

HOW COULD THIS BE GOOD?

Romans 8:17-30

Rom. 8:28—*“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 that don’t we?

But do we really believe it? *What about...?*

We all face circumstances when it doesn’t LOOK like it!

Deanna, rough week: “I’m not sure I believe that anymore

We frequently hear stories that cause us to question:

“I’m not sure I believe that!” How can THIS be good?

All God's children pass through hard times.

Someone’s out to get us. **How can this be good?**

Pagans: **“*Either God’s not all-powerful or He’s not good!*”**

In time of suffering, ? haunts us: “Why?”

Romans: **Gospel, good news: people who trust Jesus have eternal life & new life—now!**

6-8 This gospel produces godly living

God’s Spirit comes to live in us. 8

He empowers us to live a different kind of life.

In afflictions church faces, Paul explains relationship between this new, transformed life & suffering:

Godly living=>patient endurance in suffering.

How can we be patient, in the hard times?

3 reasons for patient endurance in suffering

1. We’re patient because of our future glory 18-25

RESULT OF PAIN 18

Present pain leads to future *glory!*

When Christ returns, future glory will be greater than present suffering—suffering will seem insignificant!

Groaning of all creation 19-22

Whole universe endures the consequences of sin.

World waits for God to eliminate sin & suffering.

Groaning of God's children 23-25

“Not only the creation, but we ourselves... groan”

WE wait expectantly because God has given us H.S.

Assures us that God will complete what He started

Our present afflictions can't be compared with our future *glory!*

2. We're patient because of Spirit's help 26-27 *“The Spirit helps us in our weakness. We don't know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit intercedes for us with groans that words can't express.”*²⁷ *He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in acc. with God's will.”*

We're weak. We view struggles from human perspective.

Just when we feel we can't go on . . .

when we don't know how to *pray* anymore . . .

H.S. intercedes for us.

When we can't come up with words, He *groans with us!*

We know what WE want; we're sure God can do anything.

But **we aren't always sure doing what we want is best.**

Sometimes we're grateful God doesn't grant wish!

Therefore, we aren't sure what to ask for.

**When we don't know how to ask,
H.S. intercedes for us.**

Some people equate this intercession with tongues,
an angelic language unintelligible to us.

Intercession isn't in *any* language, human or angelic.
Like groanings of nature (v. 22), Too deep for *any* words
Desire from within; ***words aren't adequate to express.***

God knows desire without verbal communication

When *we're* groaning, **Spirit groans with us**

What Spirit asks *always* agrees with God's will.

What better way to always have the best?

3. We're patient because of God's purpose 28-30

"We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called acc. to his purpose. ²⁹For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers & sisters. ³⁰And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified"

We endure suffering since we trust His purpose;
we know He seeks best for us, acc. to His plan.

When our hope gives out . . .

When we don't know how to pray...

...We can cling to what we know is true

God isn't finished with us yet!

Hard to believe *everything's* under His control & leads to good

Reason it's hard to accept: **we don't understand what God wants to do in us *through* hard times.**

Paul traces God's plan to glorify us together with Christ.

Viewing suffering this way, it's easier to see God's perspective

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER FOR GOOD

For those who love God

For those called according to His purpose

Like making cake—some ingredients taste terrible—wacky cake??!! (Missionary staple; Vinegar, baking soda??)

Friend yrs ago— 4-year-old son diagnosed with Leukemia

Battled with bitterness => ***"I'm not important enough for God to make his first mistake with me!"***

5 steps to perfection—to be all God wants to make us

1. God has known us—before foundation of world.

God knows us intimately

Our life never takes God by surprise.

2. God has predestined us to be like His Son

God appointed us *to make us like Christ*.

3. God has called us

1st 2 refer to God's **plan**; He *designed* it; fulfills His plan.

By His Spirit, God calls us.

Calling *isn't* wasted effort; called *become* justified.

[Same group throughout! => Those justified...]

4. God has justified us—declares us righteous

Those justified can be sure we're part of His plan; *Therefore...*

[5th is true]

5. God has glorified us **5th step: **result** of process

Did you notice that this step is PAST tense?

Before, Paul talked about glory *to be* revealed.

He calls it *present fact*. **God *already* sees end!**

Why? Because God sees us in Christ.

When Christ was glorified, we were glorified with Him.

Therefore, we should be patient when we face suffering.

God will be glorified by plan; we'll be glorified with Him.

5 STEPS IN GOD'S PURPOSE FOR US:

1. Known beforehand 2. Predestined to be like Christ

3. Called 4. Justified 5. Glorified

If *this* is God's plan => **all things work together for good**

Sometimes we see God's purpose in suffering;

sometimes we don't

Remember Job? He *NEVER* read 1st 2 chapters!!!

Tozer: "It is doubtful God can bless a man greatly until He has hurt him deeply"—that's part of His plan! —make us all God wants us to be!

Progression:

All creation groans

*God's children groan— **WE groan!***

God's Spirit groans with us.

He intercedes for US, *with groans* too deep for words!

But **some day the groaning will stop!**

Our groaning will be converted into glory.

When hard times come, **don't assume God's punishing us**

Don't assume God has abandoned us.

Suffering's part of process to make us all HE wants us to be
Paul reminds us: ***"Our present sufferings are not worth
comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us!"***
That's why: "ALL things work together for GOOD!!