

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD

ROMANS 8:28 • TV171A

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By

HENRY T. MAHAN

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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.”

I’m speaking this morning from the **Book of Romans, the 8th chapter, and verse 28.**

This is a verse of Scripture, which is quoted often by religious people everywhere, but so often misquoted, misused, and misapplied. I want you to listen to it; it is a familiar Scripture from **Romans chapter 8, 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.”

Now, people quote this verse of Scripture everywhere, for any occasion, especially when death or sickness or tragedy occurs. But, this is the way they quote it: *“We know that all things work together for good.”*

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Seldom, very seldom, do we ever hear this verse quoted as it really appears in the Word of God; very seldom.

Now unfortunately, I want you to listen very carefully; unfortunately, this is true of many Scriptures which are quoted by people but they are only quoted in part. When these verses are quoted only in part, they totally lose their true meaning. Let me give you some examples:

First of all: How many of you have heard this verse of Scripture quoted; *“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”* That is what the Bible says, *“Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”*

That is not what the Bible says. In **John 6:37** it says, *“All that the father giveth to me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.”*

This is a part of a sentence; this is part of a statement made by our Lord Jesus Christ in the **6th chapter of John**. He said, *“All that my father giveth me shall come to me and him that cometh, (that is those that the Father hath given Him), I will in no wise cast out.”*

Here’s another; listen to this Scripture: It is found over in **2nd Peter chapter 3:9**; listen to this, you have heard this; “well, you know that God is not willing that any should perish.” That is not in God’s Word. You say, “But, I know it is; I have heard that all my life.” I beg your pardon!

Let me read it to you from the Scripture: In **2nd Peter 3:9** listen; *“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise as some men count slackness but is long suffering to us-ward.”* Peter is talking to the church; he is talking to believers; he is talking to children of God.

“God is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” That is what that Scripture says. It does not say that God is not willing; the name of God is in the upper part of the Scripture.

There are many words said between God and His will. *“God is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”*

Here is another one: You say, “Well, the Scripture says, “Whosoever will, may come.” No; I didn’t know that the Scripture said that. In fact, to be honest, the Scripture does not say that, not anywhere. “Whosoever will may come;” it doesn’t say that at all.

Now, if a man is willing to come to Christ, made willing by the Spirit of God, made willing by a work of grace; that is true and the principle is true. If a man is willing to come to Christ, come on!

The Bible doesn’t say that in those words, “whosoever will, may come.” I know that it is a song: “Whosoever Will May Come.” But, it is not Scripture; that is found in **Revelation 22:17**; listen to it again:

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“And the Spirit and the bride say come and let him that heareth say come, (give the invitation, cry unto the people to come) and let him that is athirst, (a thirsty man, a hungry man, the weary man, and the man who has a need, who needs the Redeemer); let him that heareth say come and let him that is athirst come and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.”

Do you see what I am saying? We have made religious clichés out of God’s Word and we have made it fit to our convenience and have made it fit what we want it to believe. These verses that I quoted to you, I could give you so many more.

You know, you hear people say, “Well, you know that the Bible says, ‘Cleanliness is next to godliness.’” The Bible does not say that, nowhere in the Scripture does it say that. That’s a saying that came out of Poor Richard’s Almanac.

Some of the things that men attribute to the Bible is just not in the Word of God at all, and the Scripture that we are on today, *“all things work together for good;”* you cannot say that the Bible says that because the Bible does not say that; it does not say that at all, it is not in God’s Word.

There are conditions that hedge about this promise and conditions upon which this promise rests. You have to quote the whole Scripture, *“and we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose.”*

My friends, you cannot honestly claim any promise in the Word of God. You cannot claim any promise in the Scriptures unless, (to some degree), you meet the condition laid down in that promise; now that is so and any liberal minded person will have to admit that.

Listen to these examples: Our Lord said, *“Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.”*

Now, rest is the promise; what is the condition? Well, there are two conditions:

First of all: If you are laboring and are heavy laden, if you are weary and bowed down with sin, and if you will come.

There are two conditions there. Our Lord certainly has rest; He is willing to give rest. He is sufficient and has sufficient rest. But, there is the condition that you have to meet. You have to have a need and you have to come.

Listen to this Scripture: *“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.”*

Now, salvation is the promise; what is the condition? The condition is to believe. No man is going to be saved that does not believe. *“He that believeth not on the Son shall not see life but the wrath of God abideth on him. He that believeth on the Son hath life.”*

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Listen to this Scripture: *“Ask and it shall be given you. Seek and ye shall find. Knock and it shall be opened to you.”* Yes; it will be given. You will be found and it will be opened, but only if you ask, if you seek, and if you knock.

