

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD

ROMANS 8:28 • TV-416B

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by

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Romans 8:28

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

I want you to turn in your Bible today, to the **Book of Romans**. I have preached from this passage of scripture several times, but I am going to preach from it again today. I'll be reading from **Romans 8: verse 28**. The title of the message is: "**ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD**." I have heard this verse all my life and you have heard it all your life. It is especially preached at funeral services.

What is this talking about and what does this mean? Open your Bible to **Romans 8:28**. Let's read the whole scripture; "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.*" That is the whole verse. Can you remember it? Mark it in your Bible; "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.*"

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My message today is directed primarily to believers, to the sheep of Christ. He calls them, “*My sheep.*” To the children of God, He calls them “*My brethren.*” This message is to those who listen to me preach Sunday after Sunday. I hear from many of you quite often. I want to encourage you. I want to encourage you who know Christ, who love Christ, and I want to encourage those of you who love the gospel. I want to comfort you today. I want to assure you of the promises of God, which you have in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Isaiah wrote in Chapter 40 (he was quoting the Lord God, who said to him), “*Comfort ye My people. Speak comfortably to My people and say unto them, their warfare is over, that their sins are forgiven. They have received of the Lord double for all their iniquities.*” That is what I want to do today. I want to speak to the people of God, to the sheep of Christ, to my brethren. I want to encourage you.

We need not fear. I don’t know why we fear. We have a lot of fears don’t we? We shouldn’t. We shouldn’t fear because our Lord said to us; “*Fear thou not; for I am with thee; Be not dismayed for I am your God and I will strengthen you, and I will help you and I will uphold you with the right hand of My righteousness; so don’t be afraid.*”

Don’t be afraid of what men can do. Don’t be afraid of what tomorrow holds. Don’t be afraid of the future; don’t be afraid. “*Fear not, I am with thee.*” *Fear not, I am your God.*”

I don’t know why we are overly anxious and concerned about material things, but we are. Our Lord rebuked us for that. He said, “*Take no anxious thought, (saying); what shall we eat, what shall we drink, whether with all we shall be clothed.*” He said, “*The heathen seek those things. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and these things will be added to you; your heavenly Father knows you have need of these things.*” Doesn’t He?

Did He not say this? Did not Paul declare this in Philippians Four? “*My God shall supply all your need.*” Maybe not all of my wants but He will supply all of my need, “*According to His riches in glory through Christ Jesus.*” That is a promise! My God will supply your need.

David said, “*I was young but now I’m old. I’ve never seen God’s seed begging bread.*” I never have seen that. I don’t know why we do but we do; we have these doubts and fears. We have doubts about salvation, doubts about the mercy of God toward us, doubts about our place in the kingdom of heaven.

Why do we entertain these doubts? Why do we let these birds nest in our heads? Christ said, “*My sheep hear My voice and I know them and they follow Me. I give them eternal life and they will never perish; neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father gave them to Me and no man can pluck them out of My Father’s hand.*”

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In **Philippians**, He said, *“He that hath begun a good work in you; He will perfect it, He will perform it, and He will finish it in the day of Jesus Christ.”* God never left anything half done that He started. We don’t need to entertain these doubts and these fears concerning salvation. He said, *“Lo I am with you always; even to the end of the earth.”*

We don’t need to dread death and dying. It seems like nobody wants to die. Everybody is afraid to die. Yet, the Lord Jesus tells us this; *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints.”* The death of a believer is precious. *“To live is Christ and to die is gain.”* Didn’t the apostle Paul say; *“To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord?”* Why do we fear death? *“To die is gain.”* David said, *“I’ll be satisfied when I wake with His likeness. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord, forever. Why are thou cast down? O my soul, hope thou in God. I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance, who is My God.”*

Look at the text; *“And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who the called according to His purpose.”* Do you know what I would like to do? I would like to break that verse down into words. Let’s see what each word says.

First of all, Christ says that we know something. *“And we know.”* The answer is not that we just think, perhaps or maybe, we know (that this is true). *“We know that all things work together for good to them who love God.”* How do we know this? Do we just think it? No, we know it. How do we know it? We know it because God says so in His Word; that is how we know.

We don’t build our hopes on feelings. I’m afraid that a lot of today’s religion is just feelings, emotions, excitement and all these kind of things. There is no foundation; there is no rock. The false gospel is just a light or veneer; it is outward emotionalism and feelings.

The great Martin Luther wrote this:

Feelings come and feeling go
And feelings are deceiving,
My warrant is the Word of God
Nothing else is worth believing.

And though all my heart
Should fill condemned,
For want of some sweet token.
I’ll trust God’s unchanging Word
Whose Word cannot be broken.

I’ll trust in God’s unchanging Word
Till soul and body sever,
Because the words of men

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Will pass away
But, God's Word abides forever.

