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Title: All Things Work Together

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 8:28

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

CONTEXT:

The Epistle to the Romans is a letter of instruction exercising the main truths of the Gospel that Paul felt were needed. The needs of the Gentile were similar whether they were in Rome or Colossi, which explains the universal message in the writing.

Paul’s thought is developed logically, but does not include all of his doctrinal truth. He had prayed for the church at Rome unceasingly (1:9-10) and longed to have fellowship with them to impart some spiritual gifts so the believer maybe established (1:11). Paul wanted them to pray for him because of the dangers that threatened and his need to join them seeking to be refreshed (15:30-32).

Paul is comforted by the mutual faith between he and the churches at Rome. He is ready to visit Rome and preach the Gospel. He points out that man is not righteous and then answers the question: How does a man become righteous? Paul reinforces this discourse by discussing how man should live who has become righteous in God. Paul later surveys the plan of God for Jews and Gentiles, he gives specific exhortation to the church concerning outlook, attitude, and actions, and in conclusion Paul shows his deep interest in the Roman believer.

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ROMANS HISTORICAL FACTS

Date and Place of Writing: Romans is assigned to the period of Paul’s third missionary journey. Since the Apostle spent three months in Greece (Acts 20:3) and he recommends that Phoebe (Cenchrea Deaconess) deliver the letter to Rome, it is likely that the letter was written from Corinth. It could be likely that another Grecian city (Philippi) was the place. Dates for the epistle have ranged from A.D. 53 to A.D. 58. The years A.D. 55 and A.D. 56 seem to be the most likely dates (ref. KJV 1053). It is believed that the Apostle Paul died in Rome A.D. 62-64 (ref. Britannica)

INTRODUCTION:

Romans 8 is about a life in the Spirit and victory through the Spirit by connection with the purpose and action of God. Romans 8 is believed by scholars to contain two parts: (1) it describes the advocacy of the Spirit in the life of the believer that is now strong-willed by the flesh (vv. 1-17) and (2) it concludes with the completion of salvation and the transformation of the believer into the image of God's Son.

In this chapter Apostle Paul suggest that the Spirit resolves two major problems between humanity and God: (1) the problem of condemnation and (2) the idea of alienation-the state or experience of being isolated or separated from an activity to which one should belong. Both cases are for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Paul develops a simple contrast between the weakness of the law and the power of the Spirit. He opens this discourse with the idea that condemnation should not exist because of Jesus Christ and the idea of walking after the Spirit and not walking after the flesh (8:1). Scholars suggest that a great theme develops in Romans 8 - security of the children of God. Therefore, possession of the Spirit is the hallmark of those who truly belong to Christ (8:9); his inner witness assures us that we are God's Children and therefore his heirs (8:15-17); and his presence in us is the first fruits of our inheritance thus helping us in our infirmities and making intercession for us according to the will of God (8:23-27).

Understanding life in the Spirit is important to understanding chapter eight and our key verse:

“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.”

MESSAGE:

Apostle Paul begins the verse with “And we know.” This would suggest that Paul believes the

church at Rome should have some familiarity with what he is about to express. There are two assertions of Christian knowledge (vs. 22 – knowledge of the whole creation groaning and travailing and vs. 28 – knowledge of things working for good to them that love God and are called). In contrast, there are things that Christians do not know (vs. 26 – no knowledge of how we should pray). Let's take a quick look at verse 27 to better understand Paul's statement in verse 28. The absence of what Christians do not know is taken care of by the Spirit.

“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.”

Let's address review Romans 8:27 in bullet point facts to gain clarity:

- It is further advocacy of the Spirit. Romans 8:16 states, “the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” and Romans 8:26 states, “but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered.”
- It is a statement to clarify that the God within intercedes to God above.
- He that searches the heart (God) – knows the mind of the Spirit (God's Spirit) and it is through this means of knowing that intercession is made on behalf of the saints and it is made according to God's will.

Apostle Paul wanted the church at Rome to understand the nature of God's Spirit that lives in the believer and how this same Spirit determines what is needed and makes intercession according to what he believes is needed (i.e. the will of God).

To move further, Paul leads verse 28 with “and we know” because he is sure that the church at Rome likely understands a few

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things about God's Spirit which had been addressed in previous verses or from Old Testament knowledge. Paul's use of the word "know," [*ginōskō*] in the Greek, suggesting there is something familiar to him and the Roman believer. *Ginōskō* frequently indicates a relation between the person knowing and the object known. In this respect, what is known is of value or importance to the one who knows and hence the establishment of the relationship. Therefore, we must understand what the believer knows.

What the believer knows can be found in verses 38-39. Paul states, "*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 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.*" It is this knowing that allows Paul to boldly state, "*all things work together for good to them that love God.*" To the Roman believer Paul was suggesting that if they loved God, things that happen that are deemed evil (i.e. bad) or good will not separate them from the love of God.

