

All Things For Good

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[0 : 0 0] Turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 8. Romans chapter 8. I'll be reading from the 26th verse down to verse 30.

Romans 8, 26. In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness.

We do not know what we ought to pray, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches out 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.

[1 : 3 4] Encouragement. We all need it. And why? Well, because we don't live home, home on the range where the deer and the antelope play and where seldom is heard a discouraging word and the skies are not cloudy all day.

No, we live in a fallen world, don't we? As we're learning from Romans chapter 8, and by experience, that's where we live. Where there are plenty of discouragements and where nature is red in tooth and claw, and where the deer and the antelope are eaten by the wolves.

And all sorts of things in the natural created order are full of frustration and decay and death and bondage to such the curse that God placed upon the creation because of man's sin.

And then there's our own battle with indwelling sin that Paul takes up in Romans chapter 7. And that's by no means without discouragement, is it? That the things we want to do we find we don't always do.

And the things we don't want to do we find that we do. And all of this, you see, adds up to a whole lot of present suffering as he begins to deal with that theme in verse 17.

[2 : 5 1] That we have this suffering in this life that's part and parcel of the normal Christian life in a fallen world. And often leaves us perplexed and groaning, weary, and discouraged.

Now the good news is that God knows where we live. He knows that we live in a fallen world. In a place where there is so much to discourage us.

And he's given us, as we've seen, the Holy Spirit to help us in our weakness. And ever-present help in trouble.

He's given us a book with everything in it that pertains to life and godliness. And it's a book full of encouragements. Romans 15, 4 says everything that was written in the past was written to teach us.

So that through endurance and the encouragement of the scriptures, we might have hope. So God knows where we live.

- [3 : 57] He's given us the spirit. He's given us his word full of encouragements. And none more precious than the promises that are found in Romans chapter 8.
- We've seen them. And now this morning we get to look at what perhaps is the sweetest of those promises in Romans chapter 8.
- Verse 28. And I memorized it out of the King James Version many years ago. And I'm going to preach it out of that version this morning. And we know that all things work together for good to those that love God.
- To them who are the called according to his purpose. Here God promises his people that nothing will ever happen to you that he will not work for your good.
- Now the verse easily divides into three parts. First we have something that's known. Secondly, the promise itself. And lastly, to whom it belongs. So let's look at it in those three points.
- [5 : 04] First of all, something known. It begins, and we know. Isn't that something that Paul can assume that ordinary believers in the church at Rome know this promise?
- Now Paul's not writing to seminary students. It was an ordinary church. With ordinary people. Merchants, craftsmen, housewives, laborers, slaves, butlers, bakers, and candlestick makers.
- All the things that make up an ordinary church. And yet Paul can assume that they know this truth of scripture. Remember their Bibles were only made up of the Old Testament and some fragments from the Gospels perhaps.
- Now here we have all 66 books that make up the Bible. Such a fuller revelation. Are you reading it? Are you memorizing it?
- Are you studying it? Are you meditating on it? Are you hungering and thirsting for more of it? Do you know this promise? And not only in words.
- [6 : 18] Not only in theory. But know the power of it operating in your soul such that it is a source of encouragement in your life. Not something just wish for.
- Well I sure hope that this will turn out for good. But something you know beyond a shadow of a doubt. Encouragement.
- From the promise. Our friend Mark Chansky calls encouragement the adrenaline of the soul. And this should be a shot of adrenaline to all of us this morning as we consider this precious promise.
- Romans 8.28. Notice the statement stands in sharp contrast with what we don't know back in verse 26. Just two verses earlier. Paul says you know there are some circumstances and perplexing problems and trials and sufferings of life.
- That are such that we simply don't know even what to pray for. And it's because of our ignorance of what really is best for me and what really would glorify God the most.
- [7 : 27] That the best we can do is just groan out our petition. And yet those petitions and that groaning is produced by the Holy Spirit in our heart.
- A sense of need and desire for God's help. And the Spirit knows exactly what we need. And exactly what the Father's will is. And so as the Father searches our hearts and beneath those groans he sees the Spirit's mind.
- And he answers because the Spirit always intercedes for the saints in accordance with the Father's will. We don't know much in this life.
- That's the point. And what Paul is telling us that there are many things that we don't really need to know if we know this. If we know that in all things God is working for our good.
- So we can be perplexed and yet not in despair. We can be confused and yet not lose heart.

