

Romans 8:24-25

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²⁴ *For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?*

²⁵ *But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

For we are saved by hope. What is this hope? And what is this salvation? What are we being saved *from*? Verse 24 obviously begins with the word *for*, thus, verse 24 is explaining something in relation to verse 23, and what we just learned in verse 23 is that we have the future hope of a redeemed body—a *new, resurrected* body, by which the glory that is *in us* is going to be *revealed*, and by which we are going to be able to serve God as sons and daughters forever. This new body obviously is going to be *incorruptible*, not subject to the limitations of the fallen bodies we have now; this new body will be immortal, and entirely free from sin, and the effects of sin. We understand this of course. Christianity universally holds to this truth. But what we often fail to take to heart is that this truth is meant to produce a hope within us, and that this hope in turn is meant to *save us* from something.

Now of course the words *save*, *saved*, and *salvation* are used in regards to different subjects in the Bible. A major error we make is when we define a word the same every time, irrespective of its context. This hope is not going to save us from the debt and penalty of our sins. We have already learned that we are saved in that sense by trusting the substitutionary work that Jesus Christ performed on our behalf through the cross, the death, the burial, and the resurrection. Our justification, or our being forgiven and declared righteous before God is already a settled issue.

This “salvation” in the context of Romans 8 is a salvation from the effects that the sufferings of this present time can have upon the soul of a believer. How many times has a believer’s faith been destroyed because he had placed his hope in a so-called “faith healer,” in a miracle, in a physical answer to a prayer about a sickness or disease. And then it doesn’t happen, and they begin to doubt God. They turn away from the faith. They did not properly understand this issue, and their faith was destroyed. But we can be saved from that if we have the proper perspective, and place our hope in what God has revealed to us, rather than in what we desire in our immediate circumstances.

We have discussed how a life of suffering without purpose or meaning lends to a sense of hopelessness, and that, in that context, most people actually succumb to the evils of this physical world. *The Holocaust* is a prime example. Survivors often cite their hope as that which enabled them to endure that situation, whereas many others chose to let go because they only saw the apparent futility. Viktor Frankl, a survivor of the Holocaust, famously summarized his philosophy with a quote from Friedrich Nietzsche: *He who has a why to live can bear with almost any how.*

The effect of hope—*something one cannot see*—is very much tangibly real. The effect of hope on a person psychologically actually results in real life, physical consequences. And this effect of hope on the believer spiritually works to produce certain characteristics within their soul. Again, I have posited the question, how is one conformed to the image of God's Son? And I have answered that the mechanism by which this is going to be accomplished is the word of God. And we are seeing right here and now a form of doctrine meant to work effectually in the inner man of the believer to begin producing characteristics of Christ Himself, meant to conform us to His image.

I want us to consider something from the Psalms which recount Jesus' time on the cross:

Psalm 22:16-21

¹⁶ *For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet.*

¹⁷ *I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me.*

¹⁸ *They part my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.*

¹⁹ *But be not thou far from me, O Lord: O my strength, haste thee to help me.*

²⁰ *Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog.*

²¹ *Save me from the lion's mouth: for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns.*

This Psalm offers insight into what Jesus was thinking upon the cross. His inner monologue shows us that He asked the Father to *help* Him, to *deliver* Him, to *save* Him. Notice in verse 19, Jesus's strength is the Lord—He is relying on *the Father's* strength, not *His own omnipotent power as God the Son*. Jesus was not living out of His resources as God on the cross. He was doing this *in His humanity*.

In verse 20, He says, *deliver my soul from the sword*. Well let me ask you, does a sword have the ability to kill your soul? Of course not. Your soul is eternal. He asks to be delivered from the power of the dog. That is a reference to His inner man, His "darling," being delivered from the potential effects of the avenging sword of the gentiles. Verse 21 then says, *save me from the*

lion's mouth; this is a reference to Jesus being *saved* from the *intended effects* of Satan and His policy of evil, as Satan of course is an imitator, and imitates God and Christ, and is likened to a *lion* (1 Peter 5:8). And if we had any question as to whether the Father heard Jesus's prayer or not, He tells us: *for thou hast heard me from the horns of the unicorns*. The Father heard Him from the midst of the Roman and Jewish authorities.