"I know all things work together for good to them who love God." I know that! How do I know that? Is it because of a feeling? The answer is no; it is because of His Word.

I don't build my hopes on my faithfulness. You better not build your hopes on your faithfulness. We build our hopes on God's faithfulness. God is faithful to His promises and to His Word. He said, *"I am the Lord; I change not."* You can't say that and I can't either. I change:

Change and decay in all around I see,
Oh Thou that changeth not
Abide with me.

God said, *"I am the Lord; I change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. I know that all things work together for good to them that love God."* The reason is that it is God's Word and He doesn't change. His Word won't change and He won't change. The gifts and callings of God are without change.

Look at the text again; *"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God."* When our God declared all things work together for good, He means all things! I will name them: All things work together for good in heaven, in the Father, in the Son and Holy Spirit, with the angels, councils, covenants, all things in the universe, principalities and powers; *"All things work together for good to them that love God."* That includes all things in time, (past, present and future), before the world, during the world, after the world and eternity, (past and future), all things.

God's everlasting councils, covenants and purposes are included. There is the destruction of the world, the remaking of a new earth and a new heaven, all things work together for my good. All things on earth, in my birth, in my life and in my death, work together for my good if I am one who loves God and who has been called according to His purpose. It doesn't matter if it is joy or sorrow. It doesn't matter if it is success or failure, plenty or poverty, sickness or health, life or death.

There is nothing that takes place in the life of a believer, nothing (absolutely nothing), that takes place before He was born, after he was born, and during his entire life or in every life that touches his life or affects his life that is not for his eternal good. There is nothing that takes place in reference to a believer that is not purposed by the Father, ordained by the Father, ordered by the Father for His glory and for our eternal good.

You may not understand that now, but you will some day. I mean all things and there are no exceptions. There are not accidents in the life of a person who loves God. No accidents! Everything is on purpose. Every step of his way is designed and purposed and

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ordered by God. *“The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord who rules over all, even the hairs of our head are numbered.”* God reigns in everything! Do you know that?

Quit quoting that verse if you don't believe it. Just stop blaspheming God and stop using it. If you can't believe it, don't claim it. If you can't go all the way with it, don't start on the journey. *“And we know that all things,”* is that not what it says?” The answer is *“all things”* without exception. *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.”* They work. They are not idle. They work by God and are set in motion. They actively work together, the bad and the good, poverty and plenty, success and failure, sickness and health. They work together!

They don't work separately. They work together. If you only look at one event in your life or one happening, you might say, “I don't understand this.” No, you don't! That event is just part of a pattern. One tree doesn't make a forest. One grain of sand doesn't make a beach. One drop of water doesn't make an ocean and one happening doesn't make a life.

You go to the Doctor and something may be wrong with you. He may write out a prescription. You take it to the Pharmacist. Have you ever watched one of them? The Pharmacist takes down this ingredient and takes down that one. One of them could kill you. Some might upset you something awful. He takes these different ingredients and mixes them together and they work together to make you healthy again.

You see; any one event or happening during our lives could destroy us. Too much joy would intoxicate us. Too much misery would cause us to despair. Too much sorrow would crush us. Too much suffering would defeat us. Too much pleasure would ruin us. Too much defeat would discourage us. Too much success would exalt us and make us proud. All of these things work together for good.

Solomon wrote; *“Lord, keep me from poverty; lest I steal. Keep me from riches lest I forsake Thee.”* God knows His children.

We discipline our children. We put certain hedges and rules about them. We think we know them and we think we know what is best for them. We do what we think is best. God doesn't think He knows; He does. God doesn't think that He knows what is best for you; He does. Do you see what I am saying? He is the infinite, sovereign Father.

Well, it says; *“And we know all things work together for good.”* What does this word, *“good”* mean? When some people think of good, they are concerned only for the good, the feeling and the pleasure of the moment, right now. Some people may say that they have a terrible, terrible headache. Is that good? Right now it may not be good, not right now. This is not what He is talking about. He's not talking about the good of the moment or the good of right now.

God doesn't do things to us and in a great deal of consideration for right now. There is no time with God. People may say, “Who is going to make me happy, who is going to fill my

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mouth or fill my belly? Who is going to cover me with fine clothes and beautiful jewelry? Who is going to make me strong and healthy? I'm going to follow the preacher who promises me health and wealth, strength and beauty. Who is going to make me laugh and never cry? I don't want to ever cry; I want to be happy all the time!"

I will tell you this; these are temporary things. You don't want that. Even if you could have it, you wouldn't want it. These are all temporary things. They pass away. "*Heaven and earth shall pass away.*" "*The fashion of this world fadeth away.*" God has never promised His children that all things would work together for our present good and our temporary good. That won't help me.