- [8 : 33] We can be like Job and not know what God's doing with us. Where he's leading us and why. And yet to know that he is working all of it for our good.
- Well may God teach us this morning to know more of this encouraging promise. And to know it better and experientially. Well that's the first point.
- It's something known. And then let's look closer at the promise itself. We know that all things work together for good. We're beginning by a focus on the all things.
- And my question is how far reaching is the all things? And I want to say it's all inclusive. Now it's not always the case that all means all and that's all all means.
- You've heard that phrase haven't you? That's not always the case in scripture. Sometimes the all's of the Bible are limited by the context. But there's no limitation here.
- [9 : 38] And it embraces literally all things. Now the context here far from limiting it stretches it.
- The context is talking about present sufferings. Living in a fallen world with all the problems and sin and evil. And so this all things includes difficult things.
- Painful things. Suffering. Long trials. Losses. Sinful. Evil. All things. All things.
- Even bad things. Work together for good. Now it's important that we understand that this is not something that happens all by itself. All on its own.
- Bad things do not naturally morph into good outcomes. Evil things don't themselves evolve into something beneficial to us. If anything's true the opposite is true.
- [10 : 36] That evil left to itself only leads to more evil. And sin left to itself leads to more sin. No it is God alone who works all things together for good.
- Now there are some of the older manuscripts that actually state God is the one who works all things for good. The NIV has chosen those manuscripts as what they believe to be the proper text of Romans 8.28.
- But whether those texts are the proper texts or not. Or if it's the text chosen by the King James Version. The outcome is the same.
- God is the one who works all things together for good. It's only God who can do that. It's His work.
- So Romans 8.28 works because God works. God is working. You see he's not a mere spectator. He's not just watching things unfold in our lives.
- [11 : 45] And oh that's interesting. Look at that. And just standing by. Watching. No he's working. In all things. In our lives.
- It's an active word isn't it? An action word. To be working. It's what you do. The better part of your daylight. You're working. And that's what God is doing. He is working.
- Exerting His strength. And there is much work involved. In making all things. To serve your good.
- Let me seek to illustrate how. Even bad things can be worked together for good. Let me use the cooking image here.
- Think of the different ingredients in a recipe. I've not done a lot of cooking. But I'm learning. And I realize that. Not all individual ingredients.
- [12 : 42] In a recipe may taste good. Indeed they might be quite distasteful. How many of you like vinegar? Not a whole lot.
- But that's in a lot of recipes. Isn't it? How do you do with flour? You like lard? Baking soda? A good stalk of rhubarb to chew on?
- But you see. When the chef mixes it all together. And adds about five cups of sugar. Well the outcome is something good.

So there can be distasteful. Yucky. Bad ingredients. But the outcome of having worked it together. Is something good.

Now the ingredients didn't do that on its own. Did it? They didn't just mix themselves in the mixing bowl. Jump in the oven for the right time. And the right temperature. And then jump out. No. There needed to be a chef.

[13 : 39] With some knowledge. And wisdom. And ability. To work it together to this good end. Even so. It is only by the work of God.

With his infinite wisdom. With his almighty power. And his skill. That bad things are made. To do us. Good. Good.

Now the Bible is full examples. Of just this kind of work of God. Some time ago we looked at the life of Joseph. But my mind went there again. I want you to think of all the bad ingredients.

In Joseph's life. That God worked together. For a good end. So his father. Favored him.

Above all his brothers. Gave him a colorful robe. Special treatment. You say. Isn't that good? Not if you've got. Ten jealous brothers. And that's what he had.