So Jesus prays essentially for help, and to be delivered, and to be saved from something... But what's He asking to be saved *from*? He had already set His face like flint and had resolved within Himself to fulfill the work of the cross. Did He change His mind in the middle of it? No He didn't. His offer had to be a *freewill* offer. If He prayed for physical deliverance, or physical salvation, then the Father obviously chose not to hear His prayer, because Jesus wasn't physically rescued from the cross. He *died* upon that cross, and was then put in a tomb.

So He's not praying for physical deliverance, or physical salvation. He's praying for things which relate to the "salvation" of His inner man from the influence of His circumstances. He's praying to be "saved" from the *potential effects* of the physical and spiritual sufferings He was experiencing, because He had to accomplish the work of the cross, and He had to do so *correctly*. Jesus had to offer *His very soul* up to God the Father, which means His very attitude and disposition and heart posture had to be one that was pure and free of any blemish in its intention. If His heart harbored reservation or wrath or anything other than the things which God the Father purposed in the cross for humanity, if it was out of anything other than godly love, then the offer wouldn't count. It had to be a pure, freewill offering in accordance with the Father's will. He was praying to be delivered from *the effects* of the sufferings of this present time, and the satanic policy of evil as Satan and his forces, including his human constituents, conspired against Him.

Jesus was also saved by the hope of resurrection and future glory:

Psalm 16:8-10

⁸ *I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.*

⁹ *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope.*

¹⁰ *For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

Jesus understood exactly what was going on and those *truths*, and that ultimate *purpose*, and that *hope*, enabled Him to endure those sufferings as a man.

In a similar way, we too are offered doctrinal truths which are meant to save us from certain things. We are given a *hope* here in Romans 8:23 which is meant to save us from the potential effects that *the sufferings of this present time* have on us. Later, we will be offered a salvation from the Satanic policy of evil as well, or what Paul will term *the sufferings of Christ*. These are a

distinct type of suffering directed at the believer for their faith and patience in the Lord, in addition to the sufferings we experience as a result of living in a fallen world.

We are not saved *from* the sufferings of this present time, we are saved *through* them. We actually received this doctrine in seed form back in Romans chapter 5 in connection with our *justification*:

Romans 5:1-5

¹ *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

² *By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

³ *And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;*

⁴ *And patience, experience; and experience, hope:*

⁵ *And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.*

In Romans 5, we saw that justification by faith was to produce a rejoicing in hope of God's glory—a rejoicing in hope of eternal life. But then we learned that, not only this, but that we are able to actually take honor and be exalted in our tribulations because we understand that God is not the author of those things, but rather, that we have peace with God. And these tribulations are meant to work patience, and patience then works experience, and experience, hope.

My only point in taking us back to this passage is to show that our hope in both cases is exercised in the context of tribulation or suffering. The tribulation of Romans 5 is not elaborated upon, because the point of the passage is simply to communicate that our justification itself has bearing on how we understand and approach tribulations in life in the most general of senses. Our justification is the first and most fundamental layer of our establishment doctrine—understanding that God is not sending judgment upon us because we have a permanent standing in grace is absolutely essential if we are to be grounded.

Now, here in Romans 8, we receive this same type of idea in connection with our *sanctification*, and we are being established as sons in the truth of how we're to regard *physical suffering specifically*.

We who have *the firstfruits of the Spirit*—the Spiritual provisions and resources made available to us *now*, so that we can function as sons *now*, while we wait for the fullness of the future harvest in our future *adoption*—we *groan* within ourselves, that is, we *earnestly desire* the fulfillment of God's promise in Christ to physically deliver us at the redemption of our body. This *groaning*, this

earnest desire, is the hope that is meant to save us from the effects of the sufferings we endure as a result of living in this fallen world.

Romans 8:24

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

Romans 8:24 says that *hope that is seen is not hope*. And what is this hope? It is the redemption of our body—it is our future placement as sons into a permanent position in God's kingdom, in a permanent body, free from pain and disease, from death and sin. And so, what is verse 24 really telling us? It is telling us that this hope *is not seen*. And it is here that we have to take some time to talk about the subject of God's miraculous intervention in the physical world.

