

“Why Do All Things Work Together For Good?”

Review: “How the Lord Knows Suffering in the Life of the Believer - Part 2”

- **We Hope For That We See Not And With Patience Wait For It**
- **We Pray Not As We Ought But the Spirit Itself Maketh Intercession For Us**
- **We Know That All Things Work Together For Good to Them That Love God**
- **We Hope For That We See Not And With Patience Wait For It**

[READ] Romans 8:22-25

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to *wit*, the redemption of our body.

24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

25 But if we hope for that we see not, *then* do we with patience wait for it.

- “For we know ...”: ***Here, at the beginning of this section, the apostle again mentions the knowledge he has and that he is instructing the Romans and all of us about. He has already referred to it in concrete and revealing words in verse 18: “... For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” The entire creation and we also ourselves are a part of the ultimate plan of Almighty God, even with the curse on the creation upon us who are also suffering so many consequences of Adam’s sin. For even though we are justified and therefore free from the consequence of Adam’s sin imputed to us, we still suffer in this body of flesh and sin has not ceased its desires within us.***

He further boldly and unashamedly writes in verses 18-21 that all of this suffering in the creation and in us is for a purpose and that purpose is grand indeed. For, he writes, that this plan which the Lord God, the creator and the redeemer, knows so well and that he himself, Paul, has been taught, that none of it compares with the glory that shall be revealed “in us”, verse 18. And furthermore, verse 21, the entire creation “earnestly awaits” ours and its glorification too! Now that is a marvelous truth to know and count upon.

The apostle now continues in that vein next in verses 22 - 25:

- "... the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also ...": ***Here he refers back to the earlier verses using similar language as before but then adds an important fact about ourselves that is so important:***
- "... which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body": ***This is prophetic indeed and could never be known except as the Lord ordained through Paul. For we have "the first fruits of the Spirit" and therefore different fundamentally from the the rest of the creation. He will go on to explain that in the next section. But for now he says that due to the indwelling Spirit of God, we all have this very special hope. Praise God!***
- "... For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?": ***These words point to another truth that Paul assumes the Roman believers know something about, or he is teaching here even about that spirit reality. Hope assumes that there is much we must take by faith because we cannot see or know through other means (by experience, for example) but only through revelation what it is we are hoping for, in this case redemption waiting patiently with outstretched necks as it were: "... But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."***
- ***In verses 26 & 27 he focuses on the work in us of the indwelling Spirit who makes all the difference for us (but not for the unsaved, since they do not possess the Spirit at all). This work is fundamental to the rest of the chapter as we shall see:***

[READ] Romans 8:26-27

26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

- ... Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ...": ***With this burden we all bear in this struggle, we are helped by the Spirit! For we do not even know how to cry out to the Lord in prayer and supplication. We do not know what words to use even. This is not it seems a matter of practice or***

eloquence or anything like that though. It is rather, he writes here in verse 26, a matter of knowledge. And even Paul with his ongoing testimony concerning his own knowledge, even he does not know “what or how” to pray. But nevertheless he says here that we need to do it, for we “ought to” pray, but the Spirit “intercedes for us”, praise God.

- *“... but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered ...”: **He stands in the way, as it were, and prays for us. And his words** “cannot be uttered” **by man. But why not? Because, as he writes next:***
- *“... And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.”: **But God who searches the hearts knows what the Spirit within our hearts is saying in** “unutterable words” **because the Spirit is calling out to the Lord from within us** “according to the will of God”. **Now that is a revelation indeed. What does it mean?***
- ***Well, as I mentioned here several weeks ago, after considering this for about half a century I have come to the conclusion that what he is saying here is simply what he then summarizes in those well know and beloved words which we will read in a moment from Romans 8:28-30. But first our outline for today:***

Our Outline Today: “Why Do All Things Work Together For Good?”

- ***All Things Work Together For Good Because the Lord Has Ordained It***
- ***All Things Work Together For Good And That Has Changed So Very Much***
- ***All Things Work Together For Good, But Now We See the Rest of the Story***

I. All Things Work Together For Good Because the Lord Has Ordained It:

[READ] Romans 8:28-30

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.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

- **Verse 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.” **So,**

he reveals, that all of these trials and all of this suffering is according to his grand plan that will culminate in our glorification at the adoption or son-placing, the day of our resurrection or the moment of our transformation at the Rapture of the church which is his body at our translation into heaven's glory. This encourages us, doesn't it, and gives us hope?

But the apostle goes on further to explain the basis for his great hope, and it is based on the knowledge of God regarding his intentions and destination for us all! It is all about how God sees us and what his work is to accomplish his great plan in our glorification, but also, his work now in the creation and in us. This is all therefore about God's knowledge of his plan and how even now the Spirit of God dwelling within us is fully and completely operating in harmony with that plan as verses 26 & 27 make real and concrete.

These verses really are a conclusion from what he has just written, and the wording "... for whom he did foreknow ..." is intended to mean that all of the suffering and trials of our lives here in this fallen and tarnished creation are part of his work in conforming us into the image of his Son!

- *And furthermore, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.": **God's will and His perfect work therefore is ongoing in each of us believers today. And the indwelling Spirit of God, in communion with both us and the Father God, ministers both to us and to Almighty God as he cries out from within us in words unspeakable — but full of glory. I am reminded of these words Paul also wrote about the same time perhaps as the Romans, but here to the Corinthian believers:***

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.