[14 : 39] And their jealousy. Ripened into hatred. And ripened into a plan. To murder him. That's not good. And only at the last minute.

Do they change their plan. And one of the boys says. Why should we bloody our hands. When look. Here comes a Midianite group. Headed to Egypt. Let's sell him. We'll make a few bucks.

And that's what they did. They sold him. As a slave. To the Midianites. Who when they got to Egypt. In turn sold him for profit. To a man named Potiphar. That's not good.

Freedom is good. Slavery is bad. And Joseph. He worked hard. As Potiphar's slave. And he was rewarded. Yes. He was given more work to do.

And. He so succeeded. In all of it. That. He turned the whole estate. Over to Joseph. And Joseph. Was a handsome man.

[15 : 38] And Potiphar's wife. Noticed that. And often made. Illicit advances. To Joseph. And he always refused her. But one day. They were alone in the house. And she. Made her approach again.

And he refused her again. And she grabbed his coat. And he ran out of his coat. She immediately screamed. As if he had abused her. And held the coat with her.

Until. Potiphar got home. And then said. Look what that Hebrew slave. That you hired. Look what he's done to me. And Potiphar believed her. And grew angry. And threw him into prison.

So now here he is. He's. He's in prison. Seventeen years old. Far from home. A slave.

And now a prisoner. And that's the way it would be. For thirteen years of his life. That's not good. That's a whole lot of evil. But it just so happens.

[16 : 35] That. That this. The prison in which he was thrown. Was also the prison in which. The butler and the baker. That served Pharaoh. The king of Egypt. Who displeased Pharaoh. They too were thrown.

Into that same prison. And Joseph was kind of. Helping out everybody in the prison. And he was very kind to them. And served them. And even. Interpreted some dreams that they had.

That made them very sad. And. It all happened just as Joseph said. That the. The baker would be. Killed. For his crime. And the butler would be restored. To serve at. Joseph.

Or Pharaoh's court. It happened. And. And so the butler's leaving. And Joseph says. Speak to the Pharaoh about me. I was falsely accused.

And thrown into this dungeon. Maybe he can get me out. And the butler leaves. And. He forgets. For two years he forgets.

[17 : 29] About his promise to Joseph. That's not good. Two more years. In prison. And then. One night. Pharaoh had a dream.

He had two dreams. And they so troubled him. That he asked his wise men. To come and interpret them. And they couldn't. They had no idea. What the dreams meant. But that was all that was.

Needed. To jog the head of the butler. Ah. Pharaoh. There is a Hebrew slave. Down in the dungeon. That knows how to interpret dreams. He did so for the baker and me.

And it happened just as. He said it would. Call him. And so. Joseph is brought from his prison. Into the very presence of Pharaoh.

Pharaoh tells him the dream. God gives him the interpretation. Of the two dreams. Of course. They had the same meaning. Seven. Years of plenty. To be followed by seven years.

[18 : 27] Of famine. And so then. Joseph gave Pharaoh. What he didn't ask for. Some counsel. And he says. Well. You would be wise. Oh Pharaoh. To find a man.

A wise man. Who could. Who could. During the seven years. Of plenty. Gather some of it. And keep it. So that during the seven famine years. There would be enough. To feed the nation. And God gave.

Favor. In the eyes of Pharaoh. To Joseph. And Joseph. And Pharaoh says. Well you are such the man. For the job. And he. He took off his ring.

And gave it to Joseph. And said. Your word is law. No one is higher than you. In the kingdom. Than me. Now that was good. But that's not the end.

Of the good. Is it? Because. It happened. Just as the dreams. Went. That there was. Seven years of plenty. And then there was. Seven years of famine. And when things really. Started getting bad. The people came.

[19 : 24] For grain. And Joseph. Would sell the grain. To them. But the famine. Was so severe. That it reached. To all these. Surrounding nations. Yes. Even into Canaan. Where Joseph's brothers. And father.