We must also note, that there is a *working together* of all things (i.e. evil or good). Paul uses the term *sunergeō* in the Greek, which means "*to work with or to work together.*" Scholars also suggest that *sunergeō* means to *work together, help in work, be partner in labour and to put forth power together with and thereby to assist* (NAS New Testament Greek Lexicon). Therefore, all things working together is an assistive process for those that are called. This passage of scripture is specific to the called which will be addressed later in the message.

In examining the word *good* [*agathos*] it signifies that which is good: literally the good as being morally honorable, pleasing to God and therefore beneficial. As it relates to good, Christians are to:

- **Work it** (Romans 2:10 – "But glory, honor, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.")
- **Prove it** (Romans 12:2 – "And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.")
- **Cleave to it** (Romans 12:9 – "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.")
- **Overcome evil with it** (Romans 12:21 – "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.")
- **Do it** (Romans 13:3 – "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.")
- **Follow after it** (I Thessalonians 5:15 – "See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men.")
- **Be zealous of it** (I Peter 3:13 – "And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?")
- **Imitate it** (III John vs. 11) – "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God; but he that doeth evil hat not seen God."

In examining the scripture further, we find (HOW) all things working together for good benefits the called. Specific instruction has been given concerning good – work it, prove it, cleave to it, etc. The requirements placed on the called by the scripture determine the working of good and therefore discounts evil or negative components. "*All things work together for good*" is an establishment of principles concerning good as it relates to

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God, His will and His purpose. Scholars suggest that the text should have read “God works for our good in all things” or “God works in all things for the good of those who love him.” Regardless of the change in translation, ‘all things’ must include the sufferings Paul mentioned in verse 17 – *“And if Children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together”* and verse 23 – *“An not only they, but ourselves also which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to with the redemption of our body.”* Thusly, all things negative in life is seen to have positive purpose in the execution of God’s eternal plan thus nothing is beyond His providence. Therefore, negative things are transfigured through God because he works on our behalf. This working by God is because we follow the greatest commandment to love him and because we are called to fulfill his purpose.

Scholars also suggest that the statement is not a general law of life, but rather is a theological statement valid for those who have been called according to his purpose. It does not mean that all things are good. It does not mean that evil (i.e. the bad or negative thing) will become good as it relates to the kingdom of God. To suggest that evil can become good is heresy because scripture states, “And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but one, that is God” (Mark 10:18). According to Mark 10:18, we identify what is good (i.e. God). Therefore, the text could read: *“all things work together for God, to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.”* Good becomes two-fold: (1) good is God and (2) good is eternal life that is with God. If the good, which is God’s objective is our completed salvation, then it benefactors are his people who are described as those who love him.

The scripture has prerequisite for understand things working for good – that is things working together for God and His purpose: (1) one must

love God, and (2) one must be called. Paul mentioned this “called group” in Romans 1:7 which reads, *“To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.”* Apostle Paul identifies the called as saints. Please recognize that these saints are the beloved of God.

God does not allow the evil or negative thing to keep you from His will. We understand from Romans 8:27 that it is not possible because the Spirit makes intercession for us according to the will of God. Therefore, regardless of the evil or negative thing, the Spirit will make intercession to keep Christians in accord with the will of God because you are the loved of God and that love is bonded through Jesus Christ our Lord.

“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” has nothing to do with the evil or negative that has befallen the saints. It has everything to do with the good working in the life of saints, which assist in God’s purpose. Therefore, if all things work together (i.e. all things work together to assist) for good it is because the called (i.e. the saints) love God and understands that things must be done for His purpose (i.e. the Holy Spirit making intercession on behalf of the saints to remain in God’s will).

MESSAGE NOTES:

1. The saints have the responsibility of knowing that nothing should separate you from the love of God.
2. The saints have the responsibility of accepting the established principles of good as it relates to what is good according to the word.

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3. The saints must love God because God is that which is good.

4. The saints have a responsibility to understand the Holy call.

5. The saints have the responsibility of linking with God's purpose thus allowing them to be led by the Spirit of God. Your son-ship depends on it!

PERSONAL MESSAGE NOTES:

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MESSAGE ILLUSTRATIONS:

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Concluding Thoughts

To often the body of Christ uses Romans 8:28 to foster something evil into good. As we all should know, God does not align himself with evil. God kicked the evil one out of heaven, which is why we have evil in the earth. The word of God proclaims, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I have come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (St. John 10:10). The negative things that happen in life should be attributed to the evil one (Satan) and not to him that give abundant life.

All things working together for good (God) should open your heart and mind to focus on that which is an established principle of God concerning good. God has spoken in the word how we are to embrace good and working those things together will help define God’s purpose for our lives. And, this purpose will be an abundantly life in Christ Jesus.



*Sermons for Pastors and Leaders
of the Christian faith!*

The scripture and above material has been taken from the King James Version of the Holy Bible, Vine’s Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words, Matthew Henry’s Commentary, and other bible sources. The opinions of this sermon are from Dr. Evette Hyder-Davis and should be researched further by the recipient. Rightly Dividing sermon series is a copyright of Dr. Evette Hyder-Davis with permission for use but not distribution. For more sermons, please visit <https://www.evette.co/services.html>.

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