

A scenic photograph of a sunset over a body of water. The sky is filled with large, dramatic clouds, some of which are illuminated from below by the setting sun, creating a vibrant orange and pink glow. The water in the foreground is dark blue, with the colors of the sunset reflected on its surface. In the background, a dark silhouette of a forested shoreline is visible against the bright sky. The text 'The Message of Hope!' is overlaid on the image in a large, yellow, serif font, with a slight shadow effect. The text is arranged in two lines, with 'The Message of' on the top line and 'Hope!' on the bottom line, both slanted slightly to the right.

The Message of
Hope!

A sunset over a body of water with a forested shoreline. The sky is filled with vibrant orange, pink, and purple clouds, reflecting on the water's surface. The foreground shows the dark silhouettes of trees along the shore.

Karl Marx Said:

“Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature,
the heart of a heartless world, and
the soul of soulless conditions.
It is the opium of the people.”

Hope Is A Popular Word

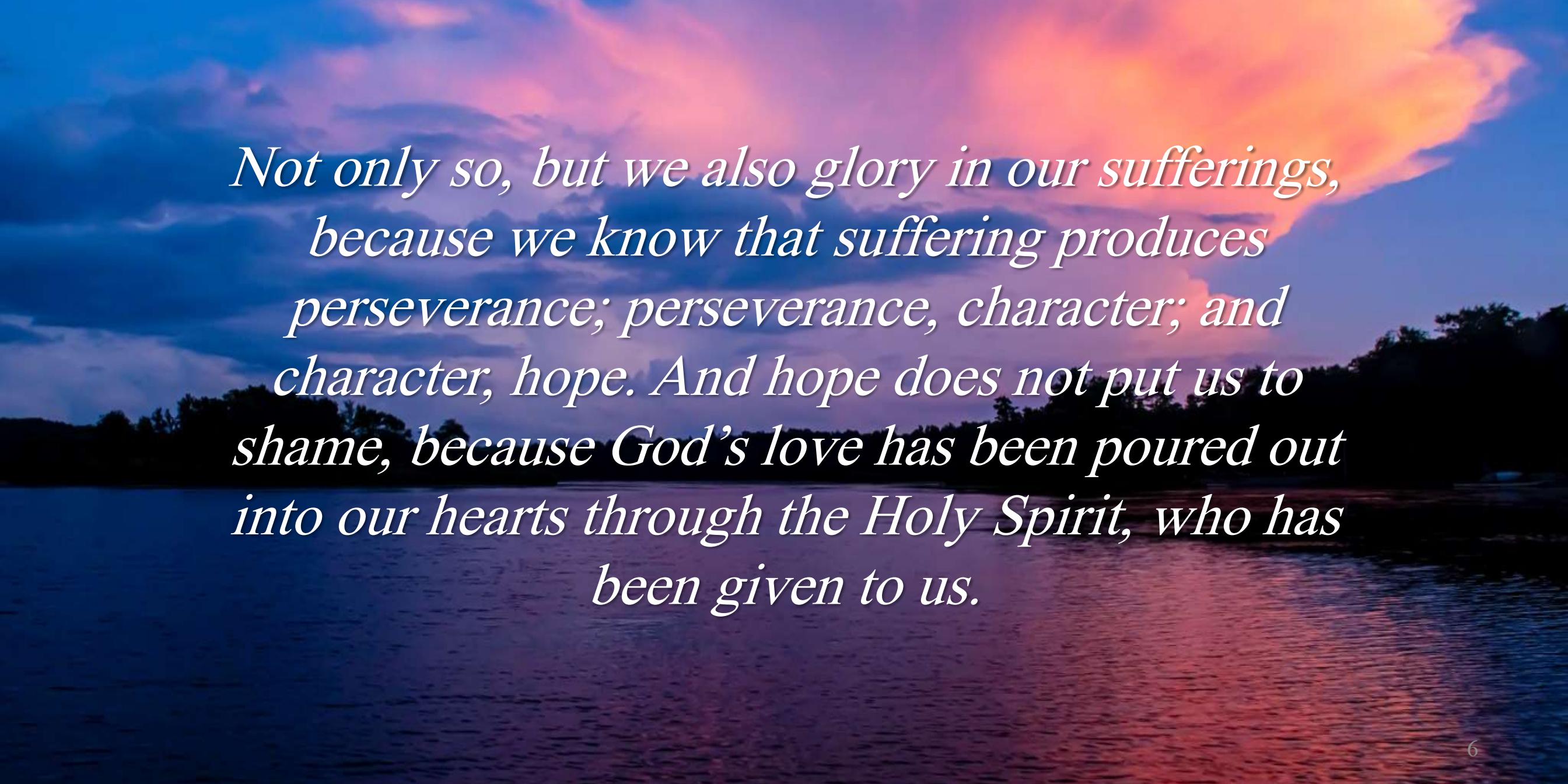
- We hope we'll have a great lunch today.
- We hope we will lose weight.
- We hope our team will win the championship.
- We hope the preacher will cut the sermon a little short today. *“You really are dreaming.”*
- “Hope” has become another word for a wish or a dream and politicians have long known/used it.