And mother were. And so the brothers. Eventually come. To Egypt. To buy grain. And it's been. Some 20 years. They don't recognize.

Joseph. You remember the story. Eventually. He tells them. I am Joseph. Your brother. And their eyes. Got bigger than eyes.

Have ever got. When they looked at him. And couldn't believe it. And yet it was true. And so they rejoiced. But they were also fearful. That he might.

Seek revenge. Upon them. And here in the first book.

[20 : 18] Of the Bible. Early history. Joseph tells them. That it was God. Who had worked all things together. For good. He said to them.

Don't be angry with yourselves. For selling me here. Because it was to save lives. That God sent me ahead of you. God sent me ahead of you. To preserve for you. A remnant on earth.

And to save your lives. By a great deliverance. So then it was not you. Who sent me here. But God. You meant it for evil.

But God meant it for good. To accomplish what is now being done. The saving. Of many lives. Not only the whole nation of Egypt. But other nations around. And especially the people.

From whom. The Messiah would come. He kept alive. The line of Christ. That was good.

[21 : 14] That was very good. And yet it. It was a whole bunch of evil. That God. Worked. For good. Only God can do that. Isn't it wonderful to have a God.

That we can come to with anything. And to ask him for help. Because he can do anything. You see. Our assurance.

Of Romans 8.28. Rests squarely. On the providence. Of God. What we call. The providence of God. The reason Romans 8.28.

Works. In your life. Christian. Is because. God. Rules. And reigns. Over all. We memorize that. Definition of the providence of God.

Is God. Upholding. And controlling. All his creatures. In all their actions. All the time. And it's because. That's true. That God can work.

[22 : 14] All things together. For your good. Ephesians 1.11. Says God. Works out. Everything. In conformity. With the purpose. Of his will. God. That's what he does.

He has power. Over everything. All things. R.C. Sproul. Has said. There is not one. Maverick molecule. Running loose. In all the universe. It must obey.

The voice of God. When God speaks. Because he controls. All things. Think of all the things. We've seen in the book of Jonah. That God controls. He controlled. A great storm.

To chase Jonah. And then he. He controlled. And brought. A great fish. To swallow Jonah. And then he brought it over. And burped him out. Onto dry land. And then God. As we saw this morning.

Raised up this. This vine. To cover. The head of Jonah. And then he provided. A worm. To eat the vine.

[23 : 11] And all these things. You see. God does. He reigns over. All things in heaven. And on earth. The sea. And all their depths. And if God is not in control.

Of all things. Then he has no power. To bring all things. Together. For your good. If there's just one thing. That's outside of his control.

That could be the source. Of your undoing. Your unending evil. That he doesn't work for good. And so it's the. This providence of God. Overall. From the favoritism.

Of Joseph's father. To the jealousy. And hatred. And murder. And Potiphar. And Potiphar's wife. And the butler. The baker. All of it.

You see. It was all working together. Because God's in control. Of all of that. God caused the dream. To pass through this. Pagan king's head. And then he caused Joseph.

[24 : 07] To be able to interpret the dream. God controls all these things. So Romans 8 only works. Because God works. And he works.

In all things. For the good of his people. Now. Let's look more closely then. At the word good. We've looked at the all things. And God being the one who works all things.

Now let's look at the outcome. He works them together for good. And I'm afraid here that our. Our stubborn self love. And self centeredness. Is too often seen in the way we define this word good.

We read it. And we. Oh yes. That would be whatever I think. Is good for me. Myself and I. That's what God's going to do. In every situation.

What I think. And want. Many professing believers. Think that this is God promising them. Health. Wealth. And prosperity. Right now. God's going to work it all out.

