

SOME THINGS WE KNOW

By Henry T. Mahan

Romans 8:28-30

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**Henry Mahan T. Tape Library
Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501**

I want you to open your Bible's with me today, to the Book of Romans. I'm going to speak to you from Romans Chapter 8, a very familiar passage of scripture, (**Romans 8:28**). I'm going to be speaking on this subject: "**SOME THINGS WE KNOW**." I enjoy preaching and I enjoy listening to messages on things we know from the scriptures. I don't receive any comfort or any assurance from speculation, or man's imagination, do you? My confidence and assurance and faith rests upon His Word, upon His Word of truth and His promise. I want to preach the things I know, the things of which I'm 100 percent certain.

We had a preacher's class in our church, years ago, and I use to tell the younger preachers, "Don't take your doubts into the pulpit. If you're not 100 percent convinced and sure of what you're preaching, don't preach it." The things I'm going to be talking about today, from **Romans, Chapter 8:28**, are some things I know, some things of which I'm 100 percent certain and sure of.

This is how this text begins. Look at **verse 28, of Romans 8**: Paul says, "*And we know*," this is not a matter of opinion, it's not a matter of uncertainty, and it's not a matter of debate. The apostle Paul says, I know this, we know just as assuredly as we know God is God, we know this. "*We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose.*" We know that and are certain of that, we are absolutely sure and absolutely know that all things, what do you mean all things preacher? I mean that all things in heaven; (the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit) and the angels are ministering spirits, who minister to the heirs of salvation. All things in heaven, (Father, Son, Holy Spirit), the angels, even those who oppose, even the evil spirits, even principalities and powers, rulers of the darkness, and spiritual wickedness in high places, all of these things in heaven, "*work together for our good.*"

"*All things on earth*," all good events, all bad events, all the successes, all failures, all people, friends or enemies, all things past, present and future on this earth, "*work together for good, to them that are the called according to His purpose.*" I know that!

It says, here, that they are working together. All of these things and all of these events, all of these happening and experiences, not separately, but all of these things are working together, all of our lives, from the cradle to the grave in the wise decree and purpose and design and plan of our heavenly Father. One is not without the other. One event is not without the other. They are working together for our good.

What does this good mean? Well, it is certainly not our temporal good, it's not our earthly good, but they are working together for our spiritual good, our eternal good. You see, my friends, for me and for you, (children of God); the design of God is not especially our earthly good, because these things fade away. "*The fashion of this world passeth away.*" They are all temporary. They all have to be folded up and put away like an old garment. So, the design of God is our eternal good, not our temporal good. The design of God is our eternal happiness, not our present joy. The design of God is our eternal help and not our present comfort, and our eternal wealth, (not these earthly toys).

Let me give you an illustration. Now you listen carefully to this and you hold on now and listen to what I am saying. And we know that all things in heaven and earth and under the earth, past, present and future, all of our lives work together, not for our temporal, earthly, temporary good, but for our eternal happiness, eternal joy, eternal glory, and eternal good.

The thief on the cross, who died at the sight of our Lord, had the most terrible life; I'm sure, a life to be coveted by no one. It's hard to say what kind of person he was or what kind of life he lived, or how unhappy and desperate were his circumstances. I'm sure he had a terrible life that ended in being executed. But, everything in his life brought him to this point when he met Jesus Christ. I'm saying that it all worked for his eternal good, because my Lord turned to him and said, "*Today you will be with me in paradise.*" Do you know anything better than that?

Now, Pharaoh had a much easier life on earth than Moses, but where is Moses and where is Pharaoh? The rich man's life was much better than Lazarus, who lay at his gate with sores. But, where's the rich man, and where is Lazarus? The Pharisee's put the disciples to death, and the Pharisee's lived to be old, respected, successful men on earth and died and perished in their sin. The disciples went to be with the Lord. Do you see what I am saying? "*All things!*"

That is the reason the apostle Paul found contentment in whatsoever state he was in, because he knew in prison or in palaces, abounding or being abased, that everything was working together for his eternal good. Watch the rest of this! These are things I know; I can't explain them, I just know them. I know, "*All things work together for the eternal good to them who love God, those who love the Lord, to them who are called according to His purpose.*"

Now, all things do not work together for good to all people. Cain's rebellion brought Cain condemnation. Pharaoh's rejection brought eternal judgment.

In **Matthew 7:21-23**; *“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”*

So, all things didn't work together for their good, by any means. It plainly says, this is what I know, and what you know. *“I know that all things work for good,”* (eternal good), *to them who love God,”* who believe God, and who walk with God, who receive God.

Paul ended his first epistle to the Corinthians church, this way. This is the way he ended the letter to the Corinthians. In **First Corinthians 16:22**, Paul said, *“If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ let him be Anathema* (let him be accursed), *Maranatha,”* (the Lord is coming) if he doesn't love Christ. So, all things do not work together for the eternal good to people who do not love Christ. All things work together for the eternal good for those who love Christ, who love God.

