



Romans 8:22-27

²²We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; ²³and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. ²⁴For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? ²⁵But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

²⁶Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. ²⁷And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

Series Context

The Holy Spirit is the “third person of the Trinity” and one of the most neglected in our understanding and practice of Christian faith. The Spirit is not as frequent a character in the bible like God is, and the Spirit is not nearly as easy to imagine as Jesus—a person who lived, breathed, and interacted with others.

We may associate The Spirit with ecstatic experiences (perhaps strange or mysterious to us) like “speaking in tongues” or “falling out” or predicting the future. We may refer to the Spirit as the source of spontaneity in our spiritual life, like letting the Spirit take you somewhere or share something unplanned.

Or perhaps the Holy Spirit is the way we talk about the mystery of God or the mystery of Creation.

Over the next four weeks we will examine scriptures that present a glimpse of who the Spirit is and what the Spirit does.

Quote

“Theologically speaking, Spirit, love, and grace are one and the same reality in different aspects. **Spirit is the creative power**; love is its creation; grace is the effective presence of love in man.”

—Paul Tillich in Amos Yong, *Spirit of Love: A Trinitarian Theology of Grace*, 79-80.

Big Idea

The Spirit is not a creation of God, it is God creating.

Reflect

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. How do you understand the Holy Spirit and what role does The Spirit have in your life?
3. Talk about a time you created something special or unexpected. How might that reflect the creative power of God?
4. What do you think it means that creation is groaning? How might God's creative power in us *renew* a groaning creation?