

**SERMON FOR SUNDAY
HIDDEN HILLS SG BAPTIST CHURCH
WILLOW, ALASKA
DATE: September 13, 2020
SCRIPTURE READ: Romans 8:26-28
TEXT: Romans 8:28
SUBJECT: All things work together for our 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.

This verse is n connected to all the previous parts of this chapter and is in that context. What a consolation this verse has been for all the saints through the ages. If we can apply it to our own situation as readily as we apply it to the lives of others, we are the better for it. It applies to all of us who love the LORD. This is added to what has been said in the previous two verses. Just a couple of comments as we look back to those verses.

Romans 8:26-27 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.

In making intercession for us, the Holy Spirit is said to do it with groanings which cannot be uttered. His intercession is always in full accord to the will of God – and the Heavenly Father knows what is the mind of the Spirit. I found an interesting meaning in the English words “intercede” and “intercession.” These words come from a Latin

root which meant to: come between. In the etymology of the verb "intercede", we find this from Roman History of the Tribunes: "To interpose a veto." Personally, I am convinced that, since the Holy Spirit intercedes according to the will of God that he often "interposes a veto" to the things that we plead which are out of the will of God. He does that by substituting in their place what is in the will of God for us. The question is asked, "Does the Holy Spirit pray?" There is no verse in all of the scriptures that says that exactly. So, this is a good question. I believe the word intercede or intercession necessarily means prayer – and that in the same sense as our Lord was said to intercede for the transgressors in Isaiah 53. BTW, this is the first of four times where the word "intercession" appears in the Old Testament. The so-called law of first mention is applicable here. This verse shows us what intercession is. The Lord prayed for the transgressors, for he said: "*Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.*" (Luke 23:34).

Isaiah 53:12 *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*

What a blessed truth there is in Romans 8:28 for us to be fully persuaded that all things work together for good to those of us who love the Lord and who are the called according to His purpose.

Let us examine this verse:

And we know -- We do know, do we not? Are we assured of this without question? Yes, we can be and should be. The things that are written in these two chapters – 7 & 8, are written

for our comfort; to encourage us and make us know. Is it not true that you and who are believing that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God have the Spirit of Christ in us? We not only know but, we apply the promises of God, and are able to say, This promise is mine, it belongs to me! This promise is to me as a believer in Christ. *'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant.'* The experiences, of each and every one of us brings home to our minds the conviction of this encouraging truth.

This is a matter of certainty and assurance. How is this known?

1. By the testimony of God; the Scripture tells us as much. Both here and so many other passages – such as these:

Psalms 128:1-2 A Song of degrees. *Blessed is every one that feareth the LORD; that walketh in his ways. 2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.*

Isaiah 3:10 *Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings.*

2. By our own experience. Can we not say for a fact that everything that God has brought into our lives, whether the things were in themselves good or bad, has been for our good? WE are assured of it – both in ourselves and by the testimony of others who are God's children. There are some things, the consequences of which, have not been yet seen – yet, we know they shall work for our good ultimately. How about you? Can you think back over your life and understand how that God has made everything work for your good?

That all things – Not *some* things. Not a *few* things. But all things, and that without exception. Even sin itself, not that God is the author of our sins or any sin. But when we stumble and fall we, who are God's dear children, arise humbled by our sin and therefore are more careful to walk in the path of righteousness. It is **NOT** sin in itself that works the good, but God who **overrules** its effects to His children, — shows US, by means of it what is in our hearts. Our falls into sin lead us to humiliation, to the acknowledgment of our weakness and depravity, to prayer for the power of the Spirit to enable us to walk with the LORD

How about afflictions - sickness; the worst and crassest providences, those things that are evil in themselves, they *work for good* to the children of God.

Think about it, beloved – what things are the “all things” in your own life? What has been the dealings of God's providence with you? Has not God worked all things for your good?

Work together for good -- All things are not, in themselves good. No, a thousand times no! Is it bad to be plagued with a debilitating disease? It is horrible to be suffer the loss of a parent, a mate, a child – or any loved one? It is bad when we lose the things that we have worked so hard for? It is bad when the government of the US turns its back on the constitution of the land and discourages us who are the rank and file of those in the nation? It is bad when an evil dictator rises to power and decides to slay and otherwise persecute the righteous? We could name a thousand such things as you well know. But all of these things, without exception, work together for good.

- All things are designed of the LORD to wean us from our affections from this world;
- All things are working together to teach us the truth about our frail, transitory, and dying condition;
- All these things lead us to look to God for support, and to consider our final home in glory with Him forever.
- All things produce in us a subdued spirit, an humble temper, a patient, tender, and kind disposition.
- This has been the experience of all saints; all things are not, in themselves, afflictions, but many of the things are. At the end of this life we shall be able to say it was good for us to have been afflicted. Afflictions turn us to our LORD – to walk with him and depend on him.

Psalms 119:67 *Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*

Psalms 119:71 *It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.*

Hebrews 12:11 *Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.*

This is a truth which gives us the highest consolation. These words teach us that whatever may be the number and overwhelming character of adverse circumstances, they are all contributing to bring us on through this life and into glory. That all things are thus working for the good of the children of God, is

manifest from the consideration that our great Sovereign God governs the world. Our God is the first cause of all. Second causes are all His creatures, whether angels, good or bad men, animals, or the inanimate creation. The scriptures give us examples of some of the saints where all things worked for their good even in a temporal way.