Political Slogans Are About Selling Hope.

- Happy Days Are Here Again.
 - A Chicken In Every Pot
- It's Time To Do Great Deeds.
- Are You Better Off Now Than You Were 4 Years Ago?
 - It's Time To Change America Again.
 - Yes America Can.
 - Stay The Course.
 - Keep Hope Alive.
 - Make America Great Again.

Romans 5:1–5 NIV

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.



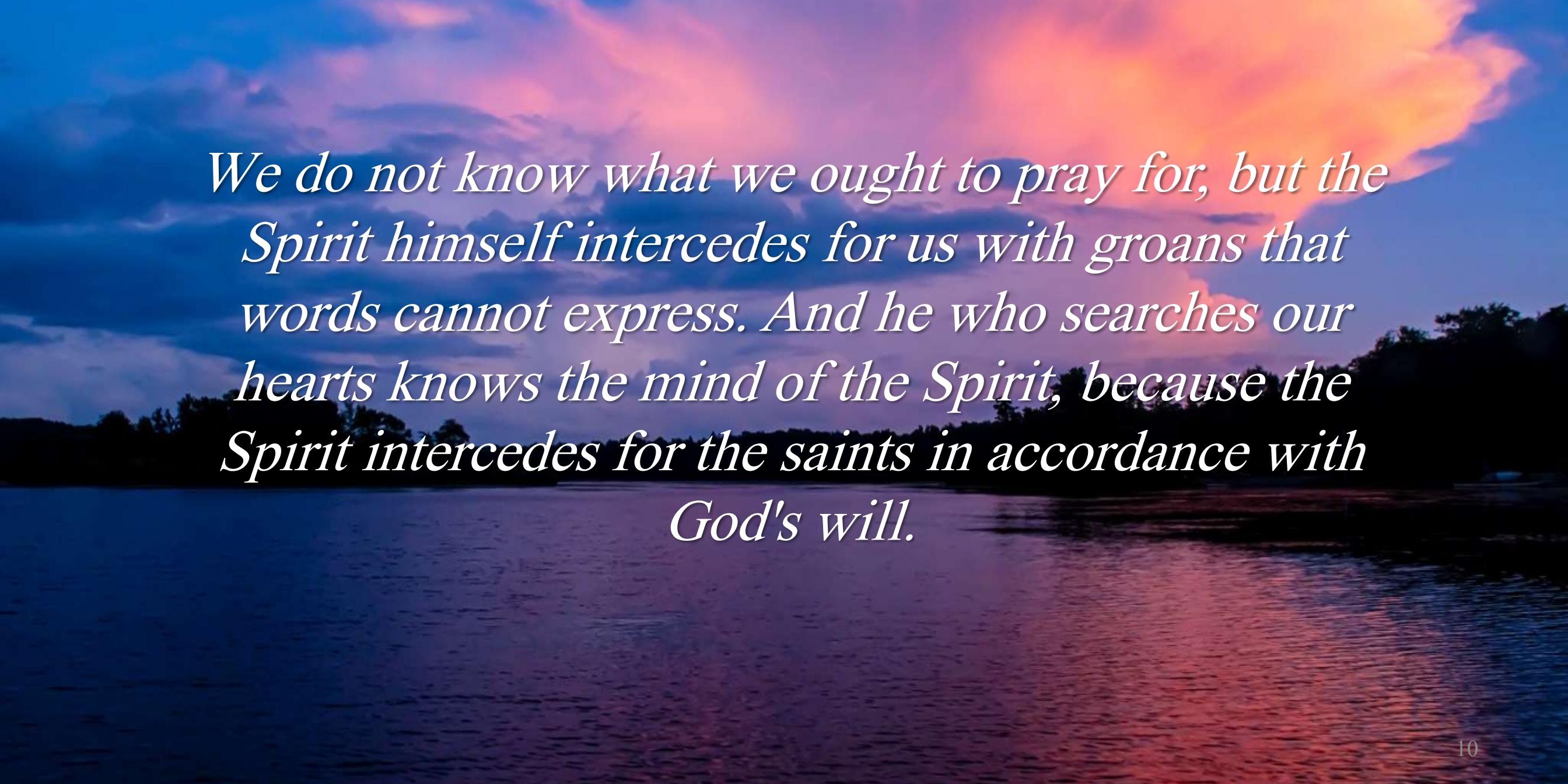
*Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings,
because we know that suffering produces
perseverance; perseverance, character; and
character, hope. And hope does not put us to
shame, because God's love has been poured out
into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has
been given to us.*



