“Do Things Always Work Together For Good”

November 29, 2015

Romans 8:18-28

Can you imagine having someone in your life who faithfully, patiently and consistently prays for you and who is always heard by your Heavenly Father? My hope today is to introduce you to Someone Who does just that.

Would you take your Bible and open it with me to the Book of Romans at chapter eight?

And the one verse that I want to focus on today is verse twenty-eight. It’s what you might call a “well-known” verse. Most of us have quoted it or heard it quoted. You’ve seen it on plaques and in cards. And many people consider it their life verse. It’s a highly treasured verse; just twenty-five words.

And today my sermon is hopefully a sermon of encouragement. Let me read it once more for you. 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.”*

Let me begin with when. *When* should you use this verse? How about when things go wrong? No. How about in a time of great trial? No. How about in a time of tragedy? No. How about when things don’t go your way? No. How about when you get into a car accident? No. Well when? When does Romans 8:28 apply? When should you use this verse?

The answer is surprisingly simply. All the time; in every circumstance; every day and in every situation. Let me show you just what the LORD says here.

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.”*

“All things” implies that the verse has something to say about *all* the things that come into your life?

Now who are the two people most concerned with all the things in your life? You. You are most concerned. But there’s Someone else.

Let me show you just Who that Someone is. Look back with me at Romans 8:26.

Romans 8:26 *“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.”*

The Spirit, the Holy Spirit, the Spirit Who now indwells the children of God; He is continually helping your infirmities; your weaknesses.

And you have a lot of weaknesses. Your flesh is weak while your spirit is willing. Your mind is weak and you have a constant need to fill it with the Words of God. Your heart is weak and you are often fearful or worried. Your body is weak and sometimes get ill or diseased. Your emotions are weak and you are sometimes discouraged. And your prayer life may at times be weak.

Won’t you agree with me that you have infirmities; weaknesses?

Well, since you have such weaknesses, you need help. And God has sent the Helper into your heart to assist you. But, in what way?

The Spirit makes intercession for you with unutterable groanings; groans without words. By the way, what is a groan anyway?

Στενάζω - This term "denotes feeling which is *internal and unexpressed.*" “To feel pressure from what is *coming on* – which can be intensely pleasant or anguishing (depending on the context).”

A groan is a way to express yourself without words. And it’s a feeling; an emotion. You can groan to others and you can groan to God or even to yourself. And here we find that the Holy Spirit groans to God on your behalf.

Now, here’s how the groaning of the Spirit affects you and me. Folks, you should stop separating Romans 8:26-27 from Romans 8:28.

Here’s why. Romans 8:26-27 teaches us that the Holy Spirit makes intercession before God on your behalf. Can you imagine having someone in your life who patiently and consistently prays for you and who is always heard by your Heavenly Father? You see, you have Someone Who prays and prays and prays for you.

And the Father fully understands His prayers for you; so much so that the Holy Spirit will never pray anything except the will of God for you.

Folks, there are few things as amazing as the relationship between the members of the Trinity. Here is a look into that relationship. Your Heavenly Father knows the mind of the Spirit when and as He intercedes for you.

And further, the Spirit so intercedes for you because you don’t know what you should pray for as your ought to.

You, Mr. and Mrs. Weak Human, you have an Almighty Prayer Partner Who knows you inside and out and Who is willing to continually invest His time and energy on your behalf.

And the effect of the Spirit’s groaning and intercession is Romans 8:28.

Folks, Romans 8:28 is not to be applied when you experience a dip in your life or a time when you experience a trial or a temptation. Rather, it’s an all day, every day, every hour verse.

So, if you look closely at this passage you will see that Romans 8:28 is the Father’s answer to the prayers of the Holy Spirit, Who prays with groans and Whose groans are perfectly understood by an Omniscient Omnipotent God.

Can you see with me how much God loves you and is interested in every single thing in your life? Can you see with me that God is constantly loving you and working on you through the things He supplies in your everyday life?

Many of us, myself included, fall down miserably when it comes to believing the love that God has for us. Here we see that love in very simple and wonderful terms. It’s the love of God for you personally and daily and intensely and constantly.

The Scriptures teach that God is love. Listen, if there’s no love, there’s no God. And His love is a prayer-listening love. And it’s a groan-interpreting love. And it’s a love that is so strong and so patient and so persistent that it’s working everything together for your good.

Folks, take Romans 8:26-28 to work with you this week. Take it to your relationships both inside and outside your home. Take it to your money and your trials and your times of discouragement and your times of worship.

Romans 8:28 is designed by God to infuse you with His love.

So, what is the message of Romans 8:8?

First, then, I know that God sovereignly works in and on my life.

What do you know? Or, should I say, what should you know? You should know that He is able to work on every one of us at the very same moment. He is able to make all of His grace abound towards every one of us at the very same moment.

He’s a big God. And He’s got a big family. And He’s able to supply every need of every single one of us.

And, are you learning that He is sovereign over every area of your life? So, what do you do when things quote “go wrong”? What do you need? What do you need emotionally? What do you need spiritually? What do you need materially? What do you need in your relationships?

You need a sense that the Holy Spirit is groaning before the Father just for you. You see, you have a Father Who knows what you need long before you even ask Him. Call Him “my Heavenly Sovereign Father.” That’s Who He is.

First, then, I know that God sovereignly works on my life.

Second, everything God allows in my life is for my good.