- Did not Joseph experience some bad things? Was not God in all of those things which he SUFFERED? Underscore suffered! He did suffer. Yes, from the pit where he was guarded and sold – to the prison having been lied about and despised – to the palace where God exalted him. Was it not for his ultimate good – and the good of all of God’s people? It was. In it, he learned not to hate those who had did him harm, but to forgive them and love them.
- Did not Job suffer some bad things? Was it bad when he lost all his wealth? All his children in a day? His health? The support of his dear wife? The encouragement of his friends? Was it not in the design of God to bring him closer to the Almighty – even to see Him with his eyes? And to learn to abhor himself so that he repented in sackcloth and ashes? Did not all those things work together for good? Yes, they did, indeed!
- Did not Daniel suffer some bad things? Was it a good thing when the king who respected him was forced to send him to the lion’s den? Did you think he feared the prospect of the den of lions? Our God worked it together for good – as he did with Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego.

- How about the saints all through the ages past? Some suffered more than others –
 - **Hebrews 11:32-40 (KJV)** *And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: **33** Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, **34** Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. **35** Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: **36** And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: **37** They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; **38** (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. **39** And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: **40** God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.*

To them that love God, -- This blessed and wonderful promise is to them that love God only – and only them. Do we love the LORD? And why do we love God? It is because He first loved us and sent His son to be a propitiation for our sins. We love him

because he first loved us. As we have seen, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given us. We do love God! He is our God and our savior! He is our strength – our shield – our hiding place. He is our provider and the giver of every good gift and every perfect gift.

To love God is a characteristic of true godliness. To those who love God, afflictions are a blessing; to others, they often prove otherwise. Often the afflictions themselves bring joy because we are counted worthy to suffer for His name – as Peter and John did. We are made better by receiving afflictions as they should be received, We ought to desire that they should accomplish the purpose for which they are sent. The sinner is made more hardened by resisting them, and refusing to submit to their obvious intention and design.

Yes, beloved, ***we know that all things work together for good to them who love God*** -

To them who are the called according to His purpose. --

These ones are the same ones who love God. Those of us who love God because he first loved us are the called according to his purpose. In other words, God has called us unto himself by the gospel. He has predestinated us – marked us out to a destiny. Our God has, and has had before the world was, a plan or purpose of mind. It includes all of his elect. We are not saved by chance or haphazardly, or of our own selves. God does not convert men without design; and his designs are not new but are eternal. What he does, he always meant to do. What it is right for him to do, it was right always to intend to do. What God always meant to do, is his purpose or plan. That he has such a purpose, in regard to the salvation of his people, is often

affirmed in the Holy Scriptures. So, what is his purpose in us?

This purpose of saving his people is a purpose – watch this!

(1.) Over which a creature can have no control; it is according to the counsel of his own will, Eph 1:11.

(2.) It is without any merit on the part of the sinner because there is nothing in the sinner either legally or morally to commend him to God – therefore it is God’s purpose to save him by grace, 2Ti 1:9.

(3.) It is eternal, Eph 3:11.

(4.) It ought to make us thankful that we have been brought by the grace of God in the call of the gospel to receive Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. O, beloved, we owe it to the mere mercy of God, and we should acknowledge him as the fountain and source of all our hopes of glory.

In all of this, his ultimate purpose in us is that we should be conformed to the image of His son.

Ephesians 1:3-6 *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: **4** 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: **5** Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, **6** To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.*

In this verse, we are given to understand that we are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself. That is when we finally receive our placement as sons at the first resurrection, then, PRAISE GOD, we shall be like him! We shall be like him! We shall be conformed to his image because we shall see him as he is. That is God's purpose for us.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

Beloved, now are we the sons of God – but the manifestation of our sonship to all of creation is yet ahead of us. Our Lord is the firstborn of many brethren. You and I who have believed and are still believing on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ are His brethren and He is not ashamed to call us brethren! And as we shall see in the next verse:

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.*

Until that blessed day when we are totally conformed to the image of Jesus Christ, all of us suffer in this present time – some more and some less, but all suffer. Even the whole of creation suffers with us because of the effects of the sin of our father Adam. Praise God that the LORD is working all this together for our ultimate good. We shall rise above all this into the shared glory of Jesus Christ, our LORD. Let's read about this which is called the adoption. After we were saved, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit called the Spirit of Adoption. Though we suffer in this life, these light afflictions are working for us a far more and eternal weight of glory while we look not

at the things which are seen, but at the things which are unseen. For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Please turn back to Romans 8:14-25.

Romans 8:14-25 (KJV) *For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 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. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. 19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, 21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. 24 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*

How about you? Do you have this hope? Has God opened your eyes of faith to see Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and risen again the third day? Do you by faith see him seated at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints. Can you see by that same eye of faith that

He is coming again to receive you unto himself – and when he comes, you will see him as He is and be, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye made like him to be conformed to his image? Can you understand that this will end all your trials? All your sufferings? All your disappointments? Do you know there will be no more tears, no more sorrow, no more sickness, no more crying, no more pain, and no more dying. Do you see that all this blessedness is because God has chosen to have mercy on you a sinner? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved and have eternal life – and shall never perish!