

All Things For Your Good

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Date: 16 September 2007

Preacher: Aaron Hoak

[0:00] This is the Apostle Paul speaking, one who knew plenty of sufferings himself, and he says to us, Romans 8, 18.

! I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves who have the firstfruits of the Spirit groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

For in this hope we were saved, but hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

[1:18] In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.

And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will.

And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew, he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

And those he predestined, he also called. Those he called, he also justified. Those he justified, he also glorified.

What then shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

[2:36] Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died more than that, who was raised to life, is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

As it is written, for your sake we face death all day long. We are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen. Let's hear God's Word. What is it that you find most comforting in times of trial? In times of trouble?

[4:01] An encouraging word from a friend? A shoulder to cry upon? A warm embrace? The promises of God?

I hope that you find the promises of God a comforting thing to turn to in times of trouble. Sadly, it seems some people turn away from God's promises when they need them most, as though His promises applied only when things were going well, but are not sufficient now that your trouble is so great, or they're too trite, when real trouble comes.

Oh, it's easy for you to say, all things work together for good for those who love God. You're not going through what I'm going through now. It's easy for you to say, God was in control, God is sovereign.

You're not experiencing what I'm experiencing now. You don't understand what I'm going through. And if you did, you wouldn't be saying things like that to me. I hope that's never your response in the midst of trouble, but it seems it is the response of some when they face these things. They believe in God's sovereignty when life is good, and deny it, at least by their actions, when life is difficult. We can't say these things only when things are going well.

[5 : 22] We can't live on the promises of God only when our lives are good. We must cling to them when we face the greatest of trials, unexpected death, crisis with your children, job loss, financial disaster.

It's in these times where we must cling to the promises of God, the truth of His Word. Should you abandon the promises of God at these times, then you're abandoning your source of hope and life and support.

Now, the promises of God aren't to be flung about as though the one grieving is living in some sort of sin because of their grief. And you get that idea the way some people try to comfort when people are going through trials.

Well, you shouldn't be upset about that. You shouldn't be grieving that. God is in control. Don't you know He's on the throne? That's not the way to use the promises of God to act as though the person that's in grief and trouble and sorrow is sinning by their grief.

If it were grief to sin, to sorrow, to weep, then our Lord Jesus is guilty of sin. And we know that can't be the case. And so we're not to flippantly throw the promises of God around as though someone shouldn't be mourning.

[6 : 36] Not at all. Now, if you're mourning and tears or sighs of despair, suspicion of God's goodness, then there's a problem with sin. But it's here that God's promises keep our mourning and our grief in perspective.

Understanding that He is in control of it all. And we want to consider one of these promises tonight from Romans 8.28. Perhaps one of the best known promises of God.

All things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose. I was trying to decide whether or not to preach on this.

I was thinking on this passage for a different reason and I ran across the following quote from someone who's faced significant suffering in their life. He's lost a child. And I was troubled by what he wrote.

He said, So what is the secret to not worrying? Having faced great difficulty, one of your children dies from severe illness. When your next child gets sick, how do you cope with that?

[7 : 36] How do you not worry? And He offers up one bogus solution, tongue very much in cheek. Should we do this? And the obvious implied answer is no. And then He offers up this. There's another. It seems like His tongue in His cheek again.

And as though He's dismissing this as well. He says, Or maybe the secret, the secret to not worrying, resides in the scrap of Romans that the non-suffering sometimes throw out to the grieving. All things work together for good to those who love God.

As if God's plan is a tidy sitcom, resolving conflicts to our liking and within our field of vision. Now I hope He's attacking the misunderstanding of Romans 8.28.

I hope He's attacking the misuse of it. And not Romans 8.28 itself. And not the proper use of Romans 8.28 for those who are grieving, for those who are suffering, for those who are in times of great trial.

But some folks do misunderstand it. Some view it as a guarantee that all things will work out neatly just like we want them to. Our conception of what is good. That's not what it says. And some folks do misuse it flippantly, without concern, for the sorrow of the grieving person.

[8 : 51] Tonight we want to look at this promise and consider it in its context so that we do understand it rightly. So we understand who the promise is for. What exactly it promises.

How the promise can be true. And how we should use that promise for others who are grieving. How we should use it and apply it in our own lives when we face times of great trouble and great trial.

