

Sunday, November 25, 2012—The Things Freely Given Us of God—All Things Work Together for Good, Part 1

Introduction/Review

- I Corinthians 2:9-12
- The last two weeks we have been looking at the believer's adoption and joint-heir status with Christ. Those who have trusted Christ as the only total complete payment for their sin are adopted as fully-grown adult sons into the family of God and are given the position of being a joint-heir with Christ.
- Romans 8:28—this morning we want to consider how all things can work together for our good.

The Context of Romans 8:28

- In my view this is one of the most misunderstood verses in the entire Bible. There is a real tendency to strip this verse from its context and try and make it say things that it does not.
- First please notice the first phrase, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God.” Once again this is something that believers are supposed to “know.” This does not mean that everything that happens to us is only going to be good and positive. An understanding of the context bears this out.
- Romans 8:18—now during “this present time” there will be suffering. The suffering of “this present” time cannot be compared with the “glory” that we be revealed in the future. In short even for believers now there is suffering in the future there is glory.
- Romans 8:19-23—as believers we are not immune to the groaning and travailing that is taking place right now in the created order. Even we groan within ourselves as we wait for the redemption of our bodies.
- Romans 8:24-25—in the context what are saved from by hope? We are saved from the bondage of corruption i.e., we are able to make it through the sufferings of this present time because we know we have the future hope of being redeemed from the bondage of corruption and possessing a glorified body. Knowing that in the future the glory of God shall be revealed in us (verse 18), believers are asked to patiently wait for the redemption of their bodies.
- Romans 8:26—likewise, what the Spirit does in verse 26 like something else He does in the passage.
 - Romans 8:16—God the Holy Spirit bears witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God.

- Romans 8:26—the Spirit helps our infirmities (physical groanings as we wait for the redemption of the body) by making intercession for us with groaning which cannot be uttered. Our ignorance about what to pray for is caused by the Facts about God’s word says interfering with our Feelings. It is in the midst of this conflict between facts and feelings that Holy Spirit makes intercession for us in the same manner in which he bears witness with our Spirit that we are the children of God. In other words the intercession takes place inside the believer.
- Romans 8:27—“He” that searcheth the hearts and knows the mind of the Spirit is not the Holy Spirit but a different individual.
 - I Chronicles 28:9—the LORD searcheth all hearts.
 - Revelation 2:18-23
 - Hebrews 4:12-13—not only is the word of God the discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart it is also referred to as a person in masculine terms in verse 13.
- Romans 8:27—the word of God makes intercession in a believer’s life because who knows better the mind of the Spirit. When we pray the Holy Spirit communes with our spirit and makes intercession for us through the conduit of the word of God.
 - Romans 8:34—Jesus Christ the living word also makes intercession for us.
- The Holy Spirit, Written Word, and Living Word all make intercession for the believer. Why pray if God already knows what will happen? Because prayer activates the Holy Spirit and the Word of God in your life. Just as you don’t know you are the child of God apart from the Holy Spirit bearing witness with your spirit so it is in the believer’s prayer life.
- Philippians 4:7—we see the results of this intercessory process. We are not promised physical deliverance or miraculous intervention. Rather we are promised that our hearts and minds will be kept by the peace of God. There is something about this process that we cannot enter into in our understanding. Just as there are groanings which cannot be uttered or put into words.
 - Keep—to guard, protect by a military guard, either to prevent hostile invasion, or to keep the inhabitants of a besieged city from flight.
- It is important to note the connection between the intercessory process and its results.
 - Romans 8:27—the searching of the heart reveals the mind of the Spirit
 - Philippians 4:7—the promise is that our hearts and minds will kept through Christ Jesus.
- Prayer activates within in the believer a point of connection between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God that garrisons the believer’s heart and mind in the peace of God. While anything in our lives is a subject for prayer we must also understand what the promised result is.

- Philippians 4:8—this process only works when we keep our thoughts captive to the obedience of Christ. If you allow you mind to dwell on the things that caused you to be anxious in the first place your emotions will follow and you will not have the peace of God.

Romans 8:28

- Once again, based upon the context we just studied, Paul is not saying that believers will only experience good things. Rather the things that do happen to us whether caused by ourselves or someone else have the capacity to work together for our good. We might not like the situation or circumstance but it does not have to defeat us.
 - I Corinthians 10:13—our attitude will largely determine whether a situation or circumstances works for good in our lives.
 - II Corinthians 12:7-10—only the Holy Spirit working in conjunction with the Word of God in the believers life will produce the heart attitude that will allow all things to work together for our good.
- Romans 8:28—this verse only applies to believers, i.e., “them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”
- The Greek word translated “called” occurs 11 times in 11 verses in the King James Bible. The means to be “invited (by God in the proclamation of the Gospel) to obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom through Christ,” according to *Strong’s Concordance*.
 - Romans 1:6-7
 - I Corinthians 1:2, 24
- Notice that “all things work together for good” only for those who are called according to the purpose of God. In other words, this is not based upon us but upon something God had purposed to do in himself.
 - Ephesians 1:11—this is all according to his purpose.