

Scripture: Romans 8:18-25.

Theme: The Christian's slight suffering.

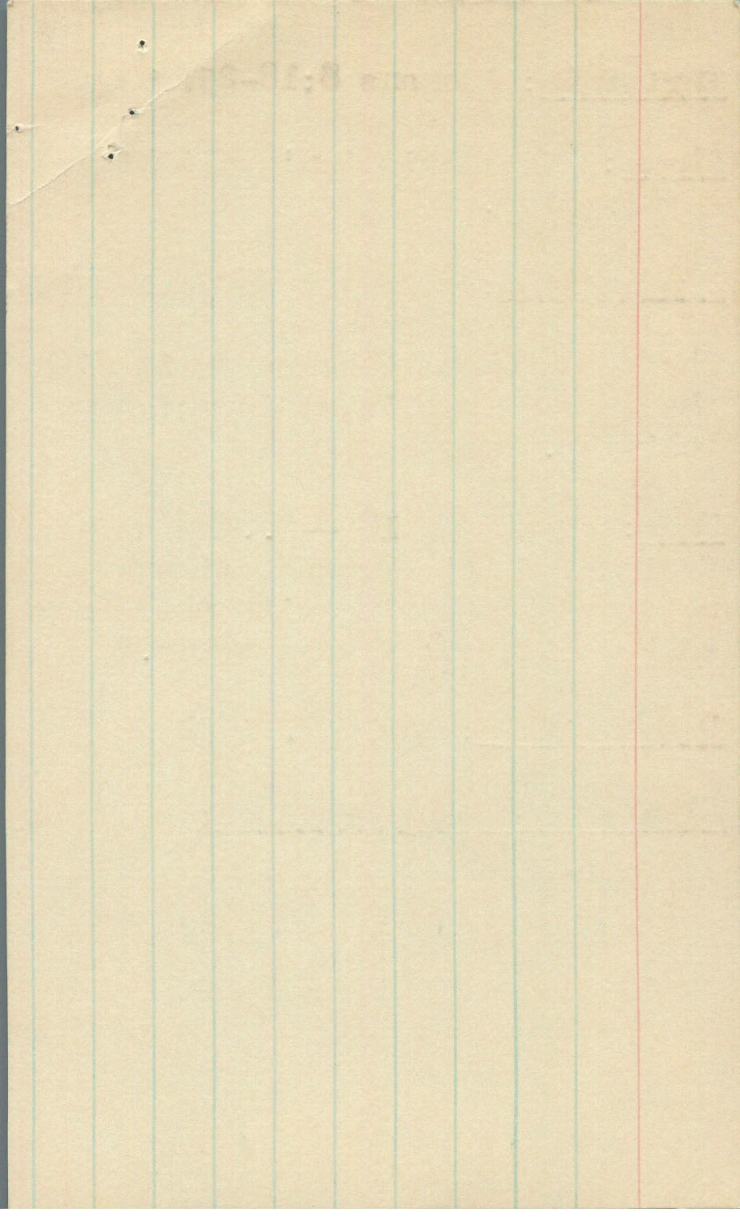
Proposition: Present suffering is of little consequence to the christian when he compares it with the eternal happiness in which he believes.

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

Date written: July 7, 1954

Places and dates preached:

Wheatland, Wyo. - July 11, 1954  
Grace, Cheyenne, Wyo. March 4, 56  
8:15 to 11 a.m.



## Introduction:

1. Suffering is a universal experience:

a. Poland -- destroyed homes and hungry children.

b. Japan -- A - bombs, floods.

c. Our country -- drought and dust storms, depression of 30's.

d. Grief and pain at loss of loved ones.

2. The christian has an attitude toward ~~all~~ this that puts suffering in perspective as a passing phase, and not as ultimate tragedy.