So three questions for us tonight. Is the promise for you? What is the promise? And how can such a promise be true? First of all, is it for you? The passage makes clear those to whom the promise is directed.

It's for those who love God and those who are called according to purpose. And we're going to take those in reverse order. We're going to start with called according to purpose. And it's according to God's purpose.

According to His purpose. The text doesn't tell us that. Our translations do His purpose. That's added there. So we understand that it's talking about God's purpose. But in the passage, it can't be anyone but God's purpose.

[9:51] And we'll see that. It's according to His purpose. We want to think about that purpose tonight. God's eternal purpose. The purpose that Job spoke of when he said of God, I know that You can do all things.

No plan or no purpose of Yours can be thwarted. And if it's part of God's purpose to call us, then that purpose is sure. It can't be thwarted.

It can't be turned aside. That's why we give the call of God the name, the effectual call. Because it's according to His purpose. And if He said He will do it, He will do it. His call is effective.

It's certain. It's sure. If God has purpose to make that one His child, then He will be His child. And Paul goes on to flesh out more of that purpose for us in the next verse. It includes His foreknowledge, His predestination.

Those foreknown. And we might get in trouble when we start to talk about God's foreknowledge. Some people will say, God looked down through time and He saw who would believe.

[10:56] He saw who would be good people. And He chose those people. That's what Pelagius taught, a famous heretic. He said, those whom God knew in advance would believe, He called.

Well, that's not what God's foreknowledge consists of. That's not what is being referred to here. What God knew in advance was His people. Those whom He foreknew.

He knew His people. He said His special covenant knowledge. All the implications of the Old Testament word, know, are wrapped up in that. That intimate, that loving, that covenant knowledge that sets a people apart.

He knew them before all eternity. It set them apart. And those whom He knew, He chose, He foreordained, He predestined. Again, for nothing good in them. As Augustine says, God elected believers in order that they might believe.

Not because they already believed. He chose us, and therefore we believe. Not for good. Chosen not for good in me, says the hymn writer.

[11:59] And so it's those who God foreknew. It's those He predestined that are called according to His purpose. And you notice in verse 29 what they were predestined to.

And here's where you get to see a little bit of, am I one of these people to whom God has made this promise? The called, you'll find out in verse 30, are those that were predestined.

And what were they predestined to in verse 29? To be conformed to the likeness of His Son. That He might be the firstborn among many brothers. That there might be many children of God.

We were called, we were chosen to be conformed to the image of His Son. And so if tonight you believe you're one of God's children, called of God, chosen by Him, then your life should look like it. Because He chose you for conformity to His Son. The question is, do you look like His Son? Do you look like Jesus? He kept God's law perfectly.

[13:03] And so we are to keep God's law. Paul's made a point of it already in Romans. You can't abandon the law because you're under grace. You can't keep on sinning so that grace may abound. Or sin because you're under grace.

No, we must live according to the law God has given us. Or as Paul wrote to the Ephesians, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

God has called you to be His children. He's called you to be conformed to the likeness of His Son. Are you? Not perfectly, but increasing measure, looking more and more like your Savior because that's what you were chosen for.

Why are you keeping that law? You scroll through and you begin to think, am I worshiping God and Him alone? Nothing else before Him. Am I honoring His name?

Am I honoring His day? Am I honoring those He's placed in authority over me? Am I showing a respect and a value for all of human life?

[14:05] Am I keeping from lust? Am I treasuring my wife, my husband? Am I always working to gain that which I need and not stealing?

Am I always telling the truth? Am I always content with what God has given me? Or am I always coveting what my neighbor has?

How do I look? Do I look like God's Son looked? It's reference to the law. If Jesus was compassionate, then we must be. If He showed love to lost and needy sinners, we must do the same.

If He walked the earth with the focus of doing God's will, then we must be doing the same. And if you're not, if your life bears no resemblance to that of God's Son, you need to ask yourself whether or not you've truly trusted in Christ.

Whether or not you're truly one of His children. Because if you are, God has chosen you for conformity to His Son. It will be taking place in your life. And so it's a challenge to us to examine ourselves to see if we're in Christ, but it's also a comfort to us.