The verse of Scripture that’s before us is our text in **Romans 8:28**, it is the greatest promise in all the Word of God; yes it is; it is one of the sweetest promises that is given to the child of God.

But, it presents a definite condition that you cannot avoid, that you cannot get around, and a condition that is so positive, you cannot claim the promise unless you meet the condition. Listen to it again:

“And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, (and only to them who love God, and to no one else), to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

Now, there are two things that I want us to consider in this message:

First of all: I want us to consider the conditions, the conditions of the promise, those conditions that protected and those conditions that hedged it about.

The first condition is this, and you see it already if you have your Bible open, if you will follow along in this message; it says: *“All things work together for good to them who love God.”*

Here, we have a description of the people to whom the promise applies. Here you have a description of the people by whom the promise is given. Here, you have a description of the people for whom everything, all things, bar nothing, work together for their good, to those who love God, and only to those who love God.

Now my friends, it may come as a surprise to you; it may come as a shock to you, but all men do not love God. In fact, according to the Scripture, no unsaved, unregenerate man loves God, not according to God’s Word.

Our Lord Jesus Christ said this; *“If you are not for me,”* (if you are not for Christ, and if you are for Christ, you certainly have to be regenerated, you certainly have to be a believer; you certainly have to be saved), *you are against me.”*

No unregenerate, unsaved man loves God. He may love the God of his imagination. I know that there is someone sitting out there right now saying, “Well; I don’t hate God. I think I can say that I love God.”

Which God, which God are you claiming to love? Which God are you claiming to serve? Every man loves “his god.” The heathen hot-n-tot in the heart of the jungle loves “his god” but not the *“true and living God.”* You will find that pagan idolaters love their god, but not the God of the Bible.

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An unregenerate man may love a “god of his imagination.” He may love the “god of his tradition.” He may love the “god of his religious superstitions” but according to the Scriptures, (and that is what we are preaching; that is the foundation of our faith and practice) he does not love the eternal, almighty, living God. I will show you that from God’s Word:

First of all: In **Romans 8:7** says; *“The carnal (natural) mind; (now that is not the spiritual mind, that is the natural mind, the flesh, human beings); is enmity against God.”* The natural and fleshly mind hates God.

It doesn’t hate its own god, its idols and false god, the god of its imaginations or superstitions, the god that is whittled out with its own pen-knife, but that natural mind hates the living God, the sovereign, almighty and living God.

Listen to **James 4:4**: *“The friendship of this world is enmity with (or against) God. Whosoever will be the friend of this world; (listen to the Scripture); is God’s enemy.”* That is what God’s Word says.

Listen to this: Christ said, *“The world hateth me.”* He said to his disciples; *“don’t be amazed if the world hates you, the world hated me before it hated you.”*

Over in the **Book of Isaiah** is the promise of the Messiah’s coming (God incarnate); Isaiah wrote, *“He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”*

No my friends, the natural mind, the natural man, does not love God. He loves a god or some god or any god, but not the living, almighty and eternal God.

Now, God is loved for who He is, not for who we think He is. God is loved for who He is, not who we think He is. God is loved as He is revealed in His Word, not as He comes to us in a vision or in imagination, or an idea.

You may say, “Well; this is the way that I think God is.” Well, that is all right, that is your business and you claim to love that god. Don’t claim allegiance to the true and living God because the true and living God must be loved for who he is, not who you think he is.

The believer loves God. *“All things work together for good to them who love God.”* The believer truly loves the living God. He loves God and I will give you several ways:

First of all: He loves God as the sovereign Lord.

When Job went through all of his trials and difficulties and through all of these traumatic experiences and he was told by his wife to curse God and die, she said; *“why don’t you curse God and die;* He said, *“Though he slay me yet I will trust him.”* Job loved God!

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Job said to another group; *“The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.”* In all of this, *“Job did not charge God with foolishness.”* He loved God; he loved God as sovereign. Whatever God did Job loved Him for it.

Now, that is the true and living God; He is loved for who He is. If you can't love God as a sovereign God, then you can't love the living God because He is sovereign. If you can't love God who does as He will, when He will, with whom He will, then you can't love the God of the Bible.