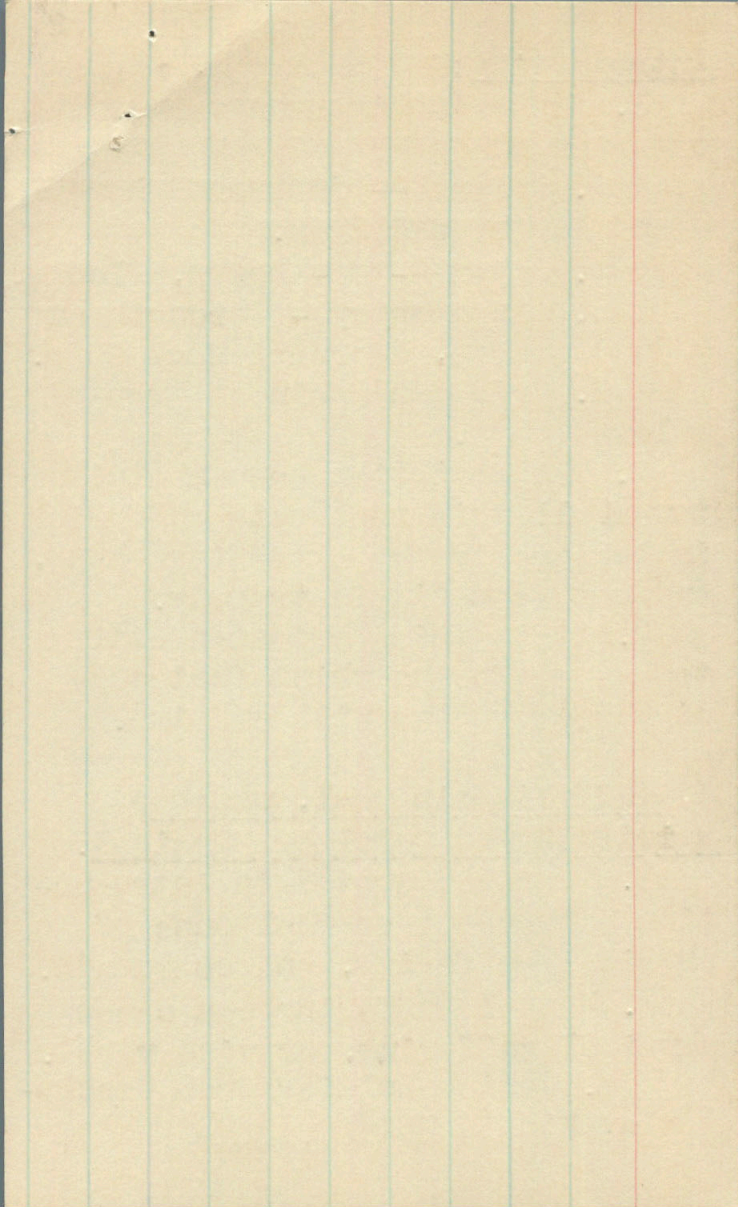
3. It is this Christian attitude toward suffering which Scripture discusses and we will examine.

## I. Suffering is real, whether spiritual and moral or physical.

1. Examples quoted in introduction all accept as real ~~ones~~ of physical suffering, and could add.

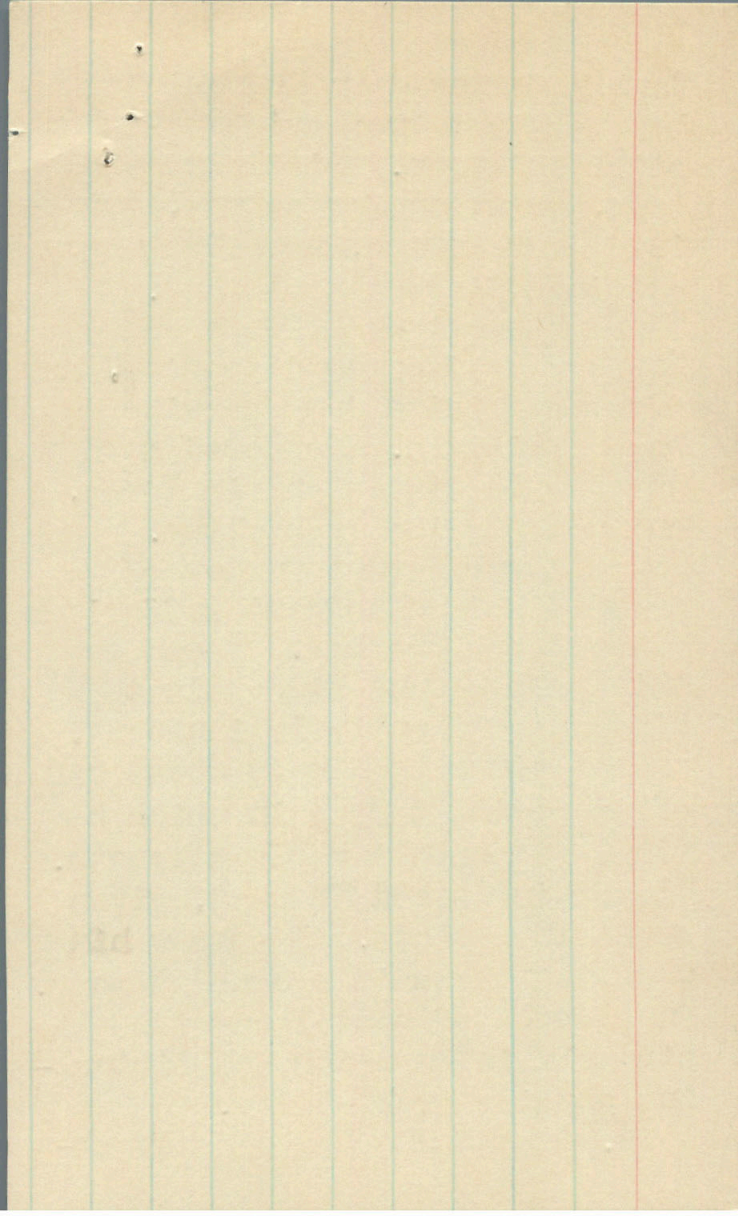
2. Mental suffering can cause physical suffering, or vice versa.