[15:23] It's an encouragement. Conformity to Christ is what you were chosen for. It will take place if you're a child of God. And so if you're struggling with sin tonight and Satan has tempted you to despair, you can look at this and you can say, I was chosen for conformity to the image of God's Son.

And it will certainly happen. Because it's according to God's eternal purpose. His purpose can't be thwarted. And if I'm to be like His Son, then God is going to bring it to pass. And there's great comfort there for the child of God.

His purpose can't be turned aside. Well, we've taken a look into the purpose of God here, but continues to flesh that out in verse 30. Those He predestined, He also called.

And we're back to where we started. Those called according to purpose. The call of the Gospel will go out to all those within the earshot.

The call of the Gospel goes out in this church, Lord's Day after Lord's Day. But not all have responded. Jesus said, Many are called, but few are chosen. But those to whom God calls effectually, those that He has set His knowledge on, those that He has chosen, those that He effectually draws to Himself, they will certainly come.

[16:37] And what a blessing that unlike those who believe in the ability of man to resist God's call, we find in the Scriptures a God who is great in power and irresistibly draws men to Himself.

And if God has called you to Himself, you know that that call is irresistible. You couldn't fight it off. God calls the chosen and they come.

Everything in that call that's needed to draw us is included in the call. It's effective. It's irresistible. And they come. And those that are called, how sure is that call?

How effectual is it? Those that are called are justified. Verse 30, Those He predestined, He also called. Those He called, He also justified. Those He justified, He also glorified.

We're down to justification. Everyone effectually called by God is justified. Declared righteous in God's sight. His Son took the guilty verdict and was punished in our place so that we might be declared righteous in the sight of God.

[17:43] Jesus declared to be guilty. What a blessing it is. You can't get into heaven if you're guilty. But those who have been justified are not guilty because of Christ.

And so if you're justified tonight, the promise of Romans 8.28 is for you. And then those that are justified are glorified. It's what we've sung of tonight, what we've anticipated, and our coming glory a few more years will pass until we are with God and glory.

Glorification won't come until we get to heaven, but it's so certain that Paul speaks of it as something that's already been accomplished. Those He justified, He also glorified. God has called you if He's set you apart.

If He's justified you, He will bring you safely home. And what a blessed thing we have to look forward to then when we die or when Christ comes back.

No more sin. No more struggle with sin. No more temptation. No more weakness. No more sickness. No more sorrow. No more tears. And then at the resurrection, a perfect, glorious resurrection body awaits all those that God has called according to His purpose.

[19:00] We anticipate that glory that's coming for us. And so the objects of God's promise that all things work together for good for those who are called according to His purpose is for those who are called according to His purpose.

Those that have been foreknown by God. Those predestined by Him to be conformed to the image of His Son. Those called to God. Those justified by Him and those who will be glorified by Him.

They're the called according to purpose. Our blessings are already manifold. There's promises right here in these things that we've considered that are certain and true because of who God is.

We'll see more of this as we continue. The second thing that's true about those recipients of the promises is that they love God. All things work together for good for those who love God.

We've seen that they're called according to purpose. But they also love God. And it only makes sense, doesn't it? That if God is so clearly demonstrated His love for us in these things that we've just seen, then we will love Him as well.

[20 : 05] We love because He first loved us. 1 John 4.19 Our love isn't perfect. It falters. It's weak. But if we're being conformed to the image of the Son who loved His Father, then we will love our Heavenly Father.

We must do it with all of our heart and soul and mind and strength. If God has done all this for us, how could we not love Him? How could we not be consumed with His goodness?

We must and we do love Him. And so the question here for you tonight is do you love God? It'll show in all sorts of ways, but if you don't have any love for God's Word, you don't love to hear it preached, you don't love to read it, if you don't have any love for God's people, don't love to be with them, don't love to gather with them, to talk with them, if you don't love the truth of God's Word, it makes you uncomfortable, it makes you feel guilty, it shows you your sin and so you don't like it. If you don't like God's house and gathering on His day in His house with His people, if you don't love these things, then all signs point to the truth that you don't love God.

Because those that love God will love His Word, His truth, His house, His people, His day. And so look at your heart tonight and ask yourself, be honest with yourself before God, do you love God?

