



"For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us" -Romans 8:18

"Will this ever end?" When you're in the thick of grief, disappointment, conflict, or any other trial, it seems like there is no end in sight. This chapter seems like it's the whole story. You used to think that the rest of your story would be "and they lived happily ever after", but now you're not sure.

At least that's how I felt after the death of my daughter. Instead of having a beautiful new baby that we were taking home from the hospital, my wife and I were now tasked with planning her funeral. I thought a lot about all the time that I had lost with her. All of the milestones that I wouldn't get to see. It wasn't right. It wasn't fair. It wasn't good. And I couldn't see an end in sight to the grief, or to the questions.

In a way, I was right. Grief doesn't end, because the love that we have for those who have died does not end. What I needed wasn't a magic fix to the hurt or the loss. What I needed was a new perspective. What I needed then, and what I still need now, is to be reminded that this is but a chapter of a larger story, God's story. And that's a story that we know the ending to. Spoiler alert.... Jesus wins. Death is defeated, sin is overcome, and the devil is ultimately cast down. And what remains is life eternal with God in the new creation. That's the ending of my story, and that gives me a new perspective, that the time that I've lost with my daughter here on earth is short compared to the time we will have together in the new creation because of Jesus.

That new perspective gives me hope. But it doesn't take away my pain or your pain. Just because you know the ending to the story doesn't mean you can't cry at the sad parts. Life still involves suffering. It is not right, fair, or good. We shouldn't call suffering something that it's not. But we rejoice that suffering has an end date. It does not get the last word. Neither do death, cancer, war, conflict, pain, famine, disease, or injustice. God gets the last word. And because of Jesus, that word for those who believe is a word of grace, forgiveness, and peace. It's "welcome home." All of our present sufferings cannot compare to the glory of that final chapter.

I don't know all the pages of your story. I don't know how exactly God will use you throughout your life. I don't know what questions you will wrestle with or what storms you will face. What I do know is that God is bigger than those questions and storms. Because they have an end date, He does not. They have a word, but He gets the *last* word. I don't know your whole story, but I do know the ending. Spoiler alert.... through faith in Christ Jesus, your troubles are temporary, but God's promises are eternal. May knowing the ending to your story change the way you live the rest of the story, as you trust in God's eternal promises to carry you through it all.

Prayer: Lord, thank you for rewriting the ending to my story. Thank you for saving me, for calling me into your family, and for never leaving me or forsaking me. Help me to hold onto your eternal promises as the answer to my questions in this life. Thank you for making me yours. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Journal Prompts:

-What is the ending to my story, because of Jesus?

-How does knowing that ending change my perspective on my present questions and struggles?