- [25 : 07] In this life. For my health. My wealth. My prosperity. My prosperity. They think God will remove all the unpleasant things.
- The painful things. And give us only the good and easy. And trouble free lives. That we. Pander for. God. God. But to define good in such terms.
- Is to be mistaken. And is to be greatly disappointed. We saw it last week in the Apostle Paul. Second Corinthians 12. Seven to ten.
- Remember when we saw. He didn't always know what to pray for. God had given him. A thorn in the flesh. Whatever it was. Whether something physical. Or relational. There was this thorn.
- It was a painful thing. A bad thing. Indeed. He says it was a messenger of Satan. To torment me. And Paul wanted it gone. I can serve you better without it Lord. And he pleaded with the Lord.
- [26 : 09] Three periods. To take it away. But God had a better plan. God had a higher good. Than that. Than removing the thorn.
- He would actually leave the thorn in his side. And work it together for an even higher good. Than ease from pain. What in the world could that be?
- We might ask. But Paul says. In order to humble me. To keep me humble. Verse seven.
- To keep me from becoming conceited. Because of the surpassingly great revelations. There was given me a thorn in my flesh. Paul wrote a third of our New Testaments. Paul saw things.
- Heard things. That no other man has seen or heard. He met Christ. On the road to Damascus. And for all of that. The Lord knew. He would get the big head. If he did not have a thorn.
- [27 : 06] To humble him. A thorn. Was the good. The humility. Coming through that process. Was the good.
- That God was seeking. By that painful thorn. Is humility. In your definition. Of good. Is that something you love.
- And long for. And seek after. And pray for. God. Give me humility. Humility. It's the soil. Out of which. Every Christ like virtue.
- Blossoms and grows. The devil. Meant it for evil. To torment him. God worked it together. For good. To keep him humble. Which is the higher good.
- To have all pain. Taken out. Of your life. Or to live with. Humility. Can you see.
- [28 : 08] Painful things. In your lives. That are knocking. The pride out of you. Knocking the self-sufficiency. Out of you. Cheer up. That's no small gain. That's no small good.
- Micah says. He has showed you. Oh man. What is good. And what does the Lord require. Just this. To act justly. To love mercy. And to walk.
- Humbly. With your God. To walk humbly. Before God. That's what good is. He's shown you that. And that was the good. That he pursued. In the life of Paul.
- Can. Could it not be. That he's pursuing that. In our lives. We think of Peter. And he too.
- Was a bit cocky. And self-confident. In his own abilities. When. The Lord says. This night. You're all going to abandon me. And Peter says. No. Not me. Though everyone else. Should abandon you.
- [29 : 07] Not me. And our Lord says. Oh Peter. You're not only going to abandon me. You're going to deny me. Three times. Before the cock crows. Tomorrow morning.
- No. No. Not me. I'm willing to die for you. Well. He was awfully sure of himself. But you remember. He went down. All three times.

And then the cock. Sounded off. The rooster crowed. And it sent Peter out. Weeping.

And repenting. Of his sin. Can God use sin. For our good. He did with Peter. Not just other people's sins against us.

Our sins. You have to be careful with that. That's not a reason to sin. But it is a reason to worship God this morning. That he even takes our sins. All things.

[30 : 04] And works them together. For good. Peter became a humble man. Through that experience. Do you think he ever heard a rooster crow.

For the rest of his life. Without it doing him some good. God takes all things. And works it for good. Humility is good.

David knew that God makes use of afflictions. To work for our good. He says it was good for me to be afflicted. He didn't say it was. Painless for me to be afflicted.

But it was good for me to be afflicted. That I might learn your decrees. Oh Lord. We learn some things in the school of affliction. That we cannot learn any other way. One.

1964. He goes on and he says. Before I was afflicted. I went astray. But now. Having been afflicted. I obey your word. Oh that's a good one.

[31 : 03] Isn't it? That's a good end. From something bad. Like going astray. God used his going astray. And the affliction he sent after him. To do him the good of keeping his commands.

And so David says. You are good. And what you do is good. Oh teach me your decrees. Yes. Take the instructor. Take the tutor of affliction.