[21 : 39] And if you do, thank Him and remember that it's only because He set His love on you first. And if you don't, understand that the promise that we're about to look at is not for you.

That all things work together for good, but only for those who love God. For those who are called according to His purpose. And so then, the promise is for those.

And you can ask yourself tonight, is it for me? Does that describe me? Am I called according to purpose? I know you can't look into the secret counsels of God and know who He has foreknown and who He has predestined, but you can look at yourself and see if you conform to the image of His Son.

You can look at yourself and see if you love God. And so you can know tonight whether or not this promise is for you. And if it's not, all things work together for good for these, but all things will work together for your ultimate not good.

For your ultimate punishment. We'll see that the good here ultimately is glory for our eternal well-being. And that means that the bad is eternal bad. If you don't love God, if you're not conformed to the image of His Son, then all things are working for your destruction, for your eternal punishment.

[22 : 56] And that is a dangerous place to be. And so right now, you don't even have to listen to the rest. Right now, you run to Christ and beg Him to have mercy on your soul.

Beg Him to call you to Himself. To irresistibly draw you to Himself. To overcome your stubborn hard heart and your sin. And to save you right here where you sit tonight.

And He will. We don't know who God has foreknown. We don't know who He's chosen. But we do know that He's promised to receive all that come to Him in humble repentance and faith. So right where you're sitting tonight, come in humble repentance and faith and He will receive you.

And then this promise will be for you. But tonight, if you do love God, if you are called according to purpose, let's consider secondly, what is the good promise?

All things work for good. What a promise that is. All things. There's nothing excluded in a term like that. There's no qualifiers that are given.

[23 : 58] And so, the things that seem good to us. God is working those for good. It's easy for us to believe this promise. When things are going well, life is good and you stumble across the promise in Romans 8.

You think, that's right! All things are working together for good. My life is grand. Things are wonderful. Sadly, it's easy to forget that these things come from God. Things start going well and we forget that we're dependent on God.

And we forget that it's because He works all things together for good that we are enjoying this time of blessing. And so, may we not forget it when things are going well.

But we see God's promise being worked out when things are going well. He's working those good things together for our good. It's even harder to remember and harder to believe that promise when things are not going well.

the things that seem to us to be bad things. And they can be bad things. We don't have to call them good things. Paul, God doesn't tell us that all things are good.

[24 : 58] He just says that all things work together for good. And that includes bad things that happen. And so when you face bad things, unexpected, tragic death in your family, and you can't begin to comprehend it, you have to know that good will come from it.

When you face the heartache of an unsaved child or spouse, God is working that bad thing together for good. You have so little money that you don't know how to make ends meet or where the next meal will come from.

God can and will and indeed must work it for good. When raising your children is such a monumental challenge that you feel totally inadequate for, God uses that impossible situation for good.

The smaller bad things that seem like big things at the time, these too work for good. Your spilled coffee this morning before church. Your child's wet pants when they shouldn't be.

My kids are at that age. That's what you think of. Your children misbehaving in church. Children are so unpredictable. Just tonight, I reached my hand down to have Andrew hold my hand while we were waiting, and he went to give me five.

[26 : 25] And that wouldn't have been appropriate. So I quickly moved my hand when little things like that happen that you don't expect and can be embarrassing and all sorts of things. The crying baby that you wish you would sleep.

The rain instead of sun that you hoped for. Your disagreement with your spouse on the way to church. The schedule that has far too many things crammed into it in the coming week that you don't know how you're going to survive.

The delayed flight. The getting lost. The disgruntled employee or employer or friend or co-worker. All of these smaller bad things.

All of these. work together for good. Make sure during the difficult times you remember that God's promise is being worked out for good.

That these things are being worked out for good. And that's the context of where we find the promise. Paul isn't saying, my life is grand, everything is going wonderfully, and so I'm going to throw this promise out, and I don't really know what I'm talking about.

[27 : 28] No, he says, in verse 18, I consider our present sufferings. Paul's suffering when he writes this. Our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed.

He's talking about suffering. He's talking about groaning inwardly. In verse 23, and the Spirit helping us in our weakness. In verse 26, and he's talking about being in such need for intercession that the Spirit intercedes with groans too deep for words.

