

Sunday, December 2, 2012—The Things Freely Given Us of God—All Things Work Together for Good, Part 2

Introduction

- Last Sunday we began looking at Romans 8:28 and the idea that all things work together for our good. Aside from understanding that the verse is not saying that only good things will happened to believers we spent most of our time looking at the context.
 - Verse 18—sufferings now are not worthy to be compared with the glory later.
 - Verses 19-23—we suffer because even as believers we live in a sin cursed world.
 - Verses 24-25—believers are asked to wait for the redemption of our bodies.
 - Verses 26-27—the Holy Spirit and the word of God make intercession for believers in our inner man to help us know how we should deal with our infirmities.
- Today we want to look at verses 28-30 and see how all things can work together for our good.

Romans 8:28

- Once again, based upon the context we studied last week, 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.

Romans 8:29

- There is a progression of thought in this verse that needs to be properly understood.
- “For whom he did foreknow”—first we need to understand the foreknowledge of God. The Greek word translated “foreknow” is *proginōskō* and it simply means to have knowledge beforehand.
 - Acts 26:5—“knew”
 - Romans 11:2—“foreknew”
 - I Peter 1:20—“foreordained”
- The English word “foreknow” means “to have previous knowledge of; to foresee,” according to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*. One of the attributes of God is his omniscience i.e., God is all knowing. A product of omniscience is foreknow; God has the ability to know what will happen before it actually occurs.
- Based upon God the concept of foreknowledge God knows who will freely choose to accept Christ and who will not. Those who freely believe the gospel i.e, foreknown are then predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son.
- The English word “predestinate” is a translation of the Greek word *proorizō*, which means to decide or appoint beforehand. The Greek word occurs 7 times in 6 verses in the King James Bible.
 - Romans 4:28—“determined before”
 - I Corinthians 2:7—“ordained before”
 - Ephesians 1:5, 11—“predestinated”
- The English word “predestinate” means “to predetermine or foreordain; to appoint or ordain beforehand by an unchangeable purpose,” according to *Webster’s 1828 Dictionary*. As one can clearly see foreknow and predestination are not the same thing.
- Notice what we are predestinated unto in the verse, “to be conformed to the image of his Son.” This verse has nothing to do with being picked or chosen out for salvation. Rather it states that every last person who places faith in the finished word of Jesus Christ WILL BE confirmed to the image of Christ. The predestination here in verse 29 refers to the goal that God has for every believer in Jesus Christ: that they would be conformed to His image.
- It has nothing to do with being chosen for salvation. The subject of Romans 8 is not how we can be saved. Paul already addressed that subject back in chapters 3-5. Chapter 8 is addressing those who have already trusted Christ. When you trust Christ, you are entered into a predetermined course which God has planned for every believer.

- In the Bible, predestination does not mean that God picks who will be saved and who will be lost. Predestination means that God has great plans for those who become saved. Once a person trusts Christ, predestination relates to what God will do with that person now, and what He will do unto that person and for that person for eternity.
 - Ephesians 1:5, 11
- Romans 8:29—God has predestinated believers to be conformed to the image of Christ so that, he (Christ) might be the first born among many brethren.
 - Colossians 1:15-18

Romans 8:30

- Those who have been predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son in verse 29 have also been called here in verse 30. The Greek work translated called in verse 30 is different from the one in verse 28.
- The Greek word in verse 30 is the same word that appears in Romans 9:11 and has caused many to misunderstand Romans 8:30.
 - Romans 9:11,13—“that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not works, but of him that calleth.” Theologians have used these verses to teach election to salvation and then connected them back up with Romans 8:30 because the Greek word translated “called” and “calleth” is the same.
 - Romans 9:12—these verses are not talking about being elected to salvation but to a position of service.
 - Isaiah 42:1—who is this passage speaking about? Jesus Christ. Was Jesus Christ every lost? No.
- Romans 8:30—since we have been predestinated to be conformed to the image of Christ we are also called to a position of service to serve Christ.
 - Ephesians 2:10—“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
- Romans 8:30—no one is called to a position of service until they have been justified. Notice the past tense on the word justified. Again Paul is speaking to and about people that have already been justified and declared righteous by grace through faith in the finished word of Jesus Christ.
- Those whom he justified he has also glorified. The Greek word translated “glorified” carries the following meanings according to *Strong’s Concordance*: 1) to think, suppose, be of opinion, 2) to

praise, extol, magnify, celebrate 3) to honour, do honour to, hold in honour 4) to make glorious, adorn with lustre, clothe with splendor.

- In Jesus Christ the believer has already been glorified and honored in the following ways.
 - Galatians 3:27—we have been clothed in the splendor of Christ
 - Ephesians 2:6—we have a position with Christ in the heavenliness far above all principality, power, might, and dominion
 - Ephesians 1:3—we have been blessed with all spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus
 - Romans 8:17—we have been make joint-heirs with Christ

- In the future the believer we be gloried and honored in the following ways.
 - Ephesians 1:18—we will be used of God to inherit the heavenly places.
 - Philippians 3:21—we will exchange this vile body for one that is fashioned like the glorious resurrected body of Jesus Christ.

Conclusion

- The whole point here, in the context of Romans 8:28, is that for those who “love God,” everything will ultimately work out okay, because God has predetermined this course for anyone who will believe. This does not mean that God has plotted every detail of the believers life in advance. It means that within the framework of these boundaries of being predestinated to Christ’s image, called into His service, justified and glorified, the Christian has great liberty to serve God in a variety of ways.

- We see then that as believers we have been freely: predestinated, called, justified, and glorified