But if we see deliverance from those things now... then it is no longer a hope. For what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for it? Hope that is seen, *is not hope*. The hope of physical deliverance, once it is realized, is no longer hope.

And so I want us to ask ourselves a very serious question: so far in this letter, written by Paul to the Church the Body of Christ, *for its establishment*, have we seen *any indication* that God is going to physically deliver us from tribulation or suffering? Has there been any form of doctrine that we've been given that indicates that God is going to physically intervene to protect us from the physical consequences of this fallen world? We have not.

Because of the nuance surrounding this topic, most people have no true clarity on this subject. Christians generally believe the Bible, but the problem is, there are portions of the Bible where God *is clearly and overtly* working in the world in a physical sense, and is intervening *with direct physical intervention, by His omnipotent power*.

And so the issue of understanding Paul's unique apostleship for today is of course the necessary starting point for our understanding, and I think we all have a grasp on that issue by now. But understanding that his writings are God's words to us and for us specifically *today* is not enough.

Paul worked the signs of an apostle in the book of Acts—he performed healings and miracles. But God worked these things through Paul to validate his ministry and apostleship. In the first half of the book of Acts, you see Peter perform a number of miracles, but starting in Acts 13, all of the miracles from then on are performed by Paul only. Paul's ministry was one that was multifaceted in nature: he was not only ministering to the gentiles, but he was going to the Jew first everywhere he went to demonstrate their blindness, and as they rejected the message, God

was certifying their blindness and showing that He was justified in setting them aside. Luke wrote the book of Acts, not as a book of doctrine for the Body of Christ, but *for Israel*, to show them *why* God transitioned from dealing with them in their covenant program, to dealing with Jew and gentile on the same level playing field, to build the Church of today, *the Body of Christ*.

Paul's ministry also had to be validated by signs and wonders for the sake of the apostles before him, the apostles of the circumcision. Without those signs, those other apostles would have no reason to believe Paul at all. In Israel's prophetic program, they were promised physical, miraculous signs from God. And when the Messianic Kingdom was at hand, signs were given to validate that message. In that earthly manifestation of the kingdom of God under Jesus Christ, upon the throne of David, there would be no unclean spirit in the land, and there would be no sickness or disease. Thus, the apostles of the circumcision were sent to cast out devils, and heal all manner of sickness. But if God was going to postpone the fulfillment of their promises, and delay that physical kingdom, and raise up another apostle to deal with both Jew and gentile apart from Israel's covenant promises and standing—He would have to validate that apostleship with physical signs, otherwise, the circumcision would have no reason to believe him at all.

The book of Acts then is not a doctrinal book—it was not meant for us to derive our practical doctrine from; it is a *historical account of Israel's fall and diminishing*. Our doctrine is communicated to us *in our epistles*. And what you see reflected in our epistles is that, in some of the early ones, things such as spiritual gifts are still in operation, and yet, by the time we get to the pastoral epistles, the subject is not only not discussed *at all*, but it appears that Paul himself no longer even had the signs of an apostle. In 2 Timothy 4:20, Paul tells Timothy that he had left Trophimus in Miletum sick. If Paul still had the signs of an apostle, and the ability to work miracles and healings, why didn't he just heal him? If you will remember, Paul *raised the dead* in Acts 20. He was bit by a deadly snake on the Island of Malta and was *unharméd*. Paul strikes Elymas the false prophet with *blindness*. So, if Paul had all of the signs of an apostle, why didn't he heal Trophimus.

It is because once the purpose for those signs was fulfilled, they faded away, just as they did with Peter. Once Paul begins his ministry in earnest, there is not one miracle performed by the other apostles, because what they were a part of was put on hold.

In addition, the book of First Corinthians addresses the issue of spiritual gifts given to *the members of the church individually*, and these were gifts of such an order that they superseded natural laws—they were, by definition, supernatural.