And teach me. To be obedient. To be obedient. To your laws. Holy Asaph learned the lesson. About what is good. Didn't he? In Psalm 73. He thought what was good.

Was a carefree life. With lots of money. And lots of friends. That he saw. The wicked. Rich. Enjoying. Such that he began to envy them.

He was a holy man. He was keeping himself from sin. And he says. Well I'm doing this for naught. Because all I ever wake up to. Is trouble. And affliction. And look.

[31 : 59] They don't give a rip about God. And they've got all the money. And all the popularity. And everything good. And he starts thinking. That's the good I want. And God takes him into the sanctuary.

And there he sees. The end of the wicked. And suddenly. He is no longer. Envyng the wicked. Envyng the wicked. And he comes to the conclusion.

As for me. It's good to be near God. Rather than to be separated from God. For all eternity. I'll tell you what's good.

Even if I don't have their popularity. And money. And easy lifestyle. I'll tell you what's good. I have God. Near me. Is that in your vocabulary.

For good. Your definition of good. Humility. Obedience. Near. Communion. With God. Are the waves of trouble.

[33 : 06] Washing you up. Nearer to him. Are they bringing you to him. In a closer. Tight. Fellowship. Oh. Then God has worked. Your troubles. And afflictions.

To do you. A much higher good. The preacher was visiting. A Christian man. In his congregation. Who was dying of cancer. And he was nearing the end. And as he entered the room.

He saw that the man. Was in great pain. And so. He just said to him. Brother. I can see. That you're having a tough day. The man said.

Ah. Yes. Pastor. But it's been a glorious day. Of getting to know more.

Of Christ. And the fellowship. Of his sufferings. Is that in your. Interpretation of good.

[34 : 03] To have your sufferings. Actually bring you to appreciate more. What Christ has suffered for you. There's no comparison. But that was a good. For this man.

You see. God takes. Our worst things. And works them. For our best things. Paul says. I want to know Christ. And the power of his resurrection.

And the fellowship. Of his sufferings. Being made. Conformable. To his death. 150 years ago. Elizabeth Payson. Prentice. Wrote the hymn.

We sang last Sunday. In which. In which she prays. For more love. O Christ. For thee. She suffered. Much of her life. With. A painful.

Chronic. Illness. And it changed. Her definition. Of good. Forever. We sang it. Verse 2.

[34 : 55] Once. This is the old way. Of defining good. Once. Earthly joy. I craved. Sought peace. And rest. Nothing wrong. With those things. But that defined good for her.

Now. Thee alone. I seek. Give what is best. This. All my prayers shall be. More love. O Christ. To thee. More love. To thee. So.

Let sorrow. Do its work. Send grief. And pain. She's not inviting. More and more. She's just. Bowing. In gratitude. To the sorrow. Grief. And pain.

That God. Had sent her way. Go ahead. Then let sorrow. Do its work. And send grief. And pain. Sweet are thy messengers. Sweet their refrain.

When they can sing with me. More love. O Christ. To thee. More love. To thee. Is love for Christ. At whatever. The cost. Part of the good.

[35 : 52] The way you interpret good. In Romans 8. 28. Only God. Can work sorrow. Grief. And pain. To produce this. Inestimable good. Of more love.

To our savior. All of these things. You see. Are part of the good. That God works. All things together. For. The next verse. Will spell it out.

Even clearer. For us. Verses 29 and 30. We're going to have to wait for it. But just want you to see. The verse 29. Tells us. What is this purpose. To which he's called us. Well he says.

Those God foreknew. He also predestined. To be conformed. To his. To the likeness. Of his son. That he might be. The firstborn. Among many brothers. He wants all the brothers. Looking like his son.

And so. That's the purpose. To which he's called you. And that's the purpose. Behind all. Things. That are happening.

[36 : 46] In your life. This is the ultimate good. To conform you. To the likeness. Of his son. What is more good.

Than that. To be made like Jesus. Be like Jesus. This is my song. In the home. And in the throng. Be like Jesus.