a. Jewish soldier from Czechoslovakia (Camp Cooke) whose



family murdered by Communists before his & brother's eyes when still children. Little care as boys, shifting for selves, drifting about Europe, usually hungry and insufficiently clothed. Through American help at end of World War II entered American and after requisite Army service became citizen. Rendered good service in States and in Korea, and was physically healthy. Could never forget murder of parents and subsequent sufferings of self and brother. Began to think all around him against him and self entirely innocent, and at times to have violent rages of anger and terror in which he displayed unbelievable strength. Closed in locked NP ward, given shock treatments. Last saw him when doctors said prognosis poor. An example of mental anguish strongly influencing and disturbing physical well-being.

b. Anyone who has closely ob-



served or experienced personally a nervous breakdown or mental disability knows that serious mental disturbances are very often of a spiritual type, concerned with what one considers personal failures (the unpardonable sin, etc.), and that these disturbances do affect seriously the physical self.

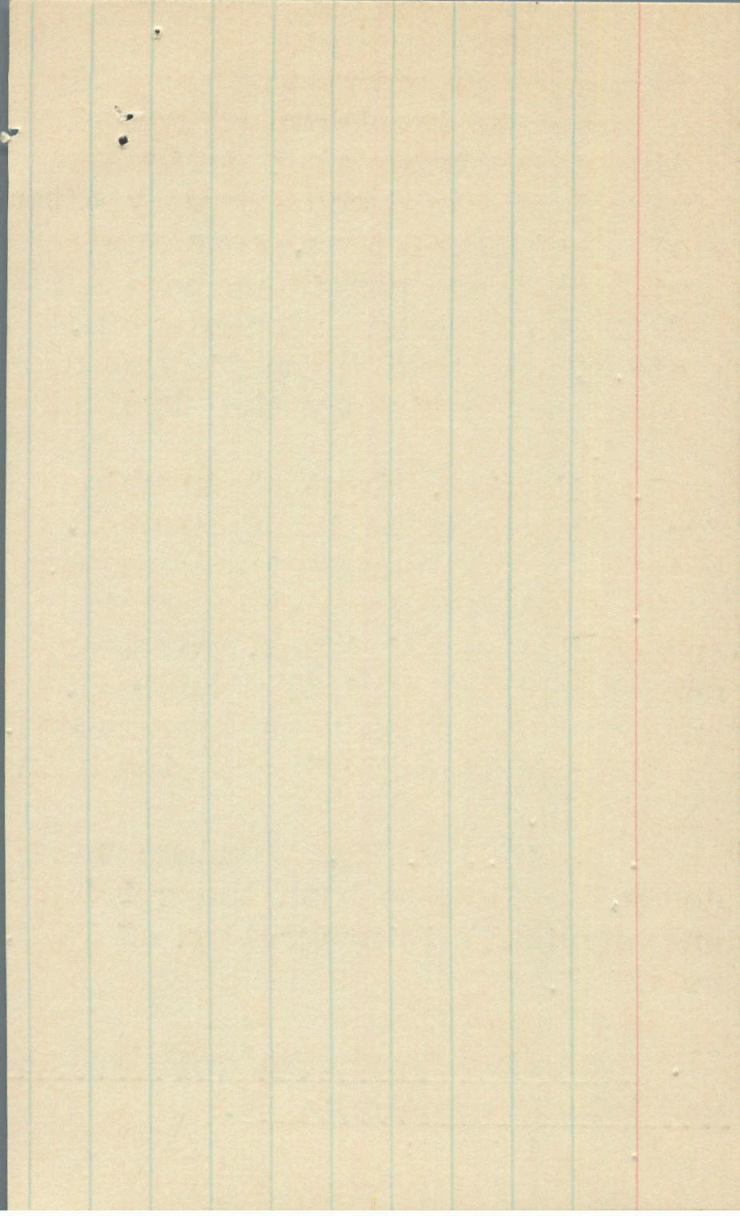
3. Likewise, physical troubles frequently seem to induce mental, spiritual, and moral disturbances.