One of the spiritual gifts was in fact *the working of miracles* (1 Cor. 12:10). This was *different* from *the gift of healing*—the gift of healing was its own spiritual gift—this was the working of miracles *specifically*. And so before we even go any further, I'll simply ask you this: what individual has that gift *today*? People who claim to have the gifts, only operate in things they can

control—their mouths. I have seen many “speak in tongues” and many “prophecy,” but I have yet to see someone who is able to work miracles. If the gifts are still in operation, why not?

The Corinthians were *carnal* Paul says (1 Cor. 3:3), they were *fleshly*, they weren't being *led by the Spirit*, and yet they operated in Spiritual giftings, things they didn't *ask for* or *try to develop*, but which the Spirit divided to every man severally as He willed (1 Cor. 12:11):

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

¹ *And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.*

² *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.*

³ *For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?*

1 Corinthians 12:11

But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

The Spiritual gifts were not in themselves a mark of spiritual maturity. So what were they for? Of course we are going to deal with this topic extensively when we get to Romans chapter 12, and so, even though I will give you the scriptural answer now, we are going to have to wait to cover all of the details.

The simple answer is, the Spiritual gifts were given to fulfill specific *operations* that God the Father needed to accomplish:

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

⁴ *Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.*

⁵ *And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.*

⁶ *And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*

There were different *gifts* operating according to *the Spirit*, and different *administrations* or *offices* which superintended these gifts by the authority of *the Lord Jesus Christ*, and all of this worked together to fulfill certain *operations* according to the will of *God the Father*.

These operations included the communication of God's word for edification; they confirmed to *the gentiles* that God was now doing a work among them *apart* from the agency of Israel; they also demonstrated to Israel *directly* that God had turned *from* them, *to* the gentiles; and they were for the ordering and governing of the local assembly. Some were meant for believers, and some were meant for unbelievers. Some of the gifts were for edification *within* the assembly, and some of the gifts were for signs *outside* of the assembly. With the fulfillment of the operations they were meant to perform however, they were no longer needed.

And so, when 1st Corinthians was written, did the saints in the Body of Christ have a completed canon of scripture? No they didn't. Did they possess all of Paul's writings? No, because he wouldn't write his final epistle until a little over ten years later. Now, what do we know about Paul's writings to us? They are given for *doctrine*, for *reproof*, for *correction*, and for *instruction in righteousness*, that the man of God may be *perfect*, throughly furnished unto all good works (2 Tim. 3:16-17). They are given for godly edifying in faith (1 Tim. 1:3-4).

And so, how were believers who were alive before Paul finished writing inspired scripture going to be edified without the completion of that scripture? Even Paul did not yet know *everything all at once*. Paul writes in 2 Cor. 12:1 that he *would come* to visions and revelations of the Lord. That is why he writes in 1 Corinthians 13:9, *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part*. The gifts only provided partial revelation at a time. But, Paul writes in the very next verse, *when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away*. The gifts that were used for signs and edification became obsolete once the scripture was fulfilled, and once those signs fulfilled the purpose God wanted to fulfill.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10

⁸ *Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.*

⁹ *For we know in part, and we prophesy in part.*

¹⁰ *But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.*

Edification of the believer and local church governments are the only operations that are still ongoing; all of the other operations fulfilled their purpose, thus, they are no longer needed. They're obsolete. The operation of edification is still taking place, but now it is taking place through the completed revelation of the word of God. Thus, the edification gifts themselves also are obsolete, and yet, the administrations or offices that superintend that process are still in

effect. Thus you have the static offices of *bishop* and *deacon*, and you also have the administrative offices such as *helps* and *governments*. The offices of apostles and prophets superintended the writing and multiplying of the word of God, but now that that has been completed, those offices or “administrations” also are obsolete.

Christian’s today who “practice the spiritual gifts” do not even understand the operations they were meant to perform. And Paul actually warns the Corinthians about this very issue when he first begins discussing the gifts—that in times past they were just superstitious gentiles, led away unto dumb idols. They had no understanding of what God was or wasn’t doing, and that was exactly how they were operating in the gifts—in ignorance and superstition.