Ephesians 6, verse 24, Paul ended the Ephesian letter this way, he said, *“Grace, peace, and joy, be with all them who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.”* So, *“All things work together for good, to them who love God.”*

Listen, *“To them who are the called, according to His purpose.”* Now, there's a sense that the old timers use to talk about two calls. They talked about the general call. They talked about an effectual call. In this general call that they preached about, was a call which is extended in some degree, in some measure and in some way to every son of Adam. Every son of Adam has some “light” in reference to God; He's made aware of the glory of God.

For example, for there is the knowledge of God taught by nature, the power of God, the glory of God is revealed in the things that are made. So, men are without excuse. There is knowledge of God taught by conscience. Men have conscience that either accuses or excuses them (Rom. 2:15). There's the knowledge of God taught by the law. There's the knowledge written in the heart. There's the knowledge of God, which is revealed in providence. Things just don't happen; the world isn't held together by chance. God is in charge and men are made aware of that to some degree. There is also the knowledge of the preached Word. People hear preachers. God has always had a preacher. He's never left himself without a witness. That's a general call.

This is not what we're talking about here. *“We know that all things are working together for the eternal good to them who love God, to them who are the called, according to His purpose.”* The Holy Spirit calls the sinner on purpose. *“Not by might, not by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.”*

Paul wrote in **Second Timothy 1:9** about this call. He said, *“God hath saved us, (the word saved, is delivered), God has delivered us and God hath called us with a Holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace.”* Isn't that what we read in **Romans 8**? *“All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who*

are the called according to His purpose,” (not according to our works, or merit), but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Jesus Christ before the world began.”

These are the people for whom all things work together for their good, they love God. They do, they believe God. They walk with God and they are called. God calls them! Christ said, *“I know my sheep,”* I know them and I call them. They are called according to His purpose, they are called by His Spirit, they are called by His Word, and they are called by His gospel. The scripture says it is a, *“High calling.”* It’s a, *“Holy calling,”* it’s a, *“Heavenly calling”* and it’s not according to works, it’s according to His purpose and grace.

Now, look at **verse 29**. Here are some more things that we know. In **verse 29** it begins with a little three-letter-word, *“for.”* Paul said in **verse 28**, *“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose,”* (for), because, God’s not left this matter of salvation and His eternal kingdom and the glory of His Son and the population of the new heaven and the new earth to the will of men. He hasn’t left this thing to chance. God has not left salvation and eternal life and the glory of Christ and the population of heaven to some kind of “toss of the dice!” If salvation were dependent upon us, heaven would be without people, because it’s impossible with men. But, God has a purpose, these people that are called according to His purpose.

“For whom he did foreknow,” for whom He foreknew that is in the Bible, five times. There is foreknew, foreknowledge, and foreknown, five times. Every time it means this, it means to know before. Whom He foreknew! Elect according to foreknowledge of God!

The people, who crucified Christ, carried out the foreknowledge of God (Acts 4:26-28). God knows the future. How does God know the future? God brings the future to pass. Why don’t I know the future? I have no control over the future. If I could control the future, I would know the future. I don’t know what’s going to happen in the next five minutes or the next ten minutes, or even the next day, because I have no control over it. But, God foreordains, God foreknows, because God has foreordained. Do you see that?

For whom He foreordained, whom He foreknew, He also ordained to eternal life (Acts 13:48). That’s how God knows who is going to believe. Christ knew from the beginning who would believe and who would not believe. How did He know who would believe? He gives them faith. *“Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power.”* God knows the future because God controls the future. He chose us; because He foreknew us and because He chose us in eternity.

Ephesians 1:3-4 says, *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According 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.”*

Paul, writing to the **Second Thessalonians 2:13-14**, wrote this, “*But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

He foreknew us. He said to Jeremiah, “*Before you were formed in the belly, before you came out of your mother’s womb, I knew you.*” I know my sheep (John 10:27).

All right, watch this, the second word in **verse 29**: “*For whom He did foreknow, He did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son.*” You know my friends, heaven will be populated by the people who love God, who are called according to His purpose, and who are just like Jesus Christ! They love what He loves, they enjoy what He enjoys, they desire what He desires, they hate what He hates, and they are just like Him.

“*God has predestinated us to be conformed to the image of His Son.*” Everybody in heaven will have on a wedding garment. That’s the righteousness of Christ. Everybody in heaven will be like Jesus Christ. That’s what the scripture says. “*Beloved, it doth not appear what we shall be, but when He shall appear, we shall see Him as He is, and we shall be like Him.*” This word, predestinate, occurs in the Word of God, four times. It’s in the Book of Ephesians, the **First Chapter**, twice. It’s in the **Book of Romans: 8**, twice. Every time, it says that we are predestinated to be like Christ. You see, election has to do with people; God chose a people. God chose us in Christ. “Christ be my first elect, He said, and then chose us in our head.” Christ is the first elect and God chose us in Christ. Predestination has to do with what those people are going to be. Every step of our lives is ordained by God to make us like Christ. God has predetermined, predestinated, everyone whom He chose to be like Christ. Heaven will be populated with a people just like the Lord Jesus Christ. That’s what predestination means!