4. Suffering is just as vivid and real when spiritual, moral or mental as when strictly physical, and sometimes much more torturesome. Must think of suffering as including all types.

5. Scrip., v. 21, "bondage to decay," refers to both the spiritual and physical disintegration of life, we think.

II. Suffering is not endured because we wish to experience it.

1. Scripture:





a. V. 20, in full.

b. v.22, in full.

c. v.23--"...groan inwardly as we wait for adoption as sons."

2. Book Of Job presents this idea vividly, by portraying Job as a righteous man who loses family by death, loses wealth and all property, and is afflicted with boils and illnesses himself, all as a result of a plan arranged by God at the challenge of the devil and in order to test Job's faith. He surely did not chose the suffering.

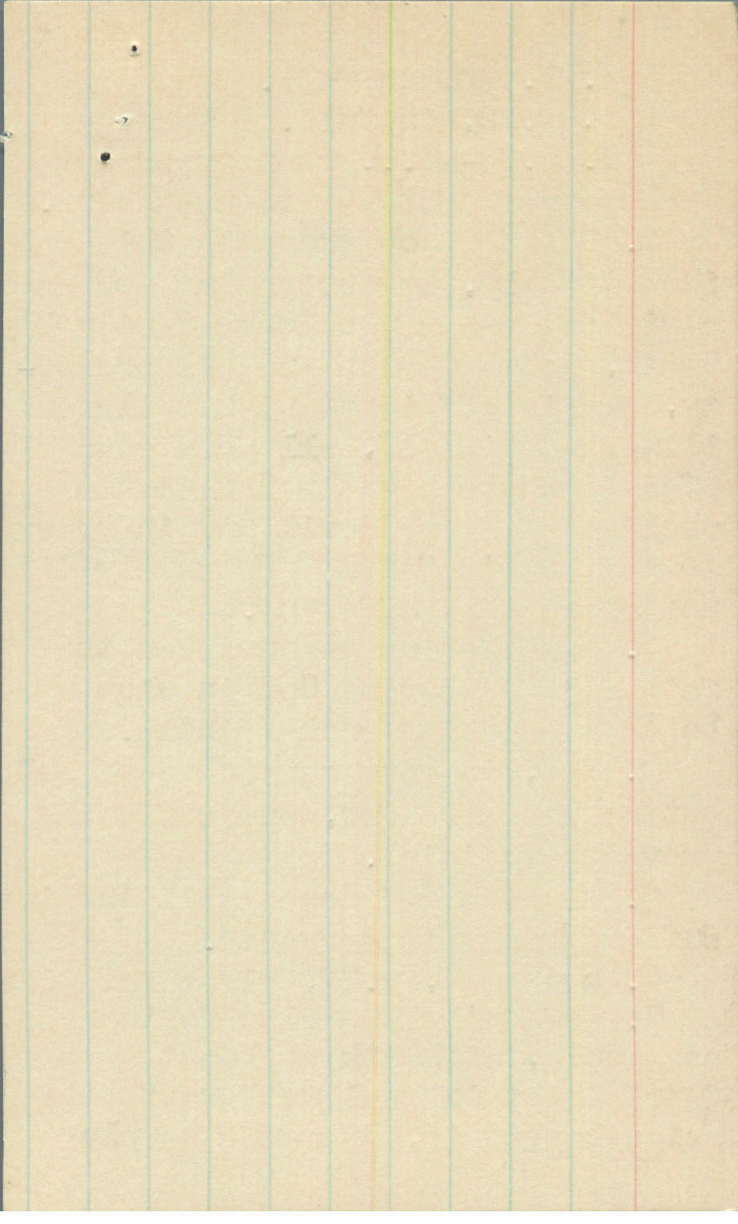
3. Hard for us to envision the fatherly and loving God in whom we believe as doing such a thing.

