

Romans 8:28~30

Illustration: (*Cake*) All things work to the good...

In like manner...²⁸ ...we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

Tragically, Romans 8:28 has been greatly misunderstood, greatly misinterpreted, and miss-taught. Proclaiming it to be a promise that God will work out all circumstances in the believer's life. Which is simply not true. We all know, that our situations and circumstances don't always work out to the good. A lot of times, they end up in a mess, in tragedy!

The promise is not to make our lives here on earth better, nor to make our circumstances better...to FIX our problems... But it is a promise to change our lives, to make us into the men and women of God that he created us to be!

In Genesis 1:26~27... We are told that God created us, male and female, in his own image! An image that has been greatly marred by SIN! Through the "*Fall of Adam and Eve*", all of mankind is fallen. The Gospel of Christ is the revelation of God's plan to restore "*fallen man*" to His rightful image, the same image that was manifested in Christ Jesus!

(Vs 24~30) This section speaks to the "*Inner Workings*" of God's plan of Salvation!
How God plans to restore "*Fallen Man*..."

God has chosen to save men, to rescue "*fallen man*" through Faith... ²⁴*For we are saved by hope*...
We are delivered, we are restored, we are made whole, by trusting in what we cannot see!

Which is a reference to *the Spirit of Christ*...*The Just shall live by Faith*... He's emphasizing the fact, that God's plan to restore "*fallen man*" is not through man's submission to the Law of Moses...but by man's submission to the Spirit of Christ! The Law can't help, because it can't change the heart!

Paul reminds us, that we, being totally depraved, we who are carnal, we who are fleshly don't even know what to pray for, we don't know what we need... But Christ does. Christ knows my needs, and He also knows the will of God, and He prays accordingly!

Thus, Paul says here in verse 28, knowing that Christ is praying for us, knowing that he is interceding for us according to the will of God...we can have the assurance that "*all things work to the good*..."

A "Good" that Paul describes in verse 29, as "*our being conformed to the image of Christ*!"

And beloved, that is the "*heart*" of this passage! That is the WILL OF GOD, that is the PURPOSE that "*all things work together for good to*..." God's plan is to restore "*fallen man*" to the image of Christ.

Listen, they may not mean much to a carnal, worldly-minded man...

But to the true believer...there's no greater promise on earth than that!

Because that is the heart's desire of every "*born again*" child of God!

As we look closely, we see how Paul reveals *the heart* of "*Those who are His Children*."

(Vs 28) They are marked in that their "*hearts desire*" is God! They HATE SIN (Vs 23) and long to be rid of this body of sin, in order that they might better please God. In the last part of verse 28, Paul describes believers as "them who are *called according to His purpose*..."

A purpose that Paul reveals in the very next verse...of being conformed to the image of *Christ*.

The “called” here is just another name for the “Children of God”. Paul says, “God’s Children” are those who long to be like Jesus Christ! Their hearts desire is that they would live a life that is pleasing to God, by being transformed into the image of Christ!

Characteristics of the “new birth,” the “new life” that God has placed in us!

¹⁵For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, **whereby we cry, Abba, Father.** ¹⁶The Spirit itself bears witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

This “NEW LIFE” that I’ve been given in Christ, longs for God...seeks God, it desires the things of God! And Paul says here, that it is this Spirit that gives us the affirmation, it is this Spirit that gives us the confidence, that we are truly God’s children!

Which is extremely important to me... Because the truth of the matter is, even though I have put my trust in Christ...there’s still a lot wrong with me! If my hope was based on my “Holiness”, my “Righteousness...” then I would be in a world of trouble! I’d have NO HOPE...

The only thing that I “Hold to,” the only thing that I “TRUST IN” as far as my salvation goes, is the change in my hearts desire, by God! Through faith in Christ, I have a “love for God...a desire for God” that I never had before! I have a LONGING for righteousness that I’ve never had before. Like that of the longing described in verse 23... Like that man, I too realize my depravity...I realize my sinful condition. But its one that grieves me to the core! I hate it. I long to live a righteous life, one that is pleasing to God.

(Vs 26~30) ²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷And he that searches the hearts knows what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.* ²⁸And 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 us to look at “His Purpose”... “His Intention”... “God’s WILL...”

²⁹For 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. ³⁰Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

In explaining God’s Sovereign Plan... Paul uses some terms that need some explanation... Terms like predestination... A subject that has caused a lot of confusion in the church...

And tragically, an even greater amount of of controversy...in the church...

Some hold to the teaching that God has pre-determined who will go to heaven, and who will go to hell. That it is set by God, and there’s nothing anyone can do about it!

But that’s just not true, and that’s not at all what he is teaching...

Predestinated simply means, “*Something determined beforehand.*” **Pre-determined**...

This is wonderfully stated in Ephesians 1:3~5...

⁴According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: ⁵Having predestinated (**Pre-determined**) us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Paul declares...It is a “*Plan that was In Existence*” before “*Man was in Existence!*”

If that don't build your faith...I don't know what will! That helps put God in his proper perspective. Beloved, we don't serve a small God. Think about what Paul is saying here, that God did not come up with His plan after Adam and Eve transgressed...as a remedy. He devised the plan LONG BEFORE they were ever created.

²⁹For **whom** he did foreknow, he also did predestinate ...speaks to “People of Faith!” It is a reference to all, to whosoever will come by faith...God will redeem!

Before God created the earth, He *pre-determined* how He would save fallen man; He *pre-determined* how He'd reconcile man to himself...solely on the basis of man's faith in His Son, Jesus Christ!

God determined, that through “*Faith*”...HE would save us!

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

God performs EVERY ASPECT of our salvation...

God set the plan, God sought the sinner, God justified the sinner, and God changes the sinner!

The writer of Hebrews said the same thing in Hebrews 12, as he wrote using the analogy of a race to illustrate the living out of the Christian life.

¹Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset *us*, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, ²Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

The writer likens the Christian life to that of running a race! And in these first 3 verses, he makes clear as to how we are to run this race. “*By looking unto Jesus...the “author and finisher” of our faith!*”

From the “*Starting Line*” to the “*Finish Line*”...we are to stay focused on Jesus!
Listen, our only hope of “*Running Well...*” is by our looking to Him!

God has designed it so, that the ONE THING that man MUST DO...look to Him in Faith...

²⁶Likewise the Spirit also helps our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷And he that searches the hearts knows what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. ²⁸And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

²⁹For 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. ³⁰Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Beloved, the “*Gospel of Christ*” is a call for “*Dirty Sinners*” to come to himself...for cleansing.

Illustration: Dirty water turned pure...

God takes old, dirty sinners who place their trust in Christ, and turns their heart towards Him!
Then through “*life's circumstances*” and through the *Holy Spirit*, does a work in our hearts, making us the men and women He'd have me to be!