And so, I say all of this just to give you some basic understanding of the issue surrounding the miraculous signs that Paul operated in for a time, and of the spiritual gifts that were in operation at the inception of the dispensation of grace, as recorded in the Acts period. I obviously cannot deal with this subject in totality here and now. But I hope to have at least partially answered some of the common objections to what I am conveying to you today. And all I am conveying to you is what the doctrine that is written specifically about us and to us today is conveying to us, which is that we are to be thinking about our physical circumstances *in a very particular way*, and it is not the way that we are naturally inclined to think about them.

We have got to nail down with finality one simple issue: is our faith going to be in our experiences, in anecdotes, in stories, or is it going to be in the words of scripture itself? Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and so if what we believe does not come from the clear, objective words of our scriptures, it is vanity. We have discussed this on several occasions already: this principle was true for our *justification*, and it was true for our *sanctification*. Now it is going to hold true for our *establishment* as justified, sanctified, *functional*, sons of God.

As many as are led by the Spirit, Romans 8:14 tells us, are the sons of God *functionally*, practically speaking, in this present life, and we saw that phrase led by the Spirit was only ever used elsewhere in scripture in regards to Jesus being led into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. Why should we be surprised then if we are being told that we too will face temptation? And if we are to be led by the Spirit, then we are to be led by the word of God. Operating out of the doctrine *is how* we are *led by the Spirit*, for those that are after the Spirit do mind the things of the Spirit (Rom. 8:5).

When we trusted that Jesus did everything necessary to save us from the penalty of our sins in the cross, and in the death, burial, and resurrection, did we have any physical, outward sign to validate that it was so? No we didn't. Did we see Jesus on the cross ourselves? No we didn't. If we had, would we have seen our sins imputed to Him, and His righteousness imputed to us? No, we wouldn't have. All of these things could only be known by the word of God revealing them to

us, and we had to take them on faith that they were so without any physical, outward manifestation to validate it.

When we learned of our new spiritual identity in Christ in Romans 6, we learned that the nature we had from birth, received from Adam, which was corrupt, was put to death, was crucified with Christ, when we trusted the gospel, and that we were spiritually baptized into Christ Himself—that we were spiritually united to Christ and were given an entirely new nature in our spirit. But when you first heard and trusted the gospel, would you have known or understood that? No you wouldn't have. It had to be revealed to you by the word of God. When you first heard and trusted the gospel, did you feel or see or sense *anything* that told you this information? No you didn't, because it was a spiritual operation God performed in you, not a physical one, and one that didn't affect your *soul*, but your *spirit*.

We had to come to the word of God as infants and learn of this truth and then trust that truth implicitly as children above our own thoughts or feelings or experiences, because what was in our flesh and in our soul was sin, what was in our flesh and soul was entirely contrary to that truth, and thus, our minds had to begin to be renewed by the word of God. We had to reckon that truth to be so in our hearts. But we had nothing to verify that physically or externally, we had to receive that truth by faith.

Now here, in this section of Romans, we are being established in two basic characteristics: *patient endurance* and *godly contentment*, but those characteristics are formed in the context of *physical* infirmities, *physical* distresses, *physical* pain and loss—in *the sufferings of this present time*. And so I will ask us again, have we seen *one thing* in this entire course of doctrine that tells us that God is going to deliver us from tribulations or from sufferings? No we have not. We have seen rather that because of the spiritual things God has given us, we can glory *in* tribulations, and can be saved from *the effects* of those sufferings by our future hope. We are not saved *from* the sufferings of this present time, we are saved *through* them.

We often use physical events or occurrences to “prove” our theology. But we need to ask ourselves where did we get those ideas from out of the Bible? We didn't get it out of the doctrine given to us by our apostle.

I'm not here to tell you that God will or won't do something, one way or another, but what I am here to tell you is what the word of God says to us in *our* scriptures, and our scriptures are taking us in a very different direction than most of Christianity is going. Our doctrine is teaching us to think about these things in a very particular way. Our establishment and edification depends on our willingness to employ the doctrine by faith in the midst of our fallenness, in the midst of our pain, in the midst of our loss, in the midst of physical suffering, because each time we encounter these things is an opportunity for *glory*.

