

Romans 8 Church-wide Study

Small Group Session 7 – All Things Work Together for Good

INTRODUCTION

Last week we dug into the role of the Holy Spirit who helps us whenever we face struggles in life. His presence is not only all around us Holy Spirit live, guides, instructs and even intercedes for us searching our minds/thoughts and knowing the very mind of God. God's Spirit is the gift left for us after Jesus ascending back up to the Father.

This week is packed with life changing rich words from Romans 8. In many ways, Romans 8:28 is a life-shaping, mind-calming, hope-building declaration of God's purposeful and grace-filled plan for our lives.

Listen for that as we read Romans 8:28-30 (*read it aloud as a group*)

“²⁸ We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose. ²⁹ For those whom He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the firstborn within a large family. ³⁰ And those whom He predestined He also called; and those whom He called He also justified; and those whom He justified He also glorified.”
(Romans 8:28-30 – NRSV)

OPENING PRAYER

During this prayer, ask God's Holy Spirit to search our hearts and be our Guide and Helper as we seek to glorify Him as we learn more and more about God's purpose for our lives. Settle our hearts and quiet our minds, oh Lord. Jesus it is your very presence our beings yearn for and search after. Speak through your children at this time. With our very souls we love you, Amen.

WHAT IS THE CONDITION OF YOUR SOUL?

As we did last week, invite your group to subdivide into very small groups of two or three people and ask each other this very important question: *“How is it with your soul”?*

PLEASE BREAK INTO GROUPS OF 2 OR 3 AND DO THIS AT THIS TIME NOW

GROUP DISCUSSION

1. In the beginning of the sermon Jerry talked about the soundtrack that plays in our minds. **What is your theme song for today? Be honest, not your favorite song but the song that would typify the season of life you are in right now?** Share with the group

WATCH THE PANEL DISCUSSION VIDEO

2. **What caught your attention as you listened to the panelists discuss Romans 8:28-30?**

READ AGAIN ROMANS 8:28-30 this time in the New Living Translation

²⁸ And we know that God causes everything to work together^[a] for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. ²⁹ For God knew His people in advance, and He chose them to become like His Son, so that His Son would be the firstborn^[b] among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And having chosen them, He called them to come to Him. And having called them, He gave them right standing with Himself. And having given them right standing, He gave them His glory.

As we discuss these verses, we are going to divide our discussion into two parts: verse 28 (God's Promise), and verses 29-30 (The Working Out of God's Purpose)

3. What two purposes does God have for your life? According to N.T. Wright

“God has two purposes in His plan for us: our _____, and His _____.”

Paul says in Romans 8:28 all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to His purpose.

4. What do you think Paul means when he says that “all things” work together for good? What makes up the “all things”?

- Tim Keller writes: “If God ‘works’ in ‘all things,’ it means His plan includes what we would call ‘little’ or ‘senseless’ things. Ultimately, there are no accidents. *‘The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord’ (Proverbs 16:33). God is working even in the flips of a coin.*”

○ What do you think about what Tim Keller said?

○ How have you experienced God working “all things together for good” in your life?

Let's talk about the “good” part of all things working together. Paul says that “all things work together for GOOD...”

5. Jerry said in the sermon that whenever you look at your circumstances and think that ‘nothing good can come out of this,’ think again. As Tim Keller said, “the suffering we face in life isn't good, but their results can be.” What do you think about that?

- Remind each other of the story of Joseph and his jealous brothers who had sold him into slavery and left him for dead starting in Genesis 37:12. Then read Joseph's response in Genesis 50:19-20
“Don't be afraid! Am I in the place of God? Even though you intended to do harm to me. God intended it for good, in order to preserve a numerous people, as He is doing today.”

○ Was God surprised by all that happened to Joseph (thrown in a ditch to die, then sold into slavery, deceived by Potiphar's wife, thrown in prison, becoming a prophet, a ruler, and then a forgiving Brother)?

- Was or is there ever a “Holy UH-OH” from God’s lips? What does that say about God?

Paul says that all things work together for good FOR THOSE WHO LOVE GOD AND ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE

6. Who is this passage directed toward? Why is this important for us to know?

In verses 29-30, Paul fleshes out the purpose of God for believers. In those verses, he uses five big words that have been called the *Golden Chain of Redemption*. Let’s talk about each word:

FOREKNEW

7. **What do you think Paul means by this?** As you think about your answer, consider this statement by Douglass Moo: *“The human response of faith is made the object of God’s foreknowledge; and this foreknowledge, in turn, is the basis for predestination.”* **So what did God “foreknow”?**

PREDESTINED

8. **What did God “predestine”?** A way of thinking about this is to consider the entire phrase. **What did God plan in advance?**

CALLED

9. **How does it make you feel to know that you have been called by God?** In the sermon, Jerry said that God calling you signifies that God desires a relationship with you. **Is there someone you’d like to share this with?**

JUSTIFIED

10. In the sermon, Jerry said that justification is having your sins forgiven, and he said that he heard someone say that being justified of sin is to appear to God “just-as-if-I-had never sinned”. **How have you experienced being justified?**

GLORIFIED

11. Tim Keller says that *“to be glorified means to have all sin eradicated and to be made perfect in body and soul.”* It’s also important to know that Paul spoke of this in past tense. **What does that say to you about Paul’s faith in this promise?**

- **What is keeping you from possessing that same measure of faith?**

12. **How do you intend to live differently in light of all of this rich information?**

13. **What is your takeaway from today’s discussion?**