I hear people talk about; do you believe in predestination? Yes! Do you believe God predestinates people to hell? No! The scripture doesn’t teach that. Every time the word predestination is used in the Bible, it has to do with one blessed thing, and only one thing; “*We’re predestinated to the adoption of children, by Jesus Christ. We are predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ.*” Anyone who doesn’t love predestination doesn’t love Christ, because God has predetermined that everybody that knows Him, is going to be like Christ.

The believer’s concerned with three things. He’s concerned with a commitment to Christ. “*That which I have committed to Him.*” He’s concerned with the communion with Christ; he wants to walk with Christ. “*To know Him and the power of His resurrection.*” And, thirdly, “*He wants to be conformed to Christ;*” he wants to be like Christ. That’s what God Almighty has predestinated for everybody whom He saves; they are going to be like Christ. Whom He foreknew, He predestinated to be like Christ. Every step we take is ordered of the Lord, and some day we will be like Christ.

Look at this third word, *“Whom He predestinated, He called.”* He’ll call you if you are His. He’ll cross your path; He’ll confront you. He said, *“I’m the good Shepherd, I know my sheep. I’m known of mine, as the Father knoweth me, even so I know the Father. I lay down my life for the sheep. Other sheep I have which are not of this fold here. Them I must bring. They’ll hear my voice, they will be one fold, and there will be one Shepherd.”* Well, how do they hear His voice? They hear His preacher, preaching His gospel. They hear His Spirit and who reveals the gospel to their hearts.

Over in **Ephesians 1:13**, it says this, listen, *“In whom you trusted, after you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom you believe, after you believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit.”* You heard, you trusted, and you believed. The Holy Spirit seals you in Christ. *“Who He predestinated, He called them.”* He calls them powerfully and they will hear. I’m preaching; are you listening? It’s the gospel of redemption.

Now listen, *“Whom He predestinated, He called, and whom He called, them He justified.”* Boy, I could camp here for a long time! Here’s the reason we love God. Here’s the reason all things work together for our good. Here’s the reason we’re called. Here’s the reason we are going to be like Christ. The reason is that we are justified! Justified before God, justified in His sight, justified by His grace (Rom. 3:24). We have no guilt, we have no sin, we have no condemnation, and we have no judgment in Christ (Rom. 8:1). There’s no judgment to them who are in Christ. *“Who can lay anything to the charge of God’s elect?”*

Over there in **First Corinthians 6**, it says this, *“Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?” Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers nor extortioners, they are not going to inherit the Kingdom of God. And such were some of you.”* That’s right and such were some of you!

But, He says you’re washed in the blood of the Lamb. You’re sanctified by God, by the Spirit and by Christ; you’re justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and you’re that way no more! You’re in Him, justified!

Here’s the top stone, watch this now, *“And we know all things (in heaven and in earth, past, present, and future), work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose.”* He’s always known them, foreknew them. He predestinated, predetermined that they are going to be like His Son. He has and will call them and continue to call them, because Jesus Christ has justified them. That’s right, by His obedience and by His blood. *“Whom He called, He justified,”* every last one of them. There’s not a one that’s not justified and sanctified, and them also, He glorified. Actually, these words are used in the past tense; did you notice that? *“Whom He foreknew.”*

You see, the purpose of God is as good as done. The promise of God is as certain as the act of God. What God decrees, He knows the end from the beginning. He declares the end from the beginning. He says already about people that aren’t even born yet, who are going to be saved. He said, they are already saved and glorified and justified. I’m going to call

them; I'm going to give them faith. I'm going to bring them to repentance, and bring them to myself. But He (Christ Jesus) is already glorified. We're seated with Christ in heaven. That's what the Word of God says, "*Made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*"

We know these things. How do we know them? Well, the character of God. "*He's able to do all that He promised.*" The Word of God, "*His Word shall not fail.*" He said, "*My Word will not return void, it will accomplish that whereunto I send it.*" It will not return unto me void, or in vain. "*The works of God, the invisible things of God are clearly seen by the things that were made, even His eternal power and Godhead.*" I'm convinced that what God has ordered, He will accomplish, because of what I've seen thus far, in my sixty some-odd years. Also, from the servants of God that I've read from the past, all of them give testimony to the God of Abraham, Jacob, Isaac and David.

You might, after I leave you today, read those six questions that follow these two verses, **Romans 8:28 and 29**. Paul follows with six questions that are born out of these same words, "*and we know.*" "*What shall we say to these things?*" (**Verse 31**), what shall we say to these things, what is your response? Mine is the response of joy, happiness and thanksgiving. "*Well, if God be for us, who can be against us?*" What does it matter who's against us if God be for us? "*He that spared not His own Son, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things?*" If Christ purchased it, it's mine. If He bought it for me, it's mine. If He paid the debt, it is paid in full. "*Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect, it is God that justifieth.*" It's God that chose and it is God that redeems.

It's the highest court. My case has already come before the highest court in the universe. I have been set free! "*Who is He that condemneth? It's Christ that died, yea, rather is risen again, who has ascended, who is interceding for us.*"

Who can separate us from this love? No one!