4. Yet, in long run Job came out better and stronger, and suffering proved benefieial.

5. Perhaps God does still inflict suffering on His servants.

6. Scripture, v.20, gives this ide

7. We don't choose suffering as a rule, withoutk at least a fairly certain goal well worth the price beyond it, as young couple



choosing to be parents.

III. All suffering will be overcome when people become sons of God.

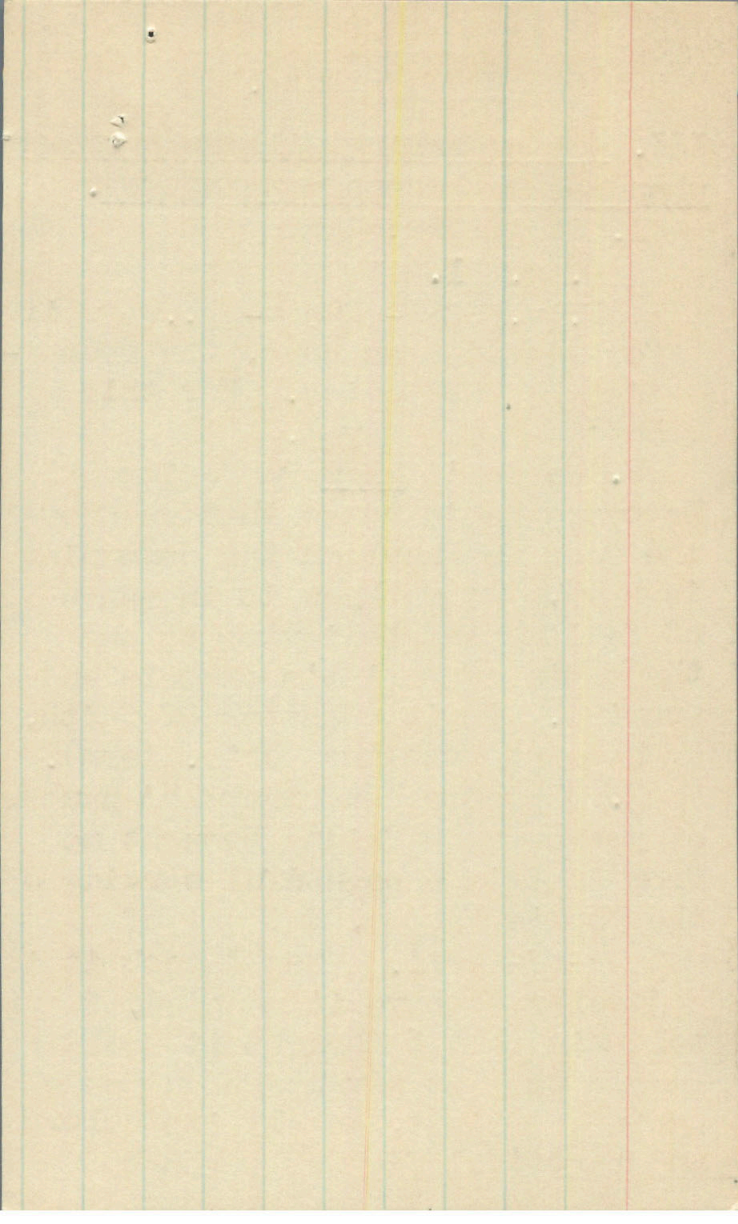
1. Scripture:

a. v. 2b.

b. v. 23b - 24a -- "...we wait for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For<sup>m</sup> this hope we were saved.

2. We don't know suffering will be overcome in sense that we know the wood we kneel on for communion is hard, but we know it in sense of feeling and believing it on the basis of Christ's example and promise. It is a matter of faith, or hope (to use the Scrip. term).

