
 - 2) Reading it this way, Paul is beginning to detail another work of the Spirit in the life of the believer in v.26-27
- B) Prayer
 1. What can be more important in our walk in this present evil world than to know how we are linked to God
 - i. Like "family-gram" on submarine
 2. Prayer is hard for every Christian

- i. Those that say it is not have probably not truly put forth any effort whatsoever in prayer
- 3. Why is prayer so hard?
 - i. “Infirmities”- This is actually singular in the Greek text
 - a) This seems to refer not to our every weakness and individual struggle, but rather to a general truth concerning every one of us
 - 1) The problem is what Paul has already referred to in v.18-25
 - (a) Our salvation is not yet fully completed in all 3 phases, thus we are not yet fully sanctified
 - (b) This accounts for the “groaning” for the adoption
 - (c) Heb 5:1-2- Compassed with infirmity (sing.)
 - (1) This means “lack of strength,” or “weakness” or “immaturity”
 - (2) This does not refer to sin itself
 - I. Our infirmity can lead us into sin, and we often fall into sin due to this weakness, but in and of itself it is not sinful
 - II. It is the result of Adam’s sin
 - III. Psa 78:39- “We are but flesh”
 - IV. Psa 40:17- We are “poor and needy”
 - (3) Rom 8:3- Christ took upon Him the likeness of our sinful flesh (yet without sin itself)
 - I. Heb 2:14-18- Christ partook of the same
 - II. Heb ch 5- this was necessary to be perfect High Priest
 - b) Our infirmity is in all 3 phases of life: spiritual, mental and physical
 - 1) And each one affects the other
 - (a) Consider what happens many times when we open our bibles
 - (b) Consider the way in which turmoil can render us paralyzed to think or function as we ought
 - (c) The same is true of illness or even preoccupation
 - 2) One of our greatest weaknesses currently is that we cannot see the spiritual realm
 - (a) We are ignorant of how the details of our life fit into God’s eternal plan (can’t see the “big pic”)
 - (b) Therefore we tend to fret and worry about the things we don’t understand
 - (1) This is especially true concerning the future
- c) This “infirmity” seems to be most prominent in our prayer life
 - 1) Rom 8:26- “We know not what we should pray for as we ought” (newer versions of bible do much harm to this thought)

- (a) This doesn't mean we do not know how to pray at all
- (b) "The what" in Greek text
 - (1) In other words, we do not know what to pray for concerning our various situations and needs, due to our infirmity (inability to see the big pic)
- (c) "As we ought"- That which is fitting, suitable in each case
 - (1) We do not know what is the proper thing to ask in many situations and therefore "know not the fitting 'what'"
 - (2) Many times we do not even know our needs, or think we need that which is actually detrimental to our spiritual well being
 - I. Like children, we simply do not know what is best
 - (3) Deut 3:23-26- Moses' infirmity in prayer
 - (4) 2 Cor 12:1-10- Paul's infirmity in prayer
 - I. But after the answer comes, Paul knows the Lord knows best
 - (5) Phil 1:20-26- Paul knew not which to choose
 - I. But Paul was able to reckon somewhat based upon the needs around him, and so are we to do
 - II. Faith believes and trusts that God knows best!
 - (6) Matt 26- Our Lord in Gethsemane- "Thy will be done"
 - I. Heb 5:5-8- Suffering was good
 - II. John 12:27- "For this purpose have I come..."
 - (7) Psalm 77- The entire psalm is based upon this