The apostle Paul says, that all things in heaven, on earth, and all things, past, present and future, "*work together for my good.*" That includes all things in my parent's life, my life and the life of my children. It includes things in every event or advent that has to do with me or touches my life in any shape, form or fashion, outwardly or inwardly. All things are supervised, ordered and purposed by my Father for my good. What good? The answer is my spiritual good, and my eternal good.

I'm not just here for a little while; I am going to live eternally. I am on this earth for a little while. My time on this earth is nothing. My time is like a drop of water compared to an ocean when you compare it to eternity. My time is like a snowflake compared to a blizzard. You can't take one grain of sand and compare it to a desert. I am just here for the moment.

These little temporary, unpleasantries, sorrows and tribulations are nothing. They are not worthy to be compared with the eternity and glory that shall be ours. My friends, what I want God to do, and what you should want God to do, is work things out for my eternal good. I'm almost finished here.

I want to "*Win Christ and be found in Him.*" I want to know God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to have my sins forgiven. I want my name written in heaven, don't you? I want a hope of eternal life. I want to be the means to bless and help someone else. I want to finish my course with joy and faith. I want to be made like Christ. That is what I'm talking about.

"*We'll be satisfied when we awake in His likeness.*" That will be good! Whatever God is pleased to bring to pass in my life or your life, so be it! Whatever our life requires or whatever it takes to bring me to Christ, then it is worth it. Whatever it takes to bring me to glory; it is worth it. Whatever it takes or whatever God has to do to break me, humble me, bring me to faith or set His seal upon me, then so be it! That will be good!

That which takes me away from Christ is not good. Whatever brings me to Christ is good. To whom is this promise given? "*And we know, that all things work together for good.*" That promise is not for everybody. It says, "*To them who love God.*" This is not a universal promise to be claimed by all men. You can't just run up and down the country

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telling everybody, “Well, I knew that was bad, but all things work together for good.” It sure doesn’t work together for good to him if he doesn’t love God.

The believer loves God. He loves the true and living God. He loves his Father. He loves His Word and He loves Christ. The believer loves the true and living God who redeemed him by His life and by His death. The believer loves the true and living God who reigns and rules over His kingdom. The believer loves God!

Why does the believer love God? The reason is because God loved him first. *“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and gave His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. We love Him because He first loved us.”* Do you love God?

I don’t mean the God of your imagination. I don’t mean the God of the Baptists, Catholics, Presbyterians, Nazarenes or the Pentecostal church. I mean the true and living God who created all things and whose glory is accomplished by all things. He gave Himself for our sin when He died on the cross. Do you love that God?

Eternal life is to know the true and living God. Eternal life is not just to have a God or a religion. I hear people say all the time, “You know, you have your religion and I have mine.” *“There’s only one Lord, one faith, one God, one Father, one baptism, one body, and one hope of His calling.”* There are not a half a dozen. Eternal life is to know Him, the living God.

David said, *“O God, as the thirsty deer panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul for Thee.”* That is the true and living God. The heathen said, *“Where is your God, David?”* David said, *“Our God is in the heavens; He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased. Whatsoever He pleased, that did He in heaven, earth, in the seas and in all deep places.”* Our God is in the heavens and our God rules and our God reigns.

That believer loves that God. Our Lord sent Peter down there by the fire, after He arose from the grave. Do you remember? He didn’t ask him if he promised not to deny him again. He didn’t say; “Do you promise that you will be a good boy now?” “He didn’t say would you do this, that and the other? He said, *“Peter, I want to know one thing; do you love me?”* Peter said, *“Ye Lord, Thou knowest I love Thee.”* He asked him a second time, *“Peter, do you love me? Yea Lord, you know I love you; then feed My sheep.”* He asked him the third time, *“Peter, do you love me?”* Peter was grieved that the Lord asked him the third time if he loved Him. He said, *“Lord, Thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love Thee; then feed my sheep.”* That is what it is based on. *“All things work together for good to them who love God.”*

Now, watch this. These are the same people that he’s talking about, *“To them who are the called, according to His purpose.”* What does *“called according to His purpose”* mean? The answer is described in the next verse; *“For whom He foreknew.”* You see, we didn’t choose Him, He chose us. *“Whom He foreknew, He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son.”* Almighty God has decreed, designed and determined that all whom He

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chose and all whom he redeemed will be just like Christ. *“In whom He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, He called.”* One day, by His Word and by His Spirit, *“He called us out of darkness into His marvelous light. Out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of His Son.”* He justified us by His blood.

He forgave us of all our sins. He pardoned us and gave us life eternal. He justified us and made us righteous. *“Whom He justified, He glorified. Now, what shall we say to these things?”* Well, I say, *“If God be for us, who can be against us.”* And we know, *“That all things, work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”* Isn't that comforting? That is a sure promise!