You love a “god of your imagination” but not the God of the Bible. He has to be loved for who He is because *“he changeth not.”* He is not one thing to one person and something else to someone else. *“He is the same yesterday, today, and forever”* and you must love Him for who He is or not at all.

Secondly: The believer loves God not only as sovereign but as Creator of all things.

John 1 says; *“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. All things were made by him; without him was not anything made that was made.”*

No evolutionist can love God. He may love a god; he may love an idol, but he cannot love the living God because the living God, says; *“by him were all things created that are in heaven that are in earth, visible and invisible. He is before all things. By him all things consist.”*

That's the living God. If you can't love Him as He is revealed in His person and in His attributes and in His true character, then you don't love God.

Thirdly: The believer loves God as King of providence, the total King of providence

I like Hannah's prayer in **1 Samuel 2:6**; this is the way Hannah prayed, she said; *“The Lord killeth and the Lord maketh alive. The Lord bringeth down to the grave and the Lord bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor and the Lord maketh rich. He bringeth low and he lifteth up; praise the Lord.”*

Now, that is loving God for who He is, or whatever He does. Eli said this when He received the message from God's prophet, that God would destroy His family, he said; *“it is the Lord; let him do what he will.”*

There's a man who loves God because God is going to do as He will. *“He doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven, among the inhabitants of this earth.”* He gives account to none of His creatures; *“none can stay his hand or say unto him, what doest thou?”*

You say, “That's not my god; that's my devil.” Well, ok; have it like you want but that is the God of the Bible. *“He creates good and evil. He creates light and darkness. Man's days are numbered and they are in his hands. The number of his months is with the Lord. He cannot pass, his bounds are set.”* That is the God of the Bible.

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You say, “That God’s a monster;” then, get ready to meet a monster at the judgment because that is the God of judgment; that is the God of the Bible.

You see; man reveals his hatred when God reveals himself. He loves his god. He loves what he thinks God is like; he loves what he wants God to be like. He loves what his preacher says God is like. He will not bow to what God says about himself, therefore, he hates God.

Listen to this: The Scripture says this *“that the believer loves God incarnate, in Christ; that’s right! Thomas fell at the feet of Christ, Jesus Christ, Jesus of Nazareth and he looked up into his face and he said, “My Lord and my God, my Lord and my God.”*

Peter said this: *“Thou knowest all things. Thou knowest that I love thee, I love thee.”* The Scripture says, *“If any man love not our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be accursed.”*

My friends, I know that there are a lot of folks who around who say, “I believe in God, but I don’t believe in Jesus, I don’t believe in Jesus Christ. I believe in God but I don’t believe that Jesus Christ is God at all.”

You can’t know God and you can’t love God; *“no man has seen the Father anytime save the Son and he to whom the Son will reveal him.”* If you don’t love the image; Christ is the image of God, the very image of God. If you don’t love Him who reveals God then you don’t love God because God is revealed in Christ.

“Show us the Father,” the disciples said. Christ said, *“He that has seen me hath seen the Father.”* Do you love Christ? You have to love Christ if you love God because God is in Christ.

Here are the conditions: *“we know all things work together for good (to whom, for whom), to them that love God.”* Not a god, some god, or any god, and idol god, a presumed god, a traditional god, a religious god, a denominational god, or your god, but God.

The Lord our God is one God. You better find out who He is, you may not love Him. You better find out what He says about himself. You may be one of those that say, *“Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice?”* That is what Pharaoh said.

The second conditions are these: *“All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called, according to his purpose,”* called by His spirit, called by His Word. *“He that heareth the word and believeth on him that sent me.”*

They are called by his Gospel, *“which is the power of God unto salvation.”* They are called out of darkness, out of the darkness of unbelief into the light of illumination, enlightenment, and revelation, called to repentance toward God, called to faith in Jesus Christ, *“called with a holy calling,”* called of God.

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Read the following verses; now listen to this: *“All things work together for good to them who love God (as He is revealed in His Word and in His Son), and they are the called according to his purpose.”*

Now listen to the rest of that: *“For, whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son that he, (Christ) might be the first born among many brethren. And whom he did predestinate, he called, and whom he called, he justified, and whom he justified, he glorified.”*

Now friends, there is a general call that is heard by all men; yes sir, *“he has not left himself without a witness.”* Every human being born into this world, in some way, has an encounter with God; that’s right! Every human being born into this world; *“he is one with whom we have to do,”* and an encounter is there.

