



Purpose...In Christ

Romans 8:28-30 |

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SUMMARY

Read: Romans 8:28-30

Ray Ortlund comments on our passage,

"...So amid the perplexities of life, what *do* we know? We know this: For those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. And this one thing we know breaks down into four parts.

First, we know that 'all things'. Not some things, not most things, not the nice things, but all things - including evil and tragedy. Ever since Adam fell into sin, God has been taking our sorrows and even our failures and bending them around to serve his own loving intentions. You are at this moment enveloped in the love of God as in an atmosphere, and nothing can touch you without his gracious and wise permission. I will not hesitate to say that even our sins fall within the scope of 'all things'.

This can be misunderstood, but how could it be otherwise? Can I sin my way out of the saving purpose of God? I can easily sin my way out of a clear conscience, out of the assurance of my salvation, out of my ministry, out of my marriage, my children's respect, financial solvency, a good reputation, my health. I can easily sin my way into disgrace and heartache and a sexually transmitted disease and bankruptcy and mediocrity and tragic inconsequentiality. **But I cannot sin my way out of the purpose of God, because my sin is the very thing his saving purpose most intentionally redeems.**

'All things' must extend to literally all things in our lives, or else Romans 8:28 loses its force. If there is even one single experience of life falling outside the range of 'all things', then we can never rest assured that God's love employs the worst of life for his loving purpose. But if 'all things' means literally all things, then we need never wonder, 'Is this the moment when God is abandoning me? Have I just stepped outside the scope of his power and his claims and his resources and his care?' But make no mistake. The boldness of Romans 8:28 does not condone our sins. It does not soften the hard consequences of our sins. It does not give us an excuse to look the other way in denial. God is able to use our sins to sting us into repentance. But that only illustrates the truth of Romans 8:28. **Nothing can outmaneuver the mercy of God for us, if God intends mercy for us."**

REFLECT: What are some of the things you are tempted to think fall outside of the “all things” of verse 28? How has today’s reading helped refine this for you?

Take some time as a group to read Romans 8:28-30. Then ask these questions:

1. What stood out to you as you read today?
2. What point does Paul seem to be making?
3. How does this portion of Scripture connect to what came before? How does it connect to what comes after?
4. What didn’t make sense? What do you still wonder about?