All day long. I would be like Jesus. That's the goal. That's where he's. Taking us. The good. Good. Well.

Whose definition of good. Are you seeking. Yours or God's. Will you let God define. What is good. For you. In your present sufferings. And weakness. Oh yes.

He does heal people. That is his sheer goodness. Yes. He does. Provide. Joys. And peace. And rest. And all the rest.

[37 : 41] But that's not the only things. That define good. There's much more. To the definition. And I simply want to stretch. It for you. He knows far better. Than you or me. What is good.

And how to bring it. About. Well. Our last point. To whom. Does this promise. Then belong. And we know.

That's something known. What's the promise. That all things. Work together for good. Now to whom. Is this promise given. To those who love God.

To whom. To those who are the called. According to his purpose. This promise is not for everyone. Though you often hear everyone claim it. As if it's operative for them.

I'm sure it will work out good in the end. No. It's limited to those who love God. And are called according to his purpose. You know. Just the opposite is true. Of those who don't love God.

[38 : 38] Their bad things don't work together for good. Their bad things work together for worse things. You remember. Jesus words about the rich man and Lazarus. The rich unbeliever.

Who lived in luxury every day. And there's the poor beggar believer. Lazarus at his doorstep. And he doesn't. Give him a bone. Well they both die.

The poor man Lazarus dies. And he. He goes to Abraham's bosom. And the rich man also dies. And in hell where he was in torment. This is the man that had so much good.

In hell where he was in torment. He called Abraham to have pity on him. Send Lazarus just to dip the tip of his finger in water. And cool my tongue. For I'm in agony in this fire.

And Father Abraham replies. Son remember. That in your lifetime. You received your good things. There is no more good for you.

[39 : 35] You received your good things in your lifetime. While Lazarus received bad things. But now he is comforted here. And you are in agony. Death was the end of his good things.

And so this promise is only for those who love God. That means the all important question is. Do you love God? We saw that we're born into this world.

According to verse 7. Of our chapter. With hostility. And enmity against God. You say I don't hate God. Oh no wait. The way we show it.

Is that we will not submit ourselves. To God's law. Isn't that something? So if we're not submitting to God's law. We're hating him. We're saying.

I don't want you. I don't like you. I wish you were gone. I don't want to submit to your word. What does it mean to love God?

[40 : 34] What does it look like? How would I know for sure that I love him? Let's ask Jesus. John 14. 21. How can we know if we really love God?

Whoever has my commands. And obeys them. He is the one who loves me. Oh. Okay.

It's kind of like Romans 8. 7. Isn't it? Whoever is submitting themselves to God's law. Is loving him. But whoever isn't. Is hating him. Fighting.

Against him. Such as the. Diagnosis of God's word. And the explanation of what it means to love him. Is love for God.

Moving you to obey his commandments. If not. You're duped. You're deceived. You believe the devil's lie.

[41 : 32] If you think you love God. But if you do love God. And you do. Keep his commands. That's your lifestyle. Not what I want.

But what you want. Not perfectly. But that's your lifestyle. Well then. You're one who. Loves God. And Romans 8. 28. Is yours. Every bit of it.

And you can know that nothing will happen to you. But what God will work together. For your good. Well we finish at the cross.

That old rugged cross. That we just sang about. Because it's at the cross. That we see God doing. This very thing.

Working together. All things. Working. Evil things. Sinful things. Together. For our good.

[42 : 38] Is. Is the crucifixion of Christ. A good thing. Or a bad thing. Be careful. If you said a bad thing.

You're right. What is worse than. Nailing the perfect son of God. Come in the flesh. To save sinners. And responding to that.

By nailing him. To the cross. And hating him. Insulting. Mocking him. Falsely accusing him. Shaming him. Cursing him.

What is worse than that? But if you said it's a good thing. You're right too. Not in and of itself. But because of what God was doing.

In. And behind the scenes. With all this bad stuff. That was going on. He was working it together. For good. God's always doing stuff.