It is the first way; *“the heavens declare the glory of God.”* Their voice is heard in every language. There isn’t any man anywhere, (except blind people), who haven’t seen the sun, the moon, the stars, and the heavens and the things that are made. That’s right! God’s glory is revealed in the heavens.

Secondly: God’s glory is revealed in the things that are made. In creation; David said, *“How wonderfully I am made.”* Everything about us says, God made us. Oh, it is so amazing and so great and so wonderful the things that God has made.

Thirdly: Every man is born with a conscience. I don’t care who he is; the law of God is written on the conscience of every human being. There isn’t a human being that at some time in his life has not realized that something is wrong, by whose standards; who gave him the standard of right and wrong? God did; he wrote it on his heart; the law of God is written on the heart.

Fourthly: The preached Word. The Scripture says, *“We are without excuse.”* We have not walked in the light that God has given us. He has given us creation, the light of heaven’s glories, the light of conscience, the light of the law, and the light of the preached Word.

That is a general call heard by all men and heeded by none. But, this Scripture is talking about an effectual call. You may say, *“What does that word mean?”* It means it gets the job done. Christ said; *“My sheep will hear my voice and they will come unto me and they will follow me.”*

They are called of God, called by power, called by His Spirit, called by His Word, and called to faith in Jesus Christ. That’s right! We are born of His Spirit. Paul said; *“God separated me from my mother’s womb and called me, called me by his grace.”*

“He that heareth my Word and believeth on him that sent me;” these are the conditions of the promise. Do you hear them? *“And we know that all things work together for good, to them who love God, to them who are the called.”* Has God called you through His Word? If He has, you have heard and you have responded.

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Fifthly: Now here's the promise. Quote it; can you quote it? "*And we know;*" that is the way it starts, "*and we know;*" how do we know? There is the way that we know it; that promise is based on the Word of God. We know it because God said so.

We believe it because God almighty has declared it. Just like Job said; "*I know that my redeemer liveth.*" Paul said, "*I know whom I have believed.*" John said, "*We know that we have passed from death unto life.*"

This is something that we know; how do we know it? Do we dream it? Was it just handed down from father to son? No sir; we have the authority of His blessed Word. This is what God has said.

What I have been trying to preach this morning; I have authenticated it by the Word of God. I have proven it by the Scriptures. I made a statement; I said, this is what the Bible says.

What do we know? "*We know that all things.*" What are the "*all things?*" Some say, "It's the father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." Exactly; it is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit because God certainly does His will in all things and He is the first cause of all things.

Some say this is all things as in the following verses: "*What shall we say to these things, God's fore-knowledge, predestination, God's election, God's calling, and God's justification. Well, that is true; "if God be for us who can be against us?"*"

Some say, "That means that all things in birth, life, and death, every minute detail of a believer's life, whether it be good or bad, whether it be painful or joyful, whether it be sorrow or happiness, whether it be success or failure, whether it be disease or death, all things."

Yes sir; all things. That means Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. That means all things in heaven and on earth. That means all things as far as the Scriptures are concerned and the Word of God is concerned.

That means that all things that happen in my life from the day I was born to the day I die, will "*work together.*" What do you mean work together?

Well, I am saying this: There is nothing in God's providence that works separately from God's purpose. All these things work together, they do not work separately; they work together.

Too much sorrow would lead me to despair. Too much joy would intoxicate me. Too much success would exalt me. Too much failure would discourage me. So, all of these things in God's good providence work together; God knows just how much of what to bring to me for my good.

Now, the word "*good;*" there are several uses of the word "*good*" but this word here is not material good, contrary to what most of the TV preachers are telling you.

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Some of God's people are poor, they are materially poor, and they don't have much. John Bunyan was one. I could name you thousands of others.

Some of you listening to me say, "Well; I must not have much faith because I don't have much material possessions." Don't pay any attention to that foolishness; that is all it is, it is a pack of foolishness.

We are not talking about physical good. Some of God's people are sick. Some of God's people have pain. All of God's people will eventually die. Some of God's people suffer.

We are not talking about temporal good. "*The fashion of this world will pass away. What will it profit me if I gain the whole world and lose my soul?*" We are talking about a two-fold good. "*All things work together for good,*" (the spiritual good, growth, grace, and the eternal good and glory of his people).

Everything that God almighty does, everything that God purposes, everything that God in providence brings to pass in my life, past, present, and future, good and bad; everything (because we love God, because "*we are called according to his purpose,*") works together for our spiritual good, growth, and grace, and our eternal good and we are going to be like Christ!