

The image features a background of ancient Roman ruins, including a prominent circular stone structure and various rectangular blocks. A semi-transparent cross-shaped overlay is positioned on the right side of the image. The word "ROMANS" is written in a large, black, serif font across the center of the image.

# ROMANS

## **About Suffering ...** (Romans 8)

**Truth: No one escapes suffering.**

No matter what precautions we take, no matter how well we have put together a good life, no matter how hard we have worked to be healthy, wealthy, comfortable with friends and family, and successful with our career — something will inevitably ruin it.

Tim Keller

## **About Suffering ...** (Romans 8)

### **1. *Biblical Suffering* is the hopeful groaning for what will be.** (v. 18)

- **Hope**: Forward-thinking soaked in an eager anticipation.  
(Scott Hemenway)
- *<sup>18</sup>For I consider that the **sufferings of this present time** are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*

## The Truth About Suffering: (Romans 8)

1. Biblical suffering is the hopeful groaning for what will be. (v. 18)

2. The Entire Earth Is Groaning. (v.v. 19-22)

- *<sup>19</sup> For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. <sup>20</sup> Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, <sup>21</sup> the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay. <sup>22</sup> **For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.***

## The Truth About Suffering: (Romans 8)

1. Biblical suffering is the hopeful groaning for what will be. (v. 18)
2. The Entire Earth Is Groaning. (v.v. 19-22)
3. The Church Is Groaning. (v.v. 23-25)
  - ***23 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.***

## The Truth About Suffering: (Romans 8)

1. Biblical suffering is the hopeful groaning for what will be. (v. 18)
2. The Entire Earth Is Groaning. (v.v. 19-22)
3. The Church Is Groaning. (v.v. 23-25)
4. Even God is Groaning. (v.v. 26-27)
  - *<sup>26</sup> 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.** <sup>27</sup> 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.*

## **This Week: Suffering Confidently: (Romans 8:28-39)**

### **The Christian view of suffering is contrary to our culture.**

- **Secular view:** Suffering is never seen as a meaningful part of life, but only as an interruption – always to be avoided.
- **Biblical view:** Suffering empowers me live in the midst of trouble, pain & sorrow, yet taste the coming joy ... confident that God is for me, Jesus is enough for me, and the Spirit is interceding with me.  
Suffering is at the heart of Jesus' gospel – the Son of God loves me and suffered for me so that my suffering is only for a short time.

“Christianity teaches that, unlike *fatalism*, suffering is overwhelming; unlike *Buddhism*, suffering is real; unlike *karma*, suffering is often unfair; but unlike *secularism*, suffering is meaningful ...

There is a purpose to it, and if faced rightly, suffering can drive us like a nail deep into the love of God and into more stability and spiritual power than we can imagine.

Keller

## This Week: Suffering Confidently: (Romans 8:28-39)

In Jesus, I can suffer confidently because:

### 1. I know how my story ends (v.v. 28-30)

*28 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.*

*29 **For God knew his people in advance**, (namely, that they would love Him)*

- *and he **predetermined** them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.*
  - *30 and having predetermined them, he **called** them to come to him.*
  - *and having called them, he also **justified** them.*
  - *and having justified them, he also **glorified** them.*

## **This Week: Suffering Confidently: (Romans 8:28-39)**

### **The Christian's Story:**

- I have decided – *I have freely chosen* – to embrace Jesus Christ as my Savior and Master.
- God knew my decision before I made it ... before I was even born. It was *my choice*, and *His foreknowledge* of my choice.
- knowing that I would choose Christ, God has set His heart on doing what I cannot do – bringing me into conformity with Christ.
  - He has *called* me into His presence.
  - He has *justified* me.
  - He has *glorified* me.

## **This Week: Suffering Confidently: (Romans 8:28-39)**

### **In Jesus, I can suffer confidently because:**

1. I know how my story ends. (v.v. 28-30)
2. **I have chosen to live in God's strength, not my own.** (v.v. 31-39)

The most dangerous heresy today that undergirds many false religions & philosophies is the belief that declares human effort & achievement are able to gain God's attention & favour. Romans 8, however, emphatically tells us that victory in life has already been secured for those who have embraced Christ ... a magnificent truth from which we can derive hope, courage and comfort no matter what we experience.

Swindoll

## **Five Questions Asked & Answered.** (v.v. 31-39)

### **i. Who shall oppose us.** (v.v. 31-32)

*<sup>31</sup> What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? <sup>32</sup> Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?*

