

“Fixing ‘them’ Post Advent Blues” Romans 8:23

Context: Post-Advent blues often arrive after the hope, peace, joy, and love leading to Christmas turn into ‘boxing day.’ No shepherds, wise men, or any of their kin were ever mentioned as Christ’s disciples. The first Advent readily slips into the blues of the day if its primary redemptive purpose is neglected. Today we look at the source and remedy for the post-Advent blues from Paul’s letter to the Church in Rome. As part of Roman’s theme of salvation, Paul teaches that, although everything is currently broken, nothing can inescapably stand in the way of a believer’s deliverance from sin’s bondage or in the way of God’s love for them. Our reflection draws its light from the Pauline context of ‘the broken’ longing for future glory.

Life Principle: God extends His hand of love to bring you out of the blue (cf. Romans 8:38-39).

1. Those Post Advent Blues – Romans 8:18-23a

Enduring the brokenness of the whole of creation shouldn’t be surprising when it’s biblically informed. Even the eco-system around us moans, writhing as a woman in labor, from the Fall until now. Everything this side of Eden awaits renewal. The prolongation of that wait predisposes the heart of those tasting the sweetness of resurrection to a doleful sigh, wondering what is taking Christ so long to bring in His next Advent.

2. The Fix – Romans 8:23b-39

Ultimately, the fix is Christ’s release of us from our broken state to a completely new resurrected body. The completion is not in resurrection alone, as suggested by the use of the word ‘bodies’ (plural). The completion is in community as well. What of the groaning? Our inward pain can be softened by the hope that nothing can separate us from our inevitable perfected outcome in Christ. This is because of God’s righteous and merciful nature as proven by the Father’s resurrection of Jesus from the dead. This resurrection is evidence of His promise to us, and the fruit of the Spirit is the evidence of the resurrection already enlivening us. That should chase the ‘blues’ away.

Study questions:

- Post-Advent blues come from a ‘wrong-headed’ view of life situations. Our **doctrinal statement** describes the beginning of such ‘wrong-headedness’ as sourced in succumbing to temptation, described as humanity’s Fall (see footnotes 5,8,9 **On Mankind**, under **what we believe** [www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/ DocStmnt.pdf](http://www.gracepointfellowship.org/files/DocStmnt.pdf)). What was ultimately wrong with Eve’s reasoning process in Genesis 3:6-8? How does your reasoning process compare with Eve’s process when you are faced with temptations that result in depression? How can you be delivered (see I Peter 5:8-10; James 4:7-8; Ephesians 6:11-18)?
- Paul speaks of the ‘redemption of our bodies’ as the definitive state of completion for which the believer longs while enduring this wrecked world. As a **Bible study method**, look up the word ‘body’ (*soma*) in *Vines Expository Dictionary*. What meaning does Paul ascribe to ‘body’ in Romans 8:23? What does this meaning have to do with our lives as the first fruit of the Spirit? How do you see the fruit of the Spirit in one concrete way that you think and act?
- What does Christ’s resurrection have to do with your grounding of hope (cf. Romans 8:31-38)?

Transformation exercise:

Mediate on the hope of Romans 8:23 and bring that hope through the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) to someone who’s blue this week.