18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are *[being]* changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

- ***Take note: "are [being] changed" or "transformed" is in the present tense here! It is his ongoing work as he works all for our good and glory, both ours and his. And if it all begins with the glory of God and ends with the glory of God, what must be true of our current***

circumstances? Well, they must be glorious indeed, and may we know this work of the Lord as glorious if we would take the apostle at his word, for truly it is the word of the living God for us today. Will we?

- *We are on the path of his choosing indeed but there are many challenges standing before us on this road to glory and as that wonderful hymn by Steve Green says so well, often from our perspective at least, “on the anvil of his will”, as Steve Green in his “The Refiner’s Fire”, says so well:*

[Verse 1]

There burns a fire with sacred heat
White hot with holy flame
And all who dare pass through its blaze
Will not emerge the same
Some as bronze, and some as silver
Some as gold, then with great skill
All are hammered by their sufferings
On the anvil of His will

[Chorus]

*“The Refiner’s fire
Has now become my sole desire
Purged and cleansed and purified
That the Lord be glorified
He is consuming my soul
Refining me, making me whole
No matter what I may lose
I choose the Refiner’s fire”*

- *Now onwards to our verses 28-30 for today in chapter 8. Here he explains how it can be true that all things are working together for good. How can that be, considering everything we know about the present evil world and our place in it. Adam’s sin with all of its consequences has taken quite a toll, indeed.*

Verse 30 summarizes 28-29 — “Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.”: **He sees it all as accomplished already, even the glorification! For the plan and his work is sure indeed. But this is Paul’s view in conformity to the Lord God’s, seeing the end from the beginning and all steps in between as well. The point here is that the Lord God has marked out the**

boundaries of our lives — and our sufferings and that this is all in the context of the fundamental and always supreme will of God as this verse makes very clear: “yes, all, from beginning to end, is part of God plan for his saints, from the calling to the justification to the glorification, and in between is the life with all of its joys and burdens and sufferings, all these are marked out with limits on the latter, in this gracious and glorious plan. We are being conformed and transformed by it all, indeed. The predestination is not about the persons but the work of the Lord in us.

- *So no detail has escaped the Father, the Son, or the Spirit as they each work in and around us to fulfill the plan of grace and truth. Praise God. We are in good hands indeed. We may therefore rejoice always even in our trials, even in our sufferings.*

All Things Work Together For Good Because the Lord Has Ordained It. Well, that is critical teaching indeed. How can we truly live our lives spiritually without this knowledge?

II. All Things Work Together For Good And That Has Changed So Very Much:

- *Our second point today is that so much has changed under grace that we may not have yet grasped fully and that is Paul's main point in the rest of the chapter. All things do work together for good because of these changes. Do we know it? Well, we surely should.*

[READ] Romans 8:31-34

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.

34 Who is he that condemneth? *It is* Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

- *To further encourage us to take to heart what he has written, the apostle now asks us some questions:*
 - *Then the first question which is this: “What shall we then say to these things?”. This is like asking what further questions for God Almighty shall we dare to utter considering all that has*

been already revealed here? Only rhetorical questions may be asked though, for we SHOULD KNOW NOW SO WELL ALL THE ANSWERS HERE.

- ***He introduces these further questions with this overarching one: “If God be for us, who [or what] can be against us?” And his answer: “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us [or graciously give us] all [these] things?” Yes, the glory indeed, but also the burdens and the trials. Right? Nothing can prevent the working of God Almighty from accomplishing his purposes. Nothing. Amen.***
- ***Then the next question: “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?” What can stand in the way of the work of God according to his perfect plan? For, “It is God that justifieth.” This presumes an argument from the greater to the lessor. Justification of sinners is the greatest work of redemption, isn't it? So something lessor is no issue at all. Nothing can prevent the Lord God therefore as he brings us all into his eternal glory. Nothing. Amen.***
- ***Then his questioning continues with “Who is he that condemneth?”: The answer is implied in these words: “It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.” Nothing can prevent the Lord taking us to our final destination. The resurrection and glorification of our Lord and his constant “intercession” as well guarantees it. The plan shall be complete. Indeed. Amen.***
- ***But he is not finished, for one question remains in case we are not yet convinced: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?”. But before we reach that here and his final and concluding words of encouragement, let's pause to consider what he has been saying here for these questions are not only meant to be rhetorical, but are intended to be that in the highest possible sense, for they underscore for us the very essence of what God's work in our days is really all about, namely, manifesting the grace of God worked out in our lives moment by moment as he takes us all unfailingly onwards into glory and that eternally. For it is his eternal life that is being***

increasingly manifested in and through us by the great gift of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

- *Sadly, and disgracefully, I might add, many of God's dear children have never grasped on to the full scope of this teaching, for they are largely unaware of what God's "dispensational plan of grace" is all about.*

All Things Work Together For Good And That Has Changed So Very Much!! Our hope, our expectations, our lives. Changed forever!

[READ] Romans 8:35-39

35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Conclusions & Exhortations:

- *Again and again, we have been encouraged by Paul's teaching. I certainly have been and I sincerely hope you have been too! Even our sufferings are part of his eternal plan of glory, for us and for the creation in general.*
- *Our Lord God has a purpose therefore for everything, even our suffering. We are in the very center of his work. We have every reason therefore to rejoice. And again I say, rejoice.*
- *And what can we add? Nothing at all. Amen. So be it.*

All Things Work Together For Good, But Now We See the Rest of the Story. It all fits together perfectly and in the center of it all is the love of God for us redemptively. So much was accomplished for us when our sin and sins were removed from the picture once and for all.

"Why Do All Things Work Together For Good?", is our final question. And Paul's teaching on this is so very clear. The answer is that the love of God for us requires it. It is that simple.

You are beloved of God! Amen.