LINKS DAILY DEVOTIONAL BIBLE STUDY | NOVEMBER 27TH, 2026

Links Players

ADVENT 2026
HOPE

For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. (Romans 8:20–23, ESV)

You pull into the parking lot of your home course a week after a hurricane. From there, you can see fairways buried under silt. A wooden bridge is wedged against an uprooted tree, and a large oak lies where you used to land your drives.

You remember what those holes looked like last Saturday, when your friend Billy made three birdies in a row and insisted on telling you the story all the way to the locker room.

Then you see the superintendent, shoulders slumped, standing beside the fairway with a chainsaw in hand as he surveys the damage. You wonder whether the course can be restored. He tells you where they have already cleared debris and where they will begin tomorrow.

This scene illustrates something Paul is getting at in Romans 8. When he tells us what Christians are waiting for, he envisions "the world to come." Creation itself, he says, will be set free from its slavery to decay.

When Paul addresses our personal future, he says we are waiting for the "redemption of our bodies." God cares about the world he made and about these bodies with which we have worked, played golf, and embraced our loved ones.

Paul knows there is much to grieve. He says that all creation has been subjected to futility by God and now groans. Then he adds that we groan too, even though we have received the Holy Spirit.

As the late comedian Robin Williams once observed, "Everyone you meet is fighting a battle you know nothing about…." In short, everyone you tee it up with may be carrying some unspoken pain. Paul reminds us that we are waiting.

Paul compares the groaning of this age to the pains of childbirth. That metaphor helps us understand anchored hope: our pain is real, but something is coming.

Interestingly, that's because the future has already begun. As baffling as that truth may seem at first, it is one of Paul's primary points.
The Holy Spirit is the firstfruits—the first portion of what God will bring to completion at Christ's second coming. Peter echoes Paul when he tells us where this living hope began: God raised Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3–9).

Your superintendent can restore the damaged course over many seasons. The truth of Christianity is far more amazing: God brought his Son through death itself, the harbinger of what is to come for the believer.

The future God promises has already arrived in the person of Jesus, and by his Spirit we begin to share in that life now (see 1 Corinthians 15).

That gives us an Advent hope we can share. Think of a friend with whom you used to play every Saturday, but who now seldom leaves home. You could drop by and listen to all those stories you've heard a thousand times.

This small act of kindness comes from knowing that the Lord cares about your brother in Christ and will one day restore all he has lost in this life. Your presence alone can buoy his fainting hopes.
Advent reminds us that the Son of God came supernaturally into this world as a baby. It also reminds us to wait in anchored hope for his return.

Creation groans, and we groan too. There are seasons of life we would like to forget; the pain of failure or loss can feel like too much to carry.

The promise of this first Sunday of Advent is that the risen Jesus has an unimaginably brighter future for his disciples—and for his creation, which we will call our eternal home.

Prayer: Father, visit our hearts and minds with renewed hope in what you have promised.

READING: Romans 8:20–23, ESV

1. Have you ever seen a golf course badly damaged and later restored? How does that experience help you picture the hope Paul describes in Romans 8?

2. Why is it important that Paul says even those who have the Holy Spirit still groan? How does Jesus' resurrection give us hope as we wait?

3. Who in your life needs a reminder that suffering will not have the final word? What simple act of kindness could you offer this Advent?

NOTES

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