

## Introduction:

**Text:** Romans 8:16-18, 28-30

The stages of our conformation to the likeness of Christ.

**SONSHIP** (John 1:11-13; Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor. 5:17)

1. The **starting** point of our conformation to the likeness of Christ is our personal relationship with God as our Heavenly Father.
2. The continuation of our conformation to the likeness of Christ involves God's Fatherly **discipline** or training to produce His holiness in us (Heb. 12:4-11).

**SUFFERING** (Rom. 5:1-4)

1. God allows and uses our sufferings to **mold** us into the likeness of His Son.
2. If God is good, why is He allowing evil and suffering in the world?
  - a. Because suffering is a consequence of Adam's **sin** which brought us a variety of reasons for suffering.
  - b. GOOD NEWS: Our sufferings can **produce** in us, patience, character, and hope, if we keep our faith in God in all our sufferings.
  - c. Theologian, Dr. Peter Kuzmic said, "Charisma without character is **chaos**."
  - d. Another GOOD NEWS: Our sufferings can be used to conform us into the likeness of Christ if we **choose** to bless God, to thank God, and to worship God, in spite of all our sufferings.
  - e. In case you are bitter or sour because of any suffering in your life, **offer** your suffering to God as a form of worship and you will experience the joy and the peace of God that passes all understanding.

**SUMMIT** (Rom 8:28-30)

1. This is the **peak** of our conformation to the likeness of Christ.
2. Predestination in v. 29 is not John Calvin's "double predestination" of people who will go to heaven and people who will go to hell, which denies people's free will to **choose** their eternal destiny.

3. Our final conformation to the likeness of Christ is the Grand Finale which involves:
  - a. The **restoration** of God's original image in man that was broken by Adam's sin (1 John 3:2-3).
  - b. The **redemptive** death of Christ on the cross are for all people (Rev. 5:9).

4. Personal inspiration:

- a. This inspired my **Vision** to build Charisma Life Church into "a blended community of Christ's followers"—people who are multicultural and multigenerational.
- b. This inspired me to raise Charisma Life Church into a "Spiritual Power House" that is ablaze with the glory of God to **attract** people to Christ through our local and global mission.

## Conclusion:

### TABLETALK STARTERS (For family devotions and Life Group discussions)

1. Compare and contrast the secular and spiritual views about the Ultimate Good, mentioned in the sermon introduction.
2. Read John 1:11-13; Rom. 8:16; Heb. 2:4-11. Started with our personal relationship with God through our spiritual birth into His spiritual family, how does God continue to conform us to the likeness of His Son, according to Hebrews 2:4-11?
3. Read Rom. 5:1-4. What is produced through our sufferings, if we keep our faith and our love for God in spite of any suffering, that will make us more Christlike? Dr. Peter Kuzmic said, "Charisma without character is chaos."
4. Read Rom. 8:28-30. Why do we call our final conformation to the likeness of Christ the highest peak of our Christian experience?
5. What substitutes does Satan offer to us to deviate our attention from God's ultimate good for us that we need to resist? Refer to Mark 8:36-37; 1 John 2:17.