3. Clarence Macartney: "A number of years ago a friend brought me from Austria a beautiful carving of the Lord's Supper, cut out of mother-of-pearl. When I took it to a jeweler to have it mounted, I told him that I thought it would appear to best advantage suspended against a light, so all its colors and beautiful figures would be



revealed. But his practiced eye<sup>7</sup> looked at it, and he said, "No, this must be mounted against something dark." So the sorr

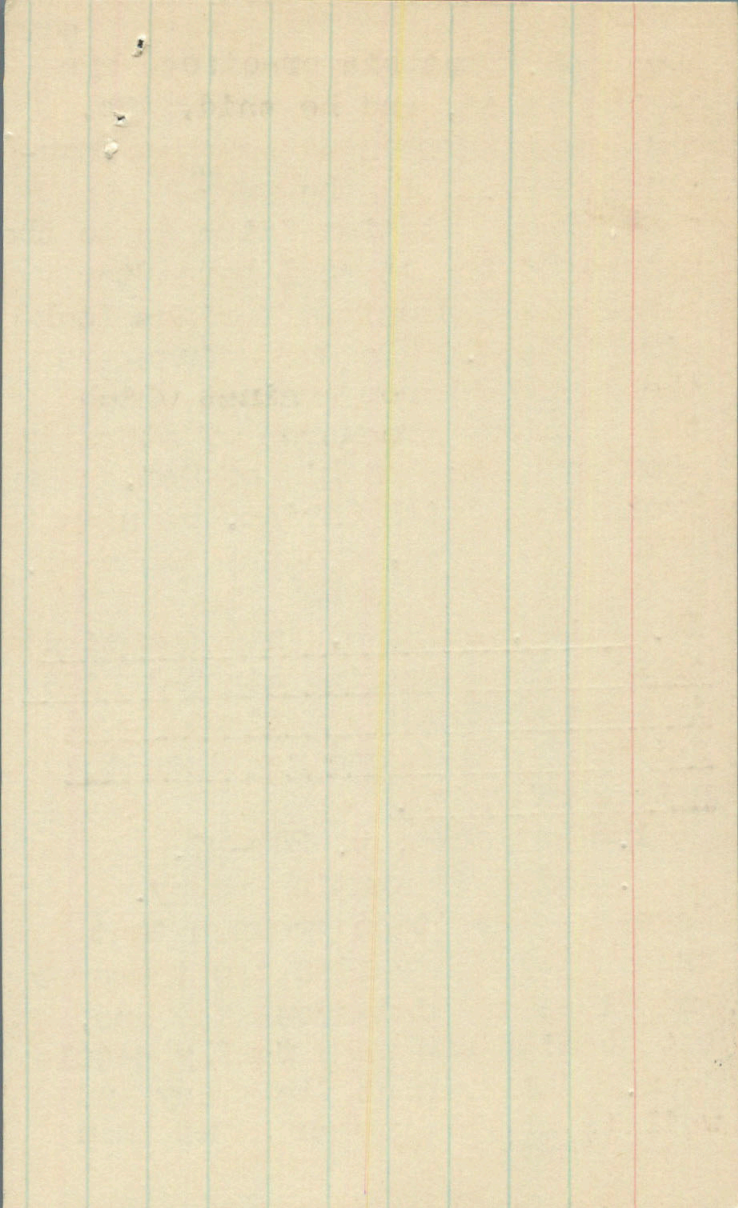
4. The Christian faith as to the nature of the eternal hereafter makes the present sufferings look ~~small~~ indeed. The sufferings are the dark backdrop against which the precious treasures of eternity show up best; sonship of God, brotherhood with Christ, reunion with loved ones, and all the rest.

IV. Faith, or hope, in redemption to a wondrously fine eternal life is adhered to more patiently and faithfully when one realizes the nature of faith.

1. Scripture, v. 24b-25.

2. Children wanting puppy.

Parents deny it on grounds that present home location too temporary and place too dangerous for one, but promise one when family settles down. Children at first cry and wail in disappointment, but then



accept this, believing parent's promise, and look forward to "when we move and get a puppy." Faith, hope, in parents' promise, reality, though puppy not seen. Later, move made and a puppy gotten, but faith and hope gone, for reality replaced it.

3. Christian hope and faith in promise of overcoming of present sufferings on much more solid base than children's. Faith and hope now. Then the move to the new land of eternity where the beautiful reality is achieved.

### Conclusion:

1. Present suffering is of little consequence to the christian when he compares it with the eternal happiness in which he believes and toward which he looks and works.

2. As text words it, "the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