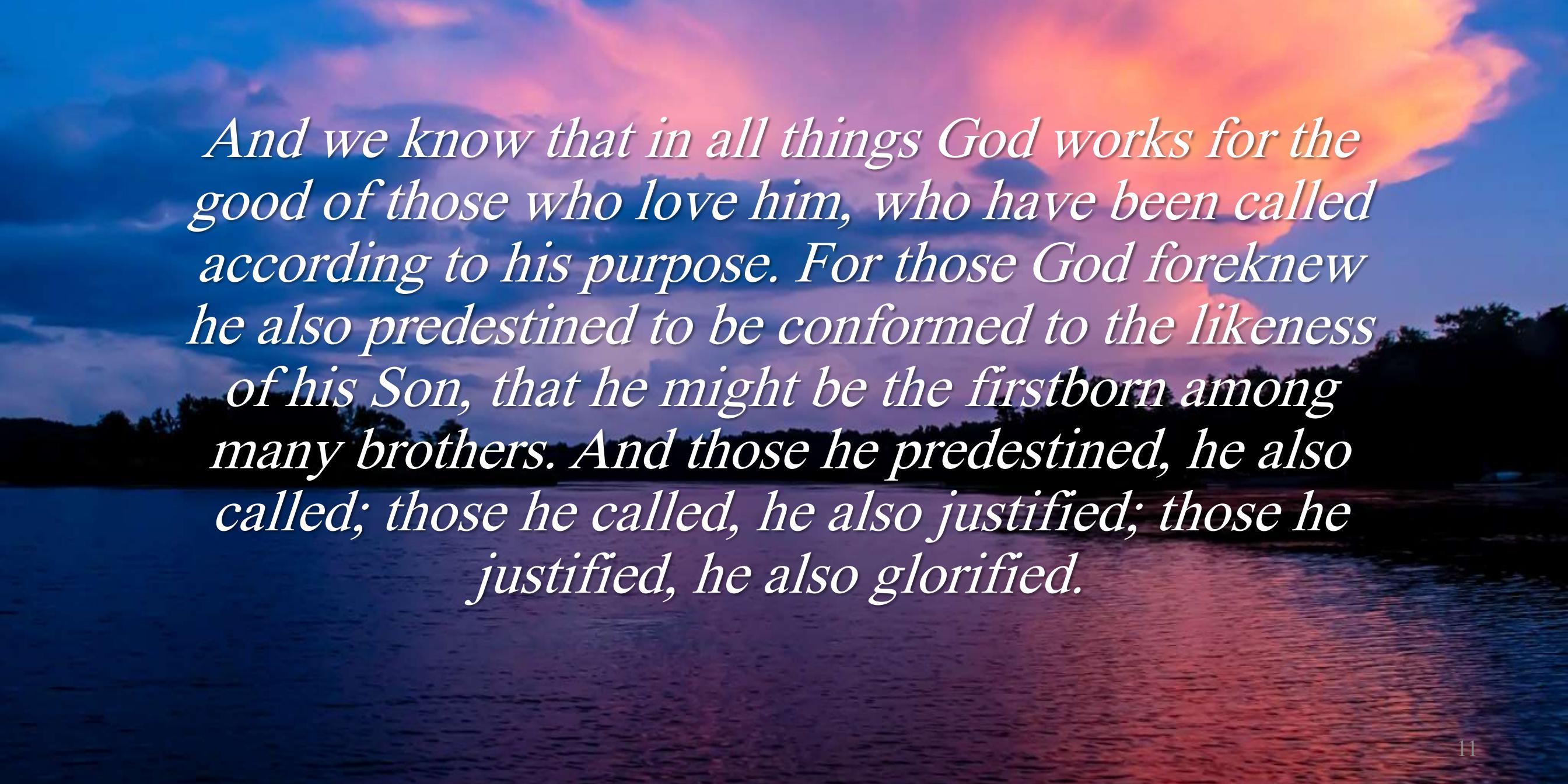
Romans 8:18-30 (NIV)