...if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

And so if God is going to fulfill a purpose in us through those things, why would He work against His own purpose?

To conclude this lesson, I want us to consider the following:

In 2013, there were massive floods in Uttarakhand, India. In Uttarakhand stands one of the most holy sites in Hinduism, the Kedarnath Temple. During the floods, all of the structures and buildings of the Kedarnath valley were destroyed and washed away, and yet, a giant boulder rolled down the valley and came to a halt just in front of the temple, protecting the 1,000 year old shrine from any damage. The Hindus there see this boulder as a sign of divine intervention, and this event to them is *proof* that their faith is valid. They have rejected the gospel of salvation as communicated in the Bible, persisted in their paganism, and cleave therefore to superstition. They use subjective experience to bolster their own superstitions, having rejected the objective standard of God's word in scripture.

The following is an article written by Victor Tjahjadi, from Banda Aceh, Indonesia, about the aftermath of a devastating earthquake and tsunami that struck Sumatra in 2004:

'God's invisible hand' saved Indonesia's mosques

By Victor Tjahjadi - BANDA ACEH, Indonesia

In Indonesia's tsunami wastelands on the northern tip of Sumatra island, little remains of whole towns lost to the colossal forces that came thundering in from the ocean.

But across these battered shores, dozens of mosques still stand, their minarets glinting defiantly in the sun - a phenomenon survivors in the deeply Islamic region credit as much to divine intervention as robust architecture.

"God's invisible hands prevents the mosque's destruction," said Mukhlis Khaeran, who saw the sea sweep away his home village of Baet outside the north Sumatran city of Banda Aceh, but leave the neighbourhood mosque relatively intact.

"He punishes us for our greed and arrogance but He will protect his house," Khaeran said, his arms covered with injuries sustained in the disaster that killed at least 100,000 people around the north Sumatran province of Aceh...

...Many churches, synagogues and temples were demolished when the Tsunami struck. A person

sought shelter in a church but managed to survive when the church collapsed around him. He hid in the corner.

When he was asked whether it tests his faith he said “It just makes you wonder if your following the true religion”

Again, we see that the survival of these Mosques while everything else around them was destroyed is perceived, not only as a miracle of Allah, but as a validation that Islam is the true faith. They have allowed their physical circumstances to determine their theology. But what do we know about Hinduism and about Islam from the Bible? Nothing. The Bible knows nothing about those systems because they are false. And yet, the pagans who follow those beliefs lean on superstition to validate their faith just like Christians do. If it works for us why doesn't it work for them? If stories or experiences of physical intervention validates our faith, and that is all we need, then why doesn't it work for them? Why doesn't it validate their faith? The truth is, God is not behind any of it. Because what God is doing is something spiritual in nature, in accordance with His eternal purpose.

One more example is the Marian Catholic Church and the priesthood who resided there during the atomic fallout in Hiroshima, Japan, on August 6th, 1945.

The church and the rectory remained standing while virtually everything else surrounding it within a 4.5 mile radius was destroyed. This catholic church was only 8 blocks from ground zero, and yet the effects of the blast were felt some 37 miles away. Friar Hubert Schiffer credited the survival of the church to the fact that the rosary was prayed there every single day.

And so, is this all we need to validate our beliefs? Is our faith in physical phenomena? Or is it in the plain and clear doctrine found in the word of God. Because this is the decision we have to make if we are going to engage in this process. Approaching the sufferings of this present time in a godly manner doesn't just mean going through them without sinning– it means approaching them with the same godly perspective and attitude as the Father, understanding the reason that Father desires to accomplish in us *through* them.

Again, I am not telling you that God is not intervening in the world physically today—I can't tell you that. What I am telling you is that our doctrine does not teach us to think about the ailments of this physical world in the way we typically think of them, but that they are opportunities for growth and for glory. If we want to be educated as a son by the Father, that is how we need to see them. If you want to operate in uncertainty, and cling to things that our doctrine hasn't disclosed to us, then you are free to do so. But just know that your edification *will* come to a halt.