[43 : 38] Behind the scenes. That we never see. Someone has said. We maybe see one or two percent. Of what God's doing. And that's the way it was at the cross. We look and we say. And the women are beating their breasts.

And saying. What a horrible thing this is. And. What a wonderful thing. Hallelujah for the cross. Why? Because God was placing. The sins of.

All that would trust in him. Upon Christ. And he as a sacrificial lamb. Took all of our sins. And. And there it wasn't just the worst of man.

Against him. It was almighty God. Pouring out divine wrath. The hell to pay for man's sins. And he suffered it. The separation from God. The darkness.

Being cut off from God's face. And cried out under it. And then was able to say. It is finished. He suffered all the wrath. So that Romans 8.

[44 : 33] Verse 1. Can say. There is therefore now. No condemnation. For those who are in Christ Jesus. Why? Because on the cross. Jesus was damned in my place. And that's my only. And all sufficient hope for heaven.

He's taken my punishment. And he's given me his righteousness. And so I can know. That I'm his. And he is mine. Forever and forever. Forever. And I can know that.

Nothing will ever happen to me. In this life. But what he will work for my good. And that every day of my life.

Goodness and mercy. Will surely follow me. And then. I will go. Into the house of the Lord. Forever. Forever. And their good.

And their good. Will hardly seem. A good enough word. To describe. How God. Has worked. All things together. For our glorification.

[45 : 34] Our glory. That's where he's headed. Would you like to. Know that. Know that. Know that. For sure. Could be yours today.

Jesus offers that. To you. Take me. And get all this blessedness. Trust in me.

Not your own good works. Repent. And turn away from your. Living your way. And surrender in faith to me. And this could be reality. For you.

So what do we see. In Romans 8. 28. We see the God. Of Romans 8. 28. What is the God. Of Romans 8. 28. Well he's very great. You say how great.

Well he's so great. That he controls. All things. But he's also. Good. How good. Well he's so good.

[46 : 31] That. That he forgives. His rebels. Through the death. Of his own son. That he's so good. That he gave his one. And only son. That whoever would believe. On him. Would not perish. But have everlasting life.

And would have a life. Here and now. Of knowing that he's working. Everything for our good. He is great. He is good. He's to be worshipped. And if this is the God.

Behind Romans 8. 28. Then you can. Know for sure. That that. Is true of you. And that he will be working. In all things.

Together. For your good. Then let's trust him. Let's do him the honor. Saying I believe you. With this painful thing. In my side. I don't understand it.

But I. I do believe it. You're worthy. Of that kind of. You. You damned your son. In my place. I can trust you. With this thorn.

[47 : 26] Let's sing of it. It's a glorious hymn. Number 21. 21.

God moves in a mysterious way. His wonders. To perform. And we've looked at some of his greatest wonders. How was you set about to save guilty sinners?

Oh. He works in mysterious ways. To see his son nailed to a cross. And yet. In that mysterious way. He was working the greatest wonder of all.

Even the eternal salvation. Of a great multitude of people. Those who trust him. And love him. Let's sing. Number 21. Stand with me as we sing. Amen. Let's pray.

Amen. We worship. We bow down in our hearts. With humility. And acknowledge how great you are. And we thank you that you are as good as you are great.

[48 : 32] We. Have no reason to be angry. No reason to be complaining. You have not dealt with us as our sins deserve in Jesus Christ.

You've dealt with him. As our sins deserve. And you have dealt with us as his holiness deserves. And even now you reign upon the throne of heaven and earth.

And promise to work everything in our lives. For good. And we do. And we do. Want to be made more and more like your son.

That is the highest good. It's the good we were made for. And thank you that you're restoring those that love you. And may your love for us. Create a greater love in us for you.

Even in those who do not love you. May they see your love on the cross. And be melted by it. And trust in this savior.

[49 : 29] And become lovers of God. We ask it for Jesus praise. And in his name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.