### **ii. Who shall accuse us.** (v. 33)

*<sup>33</sup> Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.*

### **iii. Who shall condemn us.** (v. 34)

*<sup>34</sup> Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.*

## **Five Questions Asked & Answered.** (v.v. 31-39)

### **iv. Who shall defeat us.** (v.v. 36-37)

*<sup>36</sup> As it is written:*

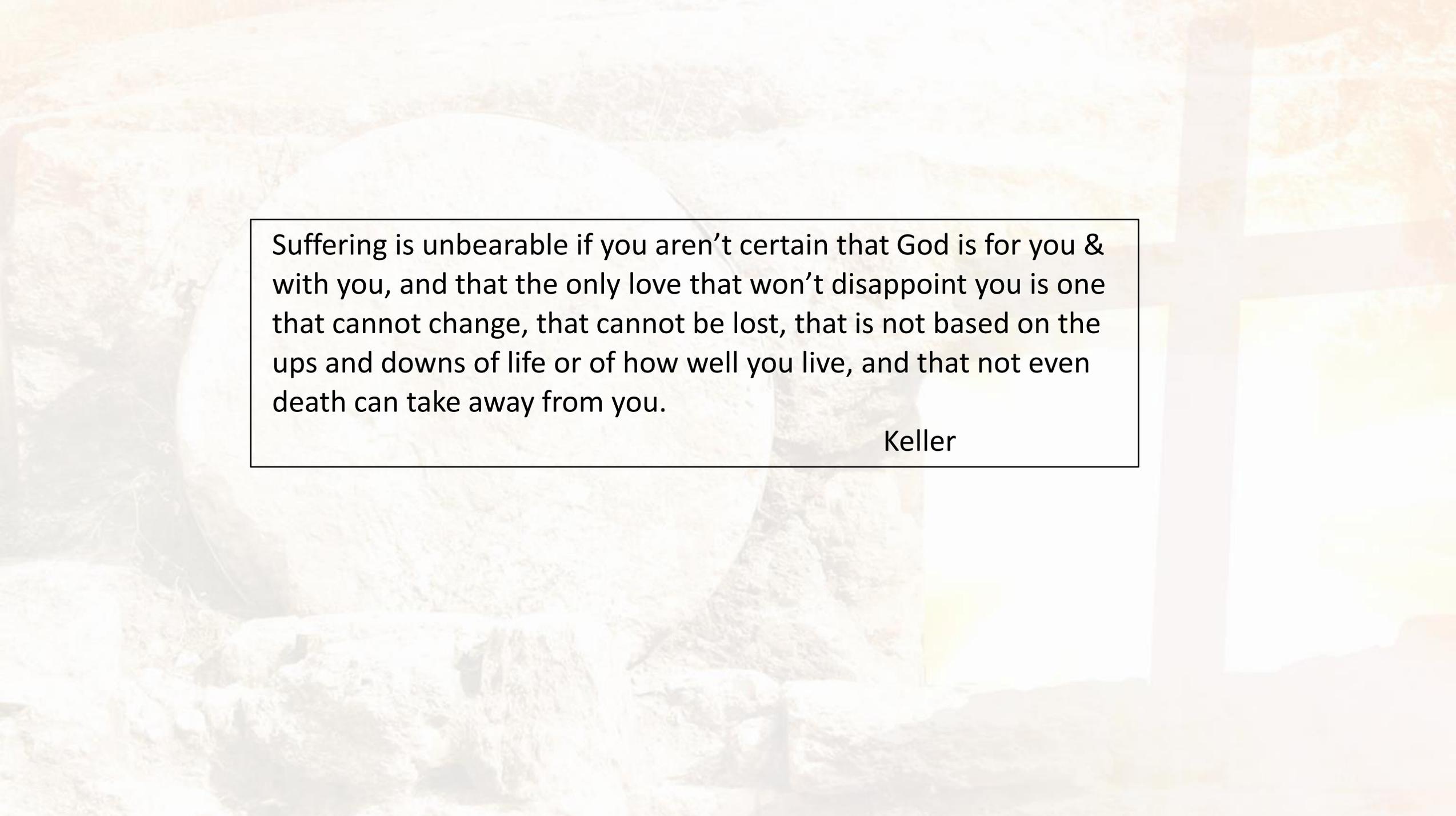
*“For your sake we face death all day long;  
we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered.”*

*<sup>37</sup> No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.*

### **v. Who shall separate us.** (v.v. 35,38-39)

*<sup>35</sup> Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ...*

*<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> 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.*



Suffering is unbearable if you aren't certain that God is for you & with you, and that the only love that won't disappoint you is one that cannot change, that cannot be lost, that is not based on the ups and downs of life or of how well you live, and that not even death can take away from you.

Keller

## **This Week: Suffering Confidently: (Romans 8:28-39)**

### **In Jesus, I can suffer confidently because:**

1. I know how my story ends. (v.v. 28-30)
2. I have chosen to live in God's strength, not my own. (v.v. 31-39)

### **3. I have a Community who will love me in Christ.**

*<sup>23</sup> Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. <sup>24</sup> And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup> not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

Hebrews 10

**When my brothers & sisters love me in my suffering they protect me from:**

- **Isolation** ... *when I believe* no one else will understand.
- **Self-absorption** ... *when I think* no one else has ever suffered like me.
- **Shame & condemnation** ... *when I believe* God is punishing me, or condemning me.
- **Anger** ... *when I forget* this broken world I inhabit is still broken, and groaning for its restoration.
- **Inertia** ... *when I permit* myself to continue to live in self-pity, expecting others to let me remain there as long as I wish.

(Simone Weil)

## **Some truths to ponder:**

1. I am not in the grip of fate or blind chance, so I do not need to fear what will happen to me.
2. God did not invent suffering ... sin did. But God can use what even sin invents to develop my character, strengthen my witness and enlarge my love for Him.
3. In Jesus, my suffering is temporary ... death & suffering do not have the last word.
4. I discover a lot about what I believe when I suffer.