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.



We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.



And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

Paul Begins His Discussion of Suffering, Not With Christ, Or Us, But With Creation.

- Paul begins with our suffering physical world and moves forward in a way that lays the groundwork for hope for the whole creation to be liberated.
- In so doing, he reinforces that Christ has brought hope to us and to our world, by himself becoming part of our world.

Romans 8:20-22 (NIV)

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

Romans 8:23 (NLT2)

And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us.

Romans 8:24-25 (NLT2)

We were given this hope when we were saved.

(If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

Our Hope Is Not In An Escape From This World, But A Renewal Of It.

- Our hope is not a denial of the realities of a sinful and broken world. Neither is it a band aid that covers over and hides the scars of our broken and fallen world.
- Denial of the suffering of a world broken by sin is a hope that is empty and useless.
- Nothing short of the hope of a new creation will redeem us and God's creation!

However, There Is Hope And Help Now!

Romans 8:26-27 (NLT2)

And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

There Is Hope Because God Provides.

Romans 8:28 (NLT2)

And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

- This is the very essence of what is called, “The Providence of God.”

Providence Is...

“the almighty and ever present power of God by which God upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty—all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but by his fatherly hand.”

Heidelberg Catechism, 1563, “Translation © 2011, Faith Alive Christian Resources, Christian Reformed Church in North America.”

Romans 8:38–39 NIV

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Our Ultimate Hope Is To Be Like Christ

Romans 8:29-30 (NIV)

For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

This Passage Includes A Fivefold Process Of
Redemption, That Results In Our Being
“Conformed To The Likeness Of His Son.”

1. Foreknowledge
2. Predestination
3. Calling
4. Justification
5. Glorification

These Are NOT The Same As The Five Points Of Calvinism.

A Topic For
Another Day.

1. **T**otal Depravity – Mankind is by nature sinful.
2. **U**nconditional Election – God elects/choose a person based on nothing a person is or does.
3. **L**imited Atonement – Christ, on the cross, only bore the sin of the elect, not everyone who ever lived.
4. **I**rresistible Grace – The person that is saved has no choice in the matter.
5. **P**erseverance of the Saints – The elect are so secure in Christ, that he/she cannot fall away.

There Is A Context For God Predestining Us To Be In *“the likeness of his Son.”*

- In this context he’s not addressing our character as a reflection of Jesus Christ, in his earthly life.
- *“The likeness of his Son”* refers to the time when our resurrected bodies will be like that of Christ.
- This state of being, *“the likeness of his Son,”* will occur at the second coming and the resurrection, when we, like the resurrected Christ, will have a new body, designed for eternity.

Romans 8:11, 23 (NIV)

And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.

Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

That State Of Being, Both For Christ And
For Us Is, Is Called Glorified.

Romans 8:17, 30 (NIV)

*Now if we are children, then we are heirs--heirs of
God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his
sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.*

*And those he predestined, he also called; those he
called, he also justified; those he justified, he also
glorified.*

This Message Of Hope Undergirds Why We Sing...

Jesus is Lord, my redeemer
How He loves me, how I love Him
He is risen, He is coming
Lord, come quickly! Alleluia!

OR

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness....
When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found.