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.”*

Marshall Shelly is the editor of Leadership Journal. He, along with his wife, Susan, suffered the grief of seeing two of their children, Mandy and Toby, die within a period of two months. He writes this. “Even as I child, I loved to read, and I quickly learned that I would most likely be confused during the opening chapters of a novel. New characters were introduced. Disparate, seemingly random events took place. Subplots were complicated and didn't seem to make any sense in relation to the main plot. But I learned to keep reading. Why? Because you know that the author, if he or she is good, will weave them all together by the end of the book. Eventually, each element will be meaningful. At times, such faith has to be a conscious choice. Even when I can't explain why a chromosomal abnormality develops in my son, which prevents him from living on earth more than two minutes ... even when I can't fathom why our daughter has to endure two years of severe and profound retardation and continual seizures ... I choose to trust that before the book closes, the author will make things clear.” [Found on [www.sermoncentral](http://www.sermoncentral) “The Author Will Make All Things Clear,” a sermon by Rich Young].

Recently, even to this very moment, you may have entered into a very difficult experience. Something in your life doesn’t seem to be working very well. Someone in your life is in great need. Now, there’s often no way to understand it. You can hardly comprehend it. But, because you know that God is working on that friend, just like He’s working upon you, then, everything He works on whether in your life (or their lives), He works together in for good. He’s a good God who has a continual load of goodness to exercise just specifically on you.

Now, should I just crassly say “God will work even this out for my good”? Or should I do the one thing that I can do? I can believe with all my heart that God allows everything into my life for my good. That’s what He says and that’s what He means.

What you are going through right now is simply God working on you by the things He allows into your life.

Some time back someone came to me with this wish. “I can’t seem to get a break.” Maybe you’ve said this.

Folks, Romans 8:28 is true. It’s true. It’s true. It’s true. God is answering the prayers of the Holy Spirit Who only prays God’s will down upon you.

The LORD’s not punishing you. Yes, He chastises. But He *has* punished His Only Son. He exerted his wrath upon His Son when He laid all your sins upon His back and enabled Him to become the Lamb of God Who was sacrificed for you.

Now He’s on your side. Now, because of Christ, He loves you so deeply that nothing can separate you from Him. So, will He now take all the time and effort necessary to work all the things in your life together as one unit for your good?

First, then, I know that God sovereignly works on my life.

Second, everything God allows in my life is for my good.

Third, the LORD’s purpose for “this” is to conform me to the image of His Son.

Actually, the “good” of verse twenty-eight is the work we know as “conforming me to the image of Jesus.” Look down a few verses at Romans 8:29. Romans 8:29 *“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.”*

How many things do think God will use to develop the character of Jesus in you? Answer: everything. Do you have problems at work? Do you have problems at home? Do you have trials and temptations? Do you have a situation you just don’t know what to do with? Do you have a person or persons in your life that slows you down or drags you down?

The big picture is a huge picture and it’s a picture of love. God’s love continually surrounds you and protects you with the shell of His will. Yes, He allows hard things. He permits suffering. He strains and stretches your sails. He allows storms and sometimes broken legs or even broken hearts. But why? Why, if God is so interested in working everything together for good; why does it so often hurt?

One answer: He knows that pain often yields a better crop than the easy life. Read any of the great Saints of days gone by. Can you name one who didn’t suffer greatly?

Here’s what the LORD says about the pain.

II Corinthians 4:16 *“For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. (17) For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; (18) While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.”*

The more you focus on the temporal things, the more difficult the difficulties are. But the more you focus on the eternal things, the more strength you find to face those difficulties.

God is working on you. And that work is simply His love at work. Why not just work with Him instead of against Him?

First, then, I know that God sovereignly works on my life.

Second, everything God allows in my life is for my good.

Third, the LORD’s purpose for “this” is to conform me to the image of His Son.

Fourth, I surrender all that I am and have to the LORD.

Look with me again at the words of 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.”*

Would you like to know which Christian it is that is really growing into the likeness of Jesus? It’s the one who is saying and praying and believing and knowing this one thing: that all things work together for good to them who love Him and to them who are the called according to His purpose.”

Folks, the main thing is to surrender to God. The best response to Scripture is to surrender. The only way to watch God work in and on you in His conforming work is to yield to His working.

This is the secret to applying the message of Romans 8:28. You see, your life with its trials and blessings; its sorrows and its joys is all for your good.

“I surrender all.”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7x2IpLSfqp8

Where does that put you? Do you know that you need Him more than you need your food or air or water or sleep or ability to live in this world?

My hope and prayer for you today is this; that you would surrender yourself to the Son of God; that you would see the power of Romans 8:28.

Now, will you respond to Him? Your response can be as follows.

* REPENT - “change your mind about God, Christ, your sin, and God’s free gift of salvation.”
* BELIEVE - “simply trust Jesus Christ alone as the One Who paid the entire penalty for your sins.”

Here’s a simple salvation prayer for you to pray if you’ve never trusted the LORD for His free gift of eternal life.

“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Salvation Prayer

“LORD, I admit that I am a sinner I believe that Jesus died in my place on the cross. I repent of my sins. I want to be completely forgiven today. I am trusting you right now to save me. Thank you. Amen”

What will you do today? Will you just wait and hope that will help you? Or will you do what is necessary to become a man or a woman who has been deeply affected by the death of the Son of God.

Here’s a prayer I’ve given to you time and again. It will enable you to walk with the LORD today and this week with a heart of complete dependence. It’s the Prayer of Submission.

“LORD, I surrender everything that I am, and have, and ever will be. I take my hands off of my life and release every relationship to You--every habit, every goal, my health, my wealth, and everything that means anything. I surrender it all to You. And by faith I take my place at the Cross,

believing that when the Lord Jesus was crucified, according to Your Word, I was crucified with Him. And I am trusting You to live Your life in me and through me that You might receive all the glory. I thank You now by faith for accepting me in the Lord Jesus.”

Now please turn with me to Hymn # \_\_\_\_\_\_ “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.”