

"The Doctrine of Glorification"

Romans 8:14-8:39

Part 8

Introduction: Last week in our study of Romans we were looking at one of the most amazing verses in the Bible. The verse before us is the greatest verse on the security of the believer that we will find in the Bible. The verse is Romans 8:28.

Notice Romans 8:28

As we started into this verse last week, we started to look at the comprehensiveness of the verse. By that I mean what is meant by ALL THINGS. ALL THINGS mean exactly what it says here. Every situation and every experience that we face as believers God works together for our good. Now last week we looked at what this verse does NOT say. It does not say that ALL THINGS are good, because not ALL THINGS that we experience are good. But the verse says that ALL THINGS work together for the good of the believer.

Now, there is a danger in applying this verse in a materialistic way. Let me show you the words of one writer:

"Most of us have probably heard someone (perhaps ourselves!) applying Romans 8:28 something like this: "Yes, you may have lost your job, but you can be sure of getting an even better one; because 'all things are working for good.'" Or, "Don't be upset about your fiancé breaking off your engagement, because God must have an even better life partner for you; Romans 8:28 promises... ." The difficulty with this application is that it interprets "good" from a narrow and often materialistic perspective. From God's perspective, "good" must be defined in spiritual terms. The ultimate good is God's glory, and he is glorified when his children live as Christ did (v. 29) and attain the glory he has destined them for (v. 30)

As we have seen in Romans 5:3 - 4, God uses suffering to build Christian character in us, conform us to Christ, and prepare us for final glory. What he promises us in 8:28, then, is not that every difficult experience will lead to something good in this life. The "good" God may have in mind may involve the next life entirely. He may take us out of a secure, well-paying job in order to shake us out of a materialistic lifestyle that does not honor biblical priorities, and we may never have as good a job again. He may want to set us free from an engagement to be married because he wants to use us in a ministry that would be difficult or impossible for a married person. Remember that it is by sharing in Christ's sufferings that we eventually will be able to share in his glory as well (8:17).

This is not to say that material blessings cannot be included in the "good" of Romans 8:28. As the Old Testament especially makes clear, God delights to give his people good things in this life as well as in the next. In an effort to avoid a materialistic interpretation of 8:28, we must not succumb to the opposite extreme of denying God's interest in the material world."

What this writer is saying is that many times the "GOOD" spoken of in Romans 8:28 is an ETERNAL GOOD. Let us now get to the verse again.

I. The Illustration of Glorification
Romans 8:28-30
Part 2

So, as we started to look at the comprehensiveness of this verse, we looked last week at the subject of:

1. Suffering

God uses the suffering which we go through in this life as believers to work together for our good. Suffering is used in many ways to accomplish good within our lives.

a. Suffering refines us.

Zechariah 13:8-9

⁸ *And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein.*

⁹ *And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.*

b. Suffering prepares us to minister to the needs of others.

2 Corinthians 1:3-5

³ *Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort;*

⁴ *Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

⁵ *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ.*

c. Suffering turns our hearts toward God.

Psalm 119:67

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

d. Suffering reveals the true condition of our heart.

Job 1:20-22

²⁰ Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

²¹ And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

²² In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

Let me give you one more way in which suffering is used by God for our good.

e. Suffering contributes to our eternal glory.

Notice Romans 8:17-18

There is a connection with our suffering here in this life and the glory that will be revealed in the eternal state.

2 Corinthians 4:17

¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

This then is another way in which our suffering is worked together for our good. The good is an ETERNAL GOOD. Let us consider another experience of our lives which fits into the comprehensiveness of this verse.

2. Everyday problems.

The situations which come into our lives and disrupt our daily routines also are used by God for our good.

James 1:2-4

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

³ Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience [endurance].

⁴ But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing.

The tests and the trials of life are used by the Lord to bring us to spiritual maturity. Notice what Paul wrote in Romans 5.

Romans 5:3-4

³ And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience [endurance];

⁴ And patience, experience [a specimen of tried work]; and experience, hope:

The tribulations of this life build our endurance thus showing us to be a refined people who have within them a hope which is a joyful and confident expectation. This HOPE then causes our lights to shine for others to see.

1 Peter 3:13-15

¹³ And who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?

¹⁴ But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye: and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled;

*¹⁵ But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of **the hope that is in you** with meekness and fear:*

So, the everyday trials and tribulations contribute to our maturity as they are used of God to build our endurance. This then causes us to live for the hope of our eternal life which then becomes a light within us that God uses to reach the lost.

As we look at the comprehensiveness of this verse I am reminded of the sovereignty of God over our lives. There is not one situation that happens that is not used by Him for our good, whether it is used for good in this life or used for an eternal good. Not one person, not even Satan can bring something against us that God cannot use for our good. If there is something that could not be used for our good, then God would never permit it to happen.

3. Sin

This is a shock to many people but the comprehensiveness of Romans 8:28 also means that sin is included in the list of things that work together for good. Now let us not forget that this verse does not say that ALL THINGS are good, but it says that ALL THINGS work together for our good. Sin is certainly not good, but it can be used for our good.

Before we go too far into this let me first remind you that even though sin can be used for our good there are still consequences that are attached to it and God never condones sin.

Hebrews 12:6-8

⁶ For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

⁷ *If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*

⁸ *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.*

Remember the words of Paul to the Corinthians who were carelessly coming to the Lord's Table.

1 Corinthians 11:29-30

²⁹ *For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.*

³⁰ For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.

God does not wink at sin in the believer's life. There will be chastisement and there will be consequences some of which can impact the person the rest of their lives. In the midst of these Truths sin is also included in the ALL THINGS that work together for good. This then leads us to a question, "What's the good that can come from sin?"

a. It makes us long for righteousness.

As children of God there is nothing more discouraging as giving in to temptation. When we do, we hate it and it is at that time that we long for righteousness in our lives.

Matthew 5:6

⁶ *Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*

This hunger is the greatest after we have given in to temptation.

b. It causes us to long for the redemption of our bodies.

Sin makes us long for deliverance as Paul did in Romans 7.

Romans 7:15-20, 24

¹⁵ *For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.*

¹⁶ *If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.*

¹⁷ Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

¹⁹ For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do.

²⁰ Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.

²⁴ O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

c. It reminds us of our sinful hearts.

When we give in to sin it is always a reminder that we have not arrived at perfection. This reminder should prevent us to from being critical of others.

Romans 7:18

¹⁸ For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.

Matthew 7:1-5

Judge not, that ye be not judged.

² For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.

³ And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?

⁴ Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye?

⁵ Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.

This does not mean we do not point out sin in the lives of others, but it means that when we do point sin out, we do it not to be critical, but we do it to be helpful. If we point out sin to be critical then our critical spirit makes us guilty also. The point is we are forgiven, but we are not perfect in practice. Our sin is a reminder of that we are not to be critical.

d. Sin makes us truly appreciate what Jesus did for us.

When we fall to sin, we too can proclaim the words of Paul to the Corinthians.

2 Corinthians 9:15

¹⁵ Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.

Conclusion:

Notice Romans 8:28 again.

When we read this verse, it is worded in such a way that it appears as though the circumstances we face work together for our good. But the meaning here is that God works them altogether for our good. There is not one thing we can face which God cannot use for our good and His glory.