That doesn't sound like things are going well for Paul. Or for the Romans to whom he's writing. And so, surely when he comes to verse 28 and says all things work together for good, he's including our suffering, our groaning, our weakness.

He's not saying, just when things are going well, take this promise. No, in the midst of your suffering, in the midst of your difficult life, these things work together for good.

Not they are good. God Himself speaks of evil in this world. There are things that are unspeakably bad, wicked, evil, decidedly not good. But they do work together in God's perfect plan for good.

[28 : 43] And good doesn't mean things will always be happy and neat and tidy with an occasional small crisis that can be resolved in a half an hour like a television show. Life will not always be just peachy.

But it does mean that all of these things will work for ultimate good, even if that good isn't what we were expecting. Our conception of good may differ from God's conception of good.

But the ultimate good that Paul speaks of here is our glory. The present sufferings we face aren't even worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. And what a blessed thing.

In the midst of our trouble, we have the Holy Spirit interceding for us. That is good, is it not? And did we never face that trouble? We wouldn't know what it is to feel that need for the Holy Spirit to intercede for us.

And so that is good, says Paul, that we suffer because we experience that intercession. And we who are called according to His purpose will be justified.

[29 : 44] We are justified and we will be glorified. And isn't that good? We talked about what glorification means just briefly tonight. To be in the presence of God.

We're on our way to eternal life with no suffering and no tears. And as we go down that path on our way and there's trouble all around us, we have God for us.

And would we know what it means to have God for us and on our side and to feel that dependence of having God for us if things were always good in our life? No, we wouldn't. And so even the bad is working together for our good to make us feel the weight of the blessing of having God for us.

Having Him on our side. This is unspeakable good. And people may bring charges against us, but we have been justified because God gave us His Son. And so no one can bring a charge against God's people.

And that is good. And perhaps the worst evil known to man, the killing of the Son of God.

[30 : 49] Unspeakable evil. Unspeakable bad. Even that is not for good that we might be saved. And we have this Jesus interceding for us.

And that is good. And so trouble, hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and sword may come. You see, Paul's mind isn't things are going well, and so all things work for good.

He's talking about the most difficult things you can imagine. This hardship, persecution, famine, nakedness. Sword may come. These things are bad. Indeed, we face death all day long like sheep to be slaughtered.

But not even these things can separate us from the love of Christ. And so that is good. And would we know what it is to be so tightly joined to Christ if we never had these troubles?

These trials? In fact, in facing all of these things, we're shown to be more than conquerors. And that is good. So the things themselves may be bad, but in proving the love of Christ and our love for Him, our ability to triumph through Him, they are working for good.

[31 : 55] You know, it's only somebody that believes the promise of Romans 8.28 that God, that all things work together for good. For those who love God and are called according to His purpose. It's only those people that believe that that confess, that can confess what Paul says at the very end of the chapter in verses 38 and 39.

Glorious profession. That nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. If we don't believe Romans 8.28, then you can't believe Romans 8.38 and 39. Read it together with me.

If you've got the NIV, it'll be word for word. We're going to read verses 38 and 39. Read it. Confess it. Believe that this promise is true. That God is working all things together for good.

And so we can read and confess Romans 8.38 and 39. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor demons, neither the present, nor the future, nor any powers, neither height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen. That's good. That's unspeakably good. Now those things that may come, those are bad, painful, hurt.

[33 : 20] We suffer and we weep with one another when they encounter these things. Oh, they're working for our good. Do you believe that? I hope you believe it.

We want to finish by considering how such a promise can be true. How can such a promise be true? We've seen that God's purpose is worked out in the salvation of His people.

It's sure. It's unmovable. It's definite. He knows His people. He chooses them. He calls them. He justifies them. He glorifies them. We are His. Nothing can snatch us out of His hand.

His purpose to save us is invincible. It can't be touched. No one can snatch us out of the Father's hand. It is sure. His purpose, clearly in salvation, is invincible.

Because, as we heard this morning, He's a sovereign God. And if the salvation of God's people takes place according to His plan, according to His purpose, then isn't it true that all other things that happen in this world take place according to His plan, according to His purpose?

[34 : 25] Isn't that what we heard from Ephesians 1.11 this morning? In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined. That's what we've talked about tonight. According to the purpose.

