



All Things Work Together For Good

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Introduction

In this message we look at one of the few verses in the Holy Scripture that is frequently quoted and also frequently misunderstood— that is Romans 8:28. It is often repeated in moments of comfort, yet seldom fully explored in its depth. This is not a sentimental slogan; it is a profound declaration of divine sovereignty.

Notice carefully that it does not say that *all things are good*. Rather, it declares that *all things work together for good*. This distinction is crucial. Many of the individual components of the “all things” are, in themselves, painful, unjust, or bewildering. Yet under the sovereign hand of God, they are orchestrated into a final outcome that is good for the believer. Let’s dive into this study by considering the following six points:

- 1) The Scope of “All Things” Truly Means All Things
- 2) The Principle of “All Things Working Together”
- 3) The Qualification for “all things” are “To Them That Love God”
- 4) The Nature of the “Good”
- 5) The Believer’s Proper Attitude in Uncertainty
- 6) Illustrations

1. The Scope of “All Things” Truly Means All Things

The phrase “all things” admits no exception. It includes the pleasant and the painful, the victories and the defeats, the clarity and the confusion. Consider what Scripture says in Ecclesiastes 3:1 “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:” And again, Psalm 76:10 points out that “Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” So, even human wrongdoing—without God being the author of sin—is overruled to accomplish God’s purposes.


A powerful biblical illustration is the life of Joseph. Betrayed by his brothers, sold into slavery, falsely accused, and imprisoned—none of these events were good in isolation. Yet Joseph later testified in Genesis 50:20 saying “But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive.”

Each event alone was painful, but together, under God’s governance, they produced salvation and preservation. As you go through each awkward and regrettable moments in life, put on the lenses of divine perspectives that when they are all put together, God will orchestrate them to work together for your good if you continue loving and serving God.

2. The Principle of “All Things Working Together”

The verse does not merely say that all things happen, rather it says they *work together*. This implies coordination, design, and intentionality.

Think of a tapestry. If you examine the underside, you see knots, loose threads, and confusion. Yet on the upper side, there is a coherent and beautiful design. So it is with the believer’s life. In-



dividually, circumstances may appear disjointed or even contradictory. But God weaves them into a unified purpose.

Another scriptural example is the crucifixion of Christ—the greatest evil ever committed, yet the means of the greatest good ever accomplished. Acts 2:23 confirms that: “Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:” And yet through that very act, Isaiah 53:5 was fulfilled, which states: “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.” What appeared to be defeat was, in fact, redemption. What looked like chaos was divine orchestration.

3. The Qualification for “all things” are “To Them That Love God”

This promise is not universal; it is specific. It applies only to a specific group of people “that love God” and “to them who are the called according to his purpose.” Love for God is not mere sentiment—it is demonstrated through obedience and trust. In John 14:15 Jesus said: “If ye love me, keep my commandments.” This means the promise belongs to those who are in covenant relationship with God—those who have aligned themselves with His will.

4. The Nature of the “Good”

We must also define what “good” means in this context. It is not necessarily comfort, prosperity, or ease. The very next verse (Romans 8:29) clarifies that “For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son...”

The ultimate good is Christlikeness. God is not merely working to make us comfortable. Rather, He is working to make us like Christ. Hebrews 12:11 points out the fact that “Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.” Therefore, what feels painful in the moment may be essential in producing righteousness.

5. The Believer’s Proper Attitude in Uncertainty

In the light of this truth, how should the believer respond to complex, confusing, and uncertain situations?

(a) Trust in God’s Wisdom

Proverbs 3:5–6 commands “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.” When circumstances defy explanation, faith must rest in God’s character rather than human reasoning.


(b) Maintain Peace Rather Than Anxiety

Philippians 4:6–7 encourages us: “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” The believer is not called to panic, but to pray. Prayer changes things as well as orchestrate things to align with God’s purpose and plan for each believer.

(c) Do Not Envy The Wicked

This is commanded in many scriptures, including the three examples / aspects below:

1. The Foundational Warning Against Envy. Proverbs 23:17–18 “Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the LORD all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.” This passage not only forbids envy but redirects the heart toward reverence for God, grounding the believer in eternal perspective.



2. Do Not Be Provoked by Their Apparent Success. Psalm 37:1–2 “Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.” The prosperity of the wicked is temporary and fragile—like grass that quickly fades.

3. Their Prosperity is Deceptive and Their End is Sudden. Psalm 73:3, 17–19 “For I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked... Until I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end. Surely thou didst set them in slippery places: thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment! they are utterly consumed with terrors.” This is one of the most honest confessions in Scripture. The psalmist admits envy—but shows how divine perspective corrects it.

The consistent biblical logic is that:

- The prosperity of the wicked is temporary;
- Their apparent success is spiritually hollow;
- Their end is judgement unless they repent; and
- The believer’s inheritance is eternal and secure.

Therefore, envy is based on incomplete information as it only focuses on the present but ignores the end.

(d) Rejoice Even in Trials

James 1:2–3 admonishes “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.” This is not denial of pain, but it is recognition of purpose.

(e) Persevere with Hope

2 Corinthians 4:17 points out that “... our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;” Even severe trials are temporary when viewed through the lens of eternity.

6. Illustrations

- Consider the process of refining gold. Raw ore is subjected to intense heat, causing impurities to rise to the surface and be removed. The fire is not pleasant, but it is necessary.
- Likewise, in medicine, certain treatments—such as chemotherapy—are harsh, yet they are administered with the intent of healing.

In both cases, the process is difficult, but the outcome is beneficial. So it is with God’s dealings. The “all things” may include fire, pressure, and discomfort—but the result is purification and maturity.

Conclusion

Romans 8:28 is not a shallow comfort—it is a profound assurance rooted in the sovereignty of God. “All things” truly means all things—joy and sorrow, gain and loss, clarity and confusion. Individually, they may not be good. But collectively, under God’s wise orchestration, they work together for good. Therefore, the believer must not be ruled by circumstances, but by conviction. Let us then respond with trust, patience, obedience, and hope—confident that the God who governs all things is also working all things for our good and for His glory.

Therefore, Hold fast to this truth, especially when life does not make sense. The day will come when what is now confusing will be revealed as purposeful. Until then, walk by faith. 2 Corinthians 5:7 encourages us to do so—“For we walk by faith, not by sight.”