

# By Love Set Free

APRIL 13/14, 2019

## THE ULTIMATE FREEDOM

ROMANS 8:16-28

SENIOR PASTOR BYRON MACDONALD

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**The Reality:** This is a dying world with pain and suffering as the consequence of mankind's rebellion. Someone living for Christ will endure suffering in this life. While a person's soul is redeemed in Christ, the body still awaits its redemption, vv. 17-18, 23.

**The Pain:** Suffering for a Christian produces real hurt and a longing to be free. The Lord Jesus experiences suffering with us, vv. 17, 23.

**The Hope:** Suffering is temporary and not worth comparing to the glorious redemption of the bodies of those who belong to the Lord Jesus, vv. 18-23.

**The Innocence:** Suffering comes to the one walking in Christ, not as punishment from God, but because we live in a fallen world in which God is still working His plan of redemption through Jesus and the cross, vv. 21-23.

**The Eagerness:** Suffering brings an even greater longing for the day the glory of Christ Jesus and the saints is revealed, vv. 19, 24-25.

**The Resources:** The Holy Spirit, through the Word and prayer, brings His resources to the Christian in suffering, including interceding in prayer, vv. 26-28.

**The Confidence from Hope:** Suffering is not wasted but is part of the good that God is doing in and through the lives of believers, vv. 24-25, 28.

# P A S T O R ' S   C H A T

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This weekend marks the beginning of Passion Week. It was a week that was, in some way, about crowds and how they responded to Jesus. On Sunday the crowds hailed Him as the Promised King of God who would bring in the kingdom crying out as recorded in Luke 19:38, *“Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”* People put down their cloaks for Jesus to ride by in honor. They took palm branches hailing Him in worship as the Promised One of God. Yet it says by the end of the week on Friday the crowds were gathered before Pontius Pilate and they cried out, *“crucify, crucify Him!”* How is it that crowds can be so easily influenced, within one week, to first hail Jesus as the King from God; and then call Him a fraud and for Him to be crucified?

I am sure that in each crowd there were a few with passion who rose up and influenced others. Certainly before Pilate it was the chief priests and the elders of Israel that persuaded the crowds to cry out for Jesus to be crucified, Matthew 27:20. Who were the people who moved the crowds to hail Jesus as the King? It is not as clear. But we see what happens when a determined smaller group acts together to move greater numbers. We know that 50 days later the crowds gathered and the disciples of Jesus preached the resurrected Jesus and 3,000 stepped forward for baptism to indicate their embrace of Jesus as Savior and Lord.

We are seeking a significant moving of people in numbers here at RHCC. It has always been my

desire at RHCC to see God moving in our lives and through our lives in ways so significant God is the only explanation for what is happening. The desire for a deeper moving of God, that catches us all up together in a movement of the Holy Spirit, is what is behind the REVIVE series beginning the week after our Resurrection Celebration. This is not just a new sermon series, it is not just a study guide for Life Groups, it is not just a five-day a week personal study for each of us in the Word of God – this is a hunger for the moving of God that goes beyond the coordination of our worship services, our Life Groups, or our personal devotions. But this will only be a movement if you are part of it. This cannot happen as something that a few do, it will only happen if it is something we all do together.

The 10 weeks of REVIVE will mark the last ten weeks of my ministry here at RHCC. But my hunger is for a moving of God that captures us as a church and goes on in strength and passion far beyond my pastorate. As we consider the call of REVIVE, we have a wonderful promise of God as given in Isaiah 57:15, *“I dwell in the high and holy place, and also with him who is of a contrite and lowly spirit, to revive the spirit of the lowly, and to revive the heart of the contrite.”* Let us each come hungry for God to move, to revive. Remember this won't happen without you. Let's join together in this and see what happens when we humbly come together to call on God to revive us, and each says, “start with me.”

~ Senior Pastor Byron MacDonald

*Pastor Byron welcomes your questions/comments at [bmacdonald@rhcc.net](mailto:bmacdonald@rhcc.net)*