I've lost my place. In Him we were also chosen, having been predestined, according to the plan of Him who works out everything. Everything.

In conformity with the purpose of His will. He has planned to save us and He works that out perfectly. That's His purpose. But He also works out everything. Everything. In conformity with His purpose.

With His will. And that means that everything else in this world that takes place is in His hands. And He is working it out according to His purpose.

His good purpose. His good plan. There are no random chance events. And that being the case, God has planned all things. He's sovereignly bringing them to pass.

[35 : 24] And He's decreed the eternal well-being of His people. Then it would be impossible for all things not to work together for our good. They must work out for our good because God is who He is.

If things didn't work out for good, God wouldn't be God. God is rooted in His very character of who He is as a sovereign God. Because He is on the throne and He has planned all things and He is bringing them to pass to look at an event that happens to say that this certainly can't work for good is to say that it's not part of God's plan.

To say that God wasn't sovereign over that event. Over this thing. This occurrence in my life. The promise is sure because God is who He is. And that cannot change.

Such a promise is true because of the God who made it and stands behind it. Faithfully working it out in each of our lives. An implication, an application of His sovereignty.

It's comfort. That was the last one we saw this morning. The application of His sovereignty to us. That's a comforting thing. And here we see why. Because God is working all things for good.

[36 : 32] And so then Romans 8.28 cannot be some scrap that's thrown around that doesn't provide comfort in the really trying times of life. No, it's the promise to which we must turn during the most difficult and trying times of our lives.

It's where we must go in the midst of our most severe suffering. For here we're reminded that not even this suffering can separate us from the love of Christ. Not even this suffering can snatch us out of God's hand.

It can't undo our justification. It can't undo our future glorification. It cannot take away what God has promised to do and what He is doing. None of these things are out of the control of God who works all things according to His purpose and that purpose cannot be thwarted.

And so Romans 8.28 has to be true. And so when you suffer, whether it's from illness or tragedy or family problems, rebellious children, special needs children, financial trouble, work trouble, house trouble, school trouble, friend trouble, relationship trouble, don't turn away from the promises of God.

Don't turn away from Romans 8.28 and say, that's not what I need right now. If God's promises were true, I wouldn't be in this situation right now. No. Run to Romans 8. Read verses 18-39 and see the progression from suffering to glory.

[38 : 04] Be reminded that nothing, no matter how seemingly insurmountable to you, nothing can separate you from the love of Christ. If God is for us, who can be against us?

He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? Here is true comfort.

Here is true compassion. Here is true love. His purpose for you will be fulfilled. It can't be turned aside. And if someone you know is suffering, weep with them, suffer with them, shoulder the burden with them, and offer them the comfort of these verses.

They were written for people in the midst of suffering, not to be dismissed by people who are enduring that suffering. Share them with those who suffer. And we know that in all things, God works for the good of those who love Him.

Who have been called according to His purpose. We know. Can you say, we know that tonight? Can you confess that? And believe it? Without a shadow of a doubt in your mind, we know that all things are working together for good.

[39 : 28] Don't doubt the promises of God. To do that would be to doubt who God Himself is. A faithful, sovereign, promise-keeping God. Who is sovereign over all.

Who is working all things out according to His perfect purpose. And so let's give Him thanks and praise tonight. Let's honor Him. That He's given us these promises. And that we can find great comfort in them.

Let's pray together. Our Father, we thank You that You are indeed a sovereign God. And that You work all things after the counsel of Your will. We pray that You'd forgive us for the times when we've questioned Your counsel.

When we've doubted the purpose of Your goodness for us. We pray that You would give us a stronger, firmer faith to lay hold of Your promises. Not just when things are going well, but when we face the deepest, most difficult trials of our life.

We thank You that You are for us. And we pray that we would lay hold of Your truth. That You do work all things together for good. For those who love You, are called according to Your purpose. [40 : 33] We pray that You would give us grace to love You more. To love You as we are. To be more and more conformed to the image of Your Son. And we pray that You would extend that effectual call to some here in our midst tonight that have never trusted in Christ.

Draw them to Yourself irresistibly. That they too might know the glory, the joy of trusting in these promises. And so give us grace to rest in the truth of Your Word.

Give us grace to honor You in the way that we live. Give us grace to love You in the way that we should. And we ask it in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.